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## True tale of terrible director makes great film in 'Ed Wood'

By Timm Doolen  
SPECIAL TO THE BATTALION

**"Ed Wood"**  
Starring Johnny Depp and Martin Landau  
Directed by Tim Burton  
Rated R  
Playing at Hollywood 16  
★★★★ 1/2 (out of five)

Make a movie about the behind-the-scenes of the worst films ever made and what do you get? "Ed Wood," one of the best pictures of the year.

This movie covers the first four years of writer/producer/director Ed Wood's movie making career - starting with the writing of "Glen or Glenda" and ending with the premiere of "Plan 9 From Outer Space." "Plan 9" is considered by many the worst movie ever because of its not-so-special special effects (painted paper plates serve as space-ships), and inane dialogue: "There's been a murder here and someone is responsible." "Future events will affect you in the future."

In these four years, Ed Wood (played by Johnny Depp) managed to attract an entourage of

loyal friends and unabashed weirdos. Among his friends: Bunny Breckenridge (played by Bill Murray), a rich transvestite and showman, and of course, Bela Lugosi (played by Martin Landau), the acclaimed actor of such horror classics as "Dracula" and "White Zombie."

Actually this movie could have been titled "Ed and Bela." Most of the movie concerns the relationship that developed between the filmmaker and the fading, aging movie star in Lugosi's final few years of life.

Together, Wood and Lugosi were able to propel each other's careers. Wood was trying to break into movies and his only way in was getting a star name for a movie. At the same time, Lugosi literally couldn't get a job to save his life and Wood was one of the few people who would give him a chance and a means of support.

Although on paper this sounds like a recipe for a really depressing film, "Ed Wood" abounds with humor. The recreations of three of his most famous films (the two mentioned above and "Bride of the Monster"), are a riot. Wood directs a scene and the actors knock over

some fake graves, or clumsily bumps into a ing a take. "Cut! Perfect! shouts. No second takes, time, no money.

Wood made his movie matter of days and on that were less than a shot. If he needed a space ship, he needed a paper plate. If he needed a paper plate, he needed a paper plate. If he needed a paper plate, he needed a paper plate.

Unfortunately, like all local or biographical films, Ed Wood's life is left out. His alcoholism is mentioned, and the movie before it gets to his years of pornographic movies and a taxi to make a living.

Unfortunately, his past movies never turned out nancially successful, and Lugosi, Wood died a poor

But maybe concentrating Wood's vibrant years was best. Wood has such charm that you want to see him high point of his life - the movies he will always be remembered for.

Maybe with the release of "Ed Wood," he will finally get the respect and credit he deserves years too late.



From left Bill Murray, Sarah Jessica Parker and Johnny Depp star in "Ed Wood," a new film from Tim Burton.

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