

MOVIESHORTS

ELEGY



Jesus, the last time I saw a movie this sad was Darren Aronofsky's "The Fountain." At least that one had some hopeful redemption. "Elegy" is a truly dark, as cold and lonely as the love life of its main character, ably played by the tremendous Ben Kingsley.

Director of cinematography Jean-Claude Larrieu does a fine job making the look of the film match its mood.

Lots of dim interiors and cloudy skies make things so emotionally stuffy that the theatre becomes quite claustrophobic. The shots are beautiful though, once you learn to deal with the despair.

Penélope Cruz is great in her supporting role, though seeing her in another dark room romance under such different circumstances might make fans of

"Vicky Christina Barcelona" groan a little.

"Elegy's" emotional power is contained in one of the most incredibly moving death scenes I've ever seen, and from Dennis Hopper no less.

All in all, those who suffer from depression should steer clear, but if you're looking for some old-fashioned catharsis, this one's for you.

- Jonathan Pattishall

MAN ON WIRE



"Man On Wire," the story of the man who walked across a tightrope illegally strung between the two towers of the World Trade Center, is a poetic account of a man who lives to walk on air. Unfortunately, it's also kinda boring.

Utilizing mostly archival footage and "America's Most Wanted"-style reenactments of the more illegal events, the film details Philippe Petit's dream of crossing the gap between the two tallest towers in the world.

Petit is a Frenchman who wears a top hat, uses a unicycle as his main mode of transportation and

is probably well-versed in the art of mime.

He also tightrope walks across vast spaces, such as between two towers on Notre Dame and a bridge in Australia.

His vigilante stunts are detested by officials and adored by onlookers and the people he charms into helping him with his eccentric — and entirely illegal — stunts.

But the movie stays mired in the planning stages of Petit's stunt way too long and delves too deeply into the mechanics of the stunt.

The film relies on the reenactments too heavily, and by the time they finally stop hiding from security guards and begin setting up the stunt, you wish he'd just go ahead and walk across the damn wire already.

But when the story finally meanders around to its main event, the movie suddenly shifts back to the sense of beauty and wonder that the first act hinted at.

All of the talking heads breathlessly recount what it was like to watch a man walk on air, and tear up as they remember how it felt

to be a part of such a beautiful moment.

There's even an amusing archival interview with one of the NYPD officers who arrested him, describing the obvious internal conflict between his sense of duty and his sense of wonder.

It's a pleasure to be given a peek into the mind and adventures of Petit in all his wacky French-ness. Unfortunately, the movie only gives us a glimpse of the incredible man on the wire, which just isn't enough to make the movie as engaging as the premise would suggest.

-Rachael Oehring

BANGKOK DANGEROUS



If you decided that you'd rather see your entire life come to an embarrassing end than see Nicholas Cage star in yet another one-man show action movie, I wouldn't blame you.

After all, what happened to the quirky and exciting Nicholas Cage of "The Rock," "Con Air," and "Face/Off"?

Well, the Cage of old is not back

— but things could be worse. The good news and bad news about "Bangkok Dangerous" is that it's a forgettable action flick.

There's nothing noteworthy about the film, but certainly nothing despicable. This is an advancement for Cage, for sure.

Sure, the story line is melodramatic and predictable and has a tacked-on love story that has literally nothing to do with the rest of the film.

And of course Cage takes himself way too seriously.

From his "dark" narrative soliloquies to his tendency to stand over people he's just killed for at least 20 minutes, Cage's performance necessitates more than a few winces.

But anyone going to a movie called "Bangkok Dangerous" starring Cage expecting anything better than this deserves to be disappointed.

The fact is, Cage drives a mediocre action flick and succeeds in what must have been his childhood dream — to be a mildly cool middle-aged action star.

At least for this movie.

- David Berngart

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- 13 SA REGGAE BLITZ (Mickey Mills, Crucial Fya, more)
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- 25 TH BLACK KIDS w/ The Virgins**
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- 10 FR ANTBALAS** (\$14/\$16)
- 11 SA KICKIN' GRASS CD Release Party
- 13 MO GIRL TALK w/ Grand Buffet (sold out)
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- 8 SA MARK KOZELEK w/ Kath Bloom** (\$15/\$17)
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