

Jim Carrey serves up another

ACE

When *Nature Calls* brings in top weekend dollars

LOS ANGELES (AP) — Jim Carrey's *Ace Ventura: When Nature Calls* enjoyed the best non-summer opening in Hollywood history, collecting \$37.8 million in its debut weekend.

The opening was the sixth largest ever, and the year's second strongest premiere. The all-time record was set in June by *Batman Forever*, which made \$52.8 million in its first weekend.

Carrey is now one of Hollywood's most popular actors. His recent blockbusters include *The Mask*, *Dumb and Dumber* and *Batman Forever*, in which he played the Riddler.

In second place was *Get Shorty*, which continues to play strongly. Positive word-of-mouth benefited *Copycat* and *Home for the Holidays*. *Powder* is now a minor hit.

Fair Game slipped badly in its second week, and *Vampire in Brooklyn* faded in its third weekend. In limited release, *Carrington* was well-received.

Carrey monkeys around in newest Ventura film

By Michael Landauer
THE BATTALION

About three quarters through watching *Ace Ventura: When Nature Calls*, a boy whispered to his dad, "This guy's weird."

In what was probably the overstatement of the century, this child's astute observation is not an uncommon response to an amateur's first impression of Jim Carrey's comic style.

For those with experience watching Carrey, *When Nature Calls* offers new proof to the fact that the man is completely insane — and insane people are funny.

Ace has changed a little since the first movie. Due to an unfortunate incident involving a raccoon, Ace has devoted his life to finding spiritual attainment while living among Gregorian monks.

Although he thinks he is a spiritual being, Ace's humor never changes. Carrey told Entertainment Tonight that his character continues to do the things that piss people off.

And he starts with Fulton Greenwall (Ian McNeice), an emissary sent to lure Ace back into pet detection with a \$20,000 reward. After rolling a truck into its parking space, Ace lets out a trademark "Llllllike a glove," and re-enters his world of sporadic pelvic thrusts and high-pitched one-liners.

Most of Ace's old one-liners find their way into *When Nature Calls*, but viewers will want to see this film more than once if they have any intention of hearing all of Ace's under-the-breath, smart-ass comments.

Carrey's knack for comedy is shown in other ways, too. *When Nature Calls* sets up more situational comedy than



Jim Carrey and his animal friends star in *Ace Ventura: When Nature Calls*.

MOVIE REVIEW

Ace Ventura: When Nature Calls
Starring Jim Carrey and Ian McNeice
Directed by Steve Oedekerk
Rated PG-13
Playing at
*** 1/2 (out of five)

Pet Detective had to offer. Writers realize that if you trap a naked Carrey inside a Rhinoceros spying machine, the audience is only a few facial expressions away from being sent rolling in the aisles.

Some people will be happy with another dose of the same comedy, but others will be disappointed at the lack of new material. But although this film adds nothing new to the recipe for the first film's success, it is every bit as good.

However, one area that could have used a facelift was the plot. The writers apparently took the same characters from the first movie, altered them slightly, dropped them in the jungle and then kept the same basic plot. But, of course, the story is not what viewers are coming out to see.

Each situation is created around Carrey's comic ability. Just when the audience thinks a joke has run its course, Carrey takes it to another level — as in one scene that includes an appearance by "The Monopoly Guy." But when Carrey pushes scenes to another level, his dragged out routine only makes the audience laugh louder and louder.

As outrageous the moments get, Carrey never crosses the line created by Jerry Lewis into the stupid side of comedy.

In his fourth major feature film, Carrey has shown that TV slapstick can not only make the transition to the big screen, but also can survive there.

Carrey shows that he is willing to draw on old jokes while creating new comedy. The filmmakers utilize every ounce of comedy Carrey has to offer, and it fits — like a glove.

Value meals

Southerland provides several opportunities for discussions

By Amy Uptmor
THE BATTALION

You may have seen ads for it in *The Battalion*. Maybe your mother signed you up to do it when you were a freshman, or your roommate did it and could not stop talking about what you missed out on for days.

Somehow you have probably heard of the vice president of Student Affairs' student luncheons.

For more than 20 years, the vice president of Student Affairs at Texas A&M has opened his door and his ears to freshmen and student leaders, welcoming them to informal lunches and gatherings where they have an opportunity to voice their concerns about A&M.

The luncheons were started by Dr. John Koldus in his second year as vice president of Student Affairs. Dr. Malon Southerland, the current vice president, has carried on and expanded the tradition.

Freshman luncheons are held every other week throughout the school year. Southerland said about 800 names have been collected so far in every manner possible.

"Everyone who signed up should at least get an invite," he said. "It usually takes about 60 names to get 20 people."

Southerland said he is pleased with what he hears at the freshman luncheons.

"The freshmen are just sensational," he said. "They're just so

pleased to be here."

Toby Boenig, student body president and a senior agricultural development major, praised the luncheons.

"The luncheons are excellent, especially for freshmen," he said. "A lot of times they don't know what's going on. It's a great way for them to learn about the issues that affect A&M."

Another social sponsored by Southerland is the faculty / staff / student luncheon, which allows the same open forum, but gives students, faculty and staff the opportunity to talk together. Southerland said he had considered discontinuing this program but he had a change of heart after he attended his first one.



Southerland

"I knew it was the right thing to do," he said. "It's real useful. The feedback from the faculty and staff is strong."

Southerland also has different groups of student leaders over to his house every Tuesday for dinner. He said these dinners are the perfect opportunity for leaders to tell him what is going on.

Boenig said student leader dinners are one of the best opportunities he has to talk to other student leaders in one place.

"It's one of the best resources of

time I have," he said. "It's great to have Dr. Southerland there, and a lot of times, we just need to get the student leaders there to discuss some issues, so it's an excellent resource."

Other programs include Chat and Chew, an open social held two or three times a semester. Students do not need to sign up to attend Chat and Chew. Although the turnout is not as high at these socials, Southerland said the feedback is still positive.

"We usually see about 50 to 100 people, but with many of them, it's clear that they came to that spot to find you, so that's a good reason to do it," he said.

Southerland also holds open forums once or twice a semester. Although the forums generate a small turnout, Southerland said they are still extremely useful.

Southerland said he welcomes groups to his house for meetings, which is something Koldus did not do because he had a family.

"But since it's just me at the residence now, I don't mind having student groups over," he said.

Southerland said all the different socials he holds are "listening environments" and the key is the students.

"I have blocks of time committed to these socials every week, and that puts pressure on the calendar for other things," he said. "But if you believe this role (vice president of Student Affairs) is a lifestyle and never say no, then the time fills up. You just have to be able to say yes."

Etheridge's *Secret* lacks quality lyrics

ALBUM REVIEW

Melissa Etheridge
Your Little Secret
Island Records
*** (out of five)



By Amy Uptmor
THE BATTALION

Melissa Etheridge's 1993 album, *Yes I Am*, was one of the most emotionally candid, thoughtful albums by a woman to sell five million copies in musical history. It was a wildly successful break into a stardom for one of the most sincere stars of the moment, resulting in a sold-out stadium tour last summer.

Now, enter *Your Little Secret*, Etheridge's fifth album and the much anticipated follow-up to *Yes I Am*. Needless to say, following a five-time platinum album could put a bit of pressure on an artist.

Your Little Secret is a nice, safe follow-up album. Etheridge does not try any new tricks on this album. She's still hopelessly and obsessively in love and writing about it in almost every song. Songs that are not about love cover such common Etheridge topics as open-mindedness and, well, more love.

Her voice is as gut-wrenchingly powerful as ever. It's almost as if you can hear her heart bleeding on songs like "nowhere to go" and "shiner's park."

But something very important is missing. The emotion is there. The guitar is powerful as ever. But Etheridge has slid a bit on the songwriting. Such a dry spell is apparent in the album's title track, "your little secret" ("baby / one and one and one make three").

Masterpieces like "Come to my window" are nowhere to be found on *Your Little Secret*. There are some good moments — "nowhere to go" is a beautiful ballad about a secret young love affair. It probably carries the strongest lyrics, but that's not a hard title to earn on this album.

Another new Etheridge love song which just tugs at the heart strings is "all the way to heav-

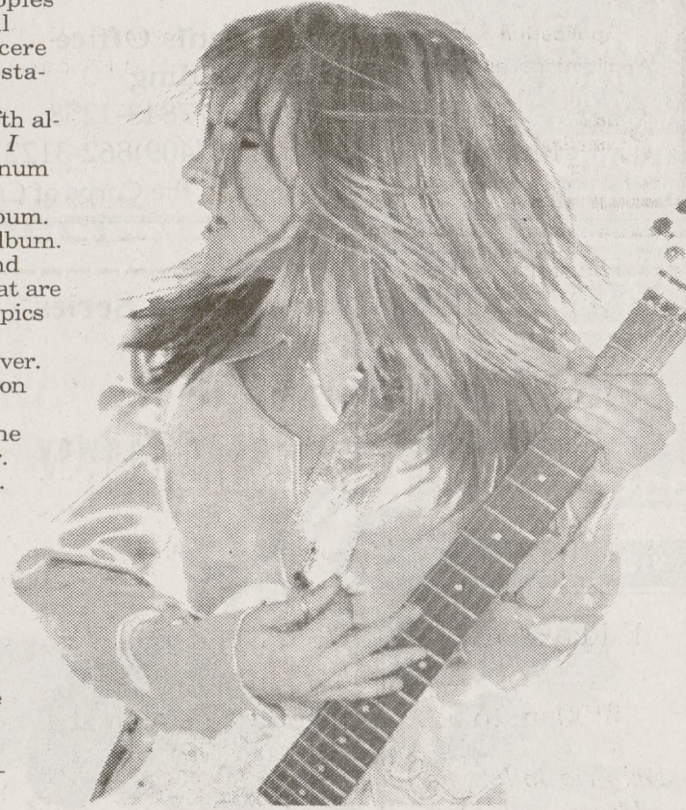
en", with passionate lyrics like "i want to roll down the windows / and teach you to fly / i want to give you a thrill / the kind you can't buy."

Then there's "i could have been you," a song that carries a powerful message of tolerance, but falls flat in its delivery. It's draggingly slow guitar line makes this one almost painful to listen to.

Another flop on this album is "an unusual kiss." But any song will fail that begins with the cheesy line "i know what you're thinking baby."

Your Little Secret is a good album. It does not compete with Etheridge's past work, but it is still worth listening to.

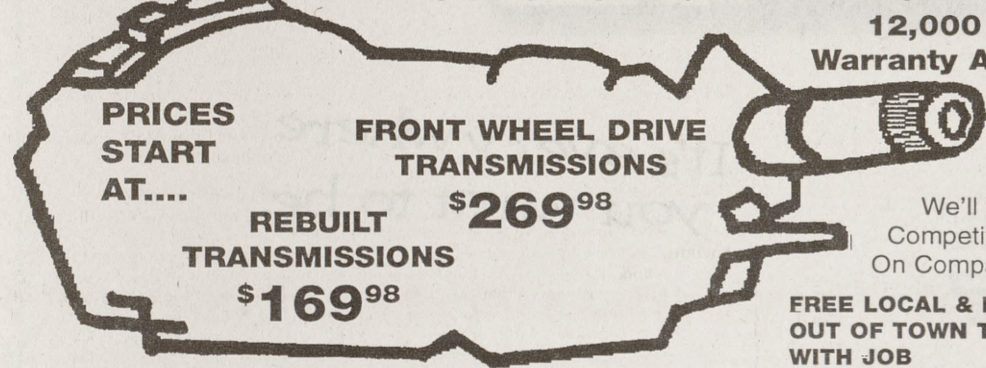
Maybe Etheridge's "little secret" on this album is that she's a better songwriter than she's letting on.



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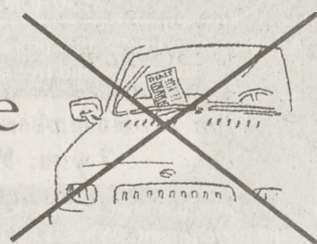
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