

FLICK PICKS



AMERICAN DREAMZ

Starring: Dennis Quaid, Hugh Grant, Mandy Moore

The U.S. president is facing a nervous breakdown, so his chief of staff saves him from the career-killing doldrums by booking him as a judge on the prez's favourite weekly talent show, *American Dreamz*. There he meets the celeb-hungry host and the contenders, including a conniving southern belle and a show tune-singing immigrant awaiting his terrorism deployment.

THE BENCHWARMERS

Starring: Rob Schneider, David Spade, Jon Heder

Three geeky buddies making up for crappy childhoods go all "Revenge Of The Nerds" when they're scouted by a millionaire dork to form a baseball team to compete against the state's meanest Little Leaguers. One of the nerds becomes a role model for all outcasts, but when his fans discover he was once a school bully he tries to win them back.

DON'T COME KNOCKING

Starring: Sam Shepard, Jessica Lange, Sarah Polley

An aging movie star who uses drugs, alcohol and girls to dull the realization that he's no longer marquee material returns home to Nevada. After learning that he has a son, he sets out to find him and also finds meaning in his narcissistic life. When he discovers that he also has a daughter from a different fling, a complicated family reunion takes place.

THE NOTORIOUS BETTIE PAGE

Starring: Gretchen Mol, Lili Taylor, David Strathairn

The director of *American Psycho* and *I Shot Andy Warhol* takes a revealing look at successful '50s pin-up, Bettie Page. This biopic follows the sexy icon's journey from sweet southern girl to star of fetish films and photos, and to her eventual testimonial at a Senate hearing into pornography. Mol expertly emulates the star's body language, sexiness, innocence and vulnerability.

WHAT'S ON DVD



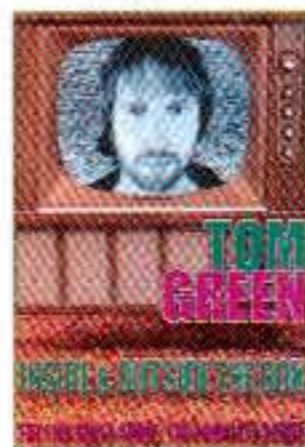
ELIZABETHTOWN (Paramount)

If you've been waiting for Cameron Crowe to explain why *Elizabethtown* is a disjointed, miscast and deeply flawed film, you're out of luck. The filmmaker is a no-show here, with no director's commentary or even a stand-alone interview. All we get is some extended footage (actually interesting taken apart from the unwieldy E-town). The film, basically about a young man trying to not kill himself, holds up far better with fast-forward at your disposal. —David McDougall CC



IN HER SHOES (20th Century Fox)

Rose and Maggie are two very different sisters who, after an argument almost destroys their relationship, endure major life changes. Throw an unknown grandmother, a love affair and an ever-present dead mother into the mix, and you've got tidy amounts of conflict. The women are two halves of the same whole and the obvious conclusion leaves nary a dry eye. Despite the stellar cast, *In Her Shoes* — with its run-of-the-mill DVD extras — falls on its face. —Deanna McFadden CCC



TOM GREEN: INSIDE & OUTSIDE THE BOX (Video Service Corp.)

Anyone who vividly remembers Tom Green's stint on *The Comedy Network* knows exactly why he's still famous today. *The Tom Green Show* was one of the most cutting-edge comedy shows ever filmed in Canada. Having all 26 episodes in one spot is like a really great buffet: it doesn't matter where you start and it's all amazing. The additional hour of never-before-seen sketches makes this a must-have package. —Noah Love CCCCC



WALLACE & GROMIT: THE CURSE OF THE WERE-RABBIT

(DreamWorks)
The much-loved claymation duo have a cracking gardening business going with Anti-Pesto, their humane bunny removal system. But just when the town thinks the vegetables are safe, a new and horrible menace threatens their garden delicacies. As with all Wallace and Gromit adventures, the genius is in the details. With more wink-wink jokes, oddball inventions and silly critters in classic Aardman style, this film is clever, campy and chuckle-inducing fun. —Hannah Guy CCCCC

SCREENING ROOM: BRICK'S JOSEPH GORDON-LEVITT by Jodi Goulart



JOSEPH GORDON-LEVITT IN BRICK

Joseph Gordon-Levitt is not a prepubescent alien, though some people may still see him as Tommy from *3rd Rock From The Sun*. He's a 25-year-old actor with an impressive growing resume. With recent roles in *Mysterious Skin* as a troubled gay teenage hustler and as a complex, stubborn Sam Spade-type character trying to solve his ex-girlfriend's murder in *Brick*, he's poised to leave the alien behind. *Chart* talked to Gordon-Levitt about *Brick's* modern take on the hard-boiled detective genre that uses a high school backdrop.

Chart: How familiar were you with the film noir and the hard-boiled detective genres before *Brick*?

Joseph Gordon-Levitt: *Brick* takes less of its cues from film noir and more from the novels from the '30s that film noir was based on. I knew the movies, but not the novels. While we were making *Brick*, Rian

(Johnson, writer and director) and I both agreed not to watch any of those film noir, hard-boiled, Humphrey Bogart movies. The whole point of *Brick* was to do justice to the genre of the detective story without getting trapped up in all the great movies that have been done before.

Where did you get your inspiration for the character?

Tom Waits, Serge Gainsbourg, Cary Grant, the Wu-Tang Clan.

The Wu-Tang Clan?

Well, *Brick* is mixing a couple of unlikely ingredients together and making it seem like they're meant to be together. Wu-Tang Clan does the same thing, they combine hip-hop with kung fu movies, and furthermore they're poets and all about their lingo.

Did you have any difficulty with the film's unique lingo?

That was a huge challenge and what made it so fun. The thing about the language in *Brick* is it's not realistic. It's not like anybody talks like that and that's what's charming about it.

Was the story similar to your high school experience in any way?

Everybody feels like an outsider sometimes, and I certainly did. *Brick* isn't trying to show how high school is, it shows how high school feels. In high school, everything is "life or death," and in *Brick*, it really is because people are dying.

I read that you're a musician. What instrument do you play?

I play guitar, drums, bass, some keys, kazoo, computer, bottles and cans... Being a musician helped me more than ever doing *Brick*. The dialogue is lyrical. Finding the rhythm and musicality in it was a huge key.

Does it bother you that some people still see you as "the kid from *3rd Rock*"?

I'm honoured that the show is such a clear and present part of American culture. I always get a kick out of it when people recognize me from it. As far as people saying, like, "You grew up!" Well yeah, I did. C