

ACCENT

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THIS WEEKEND'S BEST BETS

Nature PajamaRama

When: 7 tonight
Where: Cool Creek Park Nature Center, 2000 E. 151st St.
What's there: Party while wearing pajamas with sing-alongs and activities
Admission: Free
Information: 896-5874

Southside ice skating

Open skating times: 3 to 4:45 p.m. Monday to Thursday; noon to 4:45 p.m. and 6:30 to 8 p.m. Friday; 4:30 to 6 p.m. Saturday and 6 to 8 p.m. Sunday

Where: Perry Park ice rink, 451 E. Stop 11 Road, Indianapolis
Admission: \$3.50, adults; \$3, youths; \$1.50 for skates
Information: 865-1833

Free gallery tours

When: 5 to 9 p.m. today
Where: For a list of galleries, visit www.idada.info and click on "View Map"
What's there: More than 25 downtown Indianapolis art galleries open for viewing, presented by the Indianapolis Downtown Artists & Dealers Association
Admission: Free
Information: www.idada.info

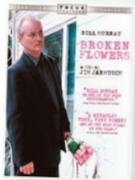
Wild About Animals

When: 2 p.m. Saturday
Where: West Indianapolis Branch Library, 1216 S. Kappes St.
Admission: Free
Information: 269-1888

TAKE IT HOME ON DVD

'Broken Flowers'

Bill Murray takes his sad-sack routine on the road in one of last year's best films, Jim Jarmusch's droll tale of an aging, apathetic Don Juan who discovers he may have a 19-year-old son and sets out to reconnect with the four women from his past (Sharon Stone, Jessica Lange, Frances Conroy and Tilda Swinton) who could be the boy's mother.



As with most of Jarmusch's films, DVD extras are sparse, Jarmusch noting in a brief featurette that it's not his job to know what his cryptic movies mean and that audience interpretations are more important than his own.

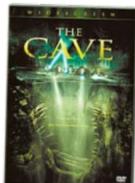
The closest Jarmusch comes to explaining the film is that the action grows out of "chaos theory, you know? Things don't happen in a rational way. They happen in more of an emotional way or a random way or by molecules in the universe moving in a way we don't control."

DVD: \$29.98

'The Cave'

Hollywood went all the way to Romania to bore us with this derivative monster flick.

Cole Hauser, Morris Chestnut, Piper Perabo and Lena Headey lead the cast as members of a scientific team getting picked off one at a time by ravenous, toothy things that live in an underground ecosystem beneath a forest in eastern Europe.



The DVD has commentary with the filmmakers, a making-of featurette and a segment on the design that went into the various lifeforms in the cave, not that anyone can really see the creatures given the dark lighting.

DVD: \$28.95

The Associated Press

AT THE MOVIES

'Hostel'

Eli Roth won't just show you a close-up of a chain saw severing the fingers of a hapless backpacker who's been chained to a chair and tortured.

He'll also show you the bloody stumps falling onto the dark stone floor, as well as the partial paw that remains.

Such is the relentlessly graphic nature of "Hostel," which surely must have been intended as a homophone for "hostile," and is not for the faint of heart or stomach.

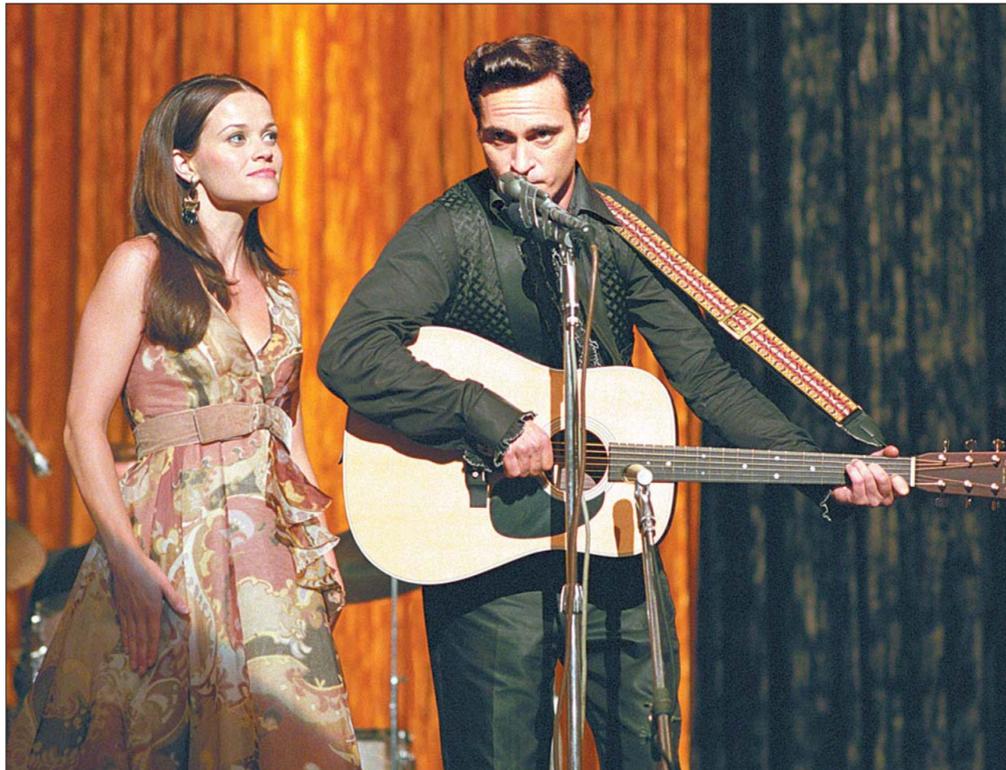
Roth follows up 2003's "Cabin Fever," the writer-director's darkly funny, gross-out debut, with the story of Ugly Americans (Jay Hernandez and Derek Richardson) and their Icelandic pal (Eythor Gudjonsson) who are traveling across Europe seeking thrills but become the victims of someone else's twisted idea of fun.

It makes you squirm in your seat, heart pounding, fingers splayed across your eyes, in sheer amazement at the intensity of the images on the screen.

Rating: R for brutal scenes of torture and violence, strong sexual content, language and drug use

Stars: 2½ out of four

The Associated Press



Reese Witherspoon as June Carter Cash, left, and Joaquin Phoenix as her husband, Johnny Cash, perform onstage for a scene in "Walk the Line." Witherspoon is expected to be nominated for an Oscar for her performance in the film.

Girl power snuffed

Few strong roles leave slim Oscar pickings for women

By BARBARA VANCHERI
PITTSBURGH POST-GAZETTE

I haven't read Maureen Dowd's new book, "Are Men Necessary?" But I know the answer in Hollywood.

A "yes" the size of King Kong or Brokeback Mountain.

When it comes to women, too often it's "Good night, and good luck," to cadge a phrase from Edward R. Murrow.

Now, that was a plum part that didn't even come with the usual on-screen accessory: wife. Janet Murrow? Gee, I don't remember meeting her in that tidy, terrific slice of history.

Women have been relegated mostly to supporting roles in 2005.

But a couple of women seem fated to hear their names recited the morning of Jan. 31 when the Oscar nominees are revealed: Reese Witherspoon, who learned to sing and play the auto harp as June Carter Cash in "Walk the Line," and Felicity Huffman, who walks the line between being a man and becoming a woman in "Transamerica," while wearing platform shoes, no less.

To be sure, other names have surfaced: Claire Danes, "Shopgirl"; Keira Knightley, "Pride & Prejudice"; Gwyneth Paltrow, "Proof"; Charlize Theron, "North Country"; Ziyi Zhang, "Memoirs of a Geisha"; and Q'orianka Kilcher as Pocahontas in "The New World."

The complaint about no good roles for women is not a new one. In "Sunset Boulevard," Norma Desmond famously suggested, "I am big. It's the pictures that got small."

She might have been on to something. Consider these factors:



Julianne Moore stars in "The Prize Winner of Defiance, Ohio." Despite what critics considered her stellar performance in the film, Moore isn't on many Academy Award radars because "Prize Winner" wasn't a box-office smash like other Oscar favorites.

Biopics are for boys

Jamie Foxx turned his brilliant turn in "Ray" into gold, and the next Best Actor race could be crowded with actors playing real people.

Among them: Russell Crowe as boxer Jim Braddock in "Cinderella Man," Philip Seymour Hoffman in the title role of "Capote," Joaquin Phoenix as Johnny Cash in "Walk the Line" and David Strathairn as newsman Murrow in "Good Night, and Good Luck."

For every "Ray" there should be a "Coal Miner's Daughter." There isn't.

Hot actors, lukewarm movies

I can't imagine many critics putting "Hustle & Flow" on their Top 10 lists, but many people know who Terrence Howard is thanks to that picture and a handful of others.

In "Hustle & Flow," he plays a small-time pimp who dreams of rap stardom.

Howard deserves all the acclaim he's been getting and more, but what about Radha Mitchell doing dynamic double duty in Woody Allen's "Melinda and Melinda"? Or Julianne Moore as a housewife who staves off desperation in "The Prize Winner of Defiance, Ohio"?

If their movies aren't on anyone's radar, neither are they, sadly. Or sometimes the radar zooms in only on the

men, as with "Cinderella Man" stars Crowe and Paul Giamatti, leaving Renee Zellweger with little acclaim.

Back of the pack

"Crash" is the definition of an excellent ensemble picture. But Matt Dillon, as a vile Los Angeles police officer who shows traces of tenderness and heroism, is the one getting most of the attention, at least at this point.

However, co-star Sandra Bullock hasn't been this good in years, and Thandie Newton shines in scenes with and without Dillon. They should join Dillon on the front lines.

Rare embarrassment of riches

"Memoirs of a Geisha" boasts so many dazzling female roles — Ziyi Zhang, Gong Li and Suzuka Ohgo, who plays the legendary geisha as a child — that the stars may cancel each other out.

Gender divide

It's generally accepted that girls will go to movies about boys, but boys typically won't go to movies about girls. The same often holds true for adults.

Men shy away from chick flicks while women will sit through countless movies about men, which means more movies about men get made.



Mike Redmond

Put it all together, it spells L-U-C-K-Y

It is well, at this time of year, to look over one's life, to sort of take stock of things.

I've just completed such an inventory, and I find:

- I need some Band-Aids and we're short on eggs.

No, wait. That's not it. That's the shopping list. Just a second.

Ah, here it is: Mike's personal inventory 2005, also known as I'm a pretty lucky guy.

Here's how:

- I have my health, and you know what they say about having your health.

You don't? Darn. I was hoping you did, because I can't remember. All I know is that having your health is a good thing.

After all, you can't have someone else's.

- I have lots of good work to do, and even better, the God-given ability to avoid doing it.

- I have a roof over my head, and this year it didn't leak quite so much.

- I have clothes on my back, and soon I plan on getting some for the front as well.

- I get my three square meals a day. Five, if you count two bowls of Cocoa Puffs, one in the middle of the afternoon and another late at night.

- Continuing in that vein, I have a full refrigerator. I'm not completely sure about what's in those plastic containers in the back, though.

- I have a big dog that loves me and keeps my yard free from intruders. It has been years, for example, since we saw any bears out there.

- I have good transportation. The fact that it's a motorcycle does present some problems at this time of year, but they're offset by the admiring glances you get when I go rumbling down the street in the dead of winter.

At least, I think they're admiring glances. It's kind of hard to tell when your eyeballs are frozen over.

- I live in a state that gets a good amount of snow each winter, which does a wonderful job covering up the leaves I didn't get raked in fall (see above under "Work to do and the ability to avoid it.")

- I have good friends. By good, I mean the kind who will sit and listen and then look me squarely in the eye and tell me that I am full of hot gas.

My friend Frank is especially good at this. So is my friend Papaw.

Of course, I do the same for them, so it evens out.

- I have most of my teeth, the majority of my hair and the better part of my eyesight.

- My personal library is rich with classics: Superman, Batman and Green Lantern.

- I am blessed with a beautiful and loving family. No joking around about that.

OK, maybe some jokes about my mother.

And my brother.
And my sister's kids, Deniece and Denepew.

But that's it. Well, except for some aunts and uncles and cousins.

- And as final, convincing proof of my good luck, I offer this: On July 28 at two o'clock in the afternoon, I rolled six — count 'em, six — Yahtzees in a single game.

I even amazed myself with that one.

It was such a thrill that I took the rest of the day off to celebrate.

Hey, I told you I was good at avoiding work.

Mike Redmond is the author of "Six of One, Half-Dozen of Another" and "The Night the Wheels Fell Off." Send comments to letters@thejournalnet.com.

Gwyneth Paltrow, left, and Anthony Hopkins star in "Proof." Paltrow has been tagged as a possible Oscar nominee for her role in the movie.

