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AGGIELIFE
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REEL CRITIQUE

MOVIE REVIEWS

THE HEAVYWEIGHT CHAMPIONS OF COMEDY
STEVE HARVEY • D.L. HUGHLEY • CEDRIC THE ENTERTAINER • BERNIE MAC



The Original Kings of Comedy
Starring Steve Harvey, D.L. Hughley, Cedric the Entertainer and Bernie Mac
Directed by Spike Lee
Rated R
Now playing at Hollywood 16

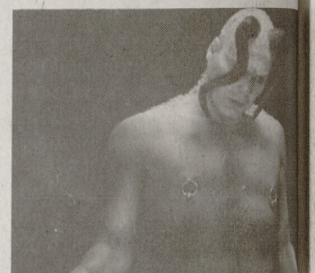
It is unfortunate that theaters do not refund ticket money. For anyone who saw this film, half of their money should have been refunded for the lackluster production and the final two comedy routines, which were slightly humorous at best and downright offensive at worst.

This film was advertised as a documentary of a comedy tour, but it is actually a tape of one stop on the tour with a few moments of backstage action thrown in. The documentary aspect of the film is nearly nonexistent.

For anyone hoping to see the backstage antics that one assumes go on during a long comedy tour, this film is an utter disappointment. It is salvaged only by Harvey's and Hughley's excellent comedy routines. Harvey, serving as the master of ceremonies, keeps the audience rolling with laughter with his opening routine and subsequent introductions of the other comedians.

Hughley's stand-up routine is funny enough to draw some viewers to his low-rated comedy show. Harvey does an excellent job of keeping audiences interested in the film, while Hughley lights up the screen with an outstanding routine lamenting bill collectors and the differences in the ways people of different races deal with the same problems. Hughley's comedic performance confronts issues of racism and bigotry and manages to

See COMEDY on Page 6.



The Cell
Starring Jennifer Lopez, Vincent Vaughn and Vincent D'Onofrio
Directed by Tarsem
Rated R
Now playing at Hollywood 16

The Cell is often called a combination of The Matrix and Silence of the Lambs, and the description is accurate enough. Unfortunately, The Cell is not nearly as good as either of those films.

The Cell is based on the search for a serial killer's last victim, taking psychiatrist Catherine Deane (Lopez) into the mind of the comatose murderer. Deane uses a form of virtual reality and experimental psychology to enter the killer's mind and find out where the last victim is hidden. The danger that she will begin to believe the killer's mind is reality and be forever trapped in his demented world. This is much like a psychotic who Dreams May Come.

Much like that film, The Cell concentrates on bizarre and visually intense dream sequences in the killer's mind. These scenes, rather than the acting of the characters or the true stars of the movie as they hold the viewer's attention. This phenomenon is not unexpected in a film directed by a man who previously directed music videos, R.E.M.'s "Losing My Religion" among them.

While the scenery and special effects are first-rate, the imagery is decidedly dark. The fact is this film is extremely morbid and often graphic, as one might expect the mind of a serial killer to be. While this may be a realistic portrayal of a creative serial killer's mind, it will probably be too much for most viewers. The film concentrates on pain and suffering, and the audience suffers for it. Neither Lopez nor Vaughn distinguish themselves in this film. D'Onofrio could have been an excellent villain, but the special effects often overshadow his performance. The film will likely be relegated to the underground bondage clubs in a month, but for those not faint of heart, it is worth renting the video. (Grade: C+)

—Jason Benny



Godzilla 2000
Starring Takehiro Murata
Toho Pictures Inc.
Directed by Takao Okawara
Rated PG
Now playing at Hollywood 16

For millions of years, a dinosaur peacefully slumbered in an underwater cave far away from the prying eyes of humans. Now, he awakens, genetically mutated by man's folly nuclear testing — and he is hungry.

So he is a guy in about a hundred pounds of foam rubber costume who has a fetish for destroying models, but at least he is not an overgrown electric iguana accompanied by a well-aged Mathew Broderick and Puff Daddy.

The point is, in this day and age when computer graphics image technology is capable of blurring definitions of reality and the imagination, an entire sci-fi genre of filmmaking based upon the comical imagination of overgrown kids has been utterly lost.

See GODZILLA on Page 6.