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on prove the old dictum of B movie auteur Val Lewton that a momentary image can have greater impact than a prolonged one. Matt Reeves directed. PG-13, 85 min. (JJ) ► City North 14.

**CG The Counterfeiters** ► Century 12 and CineArts 6, Music Box, Renaissance Place.

**R The Darjeeling Limited** In its story line, this wacky tale from Wes Anderson (*Rushmore*, *The Royal Tenenbaums*) about estranged wealthy brothers (Owen Wilson, Adrien Brody, cowriter Jason Schwartzman) reunited for a strained spiritual journey through India is pretty unconvincing as character development. Every bit as precious as Anderson's preceding features, it differs this time from late Salinger only in the way that these spoiled neurotics are implicitly ridiculed as both ugly Americans in the third world and spiritual poseurs—unlike their more committed mother (Anjelica Huston). What this movie has going for itself in spite of its cloying pleas for indulgence is a playful and interesting narrative structure that precludes much development and comes to the fore only toward the end. The whole thing may drive you batty, but as with *Rushmore*, the melancholy aftertaste lingers. With Amara Karan and Bill Murray. R, 91 min. (JR) ► Univ. of Chicago Doc Films.

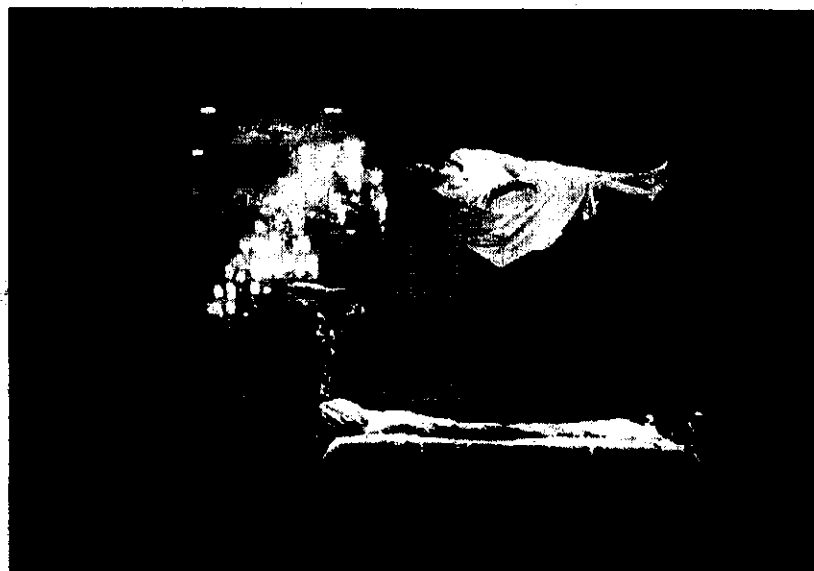
**Definitely, Maybe** A divorced New York adman (Ryan Reynolds) gives his insufferably precocious ten-year-old (Abigail Breslin of *Little Miss Sunshine*) a lengthy account of his early love life, which is conveyed in flashbacks and begins shortly before he left Madison, Wisconsin, to work on Bill Clinton's first presidential campaign as a political consultant. This highly uneven comedy by writer-director Adam Brooks (*Bridget Jones: The Edge of Reason*) might be easier to take if it were less infatuated with its own cuteness. With Isla Fisher, Derek Luke, Elizabeth Banks, Rachel Weisz, and Kevin Kline. PG-13, 111 min. (JR) ► Century 12 and CineArts 6, Crown Village 18, Gardens 1-6, Lake, Niles ShowPlace 12, Norridge, River East 21, Webster Place.

**R Diary of the Dead** After jump-starting his career with Universal's *Land of the Dead* (2005), George A. Romero lined up independent financing to shoot this low-budget fifth installment in his zombie cycle. In the previous movie the undead had all but conquered the planet, yet here Romero begins again as if nothing has happened, focusing on a handful of contemporary film students whose horror-movie shoot is interrupted by an outbreak of zombie violence. Like *The Blair Witch Project* and the more recent *Cloverfield*, *Diary* is a mockumentary, supposedly shot by the kids and edited on a laptop; though the premise requires a fair amount of indulgence, it also allows Romero to recapture the indie spirit of his landmark debut, *Night of the Living Dead* (1968), even as he reflects on the noise of the information age and his own legacy of zombie films.

**R The Diving Bell and the Butterfly** Julian Schnabel's skill as a painter informed his previous two films, *Basquiat* and *Before Night Falls*, and it's even more evident in this profoundly moving adaptation of Jean-Dominique Bauby's best-selling memoir. A celebrated editor for French *Elle*, Bauby suffered a stroke that left him completely paralyzed except for his left eye, and he learned to communicate again only by blinking the letters of the alphabet, a method devised by his physical therapist. For the movie's first half Schnabel shows everything from the invalid's perspective, using a warm color palette for flashbacks of his family and glamorous lifestyle and a combination of bleached colors and stark lighting for the hospital scenes. As Bauby, Mathieu Almaric makes an astounding physical transformation; the strong supporting cast includes Emmanuelle Seigner, Marie Josée-Croze, Max von Sydow, Niels Arestrup, Isaac de Bankolé, and Olatz Lopez Garmendia. PG-13, 112 min. (AG) ► Landmark's Century Centre.

**Dragon Tiger Gate** Martial arts brothers raised by different moms become rivals in a Hong Kong underworld drama. Cult action vet Wilson Yip (*Bio-Zombie*) directed. In Cantonese with subtitles. 94 min. ► Gene Siskel Film Center.

**The Eye** Remake of a Hong Kong horror movie about a woman afflicted with disturbing visions after a corneal transplant. David Moreau and Xavier Palud directed;



with Jessica Alba, Alessandro Nivola, and Parker Posey. PG-13. ► City North 14, Ford City, Norridge, ShowPlace 14 Galewood Crossings.

**Fool's Gold** Kate Hudson and Matthew McConaughey team up again after *How to Lose a Guy in 10 Days* (2003), but their rom-com antagonism fails to buoy this sorry deep-sea adventure. They play divorced treasure hunters who think they've found a sunken Spanish galleon off Key West. Donald Sutherland, his distinguished past receding in an ocean of amiable hackwork, is the British millionaire letting the pair use his yacht, and Ray Winstone is the rival explorer racing them to the wreck. Andy Tennant (*Hitch*) directed. PG-13, 113 min. (JJ) ► City North 14, Crown Village 18, Gardens 7-13, Niles ShowPlace 12, ShowPlace 14 Galewood Crossings, 600 N. Michigan.

**R 4 Months, 3 Weeks & 2 Days** Winner of the Palme d'Or at Cannes, Cristian Mungiu's masterful chronicle of two young women negotiating for an illegal abortion in 1987 Romania over a 24-hour period, near the end of Ceausescu's communist regime, is impressive above all for the way it respects the audience, expecting them to follow the implications of its multifaceted tale without always spelling them out. (When one of the women has to prostitute herself with the abortionist before he'll agree to proceed, and pointedly keeps this fact from her boyfriend, we can already see their relationship foundering as a result.) *4M3W&2D* is moving and gripping throughout. In Romanian with subtitles. 113 min. (JR) ► Music Box, Renaissance Place.

**R The Great Debaters** The story of the champion debate team nurtured in the 1930s at the all-black Wiley College in rural Texas is so amazing that it's infuriating to see producer Oprah Winfrey, director Denzel Washington, and screenwriter Robert Elsie add so much spin, including a climactic argument that anticipates Martin Luther King Jr.'s nonviolent tactics by two decades. Washington plays the tough-love coach, poet and activist Melvin B. Tolson; Denzel Whitaker is the team's youngest member, James Farmer Jr., who later founded the Congress of Racial Equality; and Forest Whitaker (no relation) plays his remarkable father. The other three debaters (Jurnee Smollett, Nate Parker, Jermaine Williams) are fictional composites, and for some reason the climactic match has been moved from the University of Southern California to Harvard. Conceived like a sports movie, this delivers passion, nuance, and historical insight along with unnecessary hokum. PG-13, 123 min. (JR) ► Chatham 14.

**The Greatest Silence: Rape in the Congo** Lisa F. Jackson's 2007 video documentary, a special jury prize winner at Sundance, examines "war crimes" against women—rape, torture, and other sexual atrocities committed by rebel and "peacekeeping" forces alike—in the ongoing civil strife in the Congo. 76 min. ► Northwestern Univ. Block Museum of Art.

## CRITIC'S CHOICE

# Phantom Love

Unfolding with the awful clarity of a nightmare, this 2007 drama delves into the troubled psyche of a remote Russian beauty (Marina Shoif) who spends her days dully working a roulette table in LA's Koreatown and her nights lying beneath a sweating, mechanically pumping lover. Everywhere she looks are images of male violence (cops brutalizing a kid on the street, U.S. forces bombing Fallujah on TV), and every time she comes home, a serpent curls menacingly in the hallway of her hotel. Director Nina Menkes (*The Bloody Child*, *Magdalena Viraga*) supplies a rudimentary plot—traumatic memories of the woman's abusive father, complications involving her psychotic sister—but the film's real pull is its dreamlike sense of perpetual strangeness, created largely by the crisp black-and-white photography. 87 min. ► Facets Cinematheque. —J.R. Jones

**Hannah Montana/Miley Cyrus: Best of Both Worlds Concert Tour A** 3-D concert film of the teenybopper's 2007 tour/cash bonanza. G, 74 min. ► Crown Village 18, River East 21.

**How She Move** Produced by MTV Films, this step-dancing drama is mired in cliché, but with its dingy ghetto settings and hardened, despondent young characters, it's marginally more interesting than *Stomp the Yard*, the 2007 movie that inaugurated the subgenre. Rutina Wesley stars as a determined high school student whose parents have spent her private-school tuition money trying without success to save her sister from drug addiction; desperate to escape from a hellish public school, she talks her way onto a step-dancing team that's competing for a \$50,000 prize. Ian Iqbal Rashid directed. PG-13, 91 min. (JJ) ► Chatham 14.

**R I Am Legend** Richard Matheson's classic horror novel, about a solitary man struggling to survive in a world overrun by vampires, has been filmed already as *The Last Man on Earth* (1964), with Vincent Price, and *The Omega Man* (1971), with Charlton Heston. But it's never gotten the blockbuster treatment before, and a lot of the cash here goes toward realizing a desolate Manhattan that could chill the most hardened city dweller. Will Smith is a scientist trying to eradicate the biotech virus that was supposed to cure cancer but instead has turned the world's population into raging blood drinkers. The people who remain are even harder, but what lingers is the sense of urban despair: watching old videotapes of the *Today* show, carrying on friendships with mannequins, Smith turns out to be no legend at all, just another New Yorker slowly dying of loneliness. Francis Lawrence directed. PG-13, 100 min. (JJ) ► Logan.

**R In Bruges** Martin McDonagh's Oscar-winning short *Six Shooter* showed a fine sense of irony, but this debut feature by the Irish playwright (*The Pillowman*) turned director is even more impressive in its command of tone. Brendan Gleeson and Colin Farrell play mismatched Irish hit men sent to Belgium for an assignment to be specified later; Gleeson's older, more settled character wants to experience the haunting medieval architecture, while Farrell's loudmouthed lad is bored stiff by the sightseeing. The movie gradually deepens from odd-couple comedy into Catholic-themed drama, but it remains marvelously funny throughout. Instead of hitting the easy notes of black humor, McDonagh skillfully modulates between broad character laughs and the men's piercing anguish as the story nears its bloody conclusion. R, 101 min. (JJ) ► Century 12 and CineArts 6, Pipers Alley, River East 21.

**Interzone** SAIC faculty member Anne Quirynen directed this 2007 video, which was commissioned as an opera based on the eponymous William S. Burroughs novel and purportedly appropriates Burroughs's cut-up technique "as a structural guide." Approximately 60 minutes. ► Gene Siskel Film Center.

**Jodhaa Akbar** Ashutosh Gowariker (*Lagaan: Once Upon a Time in India*) directed this historical romance

about the marriage between the Mughal emperor Akbar and his Hindu wife, Jodhaa. With Hrithik Roshan and Aishwarya Rai. ► Niles ShowPlace 12.

**Jumper** Hayden Christensen stars as a fellow who can instantly transport himself anywhere in the world, which allows him to stand atop the Great Sphinx or grab the TV remote without getting up. The problem is that, after a few reels, those two actions begin to feel equivalent; like so many other CGI behemoths, this dull action fantasy ultimately squashes rather than inspires one's sense of wonder. Michael Rooker, Diane Lane, and Samuel L. Jackson add some color in supporting roles, but they're no match for the annihilating beige of Christensen's screen persona. Doug Liman (*Mr. and Mrs. Smith*) directed. PG-13, 88 min. (JJ) ► Century 12 and CineArts 6, Chatham 14, City North 14, Crown Village 18, Ford City, Gardens 1-6, Niles ShowPlace 12, Norridge, River East 21, ShowPlace 14 Galewood Crossings, 600 N. Michigan.

**R June** Jason Reitman follows his pitch-perfect satire *Thank You for Smoking* with another adventurous comedy, though here the cleverness can be grating; the movie's real distinction lies in its complicated emotions. A pregnant 16-year-old (Ellen Page) agrees to give her child away to a prosperous couple (Jason Bateman and Jennifer Garner) but later discovers the impending adoption has become the fault line of their marriage. Screenwriter Diablo Cody saddles her teenage heroine with annoyingly glib dialogue, and Reitman hammers it so hard you almost expect a laugh track. More impressive are the adult characters: Allison Janney and J.K. Simmons are ruefully funny as the girl's practical parents, and as the yearning adoptive mother, Garner proves that even a limited actress can really connect when given the right role. PG-13, 92 min. (JJ) ► Century 12 and CineArts 6, Crown Village 18, Davis, Gardens 1-6, Lake, Landmark's Century Centre, Renaissance Place, River East 21, 600 N. Michigan.

**Labyrinth** When her little brother is kidnapped by goblins, a young girl must enter a mysterious labyrinth, populated by good and evil beings, to rescue him. George Lucas produced and Jim Henson (of *Muppets* fame) directed this heftily budgeted 1986 fantasy, which seems to be a conscious attempt to play on the female coming-of-age themes of classic fairy tales. Jennifer Connelly, David Bowie, and Toby Froud head the human cast. PG, 111 min. (DK) ► Music Box.

**Light Drawings: The Zagreb School of Animation** A compilation of short films from the "golden age" of Zagreb animation, curated by Mato Kukuljica. In Croatian with subtitles. 112 min. ► Gene Siskel Film Center.

**Live Flesh** Victor (Liberto Rabal) is a complicated cross between sympathetic and crazy. Because Elena (Francesca Neri), the daughter of an Italian diplomat, makes out with him one night, he becomes obsessed with her and goes to her Madrid apartment uninvited. A neighbor's call brings two police officers (Javier Bardem and Jose Sancho) and their own conflict to the scene, making things even more volatile. The characters in this 1997 story often explain their motives to one