#### MOVIES

# Congo' delivers old-fashioned thrills, chills



Return with us now to those thilling days of yeateryear, when the kids would line up at the neighborhood Biguo on a Satunday after nown. They'd set off with espeditions in search of Jungle riches only to discover astounding when the same premise fuels. Congo, a new adventure thiller with stock characters and

Filled with stock characters and dopey dialogue, it nevertheless delivers old-fashioned thrills and

chills.

It's hard to run through the plot with a straight face. You see, there's this talking poilla who uses a computer device to turn sign language into speech. Her trainer (D) Lan Walsh) wants to return her to the jungle, but must

A Romanian philanthropist (Tim Curry) comes on board, though it's soon reverled that he's broke and in search of King Solomon's mines. The real money comes from a former CIA agent Claura Linney), now working for a telecommunications company, who must retrieves a downed expedition that includes her former lover.

dition that includes her former lover.

A savey black safari leader (Ernic Hudson) guides them past hungy animals and unfriendly political regimes. The native look astonished when they see him leading the group. "They expect a black man to carry a trunk on my head," he quips in a sophisticated tone a la George Sanders.

Closing in on their destination, they discover that deep within the jungle is something mysterious and deally, an apelike creature that can wipe out an armed party in seconds.

That "Congo" works so well is

Crichton negotiates multi-million dollar book deals with Hollywood long before he lifts a pencil. He tosses in every jungle adventure cliche, from volcanic cruptions and poisonous anakes to killer hippos. Yes, killer hippos.

A few unique moments do oc-cur. At one point, ground troops fire heat-seeking missiles at the expedition's plane. The resource-ful CIA agent whips out a special gun whose bullets lure the explo-sives away from them.

As in "Jurassic Park," the cast plays it straight, no matter how silly the dialogue. "Rocky Hor-ror's" Tim Curry, who could star in the Peter Lorre story if his eyes bulge out any further, has the proper blend of slimy charm and obsession in his quest for dia-monds.

Former Detroiter and "Evil Dead" star Bruce Campbell even turns up early in the film as one of the first to meet the monster.

The most convincing perform-



ance comes from that talking go-rilla, Amy, created by special of-fects wir Stan Winston. The faci-al commence of the commence of the most cynical viewer believe, if just for minute, that she is a real beast.

Call it a guilty pleasure, but I enjoyed "Congo" as well as any movie this year. Critics may sniff, but word-of-mouth should allow the family-friendly "Congo" to hold its own with a slew of other higher-profile releases this summer.

To leave a message for John Monaghan, dial 953-2047, mail-box number 1865, on a loud-tone phone, fax him a note at 591-7279, or write him in care of Entertain-ment, Observer & Eccentric News-paper, 30281 Schoolcraft, Livonia 43150.

story: Primatologist Peter Elliot (Dylan Walsh) is the

guardian of Amy, a goril-la he decides

must be returned to her jungle home in "Congo."

### SCREEN SCENE

A sampling of what's playing at atternative movie theaters across metro Detroit as reviewed by sohn Monaghan.

### H MAGIC RAG THEATRE

22918 Woodward, Ferndale, Call (810) 544-3030 for information.

(\$10) \$44.5000 for information.
(34; 35 students/seniors)
Pulp Fiction" (USA 1995).
9 p.m. June 20. Quentin Tarantino's supersharred comedy thriller
boats unforgetable performances from John Travolta, Samuel L
Jackson, and Bruce Willis.
Inframan' (Hong Kong 1976). 9 p.m. June 21. Continuing
the Monster Wednesday series,
the adventures of Inframan, Hong
Kong's answer to Ultra-Man, who
makes it his job to foil the worlddomination plots of the evil Princess Dragon Mom. She sends out
whole slew of weird villains to whole slew of weird villains to do bettle with him. Shown here in

M MAIN ART THEATRE

Royal Oak, Films play through at least Thursday, unless noted oth-erwise, Call (810) 542-0180 for in-formation and showtimes. (\$6.50; \$4 atudents and matinee, \$3

formation and showtimes. (26.59; 34 atudents and mattines, 23 twilight)

"The Englishman Who Went Up a Hill, But Came Down a Mountain" (Britain — 1995.)

Hugh Grant stars as an English mapmaker who meet a his match in a small Welsh village. The residents are outraged when his measurements show that their beloved mountain is merely a hill and do everything in their power to make him change his mind.
"Braveheart" (USA — 1995). Mel Gibson both directs and stars in this epic sags of the legendary Scottish warrior who united warring clans against the English. Long sad bloody, it still packs an emotional punch.
"The Bridges of Medison County" (USA — 1995). Skepticing greeted Clint Eastwood when he decided to bring Robert James Waller's much-loved,

equally maligned novel to the acreen, but it's not bad at all. Meryl Streep plays the lowa farm wife whose chance encounter with a worldly photographer (Eastwood) changes her life forever. "The Underneath" (USA 1995). This now psychological thriller reunites "sex, lies, and videotape" director Stephen Soderbergh and actor Peter Gallagher. Starts Friday.

Starts Friday.

22 MAPLE TREATR2
4135 W. Maple, Bloomfield. All titles play through at least next Thursday. Call (Biol) 855-9000 for information. (46; \$2.95 twilight)

"A Little Princess" (Britain - 1995). A child raised in India must fend for herself when it's presumed that her father has been lost in combat.

"The Englishman Who Went Up a Hill. But Came Down a Mountain" (Britain - 1995). See Main Art Theatre listing above.

"Braveheart" (USA - 1995). See Main Art Theatre listing above.

"The Bridges of Madison County" (USA - 1995). See Main Art Theatre listing above.

"The Underneath" (USA -1995), See Main Art Theatre list-ing above, Starts Friday.

M MICHIGAN THEATRE
603 E. Liberty, Ann Arbor, Call
(313) 668-8397 for information.
(\$5; \$4 studentseniors)

(313) 6G8-8397 for information.
(35: 48 studentsenions)
"Only the Brave" and "Playing the Part" (Australia — 1994) at 5 p.m. June 17: 91:5 p.m. June 29.
The first is a harrowing comings of age story about two teenage girls who live on the edge and are desperate to get out of their desolate, deadend surroundings. The second is a home movie, currently on the film featival circuit, in which a woman tries and fails to make her uptight Grosse Pointe parents recognize her homoserulity.
"Amateur" (USA — 1995).
Through June 25 (call for showtimes). The latest from director Hal Hartley ("Trust," "The Unbellevable Truth") introduces a string of unusual characters, including an ex-nun who writes pornography to earn a living and an amnesiac who was once a ruthless player in the porno game himself.



Disney feature: Pocahontas finds herself at odds with father Chief Powhatan (above, right).

## Disney extravaganza features 'Pocahontas'

Mickey Mouse, Aladdin, Snow White and the Llon King are all coming to town this week when Walt Dianey Pictures and the Fox Theatre team up to present a special showing of "Pocahontas," Dianey's 33rd full-length animated feature film, together with a live stage show featuring classic Disney characters.
"The Pocahontas Summer Spectacular," opens June 16 and continues to June 22 at the Fox Theatre, 2211 Woodward, Detroit.

Curtain time is noon, 3:30 p.m. and 7:30 p.m. Friday, June 16; 10:30 a.m., 1:30 p.m., 4:30 p.m. and 7:30 p.m. Saturday and Sunday, June 17:18; noon, 3:30 p.m. and 7:30 p.m.

Monday, June 19-Thursday, June 22.

Tickets, \$10.\$20 per person, are available at the Fox Theatre, (313) 390-7600, all Ticket-master locations. To charge tickets by phone call, (810) 433-1515.

"Pocahontas" is the famous love story of the Native American herolne Pocahontas (the voice of Irene Bedard) and handsome see captail John Smith (Mel Gibson) set in Jamestown, Virginis, in the 1600s. The folk tale features music by Academy Award-winning composer Alan Menken ("Beauty and the Beast" and "Aladdin") and lyrics by Broadway veteran Stephen Schwartz ("Pippin," "Godspell" and "The Magic Show").



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