Actor takes on many roles in 'Anniversary Party'

MOVIES

BY STEPHANIE ANGELYN CASOLA STAFF WRITER

Actor Alan Cumming called Monday, June 18, to chat about his new film, an introspective, intimate look at the life of a Holintimate look at the life of a Hol-lywood couple on the edge, The Anniversary Party, which he co-wrote, directed, produced and starred in with actress Jennifor Jason Leigh. The story centers on The Ther-rians. a couple whose life

The story centers on The Ther-rians, a couple whose life appears to be coming back together, aven while they're filling apart at the seams. On the morning of their sixth wed-ding anniversary and after a yoarlong separation, the couple had accided to work out their difyou'd think. We made up

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ferences. The film details the next 24 hours at a party in their honor. The film opens in metro area theaters this Friday, June 22.

Z. Here's what the Tony awardwinning actor had to say: *O&E*: Tell me where the idea for *The Anniversary Party* came

The first of the first of the first of the form. Also Cumming: "Jennifer had just done a dogma film in Africa and I was staying with her when she came back. She was talking all about how great it was to work with digital video. Although wo'd known each other, we hadn't done hardly anything together. We made up a little story. We got our friends. It blossomed from there."

GUIDE TO THE

United Artists Theatres Bargain Matines Daily, for all show starting before 600 PM Same day advance ticlets available. NV - No VLP, tickets accepted

O&E: How long did it take from the time you had the idea until the film was completed? A.C.: "We started writing the treatment in October. About February we sold that treatment. Eventually, we wrote the script (when Fine Line Features seid

(when Fine Line Features said they) were going to buy it. There were a couple of weeks of drafts and changes. We told people the story so many times, it got so embellished, we knew exactly what we wanted to happen in every sene" every scene." O&E: How did you manage to balance writing the story, direct-ing, producing and then finally starring in the film? A.C.: "It was much easier than

MOVIES

WHAT'S THE WORST THAT COULD HAMPOR (PC33) PEAR HARDON (PC33) SHEEL (PC3) ANGEL TYES (P A KORGHT'S TALE (PC33) THE MUNICHT STALE (PC33)

A.C.: "It was much easier than you'd think. We made up the

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story together and really when it came time to direct it, we didn't delineate. What else? Oh the act-ing (he laugha). The acting was really easy. Of course, we knew the characters so well." O&E: Tell me about your char-actor, Joe Thorrian, and the qualities you admired about him. A.C.: "I like his openness. I like the fact that he's ort of this (guy who believes) 'anything's possible. Some of the negative thing people think are true. He's like a little puppy, always looking for something apendy. I like the way he really believes he really loves her. He's very in-the-moment and kind of selfish. In a way, he's not very responsi-ble."

In a way, he hot only response ble: Odd: What do you hope peo-ple will take away from secing this film? A.C.: "The lessons you learn in life. It's basically about (how) relationships are hard. Whether you're 25 years old and just starting out, there are lots of things to juggle. It's just difficult to have a relationship with another person and have it lest. Life is hard. Life is not like the movies."

Life is nard. Life is not nev the movies." O&E: Tell me about choosing the cast, which is made up of mostly friends. A.C. if was so nice. There is a kind of closeness when you know the people you're working with...They were playing parts that were a version of them-selves."

Construction of the service of the s



Celebrated: Actors Alan Cumming and Jennifer Jason Leigh try their hand at writing and directing with "The Anniversary Party," which hits metro area movie theaters this Friday, June 22.

to work with a lot of those actors. to work with a lot of those actors. She took the part and was so clever in it and curious. She's clever the film as about the glass O&E: Tell me about the glass the comment on the fragility of ing cleash cures and and that cort of stuff. Hollywood is sort of a facada, nice toeth but under-neath its sort of crumbling. It's book, a novel. I want to try and thing, where's the mess. O&E: The the mess. A.C.: The about people living the tot the totth but under-thinking, where's the mess. O&E: The totth mess. A.C.: The about people living A.C.: The about sort of a A.C.: The about people living A.C.: The about sort of a book, a novel. I want to try and A.C.: The Anniuversary Party show. clever in it and curious. She's really amaring. Odd: Toll me about the glass house, where the film is set, and its comment on the fragility of ifs of relationships. A.C.; T's about people living in glass houses and all that act of staff. Hollywood is sort of facade, noise tooth but under-nenth its sort of crumbling. It's wery fragils, that houses. I sopt wery fragils, that houses. I sopt of diff. The film was sheat in just of staff. Hollywood is sort of a meth its sort of crumbling. It's of staff. Hollywood is sort of a meth its sort of crumbling. It's of staff. Toll me sould have a neath its sort of crumbling. It's of staff. Hollywood is sort of a meth its sort of crumbling. It's of the noise sould have a meth its sort of crumbling. It's of the noise of the meas. Odd: To gline it is of the sould have a meth its sort of crumbling. It's mething about it, we could shoot

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Talking animals steal the show in 'Doctor Dolittle 2'

BY MICHAEL MURPHY SPECIAL WRITER

Breach warren Breach warren Breach warren Mals talk? It's hard to say, but on TV shows, in commercials and at the movies they're talking more and more. And wo're still laughing. In Doctor Dolittle 2, which, like the 1998 film remarks of Doc-tor Dolittle stars Eddio Murphy, the good veterinarian doean't just talk to the animals, the ani-mals talk back. The film places Murphy at the head of an effort to says a forest full of animals and an endan-gered Pacific Western Bear (named Ave and voiced by Lisa Kudrew) from an out developer. And whether the animal lines style, the east of critters has a lot to say about its impending destruction. A subplet in the film puts

destruction. A subplot in the film puts Murphy at odds with his teenage daughter for reasons of adoles-cence and at odds with his wife for reasons of inattention.

for reasons of instantion. After all, Dolittle convinces his family to trade a trip to Europe for a stay in a rustic cabin in the woods after he gots the call of the wild from a mobsterish rac-com (Michael Rapapert). John Dolittle's proposed remo-dy to ford off development of the forest is to find a Pacific Golden Bear in capitvity and reintro-duce it to the wild so it can mate

with Ava. He finds one named Archie in a circus. The only prob-lem is that Archie sings *Born* To *Be Wild*, but the forest is not the kind of "wild" he's talking about. At one point, bemoaning his intended love's lack of interest in a citified bear, Archie raids the Dolitics' icebox and overdoeses on Ben & Jerry's. At first cool to the idea of hipping himself to the ways of the wilderness, he even-tually comes around, only to be stalled by the nasty doings of the film's development villains. Will the forest be saved? Natu-

film's development villains. Will the forest be saved? Natu-rally, you might say, when the wild animals call on their domes-ticated brethren to help forestall the destruction of their home.

Main plot

So the main plot "save the farm" story and the subplot is pretty thin, too. Never mind, director Steve Carr would tell you, it's the animal chatter that matters. reprises his role in this summer's animal chatter ing comedy, Dr. Doolittle

tell you, it's the animal cnauer that matters. For the most part, and despite his maic facial expressions and vocal intonations, Murphy takes a comedic back seat throughout the movie and lets the animals do their thing. Some of these things will get the kids heads, but that's the kind of mix the makers of Doctor something for all ages. Other voices featured in Dr.

Fall in love with 'Moulin Rouge'

Brancessmerger Warring grocessmergers.homecomm.net The grocets thing you'll ever tearn is to love and be loved in tearn. The mysteries of romance res-main throughout Maulin Rouge, an electrifying movie that uses wodern-era pop tunes to tell the story of two star-crossed lovers turing the turn of the 19th cen-tury in Paris. From Madonna to Nirvana, movie juxtaposes a variety of it songs and chorcegoraphic stunusual cinematic superineses song, Razame, played to a class-sicitango. It's hero. Direct on Bar Luhrmann wei-met you to the Moulin Rouge, anightchub for the underworld whore dark red lipatick and subidering glances intoxicate

Moulin Rouge brings fireworks to the big screen.

revelors like a cheap carnival ride. It's here we meet Satine, played by Nicole Kidman, the city's meat famous courtesan roal theater. Ambitious and glamorous, it seems nothing will stop Satine from reaching her dream - until she meet Chris-tian, played by Ewan McGregor, a dashing young writer from America who lands in Paris to learn showilore and freedom. Through his words and eathuu siasm, Christian manages to cowince Satine that nothing is more important than love itself. Her carcer is quickly at stake when she's forced to choose

Dolitile 2 include Norm Macdon-ald, Phil Proctor, Frankie Muniz, Mandy Moore, Jamie Kennedy , John Leguizamo, Isaac Hayes, Andy Dick, Bob Odenkirk, David Cross, Jacob Fargas and Rence Taylor.

Michael Murphy is a Livonia

between the poor Christian and a powerful Duke, who wants to finance her theater dreams. Both Kidman and McGregor: provide wonderful song and dance performances. The chem-istry between these two is terrif-ic, similar to Meryl Streep and Robert Redford in *Out of Africa*. Adding yet another tragia-touch to this whimsical tale, wo hearn from the opening scene that Satine, the "Sparking Dia-mond" of the Moulin Rouge, ig-dying from tuberculosis. Moulin Rouge brings fireworks to the big screen. It's not a movie for veryone - some might find it.

o the big screen. It's not a movie or everyone - some might find it bit too gaudy without enough

But if you're searching for but if you're searching for some passion, some love and some romance, this movie is defi-nitely for you. I give it four cigars and a snifter of brandy.

