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Some strategy, tips, and tricks from Industry Professionals

But mostly we will be answering your questions

Tuesday, April 23, 2002

5:30 - 6:30 p.m.

Clayton W. Williams Jr. Alumni Center

505 George Bush Drive

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Reel Critique

Big Trouble
Directed by Barry Sonnenfeld
Starring: Tim Allen, Rene Russo

Straight out of the mind of humorist Dave Barry comes the comedy *Big Trouble*. Set in Miami, *Big Trouble's* hectic, fast-paced plot brings together and extremely complicates the lives of a fantastic entourage of characters in a manner reminiscent of *Snatch*.

Big Trouble begins with a long-haired Jason Lee munching Fritos and giving a brief monologue, and then quickly moves on to muck up the lives of a frustrated humor columnist (played by Tim Allen), his son, an embezzling weapons developer and his family, a pair of assassins, a pair of cops, two ex-convicts, a couple of Russian arms dealers and a pair of FBI agents.

When the assassins arrive and are foiled in their attempt to kill the weapons developer by a teenage "assassin" game, the weapons developer decides to buy a stolen Russian nuclear bomb, only to have it



and his Jaguar stolen by the ex-cons. The cops and the FBI have to retrieve the bomb with the help of the humor columnist and the weapons developer's wife. But first, they must overcome a truckload of goats, over-zealous strip searches, ignorant airport security, Martha Stewart and a toad with halitogenic excretions.

While the movie never explains why the bomb is there or what exactly it was intended for, the viewer can forgive this plot hole by laughing uproariously at the many antics of the ensemble cast. Overall, a fun funny movie and a true gem for comedy fans.
(Grade: A-)

—Mike White

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Murder by Numbers
Castlerock Pictures
Starring: Sandra Bullock

Murder by Numbers, Sandra Bullock's latest attempt at a serious role, is about as entertaining as a calculus midterm. But it is not Bullock, or any other cast member, who is to blame for this poor excuse of a suspense thriller. For the most part, the acting was commendable. The culpability rests in the hands of the screenwriters, whose artistic aptitude is easily surpassed by a third-grader's talent with a crayon.

The plot, a hideously devised void of concrete cohesiveness, begins when seasoned rogue police detective Cassie Mayweather (Bullock) is assigned to a case involving the murder of a local young woman. Rookie gumshoe Sam Kennedy (Ben Chaplin) is Mayweather's new partner, and a completely frivolous sexual relationship begins and ends between the two. Clues eventually point to Richard Haywood (Ryan Gosling) and his clandestine co-culprit Justin Pendleton (Michael Pitt), an unlikely pair considering that the former is a teen



PHOTO COURTESY OF CASTLE ROCK ENTERTAINMENT

playboy and the latter a recluse. The plot of *Murder by Numbers* — a paradoxical statement in itself — is saturated with unsupported and underdeveloped subplots, including Justin's adoration for his classmate Lisa (Agnes Bruckner), an entirely unnecessary character.

Also disposable was Cassie's frequent flashbacks, a failed attempt by the writers and directors to give an artsy edge to the screenplay and to explain Cassie's readiness to get to the bottom of the case. Bullock's character is too funny

in the first half of the film, leaving viewers wondering whether to take her seriously later in the film.

In addition, trailers for the film are misleading, depicting the killers as an ingenious and meticulous pair, when they are simply stupid kids who think they can plan a perfect murder. *Murder by Numbers* is a fitting title, however, because having to endure it will probably kill a number of its viewers. Time is better spent watching grass grow. (Grade: D- for effort)

—Matt Patten

THE BATTALION

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DEADLINE: 4:30 p.m. Wednesday, April 24. Turn in application at 014 (basement) Reed McDonald Bldg. Interviews will begin immediately after application deadline.

Extra applications available in the newsroom or online at <http://www.thebatt.com>

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