



Val Kilmer stars as Jim Morrison in "The Doors," the story of musician/poet Morrison, his rock group and the turbulent '60s.

Stone's fond 'memories' miss the mark in 'Doors'

This week's big debut may not be the film for everyone's taste. But Jim Morrison fans and devotees of the Doors will flock joyously to Oliver Stone's attempt to glorify what many consider to be the worst elements of the '60s.

Besides the pros and cons about this particular style of rock'n'roll music, the film turns out to be a pretty mediocre motion picture. The considerable talent Stone exhibited in "Platoon" and "Born on the Fourth of July" is missing in "The Doors" (R, 135 minutes).

The affection Oliver Stone has for his youth is understandable. Youth is the time when our fondest moments occur. Of course, we have good memories of the old days because we were young and enthusiastic and had hope. Hope fades and memories become fonder.

Stone's memories — and his attempt to glorify the best of adolescent rebellion speaking out against all that is wrong in life — unfortunately centers on an unpleasant, disturbed individual, Jim Morrison (Val Kilmer).

Despite the fact that he and The Doors were successful, it's hard to maintain interest in Morrison's sexual problems, his proclivity to excess in booze and drugs and his consistent failure to enjoy success. The obscure explanations revolving around Navaho tribal customs doesn't help.

THAT'S PARTICULARLY true after the first hour or so when the sequences, however artistically photographed and imaginatively enhanced with special effects, tend to begin looking like something we've just seen.

Rock'n'roll and Doors fans may disagree, but much of the music sounds like unadulterated noise as Morrison shrieks while trying to swallow the microphone.

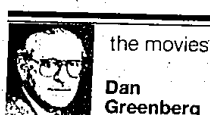
The bottom line is an extended music-video which is just as unrestrained and lacking discipline as the '60s it depicts.

Yes, Virginia, on the other side of the street, they do make movies like the good old days. Disney's latest offering, "Shipwrecked" (B -, PG, 90 minutes), is obviously marketed for the youngsters but it's an old-fashioned adventure story which will entertain the young at heart, no matter what their age.

Based on the popular 19th Century Norwegian novel, Haakon Haakonson, "Shipwrecked" includes all the Horatio Alger/poor boy takes charge elements that engage our sensibilities and make youngsters feel good about themselves and their potential.

Filmed on location in England, Fiji, Norway and Spain, the movie is attractive in the best Disney tradition. Stian Smedstad, a 15-year-old Norwegian, is very effective in the title role of the young Haakon who goes to sea to earn money and save the family farm after his father is injured.

HIS FATHER'S friend, Jens (Trond Peter Stamsø Munch), takes charge of Haakon and they set sail for Australia. A British naval officer, Merrick (Gabriel Byrne), is aboard to protect the ship from pirates.



the movies
Dan Greenberg

Grading the movies

- A+ Top marks - sure to please
- A Close behind - excellent
- A- Still in running for top honors
- B+ Pretty good stuff, not perfect
- B Good
- B- Good but notable deficiencies
- C+ Just a cut above average
- C Mediocre
- C- Not so hot and slipping fast
- D+ The very best of the poor stuff
- D Poor
- D- It doesn't get much worse
- F Truly awful
- Z Reserved for the colossally bad
- * No advanced screening

It turns out that Merrick's an impostor, however artistically photographed and imaginatively enhanced with special effects, tend to begin looking like something we've just seen.

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onal but still enjoyable when, well-told survival on a South Seas island story begins.

All told, "Shipwrecked" is lots of fun.

Another light-hearted and enjoyable little jelly-bean, former Detroit Robert Shaye's "Book of Love" (B, PG-13, 90 minutes) is a traditional, pleasantly nostalgic look at adolescence in the '50s.

Jack Twiller (Chris Young) and his friend Crutch Kane (Keith Coogan) stand out as sophomore nerds at the local high school. Their trials and tribulations finally wind down at their senior prom.

It's a fairly basic plot but it works. The boys have some other friends and there's the traditional kid brother, Peanut (Aeryk Egan), and, shhhhh, don't tell, girls.

THAT LAST category includes Lily (Josie Bisset), Gina Gabosch (Tricia Leigh Fisher) whose brother Angelo (John Cameron Mitchell) is the local bully, and Wanda (Elizabeth Perkins).

Nothing super-significant occurs but this story of the age-old problems of growing up are told in a bright and humorous way. Nothing serious but plenty of fun.

"My Heroes Have Always Been Cowboys" (PG) has an all-star cast looking at the new west. A contemporary rodeo-rider, H. D. Dalton (Scott Glenn), is injured and must return home to face the problems of growing up that he has so long avoided.

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ALTERNATIVE VIEWING

Fernand Leger's 'Ballet' gets an accompaniment

By John Monaghan
special writer

Contrasting images fill the screen in rapid succession. A straw boater is followed by a swinging pendulum, spinning saucers and a girl on a swing. A washerwoman is seen mounting a flight of stairs again and again.

For audiences in 1924, artist Fernand Leger's "Ballet Mecanique" was something fresh and experimen-

tal — if downright confusing.

For avant-garde composer George Antheil, it was pure inspiration. His resulting score for the film — a massive conglomeration of drums, synchronized player pianos, tam-tams, airplane propellers and sirens — has been performed only a handful of times since its premiere in 1926.

This Saturday, the University of Michigan Percussion Ensemble will perform live Antheil's witty score with a top-notch print of "Ballet Me-

canique." Maurice Kagel's "Ludwig Van" (1969) rounds out the unusual double bill at the Michigan Theatre in Ann Arbor.

FRENCH ARTIST Fernand Leger became famous for his Cubist depictions of city life. He was so fascinated by the thriving film medium that he threatened to give up painting and devote his life to making mov-

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SCREEN SCENE

DETROIT FILM SOCIETY, Detroit Public Library, 5200 Woodward Ave., Detroit. Call 833-4048 for information. (\$25 series membership, \$4 individual)

Back stage — "Stage Door Canteen" (USA — 1943) and "Kiss Me Kate" (USA — 1953) fill the double bill, starting at 7 p.m., March 8-9.

"Stage Door" is a lively wartime musical about stage stars entertaining the men in uniform. With bits by Katharine Hepburn, Harpo Marx, Benny Goodman and Count Basie.

"Kiss Me Kate" was originally filmed in 3-D, but even in 2-D, Cole Porter's catchy score still jumps out at you. Katherine Grayson and How-ard Keel light both on and off stage while performing Shakespeare's

"Taming of the Shrew," while Ann Miller cooks up a scorching rendition of "Too Darn Hot."

DETROIT FILM THEATRE, 5200 Woodward Ave., Detroit. Call 832-2730 for information. (\$5)

"Taxi Blues" (USSR/France — 1990), 7 and 9:30 p.m. March 8-9 and 4 and 7 p.m. March 10. One of the most controversial Soviet films in years is this unflinching story of a Moscow taxi driver and an alcoholic Jewish musician. (\$5/auditorium)

"Duke Is Tops" (USA — 1938), 1 p.m. March 7-10. A very young Lena Horne and boyfriend Ralph Cooper part ways to find their own fortunes. She's a torch singer and he's a showman for a traveling medicine show.

Re-released later as "Bronze Venus," shown here as part of a tribute to independent films originally made for black audiences. (\$2.50/recital hall)

DETROIT SCIENCE CENTER, 5030 John St., Detroit. Call 577-8400 for information. (\$5 museum admission includes ticket. \$2-44 children under 12)

"To the Limit" (USA — 1990), through April. The latest Omnimax spectacular, intercuts amazing athletic feats with an analysis of how muscles and blood meet the challenge. Not intended for people with claustrophobia, the movie becomes a

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VIDEO VIEWING

By Dan Greenberg
special writer

February closed out with a pretty heavy duty lineup of major motion pictures premiering on video cassette.

Jack Nicholson's much-ballyhooed and poorly received sequel to the well-regarded 1974 "Chinatown," "The Two Jakes" (1990, color, R, 137 minutes) appeared on Feb. 28. Nicholson directs himself in this

reprise of his earlier, award-winning Jake Gittes private eye role. Harvey Keitel, Meg Tilly, Madeline Stowe, Ruben Blades, Eli Wallach, Frederic Forrest and David Keith also appear.

For fans of older films, four Bette Davis films appeared on the cassette racks for the first time on Feb. 27: "The Catered Affair" (1956, 93 minutes), "Beyond the Forest" (1949, 96 minutes), "The Bride Came C.O.D." (1941, 92 minutes) and "Satan Met A Lady" (1936, 75 minutes).

All are in black and white and unrated. They are from a time when ratings were unnecessary.

"State of Grace" (1990, color, R, 144 minutes), starring Sean Penn, and "Death Warrant" (1990, color, R, 111 minutes), starring Jean-Claude Van Damme, also appeared at the end of the month.

The Van Peebles team, father Melvin and son Mario, released a

rap-comedy-action film, "Identity Crisis" (1990, color, R, 98 minutes) to top off the February festivities.

ONE OF 1990's most notorious titles, "Wild at Heart" (1990, color, R, 125 minutes), will appear on Wednesday. Its gross display of violence, dirty talk and explicit sexual activity added to the furor that led the Motion Picture Association to drop the X rating in favor of NC-17.

"Wild at Heart," however, was eventually released as an R-rated movie.

Only by the wildest stretch of the imagination (and of the rating sys-

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9:30 A.M.	Saturday	March 23, 1991	Reserved (Rows 10-18)	\$6.00	\$4.75
Morning	Saturday	March 30, 1991	Ringside Ends (Rows 1-9)	\$7.00	\$4.75
7:30 P.M.	Sunday	March 17, 1991	Reserved (Rows 10-18)	\$6.00	\$4.75
Evening	Sunday	March 24, 1991	Ringside Ends (Rows 1-9)	\$7.00	\$4.75
7:30 P.M.	Wednesday	March 20, 1991	Reserved (Rows 10-18)	\$6.00	\$4.75
Evening	Thursday	March 21, 1991	Ringside Ends (Rows 1-9)	\$7.00	\$4.75
	Wednesday	March 27, 1991	Reserved (Rows 10-18)	\$6.00	\$4.75
1:30 P.M.	Sunday	March 31, 1991	Ringside Ends (Rows 1-9)	\$7.00	\$4.75
Afternoon	(Easter)		Reserved (Rows 10-18)	\$6.00	\$4.75

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