

Across
CampusMandatory
Student
Organization
Meetings

Student Development will hold 30-minute sessions for student organization representatives (either a member or an advisor) to register the group for the spring semester. Contact the Student Development Office at ext. 4898 for times and locations on Feb. 1, 2, 5 and 6.

Attendance by the representative or advisor at one of these sessions is mandatory for the organization to be recognized.

For more information, call 397-4898.

Artist-
Lecture

Artist-Lecture Series presents Dr. Roland Fryer at 7 p.m. Feb. 9 in Akin Auditorium. A rising star in the academic world, Fryer is combining the disparate fields of economics and African-American studies to produce groundbreaking work that is attracting the attention of not just academics, but of anyone interested in what it means to be black in America today.

Fryer is currently an assistant professor of economics at Harvard University.

Tickets are available for faculty and staff at the Clark Student Center Information Desk.

Mustangs
Rally 2007

Recreational Sports and the Wellness Center present the Frost Your Fanny 5k run or 2-mile walk, followed by many other fitness challenges, starting with registration on Feb. 1 at 5 p.m. just inside the coliseum's southwest doors by the Wellness Center. Participate in as many of these free challenges as you desire. Receive a long-sleeve event T-shirt by completing two of the following events:

5-5:25 p.m. Register for the run or walk on the southwest side of D.L. Ligon by the Wellness Center.

5:30 p.m. Frost Your Fanny 5k Run or 2-mile walk begins.

6:10-6:30 p.m. Abs-Only class in Wellness Center

6:45-7:45 p.m. Kickboxing Turbo Style in Sikes Lake Center.

7:45-8:30 p.m. Men and women's Bench Press Endurance contest in Sikes Lake Center.

8:30-9:30 p.m. Core Conditioning/Muscle Works in Sikes Lake Center.

9:30-10:30 p.m. Pilates and Yoga in Sikes Lake Center.

10:30-12 p.m. Mega Spin in the ORC next to Sikes Lake Center.

For more information, call ext 4838.

'Smokin' Aces' accentuates fun violence

JASON KIMBRO
ENTERTAINMENT EDITOR

REPORT CARD

Entertainment Value:	A
Artistic Crap:	A
Plot/Script:	C
Performances:	B
Overall GPA:	3.25

SunKyu Yoo-Norris

American cinema has recently found a lovely little niche in the world of violence, ranging from over-the-top horror flicks like "Hostel" to over-charged, frenetic action flicks like my recent venture into the world of celluloid, "Smokin' Aces."

Director Joe Carnahan ("Narc") has been on hiatus lately due to his mix-up with Tom Cruise. He was supposed to direct "M:13," but due to some artistic differences, decided to bow out of such a mainstream project.

Five years since his acclaimed "Narc," Joe has delivered us a wonderfully action-packed romp that takes us to edges we never knew even existed.

Brilliantly paced yet somewhat contrived in parts, "Smokin' Aces" helps those of us who walk a straight path remember why we decided upon the narrow in the first place.

With bullets aplenty, here's the gist:

Mob boss Primo Sparazza is the FBI of the mobster king pins and the FBI want to bring him down.

Agents Carruthers (Ray Liotta) and Messner (Ryan Reynolds) are staking out his home when they hear about a hit being put out on Buddy "Aces" Israel, a Las Vegas magician (Jeremy Piven).

This is not good since Buddy is meant to be the FBI's top snitch against Sparazza. Messner and Carruthers quickly get the idea to put Buddy into protective custody.

Buddy has ideas of his own. He is held up in a penthouse atop a casino in Reno, Nevada. His is surrounded by his own little entourage of toughies and has the whole floor sealed off, with extra protection from hotel security.

Word gets out that Sparazza has put a million-dollar bounty out for Buddy, with one stipulation: That the assassin brings Primo the heart of Buddy Israel.

Word travels fast as several notorious groups of mercenaries, assassins, and hit women soon begin to execute their plans to destroy the ill-fated Buddy.

Among the group are the two lady killers Sharice Waters (Taraji P. Henson) and Georgia Sykes (an ingeniously casted Alicia Keys), crazy kamikazi meth-heads, the Tremor brothers headed up by brother Darwin (curiously played by Chris Pine), super-creepy master of disguise Lazlo Soot (Tommy Flanagan) and supersmooth yet incredibly diabolical Pasquale Acosta (Nestor Carbonell).

As you may have already guessed, all hell breaks loose as the crazies go after the same bit of loot and create havoc in the middle of Reno.

Other note worthy characters include bail bondsman Jack Dupree (Ben Affleck) and his two ex-cop partners "Pistol" Pete Deeks (Peter Berg) and Hollis Elmore (Martin Henderson) as the three men intended to escort Buddy to the safehouse.

Unfortunately, their mission is cut short by the Tremor brothers as all three are gunned down and assumed dead.

Each of the crazies' plans are set into motion, and Messner and Carruthers find themselves in the middle of it all trying to protect one of the smarriest men Hollywood has



Taraji P. Henson and Alicia Keys consider their latest million-dollar hit in "Smokin' Aces."

ever created, but damn it, we love him ever so much.

A few twists are thrown in to make the movie somewhat satisfying yet gut-wrenching. Things come to fruition in ways we didn't expect, yet aren't too overly shocked to discover.

Highly entertaining from start to finish, "Smokin' Aces" achieves what it was made to do: feed the violence-hungry population while even making a little capital.

Once we get past the opening minutes of character introductions and development - which are vertically viewable - the laughs and the action never seem to cease, even during the intensely dramatic scenes, which director Carnahan has an apparent knack for creating.

The pace is fast, very fast. Almost too fast for most, but for the type of audience this movie was made for, it shouldn't be too hard to follow or swallow.

The lively characters and the in-

ventive cinematography, carefully placed within a gritty wrapper, all help create a lovely atmosphere of violence and comedy that Mother would be embarrassed to laugh at and enjoy.

Performances were fairly basic, except for the surprisingly good job put forth by leading man Reynolds during the dramatic scenes. He pulls them off better than I thought he would.

Piven didn't have to stretch too far to play the immoral title character, as he wallows in the world of typecasting.

Keys didn't do so bad either, though I wouldn't expect any award nominations.

The rest of the cast over-acted or were too characterized, although Jason Bateman's portrayal of a coked-out lawyer is priceless.

The story is indeed a fun one, yet a bit contrived in parts due to the seemingly endless amount of side stories involving almost every

character in the film.

They cut from one to the other to help keep the pace going but they become undesired from time to time. Some romantic bits are thrown in. They provide some unnecessary escapist fare which did not seem to fit the mold of this film.

Violence is indeed an American pastime, which we embrace every week in movie theaters. The grubbies behind their long, empty tables just off the West Coast are taking every advantage they can.

At least they can produce something that is somewhat worthy by hiring directors like Carnahan and casting the films with such a lovely group of actors and musicians.

I can only imagine what kind of slop this film would have been if Bret Ratner had hold of the reins and cast it with people like Keanu Reeves or Justin Timberlake.

Now I've disturbed myself. Until next week!

Cheesy DVDs released this week include farce about penguins

McCLATCHEY TRIBUNE

If you're into cinematic cheese, this week brings a heady combination of campy cheddar and goofy Gruyere. Even our SE&L pick is one of the fall's least anticipated films (though we here at the blog dug its ADD-inspired trailer), while the alternate title is one of horror's most repugnant offerings. In-between you'll find failed jingoism, lame lampooning, sobering science fiction and one of the most misguided action films ever helmed. It's enough to make you save your disposable income for next week's stellar line up. In any case, here are the selections for this week:

"The Marine"

Every once in a while, even the most considered film fan needs a cleansing motion picture purgative. A few weeks back, the Jason Statham epic "Crank" was the entertainment ipecac du jour. This time around, Vince McMahon and his WWE-based film division give John Cena his own '80s throwback action film. Presenting the simplest of stories - a former jarhead must save his wife from wisecracking jewel thieves - and lots of explosions (no, make that *lots of explosions*), first-time filmmaker John Bonito shows great adeptness at creating cinematic fireworks. An extended chase scene along a busy highway crackles with kinetic energy, and the many fight scenes rely heavily on Cena's "boytoy as bruiser" abilities. If you want big, dumb and loud, this is your e-ticket to excess.

Other titles of interest:

"The Arrangement"

Based on his own novel, Elia Kazan's story of second chances is one of the director's least remembered efforts. Featuring Kirk Douglas, a very young Faye Dunaway and Deborah Kerr, the tale of a rich man looking for happiness after a near-death experience is a dense, performance-based piece from a man known for eliciting amazing acting turns.

"Farce of the Penguins"

On paper, it should work. Comic Bob Saget sends up "March of the Penguins," dragging famous "voices" Samuel L. Jackson, Jason



Above, John Cena decides to blow away anyone who hasn't seen his new film, "The Marine." Left, the theatrical poster for "Flyboys."



Alexander, Lewis Black and Gilbert Gottfried in for the South Pole satire.

Unfortunately, nature footage supplemented with silly jokes is just not that funny. Some may find the combination clever. Most will prefer the original doc.

"Flyboys"

Dean Devlin, famous for stri-

dent summer blockbusters like "Independence Day" and "StarGate," lends his producing cred (and rumor has it, own money) to this superficial story about American flyers who volunteered to help the French before America entered World War I.

Nothing more than an old-fashioned "why we fight" effort loaded with up-to-date technology.

"Gymkata"

After his success in international gymnastics, it was hoped that Kurt Thomas could translate his athleticism into the action hero genre.

The result was this loony movie, a strange story of a small country, its militarily-strategic land, and a weird competition called the Game.

Add in the title talent and you've got an amazingly misguided mess.

"Looker"

Before he was known for his mega-blockbusters like "Jurassic Park" (and on TV, "ER"), Michael Crichton tried to make serious sci-fi in the face of the growing "Star War"-ing of the genre.

Ahead of its time, this bit of plastic-surgery speculation offers Albert Finney, James Coburn and a

terrifying take on the "anything for beauty" ideal.

And now for something completely different:

"Maniac"

Boy, did this movie cause a fright-film firestorm when it was first released. Featuring a sleazy sexploitation vibe, and autopsy-like make-up effects by noted terror technician Tom Savini, this seedy addition to the slasher genre found filmmaker William Lustig delivering a dark and disgusting take on the new slice-and-dice fad.

About as far removed from "Halloween" and "Friday the 13th" as you can get, what we have here is a disturbing story of a man (Joe Spinelli) who kills and mutilates women to compensate for the abuse he experienced as a child.

Placing their freshly-shorn scalps on mannequins, he hopes to quell his pain and anger.

Considered horribly misogynistic at the time, the decades have not really lessened its grotesque grind-house impact.

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