

Star-studded Cast Gets Dose of Reality in Relationship Flick

By Rhonda Roberts
A&E Editor

Now that the "day of love" has passed, let us consider closely the intentions of the person we have chosen to give our affection to.

Ken Kwapis, directs an all-star cast, in the movie "He's Just Not That Into You," based on the bestselling book written by Greg Behrendt and Liz Tuccillo.

The movie suggests that women are programmed from the playground to believe that it's OK if a man that really likes her ignores her. Therefore women conduct the age-old ritual of sitting by the phone waiting for a call that never comes, because the fact is, he's just not that into you.



The movie chronicles the relationships of a group of young adults in Baltimore who are interconnected through various areas of their lives. Each of them is in a different phase of the dating game. Some are still trying to get a date while others are in long-term, committed relationships.

Gigi (Ginnifer Goodwin) is trying to get a date and is a complete novice when it comes to understanding men. Therefore, she relies heavily on the expertise of a friendly bartender named Alex (Justin Long) to help her come to terms with the fact that the

men that she's connecting with are not into her at all.

Connor (Kevin Connolly) is one of the men that left Gigi hanging by the phone because he has his sights on Anna (Scarlett Johansson) who has placed him in the 'friend zone' while she tries to catch the very married Ben (Bradley Cooper).

Ben is unfulfilled in his marriage to his college sweetheart Janine (Jennifer Connelly) whom he married only after she gave him an ultimatum. Years later he's questioning his choice after he meets Anna at the supermarket.

Ben's best friend, Neil (Ben Affleck) is a great guy in a long-term relationship with Beth (Jennifer Aniston). Though they are extremely happy together, Beth desires to be married while Neil is adamantly against the institution of marriage.

Meanwhile, Mary (Drew Barrymore) seems to have perfected the use of media as a means toward developing her social life: MySpace, email, text messaging and voicemail. However, all of these prove to be futile, when too many communication methods are involved.

This movie is a hilarious but blatantly realistic account of the lengths that people go to in order to score a relationship. It addresses the questions that men and women most often ask themselves at various phases of dating and relationships. Why don't they call? Why won't they sleep with me anymore? Why can't we take our relationship to the next level? The answer to those questions is: they're just not that into you.

Spoken Word Unleashed!

By Melanie Crawford
Staff Writer

Over 200 students flocked to the University Theater for some great poetry performances on Friday the 13th, which turned out to be anything but unlucky.

The evening began with two Cal State East Bay students, Amber Kippens and Candice Cooper.

Kippen's poem titled "She" was a touching piece about her mother. Cooper, a marketing major, recited three poems: "It's You," "Pioneer Pride" and "Smack."

Next was Zora Howard, a 16-year-old from Harlem, New York. Coordinator Jonathan Stull was so impressed with the performance of her poem, "Biracial," on YouTube that he had her flown out for this appearance. She did not fail to please the audience with her renditions of "Biracial," "Dear Son," "Untitled" and "Walking." Her maturity and motivation—"I look to fight indifference"—were inspiring to the audience.

was "numb to violence" and it was "a horrific moment in [his] life."

He went on to perform several serious pieces—"I'm Black" and "Gangsta"—as well as a handful of funny ones, including a scene from the Garden of Eden where the animals got in line "to define their destiny," worried that the humans were going to try to eat them.

The last performer of the evening was Amir Sulaiman, who addressed the audience in a conversational manner, welcoming questions between his performances. The first, "A Thief in the Night," was concerned with the meaning of life. He said, "I'm better than I was, worse than I'm gonna be" in his introduction to the poem.

"How Beautiful" was about a girl he knew in college whom he never got the opportunity to tell how beautiful he thought she was, inside and out. "Danger" was a poem requested by an audience member. Sulaiman described his last poem, "Dead Man Walking," as "a poem of desperation." When asked

"I'm better than I was, worse than I'm gonna be."

Following Howard was Ise Life, a 26-year-old Oakland native, who shared with the audience the time when he realized he wanted to make a difference for social consciousness.

Once, Life was at the Oakland Coliseum for a "Cash Money" concert and after the warm-up band, the main group didn't show up. Suddenly fighting broke out. He saw one young man fall from the balcony down to the next level, head first. He remembered thinking he

about his Muslim background, he said that it was important to "be converted every day, to renew my commitment" and that it was important to him to engage in listening more than speaking. He reiterated the importance of being true to oneself.

The atmosphere of the evening was one of inspiration and motivation, filled with performances that will be remembered for quite some time.

Jason Slashes in the Twelfth "Friday the 13th"

By Saul Galdamez Gonzalez
Staff Writer

Jason Voorhees returns to the silver screen in the newest version of "Friday the 13th" and he doesn't leave his machete behind.

This film is the result of great teamwork from the same pair responsible for the 2003 remake of "The Texas Chainsaw Massacre," director Marcus Nispel and producer Michael Bay.

The movie's cast features Jared Padalecki, Danielle Panabaker, Ryan Hansen, Willa Ford, and Derek Mears as Jason Voorhees.

The new "Friday the 13th" includes story points from the original movie but with a few additions.

A short prelude starts off the movie and then the audience is introduced to a group of young people on a camping trip full of alcohol and sex.

Little do the campers know that they have set up camp near Camp Crystal Lake where the most memorable camper resides.

It's not too far into the movie until the masked killer meets the unfortunate group of campers and the campers meet his machete.

A couple weeks later, the brother of one of the campers goes to Crystal Lake searching for his missing sister.

While there he meets a group of college students looking to party at an upscale lake house, but the party ends when they all meet Jason.

"I liked how it started quickly," said horror movie fanatic Deangela Purnell. "We didn't have to wait long for him to start killing people."

One of the benefits from this movie is that it is able to retell Jason's story in less than five minutes and clues the audience in as to why he kills.

Nispel and Bay were able to keep Jason's dark and playful spirit from earlier movies but they added something else to the character.

The Jason in this film is different than the ones in previous movies. He appears to be more human and we get a better understanding of the character.

"The movie was suspenseful and entertaining as well," said Purnell.

While the movie was full of suspense there were times when elements of comedy were added to keep the audience entertained.

The audience will be surprised at how Jason does not rely on his machete to teach lusty teens a lesson.

"It's Friday the 13th, you know. There's a thousand different ways to kill," said Kaimani Richards, 27. "The way Jason threw that ax was like something you'd see in the Olympics."

Nispel and Bay got creative for some of the death scenes that are in the movie. A horrific ride that's meant to entertain can be expected from these two.

The movie has been receiving mixed reviews from critics and fans.

"I would only recommend this movie to people who love horror movies," said Purnell.

"Friday the 13th" will definitely keep audiences entertained whether it is through gore or suspense.

Oakland's Renovated Fox Theater Showcases Jazz, Style in Reopening

By Denise Smith
Staff Writer

Crowds battled the elements to see jazz artists Will Downing and special guest Gerald Albright at the grand re-opening of the Fox Theatre Oakland on Friday, Feb. 13.

Lights illuminated the street outside as well as the sky above the recently renovated theatre, located at 1807 Telegraph in downtown Oakland.

Another Planet Entertainment, Bay Area Productions, and radio station 102.9 KBLX sponsored the event. KBLX radio personality, Kevin Brown hosted the concert.

"More than 70 million dollars and 42 years later, what do you think?" Brown asked the audience as he stepped onto the stage.

A roar of applause, heard from in the entrance to the lobby, was the audience's response.

A representative from Bay Area Productions provided a brief history of the Fox Theatre, from the closing of the original movie theatre in 1970 to the drive to reopen and renovate the building in the 1990s. The official grand reopening took place Thursday, Feb. 5.

The red and gold color scheme was displayed prominently throughout the interior of the theatre from the high ceilings to the intricate designs on the walls. Two large golden statues stood on both sides of the stage, surrounded by red curtain trimmed in gold.

Friday's concert opened with a 30 minute performance by OSA Funk Ensemble. The group consisted of seven high school students who attend the Oakland School of the Arts, which is housed inside the theatre. OSA performed songs by Beyonce, Mary J. Blige, and George Benson's, "On Broadway."

After a short intermission, jazz saxophonist Albright took the stage.

Albright repeatedly called for audience participation throughout his performance.

"Come on Oakland," said Albright. "I want to make you part of the band. Snap for me. Come on, let me hear it."

Albright's request was fulfilled, as a clear snap, snap, snap echoed throughout the theatre.

At times, Albright's high notes overpowered the theatre sound system, distorting the sound of his saxophone.

After Albright's set, Will Downing took over the show. He began with a recent release, "After Tonight." Downing followed his extended opening song with renditions of songs by Barry White, Luther Vandross, and Cool and the Gang. Downing invited Albright back on the stage, which brought many in the audience to their feet. The two performed three songs together.

Some in attendance were not pleased with Downing's performance.

"I found his performance disappointing," said Patricia Woods of Tracy after the concert. "I did not pay to hear him sing poor remakes of other people's songs...He should have sung more of his own music, especially from the last album."

In recognition of Valentine's Day, Downing asked couples to stand up and dance together during his performance of "I Go Crazy," from his 1991 album.

After the concert, the Fox's lounge, a two-floor bar and dance area, attracted many who were not ready to leave.

"This is really a nice touch," said Judith Givens of Woodland. They did a good job on this place."

While praising the changes to the

Fox, some also commented that there is still room for improvement.

"Nice place, but horrible parking. You'd think they would have put more thought into that," said Beverly Michaels of Stockton.

Many attendees said they looked forward to returning to the Fox for future events.

"If they continue to put on shows like this one, I will definitely come back" said Michaels.

A Midsummer Night's Dream Wakes Up in the 80s Underground

By Melanie Crawford
Staff Writer

Impact Theatre in Berkeley isn't your average live theater.

Cal State East Bay's own Dr. Melissa Hillman is artistic director, for one thing. For another, the theatre is located downstairs below La Val's Pizza. And for yet another, the audience is encouraged to bring their beer and pizza down with them while they enjoy the show.

Hillman, who puts her own personal spin on the telling of the tale, is currently directing Shakespeare's "A Midsummer Night's Dream," the theater's spring offering. She sets it in the 1980s club scene, where miscommunication abounds to the amusement of the audience.

The main characters are two men and two women, and who likes who is always in question. Add to the mix a fairy named Puck who can't ever quite get what he's supposed to do right and you have a very funny comedy of errors.

As with several other of Shakespeare's plays, there is a "play within the play." This involves a troupe of what could loosely be termed "inept wannabe" actors, who are hoping to audition before an entertainment club owner.

The great thing about this play is that it can teach a college student to not just appreciate, but also actually enjoy William Shakespeare, a genius of his time. The best part: the low price tag to attend this play is only \$12 for students. Yes, that's right, 50 cents less than going to the movies!

You really have nothing to lose and at the very least you're guaranteed a fun night of pizza and laughter with some excellent actors.

Impact Theatre performs at La Val's Subterranean, 1834 Euclid, Berkeley | 510 464-4468

A Midsummer Night's Dream is playing from Feb. 6-March 14, 2009. Tickets/Reservations: impacttheatre.com.

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