

Describe favorite game for 'Jumanji' contest

Kids, ages 12 and under, briefly describe, and explain what makes your favorite game magical, to enter our "Jumanji" contest.

There will be six winners. The grand prize winner will receive a "Jumanji" sweat shirt, four Chris Van Allsburg books, including "Jumanji", and a \$10 gift certificate from the Barnes & Noble Bookstore in Bloomfield Hills.

Five runners-up will each receive a "Jumanji" sweat shirt.

Deadline to enter the contest is Thursday, Dec. 7.

Send entries to: Keely Wygo, "Taste/Books" Editor, Observer & Eccentric Newspapers, Inc., 36251 Schoolcraft, Livonia, MI 48150. To fax entries, call (313) 691-7279.

"Jumanji" is a TriStar Pictures release opening at Metro Detroit movie theaters Dec. 15, is a fantasy-adventure about a magical board game. Two children release a man who became trapped in the game 25 years earlier, and must play the game, unleashing untold havoc and mayhem or risk being exiled back into the game forever.

"Jumanji" is based on the book by Chris Van Allsburg and stars Robin Williams, Kirsten Dunst, and Bonnie Hunt. It is rated PG.

Toy from page 8B

don't help move the action along but don't slow it down either. Songs like "You've Got a Friend in Me" and "Strange Things" are too quirky to have much hope as the popular hits that usually come from Disney cartoons.

While computer animators can masterfully manipulate objects like toys, they still have some trouble creating believable human characters, a criticism once leveled against conventional Disney animation. They sometimes have the mechanical move-

ments of robots, though the animators try especially hard in a scene where a party-full of kids (shown only by their shoes) storm into Andy's bedroom.

Though I wouldn't want to see all animated films become computer animated, "Toy Story" boldly goes where no cartoon has gone before. And unlike traditional cel animation, which probably hit its artistic peak 60 years ago, this new form is fresh and exciting and can only look better with films to come.

A sampling of what's playing at alternative movie theaters across metro Detroit as reviewed by John Monaghan

DETROIT FILM THEATRE
Detroit Institute of Arts, 5200 Woodward, Detroit. Call 313-833-2323 for information. (\$6; \$4 students)

"Mamma Roma" (Italy — 1962), 7:30 p.m. Dec. 1-2; 4, 7 p.m. Dec. 3. Anna Magnani plays a man who became trapped in the game 25 years earlier, and must play the game, unleashing untold havoc and mayhem or risk being exiled back into the game forever.

"Manhattan by Numbers" (USA — 1993), 7 p.m. Dec. 4. When his unemployment checks run out, a laid-off newspaperman is so desperate to come up with enough cash that he'll do virtually anything to come up with his back rent by the end of the day.

MAGIC BAG THEATRE
22916 Woodward, Ferndale. Call 810-544-3030 for information. (Admission varies)

"Boys Life: First Love" (USA — 1995), 7:30, 9:30 p.m. Nov. 30. A trio of films with a gay theme as part of a monthly series sponsored by Southeast Michigan Pride. (\$6)

"Blue Velvet" (USA — 1986), 7:30 p.m. Dec. 6. In David Lynch's bizarre masterpiece, a college student home for the summer discovers the seamy underside of his quaint hometown. Dennis Hopper has perhaps his quintessential role as psycho Frank Booth. (\$4)

MAIN ART THEATRE
118 N. Main Street at 11 Mile, Royal Oak. Films play through at least Thursday, unless noted otherwise. Call 810-642-0180 for information and showtimes. (\$8.50; \$4 students and matinees; \$3 twilight)

"Mighty Aphrodite" (USA — 1995). Woody Allen writes, directs and stars in this story of a father obsessed with discovering the identity of his adopted son's mother. The typically eclectic cast includes Helena Bonham Carter, F. Murray Abraham, Peter Weller, and Claire Bloom.

"Carrington" (Britain — 1995). A true story set in the 1920s England about an unconventional relationship between a painter (Emma Thompson) and an older homosexual man (Jonathan Pryce) with whom she's fallen in love. Playwright Christopher Hampton takes his first stab as director.

"Leaving Las Vegas" (USA — 1995). Just in time for the holidays, Nicolas Cage plays a suicidal alcoholic who finds his soulmate in an abused call girl (Elizabeth Shue).

MAPLE THEATRE
4135 W. Maple, Bloomfield. All titles play through at least next Thursday, unless noted otherwise. Call 810-855-9090 for information. (\$6; \$2.95 twilight)

"The Crossing Guard" (USA — 1995). In this intense drama written and directed by San Fann, an alcoholic jeweler (Jack Nicholson) and his estranged wife (Anjelica Huston) still suffer from the loss of their daughter in a car accident.

SCREEN SCENE

"American President" (USA — 1995). Michael Douglas plays the widowed Commander in Chief who tries to balance his job and a blossoming romance with an envi-

ronmental lobbyist (Annette Bening). Another crowd-pleaser from director Rob Reiner. "Carrington" (Britain — 1995). See Main Art Theatre listing.

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