**ENTERTAINMENT**

**Technique • Friday, September 28, 2007**

**New R.E. proves fatal**

**OUR TAKE: ★★★★★**

By Vivas Kaul
Staff Writer

The original Resident Evil had two things going for it: first, it was yet another part of the long-standing George Romero zombie tradition; second, it was based on a very successful video game franchise. However, these two advantages evaporated once people actually saw the movie. *Apocalypse* did little to remedy the situation, though it seems that the production values for the sequel were higher. Now with the release of *Resident Evil: Extinction*, it’s not surprising that there are a lot of dry eyes as this movie goes the way of the dodo.

All the jokes and plays on words aside, *Extinction* is a bad movie. As I was coming up with this review in my head I tried to figure out what the feeling of satisfaction I felt after seeing this movie stemmed from. After thinking a bit I realized I was satisfied to be out of the theater.

Many people are already aware that *Extinction* is the third installment in the R.E. trilogy. However, people who have not seen the first two movies (and believe me, you aren’t missing anything) will be lost worse than Sawyer on that weird island. After the events of the second movie, Alice Walker (Milla Jovovich) is on the run from the evil Umbrella Corporation.

**See Evil, page 20**

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**Expectations for Silk dissolve on screen**

**OUR TAKE: ★★★★★**

By Daniel Griffin
Senior Staff Writer

When confronted with the opportunity to revisit director François Girard, anyone familiar with his last film, the sublime *The Red Violin* (1998), would jump at the slightest whisper of Silk. His follow-up film arriving nearly a decade later. Silk opened extremely quietly this past weekend to paltry box office numbers.

The narrative follows Hervé Joncour (Michael Pitt), an 1860s French army officer, who is recruited by entrepreneur Baldabiou (Alfred Molina) to venture the long journey to Japan to supply Baldabiou with fresh silk worm eggs for his growing silk mill. Joncour quickly marries Hélène Joncour (Keira Knightley) before he sets off on the dangerous voyage to the east.

After he succeeds in making the journey to Japan, he becomes obsessed with his Japanese trader’s concubine, as she seems to seduce him with her stolid movements and bland narrative flop in *Silk*.

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What is presented here is quite simply a mess. There’s no rhythm to his eastern trader. We’re given a tragic love story with no real love, which makes the tragedy seem just that much more paltry.

Knightley treads water throughout the film, filling up space and time and sometimes lovely French dresses; sometimes not. Yet despite the occasional Knightley nipple flash, there’s really no movement here to speak of. The movement should be of the two women melding into one, which is actually attempted, though to an absurdly clumsy result.

**See Silk, page 20**

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**AWA 13 wraps up month of unique conventions**

**By Andrew Ho**
Contributing Writer

Following only three weeks after the rush of Dragon Con, one would think that the sights and experiences would be enough to appease fans of fantasy, sci-fi and popular culture for a while.

This was not the case for Anime Weekend Atlanta, a local anime convention now in its 13th year and one of the five largest anime conventions in America. AWA was hosted at the Renaissance Waverly Hotel and Cobb Galleria Centre on the weekend of Sept. 21.

Anime (the popular term for Japanese animation) has had a significant number of fans outside of Japan for decades now, especially in the U.S., and in recent times it has become an undeniably noteworthy economic and cultural force worldwide.

Curious eyes and minds flowed through the Artist’s Alley of AWA to admire, commission and purchase the many art pieces of artists both local and from abroad. 72,000 sq. ft. were dedicated to house the Dealer’s Room, where one could find all sorts of merchandise such as DVDs, posters, comics, costumes, toys and the like from vendors.

Popular as some of the areas were, certain annual events were the biggest draws. The ever-trendy costume contest put over 100 entries on stage to compete for best costume in novice, journeyman and master’s categories, as well as other awards given by the judges. Amusing at times and entertaining for all, AWA is simply Animal Collective. I will be the first to admit that

**See AWA, page 22**

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**Collective’s Jam jams**

**By Jennifer Aldoretta**
Contributing Writer

We use the word “popular” to describe something or someone regarded with approval by the general masses of people. A musician is considered to be popular when liked by many. But one might say that attaining a certain level of popularity is like artistic poison; it causes the artist to become more focused on “rolling in the dough,” if you will, than making a sincere, well-thought-out album.

Animal Collective has never been the most popular band, and probably never will be. That’s one of the reasons they are so appealing to me. They aren’t some showy, wannabe-pop group like numerous other artists out there. Animal Collective is simply Animal Collective.

I will be the first to admit that

**See Jam, page 23**
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Cronenberg makes good on Eastern Promises

By Daniel Spiller
Contributing Writer

I think for most people, David Cronenberg is still known as that guy who made that movie with the cool head explosion, or the guy who made the one where Jeff Goldblum looks really gross.

I want him to be known as that guy who makes movies that should be winning awards.

After a Russian woman dies during childbirth, Anna (Naomi Watts), a nurse, is determined to keep the baby out of foster care by finding the woman’s family. It’s only clue the woman left behind was her diary, so Anna goes about getting it translated. Unfortunately, Anna quickly finds out by means of the diary that the problem may be bigger than just a homeless baby, for the Russian mob may somehow be connected.

Eastern Promises tells this story with an intensity that never lets up. I don’t recall there being a single moment during the entirety of the film that wasn’t engaging.

Despite the story’s seemingly simplistic nature, Promises constantly has you thinking, guessing and excited to find out what happens next.

In Eastern Promises, Cronenberg pulls some truly fantastic performances out of the actors involved. Viggo Mortensen, Vincent Cassel and Armin Mueller-Stahl create not just a group of Russian characters, but a family that feels genuine.

Throughout the film, Mortensen’s character Nikolai reassures others that he is “just a driver,” which have deciphered as being code for “I am just giving the best performance of my career.” Mortensen appeared in Cronenberg’s A History of Violence as well, but he has never looked better than he does in Eastern Promises.

Nikolai is undoubtedly one of the most interesting characters in the film, always acting suspiciously enough that the audience never forgets him, even when he’s not onscreen. Armin Mueller-Stahl’s portrayal of Semyon is just as intriguing as it is frightening. With his quiet demeanor and immense power, he recalls Martin Brando’s performance as Don Vito Corleone in The Godfather. Vincent Cassel plays Semyon’s loyal but sometimes incompetent son, Kirill. Cassel does an excellent job of portraying a sense of despair to a character that can’t please his father, as well as providing the most convincing performance of a drunk that I have ever seen.

Naomi Watts is great as Anna, yet justifiably forgotten. Anna is necessary to drive the story and create the urgency, but she is overshadowed by the three key Russian men. Rather than being a hindrance to the story, the overreach of Anna only makes the Russians seem more menacing, creating a world where Anna’s adversaries are much bigger than she is.

Steven Knight is responsible for the excellent screenplay. He has put together a story that somehow manages to be always interesting. Just when you think the script is about to get bogged down with boring but necessary details to propel the plot, it keeps going with the same urgency, it always had, filling in the details all the while.

This is largely in part due to Cronenberg’s perfect pacing. It’s difficult to find a movie these days that at some point doesn’t feel either sluggish or breakneck.

What makes Cronenberg such an excellent storyteller is that he focuses more on the telling of the story than the story itself, giving the audience a film that moves at a natural rate.

If this natural progress gives that film an instantly classic feel, as if it was adapted from a source that is already revered. While watching it, you can sense that it already has a timeless quality. Eastern Promises’ direction seems both simple and stylish, resulting in a very sophisticated look. He doesn’t waste time shooting anything unnecessary, but his choices on what to show us again exceed expectations.

So go see the new film from that guy who made the movie about a hallucinogenic television signal. Eastern Promises is one of the best films you will see all year.

Viggo Mortensen co-stars as a Russian mobster alongside Armin Mueller-Stahl and Vincent Cassel in this new Cronenberg thriller.

OUR TAKE: ★★★★★

Eastern Promises

“Eastern Promises is one of the best films you will see all year.”
Evil

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tation. Imbued with new reflexes, hyper learning and trippy psychic abilities, Walker is doing her best to keep her distance from people. Meanwhile, Carlos Olivera (Oded Fehr) and Claire Redfield (Ali Larter) lead a nomadic convoy of people through the desert looking for sparse resources.

The movie runs for an hour and 45 minutes. However, looking at the simplicity of the story, the filmmakers could have eliminated most of the elements between the action scenes.

As a result, the film introduces several subplots that are not adequately resolved by its conclusion. Among them is the supposed romantic relationship between Olivera and Walker, which, given the other movies, has no context here.

Given how toned up Jovovich was for this role, I initially thought that the movie would work as a serviceable, shut-your-mind-off action flick. However, upon closer inspection, the first main action sequence between Alice and the zombie Rottweilers is mostly a rehash of an action scene.

After watching episodes of the Showtime series *Sleeper Cell*, one can’t help but ask how the hell an actor this talented got roped into doing two movies that are as trite and ill-conceived as Apocalypse and Extinction.

This logic holds true for Larter as well. Any fan of the NBC TV show *Heroes* can tell you that Larter’s character is not only well-written but well-portrayed. As a crone, it hurts when such awesome talents are wasted with such disdain.

And the zombies? Personally, I would rather have seen the zombies from *Shaun of the Dead* or *28 Days Later*. However, the special effects and makeup on the zombies is top-notch and does make for a couple moments of genuine startling excitement.

After it’s all said and done this movie leaves you unsatisfied by its conclusion. In fact, it leaves the ending open for yet another half-assed sequel. For the record, I am a huge fan of the RE videogames; however, it’s just sad that this franchise, which had so much potential, was placed in the hands of writers that were just not familiar with the source material or were too worried about a deadline or profits to really care. It’s the same problem that has plagued every video game movie to date.

In fact, the only video game movie to really come close is *Super Mario Bros.*, and even then the writers took some strange creative liberties with the source material.

To close, this movie could not have been any worse as far as movies in the zombie/survival horror genre are concerned....

Silk

from page 17

The women’s movement is filled with steam from hot baths and warm pools, depriving the film of its movement as well. And with a film that deals so heavily with the movement between lands and women, the lack thereof makes this mess that much more disappointing.

Girard shoots the film plainly, looking uninterested in the entire process of the joining of the two women. The translator that attempts to join the two with the movement of words appears much more interesting, though her part is cut to barely anything.

Instead, Girard finds the mist of the warm pools far more engaging—yet he ruins this rising action with still figures, panned into the fervescent scenery they should be a part of but remain detached from—like the audience.

With *The Red Violin* displaying incredible skill in developing a sense of the flow of objects through time, *Silk*, attempting a similar feat with love, ultimately fails. So here I hoping that in another decade, when Girard reappears, we’ll be treated to a vision of movement that mirrors our own dreams that wander through the mist.

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I'm disappointed in the War on Drugs. What happened with that? Have the drugs won?

In 10th grade my high school had a former drug addict come in and talk to the students about the effects of marijuana. He particularly emphasized how habitual marijuana use can shrink your testicles (I'd like to know how they gathered that data). This speech was supposed to resonate with 16-year-old boys, taking the whole "just say no" concept a step further. Instead of going around just saying "no," we were supposed to say "No, I don't want my testicles to turn into raisins."

Sitting in the high school gymnasium listening to speeches about how drugs will permanently ruin your life is not effective drug prevention, especially when the lecturer is a former drug addict who now gets paid loads of money to travel around the country to speak about drugs.

Instead, high schools should ship in current drug addicts, guys that live on the streets, in vomit decorated cardboard boxes, smell like the ground and the intestines with large sharp teeth, seek out drug users and impale their toothed tigers a reality. Indeed, McGruff the Crime Dog is a hokey representation of a drug-fighting engineering thing nailed down, we need to make drug fighting saber-toothed tigers a reality.

The other mascot would be Marvin himself. First McGruff was considered our best like everyone else, through fear. I'd have two mascots. First McGruff would be replaced with Chompy the drug-fighting saber-toothed tiger. Chompy was found frozen in the arctic tundra and has been thawed out and trained to seek out drug users and impale their intestines with large sharp teeth, leaving a stream of entrails down the street to serve as a warning to anyone who wants to try lighting up. Once scientists get the whole generic engineering thing nailed down, we need to make drug fighting saber-toothed tigers a reality.

The police mascots need to be changed around also. What's McGruff going to do if he catches you with a joint? Lick your face? Give you a stern lecture while wagging his tail? Third grade students learn best like everyone else, through fear. I'd have two mascots. First McGruff would be replaced with Chompy the drug-fighting saber-toothed tiger. Chompy was found frozen in the arctic tundra and has been thawed out and trained to seek out drug users and impale their intestines with large sharp teeth, leaving a stream of entrails down the street to serve as a warning to anyone who wants to try lighting up. Once scientists get the whole generic engineering thing nailed down, we need to make drug fighting saber-toothed tigers a reality.

Chompy would be the Marvin the meth addict. When Marvin gets high he breaks into your house, smashes your pussy bank, turns your candy to caramel, usually assaults the tooth fairy and causes your parents to get a divorce. Another problem the War on Drugs faces is the policies regulating everybody's favorite recreational drug: alcohol.

Dry counties, no booze sales on Sundays and the fact that American beer companies are allowed to manufacture "light beer" are some of the few absurd policies this country faces. Also, you can drive, vote in Iraq and buy pornography before you're old enough to have a sip of wine.

Did anyone pay attention to the last presidential election? How was I supposed to vote for any of those candidates while sober?

There is a simple fix to all of our alcohol problems. Reintroduce Prohibition. I say this not to discourage drinking, but to bring the fun and excitement back to alcohol consumption that occurred during the roaring 20s. Imagine spending an evening with the gang at the local speakeasy, playing beer pong and dancing the Charleston.

If the American beer companies shut down, all beer would be smuggled in from serious beer drinking countries like Germany, a country whose native language doesn't even have an expression for "light beer." While alcohol should be prohibited, I'd still keep caffeine consumption legal, but it needs to be regulated. Starbucks is the largest drug dealer in the United States, and we need to cash in on that operation. Any idiot who's willing to pay $2.70 for a cup of coffee won't care about an additional 50 cent caffeine tax. The proceeds can fund the Drug Czar's saber-toothed tiger division.

Ultimately, people just need to use drugs responsibly, which is what the drug companies need to learn. Use drugs responsibly, which is what the drug companies need to learn, and we won't have this problem. To me, this is a completely foreign concept. Hopefully, we can change drug policy to allow people to enjoy the drug-fighting saber-toothed tigers and be relieved of the burden of prohibition.

Have the drugs won?

Drugs. What happened with that?

In 10th grade my high school had a former drug addict come in and talk to the students about the effects of marijuana. He particularly emphasized how habitual marijuana use can shrink your testicles (I'd like to know how they gathered that data). This speech was supposed to resonate with 16-year-old boys, taking the whole "just say no" concept a step further. Instead of going around just saying "no," we were supposed to say "No, I don't want my testicles to turn into raisins."

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Have the drugs won?

Drugs. What happened with that?
Queens rock Atlanta back to Stone Age

As opening band, Das Riggs went through emo-style songs like “Living is Suicide” and “Radiation Blues,” you could feel the fans revving up for the main act. “The Tab” is notorious for having cars ringing, head pounding and adrenalin pumping concerts, yet it was one of the most humble of beginnings. The Tabernacle was once the Third Baptist Church and Georgia Medical Center before being transformed from butterfly to black crow by becoming a House of Blues Club.

Well, the congregation that gathered together was craving a sermon. Who else but its preacher Josh Homme and his choir to deliver the message of alternative metal! Moments before the headliners took the stage, organ-like metal beams lowered, burning pool tables where the band would stand. As these moments were no more than nine years to the day of when Queens of the Stone Age were given the kick off at the Tabernacle.

They have once again proven that they can deliver something original and new that, like actual strawberry jam, is great no matter where you are or what you’re doing! Mmm… strawberry jam.

Animal Collective Deserves praise for doing what they love to do and for being great at what they do. Like I said before, few bands still make music that they truly enjoy making when it means sacrificing a large number of fans, fame and cash. I don’t see them conforming for being great at what they do. Like the music that they truly enjoy making when it means sacrificing a large number of fans, fame and cash.

Not every artist has that kind of backbone like Animal Collective, and I don’t see them conforming anytime soon. It’s quite refreshing listening to the album of a group that still has some character. Well done, gentlemen and, in a word, well done.

ENTERTAINMENT
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Feeling that they can be your typical pop group. But wouldnt expect Animal Collective to give: originality. With members having the their sound is certainly not for every sound can be characterized as “organized clutter” and are strategically placed to give the song something fresh and disaggregating. Although in Strawberry Jam Animal Collective does stray a bit from their usual noise rock, they still manage to maintain that signature sound that many of us know and love.

Every Animal Collective album, the elements of voice and colorization are highly important. Although many of the songs seem to be randomly placed, after familiarizing yourself with Animal Collective’s debut album, Persuasive Pitch, it is very “60’s” pop-rock with a raw, native feel, and Strawberry Jam seems to take a little bit of each. More Panda Bear influence, more awesomeness. Although in Strawberry Jam Animal Collective does stray a bit from their usual noise rock, they still manage to maintain that signature sound that many of us know and love.

In every Animal Collective album, their music is more or less, consensually one of their highest rated albums, while Hollis magnesium seems to be one of their least favored. It would have to say that Feed, Song Tong and Strawberry Jam are their greatest albums (and their three most recent ones). But by far, their best album to date is Strawberry Jam.

Any fans of Animal Collective have probably also listened to Panda Bear’s solo albums. His newest album, Person Pitch, is very “60’s”- pop-rock with a raw, native feel, and Strawberry Jam seems to take a little bit of each. More Panda Bear influence, more awesomeness. Although in Strawberry Jam Animal Collective does stray a bit from their usual noise rock, they still manage to maintain that signature sound that many of us know and love.

Though all albums are well received, Feed, Song Tong and Strawberry Jam are their greatest albums (and their three most recent ones). But by far, their best album to date is Strawberry Jam.

As opening band, Das Riggs went through emo-style songs like “Living is Suicide” and “Radiation Blues,” you could feel the fans revving up for the main act. “The Tab” is notorious for having cars ringing, head pounding and adrenalin pumping concerts, yet it was one of the most humble of beginnings. The Tabernacle was once the Third Baptist Church and Georgia Medical Center before being transformed from butterfly to black crow by becoming a House of Blues Club.

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PORTUGAL IN ATL

PORTUGAL IN ATL
Portugal The Man, who recently released their sixth album, Church Mouth, will be playing at The Loft Oct. 12 along with fellow bands: Will Destroy You, The Photo Atlas, Sinkane.

ECO-FRIENDLY MUSIC
The Echo Project is hitting the Atlanta area Oct. 12-14. This green festival of music and fun features tons of bands, including The Killers, Flaming Lips, Phil Lesh & Friends, moe., and many more!