



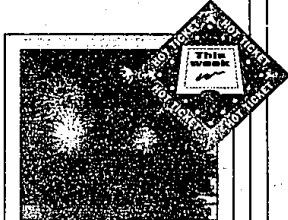
**Motley Crue**—featuring all original members including singer Vince Neil—has a live listening party for its album "Generation Swine" and a question and answer session with fans, 7:30 p.m. tonight at the State Theatre, 2115 Woodward Ave., Detroit. Tickets \$25 in advance, (313) 961-5451.



**Al Jarreau** appears with Boney James, 8 p.m. at the Fox Theatre, 2211 Woodward Ave., Detroit. Tickets \$27.50 in advance, (248) 433-1515.



**Donna Lewis** sings her hit "I Love You Always Forever" 8 tonight at Meadow Brook Music Festival, Oakland University, Walton Boulevard and Adams Road, Rochester. Tickets \$22.50 pavilion; \$12.50 lawn, (248) 377-0100.



**Hot fix:** The 39th annual International Freedom Festival celebrates the friendship between the U.S. and Canada with a variety of events on the Detroit Riverfront in the U.S. and Canada through July 4. Fireworks, which begin 10:06 p.m. Wednesday, are a highlight. Raindate is Thursday, June 26. Call the Festival Hotline (519) 971-5111 for details.

# ENTERTAINMENT

KEELY WYGONIK, EDITOR • 313-953-2105

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## ACTION, COMEDY HEAT UP SUMMER MOVIES



Heroes: Batman (George Clooney) and Robin (Chris O'Donnell) in "Batman and Robin."

BY JOHN MONAGHAN  
SPECIAL WRITER

Even longer than the wait for summer this year has been the arrival of warm weather movies. "The Lost World" has already weighed in as one of the top-grossing movies ever, while the action-heavy "Con Air" and "Speed 2: Cruise Control" have also tried to turn up the heat.

Keep in mind that this summer movie preview is not just limited to facts. There is plenty of unsubstantiated opinion here based on a variety of sources: the buzz in movie magazines, what I've been able to gauge from the trailers, and personal bias for or against certain actors and directors—basically, the same way you choose what to see.

■ **"Batman and Robin"**—The fourth entry in the popular action franchise proves that it doesn't really matter who plays the man in the hard rubber suit. George Clooney? Fine. Chris O'Donnell as sidekick Robin? I suppose so. Concentrate instead on Arnold Schwarzenegger as Mr. Freeze, Uma Thurman's Poison Ivy, and Alicia Silverstone as Batgirl. (Opens Friday, June 20)

■ **"My Best Friend's Wedding"**—Remember Julia Roberts? After bad career moves in "Michael Collins" and "Marry Rilly," she's back in a "Friends" friendly comedy that should clean up at the box office. Ten years ago her character made a pact with her male friend that if neither were married by now, they would tie the knot. When he decides to marry Cameron Diaz at the last minute, it's her duty to mess the whole thing up. (Opens Friday, June 20)

■ **"Hercules"**—Disney's 35th full-length animated feature turns the popular Greek legend into a squeaky-clean Dudley Do-Right. Charlton Heston, Danny DeVito, and James Woods provide some of the celebrity voices while the whole package resembles more the adventure-filled "Aladdin" than the dark operetta that was "Hunchback" and "Beauty and the Beast." Kids should love it. (Opens Friday, June 27)

■ **"Face/Off"**—I confess: I'm one of those John Woo junkies who thinks his Hong Kong bullet ballets compare with the best action movies of the decade. And while I've been lukewarm on his two previous American efforts ("Hard Target" and "Broken Arrow") this one looks pretty intense. Arch enemies John Travolta and Nicolas Cage somehow trade places and engage in a battle of wits that promises to be

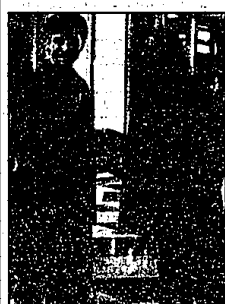
heavy on artillery and style. (Opens Friday, June 27)

■ **"Get to Sea"**—That other dynamic duo, Jack Lemmon and Walter Matthau, star as con men on a cruise line who pose as dance instructors to swindle rich women. My advice: stay home and rent "The Fortune Cookie" instead. (Opens Wednesday, July 2)

■ **"Men in Black"**—I've got a sinking feeling about this "Ghostbusters" meets "Pulp Fiction" sci-fi action-comedy. It's just too many ideas thrown into the blender at once. Will Smith and Tommy Lee Jones look sharp in those skinny suits and dark sunglasses, but the whole enterprise looks incredibly forced. (Opens Wednesday, July 2)

■ **"Contact"**—Jodie Foster and Matthew McConaughey have a close encounter with extraterrestrial life in this adaptation of Carl Sagan's novel. Another odd one for Foster, who hasn't been seen on screen since "Maverick." This could be a pleasant summer surprise from Robert Zemeckis, who hasn't directed since "Forrest Gump." (Opens Friday, July 11)

■ **"George of the Jungle"**—Brendan Fraser, formerly of "Encino Man," grunts his way through this live-action adaptation of the Jay Ward animated



Romantic comedy: Julie Roberts and Dermot Mulroney star as best friends who share the perfect relationship until one of them decides to get married in "My Best Friend's Wedding."

series. Expect Disney to turn it into "George of the Jungle 2 Jungle," which means there will probably be a dopey moral in there somewhere and lots of political correctness—neither a concern of the original series. (Opens Wednesday, July 16)

■ **"Conspiracy Theory"**—Julia Roberts again, teamed with Mel Gibson in a romantic comedy about a paranoid taxi driver who tells a skeptical justice department attorney that he sees conspiracy plots everywhere. Gibson roteams with director Richard Donner ("Lethal Weapon"), a veteran of by-the-numbers summer schlock. (Opens Friday, July 25)

■ **"Air Force One"**—And you thought the President kicked butt in "Independence Day"? Here, when Harrison Ford's commander in chief fails to meet the demands of terrorist Gary Oldman, the plane turns into a battle ground. Expect this, like most of Ford's actioners, to be more intelligent than the rest. (Opens Friday, July 25)

■ **"Leave It to Beaver"**—Is there nothing sacred? Janine Turner and Christopher McDonald star as perfect parents June and Ward Cleaver in what looks more like update than parody. Expect family fare along the lines of "Dennis the Menace," where, unlike the "Brady Bunch" movies, Dad's advice is meant to be taken seriously. (Opens Friday, Aug. 1)

■ **"Pleasure Perfect"**—"Friends" Jennifer Aniston in her first starring role as an advertising executive who feels she must be married to move up the corporate ladder. If Aniston's performance in "She's the One" is any indication, count me out. (Opens Friday, Aug. 8)

■ **"Spartan"**—Expect lots of computer-animated action and effects in this big-screen version of the popular comic book. The story is about a murdered soldier resurrected into the army of Satan, with "Wong Foo's" trim John Leguizamo in a literal stretch as a super-fit villain. My take: It's no "Crown." (Opens Friday, Aug. 8)

■ **"Titanic"**—The fate of James Cameron's Titanic retelling won't be decided until late summer, but the \$200 million dollar picture probably won't be a disaster. The trailer points to a "Somewhere in Time"-type love story, class struggle, and eye-popping visuals. Cameron is no stranger to turkeys, but even "The Abyss" had its share of amazing moments. (Scheduled to open late summer at the earliest). With the Detroit Film Theatre taking

its usual summer hiatus, this should be a cue for art film-friendly venues like The Main and Maple to clean up. Pickings, however, are noticeably slim. Providing the DFT hasn't nabbed any of these for the fall, look for:

■ **"The Pillow Book"**—Enigmatic director Peter Greenaway ("The Cook, the Thief...") focuses on a Japanese woman who gets her kicks out of etching calligraphy onto human bodies.

■ **"Star Maps"**—A Sundance favorite about a teenage Mexican-American hustler who sells maps to stars' homes as a cover for his real product: sex.

■ **"4 Little Girls"**—Spike Lee's documentary account of the racially charged murders of four Birmingham, Ala., schoolgirls in 1963.

■ **"Sunday"**—This year's Sundance winter is about a pair of lost souls in Queens who meet by chance and then create elaborate fantasies about each other.

■ **"Shall We Dance?"**—In this Asian-style "Strictly Ballroom," a Japanese businessman takes a ballroom dance class only to have his wife suspect he is having an affair.

John Monaghan welcomes your calls and comments. To leave John a voice mail message, dial (313) 953-2047 on a touch-tone phone, mailbox 1868.



Cruising: Jack Lemmon (left), Dyan Cannon and Walter Matthau in "Out to Sea."



Ready for action: After completing a hero-training course with Phil the satyr, Hercules and his flying horse, Pegasus are ready for action in "Hercules."

### GRAND OPENING



Movie madness: The lobby of the new Star Southfield is adorned with the icons of Hollywood from King Kong to the dinos of Jurassic Park.

## Southfield unveils grand Star Theatre

BY JOHN MONAGHAN  
SPECIAL WRITER

What to see at the movies this weekend—Batman and Robin putting the thumb on Mr. Freeze or Julia Roberts disrupting her "Best Friend's Wedding"—is still a dilemma. Where to see it is a no-brainer.

The Star Southfield, which premieres this Friday, is more than just another multiplex. For those of us who follow such things, the 20-screen theater is Metro Detroit's most elaborate temple of movie viewing since The Fox and Rivers opened in the 1920s.

With this ninth theater in their Grand Rapids-based chain, the Locks-Star Theatres have tried to replicate the grandeur and scope of the old movie palaces. And while the decor looks more Walt Disney Store than Albert Kahn, just remember that even The Fox had its critics who thought its mix of styles gauche and gaudy.

Outside, the theater looks like a cross between classic Art Deco and The Jetsons. Central in the neon-bedecked exterior is a spiky tower in front spelling STAR vertically in seven-foot letters. Inside, elaborate lobby murals

depict such movie staples as King Kong, The Bates Motel from "Psycho," the landing strip from "Close Encounters of the Third Kind," as well as scenes from downtown Detroit in its heyday.

A Kong-sized bucket of popcorn flanked by monster film reels looms over the concession counter, which, like all Star Theatres, is located at the atrium center. While offbeat concession items are hardly new, the Star Southfield boasts chilaquitos, chicken wings, nachos, and French fries. Management

Please see THEATRE E2



New look: The Star Southfield is the state-of-the-art in movie theater design.