



*Marie Antoinette:* Not an Adam & the Ant's video.



*Shortbus:* A brief time-out for character development.

**BLENDER APPROVED**

The best movies and DVDs of the past months



**JACKASS: NUMBER TWO**

Twice the genital trauma!



**SAFE MEN**

Unsung, brilliantly deadpan 1998 heist flick, finally on DVD.

displays of oral sex, anilingus and unsimulated copulation so much as the way the sex amplifies the intimacy of the piece; it's porno, certainly, but with a sense of purpose. All that boning doesn't salvage a group-huggy third act, but by the movie's climax (snicker), you're drawn into the lives of these characters to the point where you almost forget you're watching one man sing "The Star-Spangled Banner" into another man's asshole. Almost.

Genre convention, rather than good taste or puritanical mores, is what's under attack in **MARIE ANTOINETTE**, Sofia Coppola's arch look at the iconic French monarch. As Gang of Four's "Natural's Not in It" plays over a shot of Kirsten Dunst chomping on pink bon-bons, you sense that Coppola is trying stage a royal revisionist coup on the historical biopic. Except the post-punk period piece never arrives, and what you get instead is a New Romantic-era music video writ large. The anachronistic '80s soundtrack soon seems gimmicky, and any connection between pre-revolutionary France and late-twentieth-century materialism is never established. You can't fault the film for not looking good—long live cinematographer Lance Acord, who can do wonders with lens flares and pastel palettes—but the director's attempt to humanize or contextualize such an iconic figure only begs the question: What's the point of shaking things up if it's not clear where you're going or where you've been?

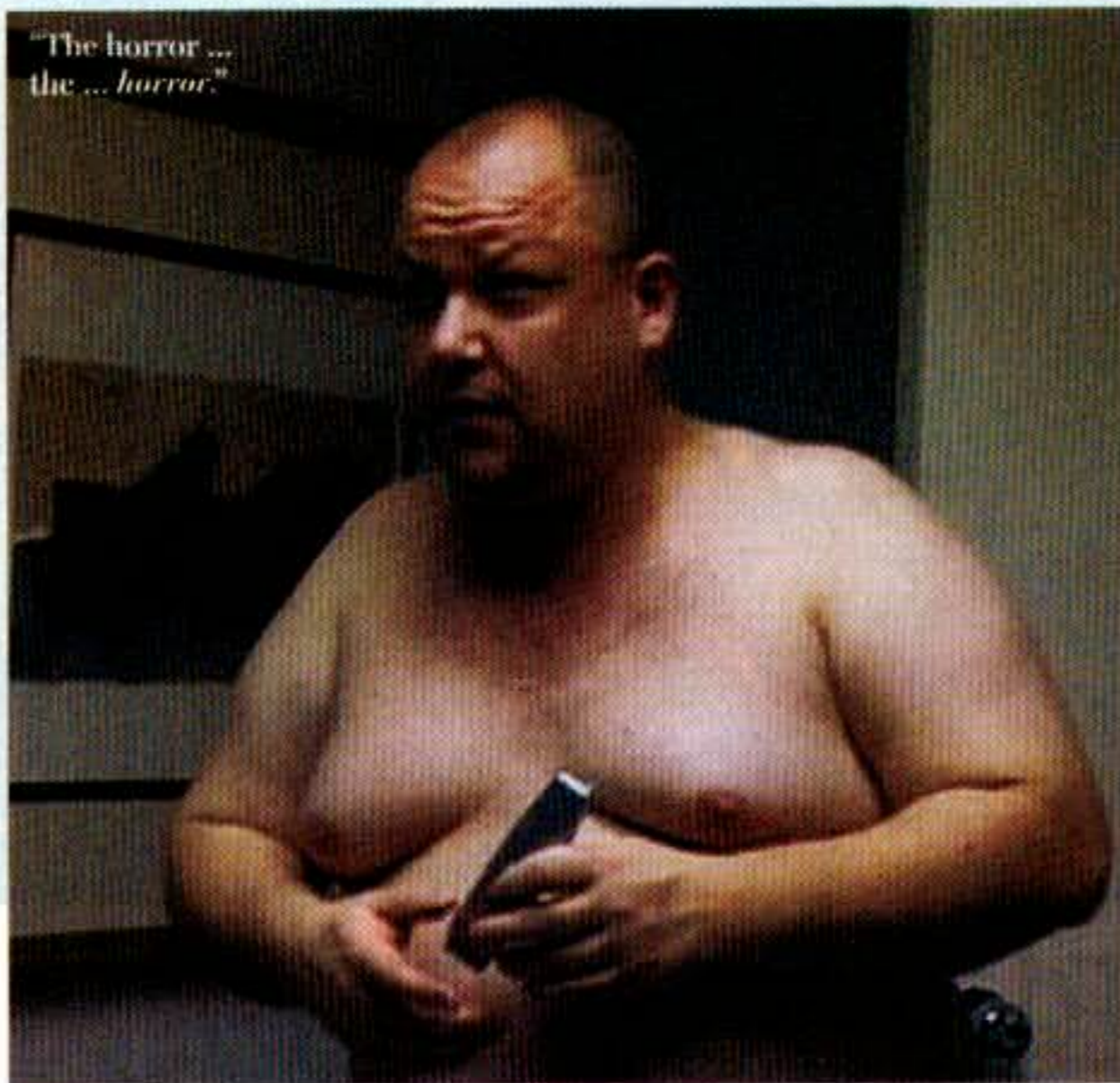


**LAST GOOD MOVIE YOU SAW?**

**HILARY DUFF**

"Click. I didn't want to, even though I like Adam Sandler, but my boyfriend made me, and it made me cry and want to call my sister."

**MUSIC DVDS**



**DO LITTLE**

A CHRONICLE OF THE PIXIES REUNION EXPOSES A BELOVED, ENIGMATIC BAND AS ROCK'S LEAST EXCITING SPECTACLE. **BY STEVE KANDELL**

**LOUDQUIETLOUD: A FILM ABOUT THE PIXIES**

MUD VISUAL

☆☆

"We don't talk to each other very much," confesses Frank Black midway through the third Pixies DVD in a year. "That's just the type of people we are." Throughout this reunion-tour-doc's 85 minutes, this—and little else about the group's dynamic—becomes painfully clear. For a band whose music is so riddled with tension, its story, or at least the one depicted here, is drama-free, even as the members reconvene after 12 years.

One reason the Pixies were

so lionized is that as inscrutable as their songs were, the band looked (and behaved) like chess-club nerds—*Cocksucker Blues* high jinks are not to be expected. But given the acrimony that followed the band's split and the reunion's evolution from cautious experiment to surprise blockbuster, there should be a story to tell here. Instead, it's all awkward silences. Only when drummer/magic geek David Lovering pops Valium after his dad dies—and suffers an onstage meltdown—does the film find a moment of conflict. The concert footage is reliably intense, but given that a quality live DVD just came out, performances aren't reason enough to buy this.

**THE BEST OF THE REST**

**JAMES BLUNT**  
**CHASING TIME: THE BEDLAM SESSIONS**  
(CUSTARD/ATLANTIC)

☆☆½

Filmed at London's BBC studio, the soldier turned balladeer plays a solid set of his soppy hits. Extras include making-of docs for Blunt's videos and Blunt speaking at length (and not at all modestly) about his rapid ascendance to supermodel-shagging status.

**VARIOUS ARTISTS**  
**FROM THE BIG APPLE TO THE BIG EASY: THE CONCERT FOR NEW ORLEANS**  
(RHINO)

☆☆☆

A wake for the hurricane-ravaged music mecca, this marathon concert, held last September, mourns and celebrates, with performances from Big Easy royalty (Allen Toussaint) and regular superstars (Elton John).

**R.E.M.**  
**WHEN THE LIGHT IS MINE ... THE BEST OF THE I.R.S. YEARS 1982-1987**  
(I.R.S./CAPITOL)

☆☆☆

A generously maned Stipe and Co. in their humble beginnings. Live clips from the British show *The Tube* rivet, as do versions of "Rockville" and "Time After Time" that look like they were filmed in a dorm room. **LAUREN HARRIS**