

Fur meets fang in 'Underworld'

BY JIM WALSH
STAFF WRITER

Movies about cowboys and Indians are outdated. And they're boring.

Movies about vampires and werewolves, on the other hand, are timeless.

At least that is what the makers of "Underworld" are banking on. In place of decent action or acting, all this flick has to offer is folklore and archetypal themes. The target audience is clear: if you're Gothic and you know it, clap your hands.

In a London of the not-too-distant future, a centuries-old battle between vampires and werewolves has been raging unbeknownst to the public. Vampire warriors called "death dealers" go into the night armed with silver nitrate bullets to hunt werewolves known as Lycan.

The Lycan are also armed, but their bullets contain condensed ultraviolet light rays that kill vampires — apparently giving them a strain of malignant melanoma.

The leader of the death dealers, Selene (Kate Beckinsale), discovers that the Lycan are after a human, Michael Corvin (Scott Speedman), who is a direct descendant of the purest werewolf.

They plan to use his blood to

MOVIEREVIEW

"UNDERWORLD"

★★★

create a super invincible vampire-werewolf who will end the ancient feud himself.

But this outlandish plot is not without supplements. Discovering what the monster species can and can't do lends itself to several unintentionally amusing observations.

The vampires — debonair socialites who sip blood from Waterford crystal — can rock all night to hardcore industrial music in their "Rocky Horror Picture Show" mansion.

Industrial music, in fact, drives the action and cinematography, keeping one's interest in the predictably dark and rainy visuals.

Relying less shamelessly on style, the Lycan are much more respectable, displaying brute strength instead as their measure of attitude. Incidentally, they too can climb walls, but they can also morph and force bullets out of their own bodies.

Neat, huh? The special effects aren't bad, but they're not that great, either — think "Gremlins." The only memorable effect is that of liquid nitrate



COURTESY OF SCREEN GEMS

Kate Beckinsale battles with a slew of angry, preternatural werewolves and vampires in the dark, leather-bound action thriller, 'Underworld.'

coursing through the veins of fallen Lycan. Their skin boils and develops bubonic plague-style pox marks.

Aside from the leather-clad Beckinsale and a welcome cameo by Robbie Gee ("Snatch"), most of the actors are no-namers just trying to get their feet wet.

Shane Brolly's performance as the coven leader Kraven is notable for being one of the worst of all-

time.

"Underworld" falls under the category of rentable movies, the kind that aren't worth the cost of a movie ticket but are still amusing enough to warrant a \$4 rental fee.

Unless you are Goth, wait for this one to come out on DVD.

Contact the A&E Editor at artsdesk@unc.edu.

Zesty mix of rockers invades Cat's Cradle

BY NICOLE BOBITSKI
STAFF WRITER

Take one Sunday evening. Mix in five punk bands. A little bit of attitude. Some Chucks. A few tattoos. The result:

The Drive-Thru Invasion Tour. The sold-out event included Drive-Thru Record artists The Starting Line, Homegrown, Early November, Allister and Senses Fail.

Starting off, Senses Fail lead singer Buddy Nielsen charged onto stage dancing and thrashed about for what seemed like minutes until the band broke into its half-hour set.

The most hardcore band of the night, Senses Fail played tracks off its *From the Depths of Dreams EP*, ranging from the sobering "Stephen" to the emotionally tinged teen-angst tune "Handguns and Second Chances."

After Senses Fail, The Early November began its set with the mosh-rump "Take Time to Find." But its set was interrupted by a few technical difficulties.

Frontman Ace Enders explained that "our bus broke down earlier today, so Senses Fail is nice enough to let us use their equipment."

Bassist Sergio Anello was the most entertaining part of the group's show, swinging his instrument around violently and provoking fear for his bass and his bandmates' heads.

He then finished a song by leaping into the mosh pit.

With Allister's members decked out in business ties, the moshing stepped up a notch as the group led with the song "Radio Player" from its album *Last Stop Suburbia*.

Homegrown introduced a more emo-inspired, melodious feel to

CONCERTREVIEW

DRIVE-THRU INVASION TOUR
CAT'S CRADLE
SUNDAY, SEPT. 21
★★★★

the show. The song "Kiss Me, Diss Me" displayed typical love-scorned angst.

The final band, recently nominated for Fuse Magazine's Next Big Thing Award, was The Starting Line.

Entering the stage to the blaring theme from "Chariots of Fire," the band members took their places and the room exploded with applause.

Playing popular hits such as "The Best of Me" and introducing new acoustic material, lead singer Ken Vasoli and bandmates showed off their diverse vocal talent.

When a girl's purse was thrown onstage at the band, Vasoli joked, "We're setting a record for the biggest thing thrown at us at a show before." They just kept right on playing.

Bassist Matt Watts, who was suffering from vertigo, played his heart out despite his illness.

Vasoli gave him credit in between songs for his devotion to the fans.

All of the bands interacted with the crowd and showed an encouraging appreciation for the fans, pleading for concertgoers to constantly cheer louder and repeatedly thanking them for an awesome time.

Even those who don't appreciate punk could admire the love these guys have for their fans.

Contact the A&E Editor at artsdesk@unc.edu.

'Anything' rides on classic Allen wit

BY KEMP BALDWIN
STAFF WRITER

For some reason, Woody Allen has the ability to make the same movie every couple of years and find some novelty within the same old package.

His latest film, "Anything Else," is "Manhattan" but in color. It's got the neurotic intellectual type in the role of the romantic lead fumbling through a deranged relationship in

MOVIEREVIEW

"ANYTHING ELSE"

★★★★

the streets of New York.

Allen isn't good on the big ideas, but he dazzles you with dancing dialogue that couples witticisms with truisms.

At their worst, Allen's films are redundant. But when he is on his

game, they are like verbal action movies with intensely funny cerebral discourse in the place of guns and car chases.

But "Anything Else" doesn't recycle too much material, because Allen has decided to give Jason Biggs a chance to walk in his shoes as the romantic lead, aspiring writer Jerry Falk.

Allen, meanwhile, takes the role of his neurotic mentor, David Dobel, a comedy writer bordering on insanity and brilliance. Dobel meets Falk when both are vying for a job writing jokes for a comedian.

Falk tells Dobel about his girlfriend, Amanda (Christina Ricci), who is nuts as well. After the first six months of crazed lovemaking, she hasn't let Falk sleep with her in half a year and has panic attacks

when things start getting physical. Dobel quickly tells an anecdote and dispenses some esoteric advice, and a dynamic is created.

Even though Allen has taken himself out of the leading role, his ego is too large to step into a small role, and the audience should thank him for this.

But this doesn't mean he is an active character in the love story. His character works as more of a segue between Falk's crises. Though his advice falls somewhere between sage-like and psychotic, he is the only character trying to help Falk take control of his life, which is in entropy.

Although "Anything Else" could be just another Allen film, it's refreshing that not all romantic comedies have to be chick flicks or have the lead screwing a pie.

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ENTERTAINERS

FROM PAGE 5

"It wasn't just that he came from Hollywood but (that) he represented a certain conservative viewpoint that fueled him," Alter said.

Sometimes politicians turn the tables, garnering great success by establishing pseudo-"stage presences."

"Bill Clinton had that 'star power.' There was the infamous sax performance (on "The Arsenio Hall Show") and the MTV appearances. He was very comfortable," Gilliam said.

Jesse Ventura's overzealous "presence" brought him to office in Minnesota.

Now his "Running Man" co-star, Schwarzenegger, hopes to replicate The Body's gubernatorial thrust.

Entertainer status can bring outsiders to office, but it also can bring voters to the polls.

"Some people are going to vote for him just because he was good in 'Terminator' and 'Kindergarten Cop,'" Alter said, but with a warning.

"You can't say 'if you vote for an entertainer — you must be an air-head voter.'"

Entertainers could make politics stronger, he added.

"If they get interested because of entertainers — because of listening to Jon Stewart ... or David Letterman — if that pulls them into politics, great," Alter said. "As long as they stay (committed) and keep (to) it seriously."

Contact the A&E Editor at artsdesk@unc.edu.

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