

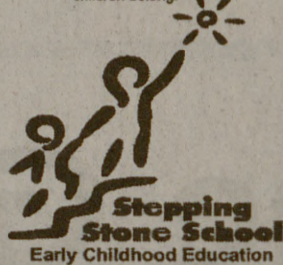
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Friday, January 18, 2002



Reel Critique

THE LORD OF THE RINGS
Directed by Peter Jackson
Starring: Elijah Wood, Ian McKellen
New Line Cinema

Once in a while, a movie comes along that has the ingredients for success: a great story, accomplished acting, capable direction and appropriately spectacular special effects. But the recipe is not complete unless the film blends these qualities into a unified whole. Billed as the most costly cinematic production in history, it seemed the producers spared no expense to ensure the film's success. But in Hollywood, success is hardly a sure thing, regardless of how much money is thrown at a project (see: *Waterworld*). *The Lord of the Rings* succeeds.

Without spoiling too much of the film, the story revolves around a mysterious "ring of power." A young, innocent hobbit, Frodo Baggins, is chosen by fate to save the world from impending apocalypse by returning the ring to the fires that forged it. Frodo sets out on his journey with a group of highly trained warriors, and together they comprise the Fellowship of the Rings.

With the advantage of working from a brilliant story, the entire cast delivers an excellent performance. Foremost among these is Elijah Wood in the role of the main character, Frodo. Ian McKellen, who portrays Gandalf the Grey, a wise old wizard who guides Frodo on his journey, turns in another



PHOTO COURTESY OF NEW LINE

outstanding performance. Notable members supporting cast include Sean Astin (Sam, the right-hand man), Viggo Mortensen (Aragorn, a helpful member of the Fellowship), Blanchett (Queen Galadriel) and Chris Lee (Saruman, the evil chief of wizards). The perfectly balanced combination of action, direction and cutting edge special effects add up to an incredible movie experience that lingers long after the trip to the theater. Already inspiring a *Star Wars*-like following, the trilogy will no doubt go on to be one of the most successful motion pictures of all time. *The Fellowship of the Ring* is a great start and now it's only a question of the next two chapters measure up to the (Grade: A+)

—Gabe P.

VANILLA SKY
Directed by Cameron Crowe
Starring: Tom Cruise, Penelope Cruz and Cameron Diaz
Paramount Pictures

Before entering an operating room, David Aames (Tom Cruise) sings, "What if God was one of us?" At the end of the film, the correct question is, "What if one of us was God?"

Peter Travers of Rolling Stone magazine said, *Vanilla Sky* is one of the top 10 films of the year [with] mind-bending secrets no reviewer should give away."

Without revealing the end of the film, the audience should be warned to prepare themselves for a movie that will haunt them long after they leave the theater.

Perhaps what makes the film so great is its potential to come true. With today's rapidly developing technology, the events Cruise is faced with are believable, unlike most plots from the holiday movies such as *Lord of the Rings* and *Harry Potter*. Has anyone else been sent on a quest to throw "the ring to bind them all" into the fiery depths of its birth?

Vanilla Sky is based upon Alejandro Amenabar and Mateo Gil's 1997 film *Abre Los Ojos*, which also starred Penelope Cruz.

Cruz's performance in *Vanilla Sky* is sweet

and charming, and Diaz's portrayal as a sex lover is chilling and will leave the audience asking "What happened to Mary?"

Some believe this is Cruise's best acting performance, grabbing an Oscar. Diaz has been nominated for a Golden Globe as Best Supporting Actress. Paul McCartney's "Vanilla Sky" has been nominated for a Golden Globe in Best Original Song.

Vanilla Sky does not have a basic plot which most directors use as an outline for their film and it does not have a predictable "happily ever after" ending. It is ready to be challenged and ready for some creativity should walk fearlessly into the theater. Those hoping for a basic storyline will walk two doors down and catch *King of the Damned* or better yet, *Not Another Teen Movie*. (Grade: A)

—Lizette R.



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A New Aggie Tradition: "Late Night" at the Women's Center!

Did you know that the Women's Center is open until 8:00 PM on Tuesdays during the semester? If you are looking for a quiet place to study, just hang out or check a source for that last-minute paper, come by and see us. We offer many services and sponsor lots of great events, too! Here is a list of upcoming events for the Spring semester. If you want more information on programming on other Women's Center services, see our website: <http://www.tamu.edu/wcenter> or contact the Women's Center at 845-8784 or wcenter@tamu.edu

- Working Group on Women's Rights as Human Rights:** Visit with Lynn Hagan and Muslim students to discuss issues related to Muslims and Arab women; Tuesday, January 22, 11:00 AM-12:30 PM; Academic 308. Co-Sponsors: Women's Studies Program, Anthropology Department, and College of Liberal Arts Dean's Office.
- Women's Center Welcome Back Open House:** Tuesday, January 22, 3:00-5:00 PM; Academic 308.
- Women's Center Community Services Series:** Brazos Valley Workforce Centers; Wednesday, January 30, 4:00-5:30 PM; Academic 308.
- Women's Center Film Series:** Screening of *Ida B. Wells: A Passion for Justice*, followed by discussion; Wednesday, February 6, 4:00 PM; Academic 308. Refreshments will be served.
- Women's Center Spring Lecture Series:** Sally Robinson, English Dept., TAMU, "Stuffed and Punch Drunk: *Fight Club*, Feminism, and the 'Crisis' in Masculinity," Tuesday, February 11, 4:00 PM; Academic 308.
- Women's Center Film Series:** *The Women*, Dir. George Cukor; Tuesday, February 12, 7:00 PM; Evans Library Annex, Room 417B.
- Women's Center Community Services Series:** Phoebe's Home; Thursday, February 14 (V-Day); 4:00 PM; Place TBA.
- The Vagina Monologues:** Thursday-Saturday, February 28-March 2; 7:00 PM; Place TBA.
- Women's History/Spirit Month Presentation:** Marlene Fried, Hagan College, "A Matter of Access: Basic Reproductive Rights Movement in U.S. and Internationally," Monday, March 4, 6:30 PM; Francis 202. Co-Sponsors: Women's Studies Program, Sociology Department, and Philosophy Department.
- Women's Center Film Series:** *Yankee Doodle*, Dir. Irving Rapper; Tuesday, March 5, 7:00 PM; Evans Library Annex, Room 417B.
- Women's Center Spring Lecture Series:** Sara Alpern, History Department, "The History of Women's History at A&M," Wednesday, March 12, 12:00-1:30 PM; Academic 308.
- Women's History/Spirit Month Presentation:** Lynn Hagan and Sara Franks, Monday, March 18, 12:00 PM; Rudder 402.
- Women's History/Spirit Month Presentation:** Lynn Hagan and Sara Franks, "Marhaba: Greetings from Western Woman in an Arab World," Monday, March 18, 6:30 PM; Rudder 402. Co-Sponsors: Women's Studies Program, Anthropology Department, College of Liberal Arts Dean's Office.
- Gender Issues Education Series:** Coffee Talk; Thursday, March 21, 10:00 AM; Academic 308. Co-Sponsors: The Women's Center.
- Women's Center Film Series:** *Thelma & Louise*, Dir. Ridley Scott; Tuesday, April 9, 7:00 PM; Evans Library Annex, Room 417B.

AGGIELAND NATION
THE BATTLE THE BATTLE

WASHINGTON exploring anti-terrorism flying over defense officials. But four on U.S. soil air patrols calculation without the

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WASHINGTON chilling vide member of a rifle, eyes videos and pects deliver call "martyr suicide terror

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