

COMING ATTRACTIONS

SCHEDULED TO OPEN FRIDAY, AUG. 9

BLOOD WORK

Retired FBI director Terry McCaleb, who has recently had a heart transplant, is hired by Gracie Rivers to investigate the death of her sister, Gloria, who happens to have given McCaleb his heart. On the case, he soon deduces that the killer, who staged the murder to look like a random robbery, may actually be a serial killer Terry was trailing for years in the FBI. Stars Clint Eastwood, Jeff Daniels, Wanda De Jesus, Anjelica Huston, Tina Lifford, Paul Rodriguez, Dylan Walsh. Directed by Clint Eastwood. (Warner Bros.)

XXX

Vin Diesel stars as an extreme sports athlete called Triple X hired by a government agency who turns him into a secret agent or a covert mission. He must use his extreme skills to destroy a dangerous terrorist cell.

Featured players include Samuel L. Jackson as a government agent, rapper Eve as the athlete's business partner and Martin Scorsese as the leader of the terrorist organization. Rob Cohen directs the action, making his first since completing *The Fast and the Furious* in 2001. (Columbia Pictures/Revolution Studios) Rated PG-13

SCHEDULED TO OPEN FRIDAY, AUG. 16

BLUE CRUSH

This is the story of two young women working as hotel maids in a remote Maui community have nothing else to do with their time, so they surf, and become very good at it, eventually entering a traditionally all-male surf competition. Stars Michelle Rodriguez, Kate Bosworth, Mika Boorem, Matthew Davis, Sanece Lake, Fallon Love. Directed by John Stockwell. (Universal Pictures) Rating TBD.

THE ADVENTURES OF PLUTO NASH

Pluto Nash, the owner of a nightclub on the Moon in 2087, finds himself in hot water when he refuses to sell his club to the local mob. Stars Eddie Murphy, Randy Quaid, Rosario Dawson, Peter Boyle, Itteana Douglas, Pam Grier, Jay Mohr, Joe Pantoliano, James Rebhorn, Victor

Varrado. Directed by Ron Underwood. (Warner Bros.)

THE GOOD GIRL

The story centers on Justine (Jennifer Aniston), who longs to have a child with her husband Phil (John C. Reilly) but has so far been unable to conceive. She wonders if all the pot he smokes with his best friend, Bobba (Tim Blake Nelson) might be the reason why. Justine finds a sperm male in Holden (Lake Gyllenhaal), a passionate man who represents a chance for her to escape into a new world of emotional and sexual awakening. But when the affair moves from liberation to poisonous obsession, Justine finds herself ensnared in the chaotic web of blackmail, jealousy and love. Miguel Arteta ("STAR MAPS") directs the comedy, marking his first since completing *CHUCK & BUCK* in 2000. (Fox Searchlight) Rated R

THE MID SAYS IN THE PICTURE

Traces the meteoric rise, fall, and rise again of legendary Hollywood producer Robert Evans. As chief of production at Paramount Pictures, Evans was responsible for bringing some of the greatest films of the era to the screen, including *The Godfather*, *Rosemary's Baby*, *Love Story*, *The Odd Couple*, *The Informant*, *Harold and Maude*, and *Chinatown*. Adapted from Mr. Evans' tell-all autobiography, the movie takes the audience on an intimate journey into the mind of this Hollywood legend. (FOCUS Features) Rated R

POSSESSION

Maud Bailey (Gwyneth Paltrow), a brilliant English academic given to doing things by the book, is researching the life and work of poet Christabel LeMotte (Jennifer Ehle). Roland Mitchell (Aaron Eckhart) is an upstart American scholar in London on a fellowship to study the great Randolph Henry Ash (Jeremy Northam), now best known for a collection of rapturous, late-life poems dedicated to his wife. When Maud and Roland discover a cache of love letters that appear to be from Ash to LeMotte, they follow a trail of clues across England to the Continent, chasing the journey of the impassioned couple a century earlier. (USA Films) Rated PG-13

THE RISING BY BRUCE SPRINGSTEEN

Bruce Springsteen doesn't pretend to understand what happened last Sept. 11.

What he does know is that music can sometimes help make sense of the senseless, or at least offer a balm. That's his conviction through *The Rising*, a surprisingly sunny pop disc at its core.

By staying away from populist revenge songs or manipulative weepers, Springsteen sidesteps clichés to make the first essential music about the aftermath of the attacks. He inhabits relatable characters — the spouse of a rescue worker who climbed the World Trade Center stairs to death, another newly widowed who stares at the "empty impression in the bed where you used to be."

Even songs he wrote before Sept. 11 can be viewed in a new context: the Asbury Park of *New York, the narrator of Nothing Man* could be a cop suffering from survivor's guilt.

The stark song *Paradise* speaks in the voices of a suicide bomber and the suicidal lover of a Pentagon victim who longs for the peace of drowning. At the end, the person chooses life.

And so does Springsteen. His tonics are the old-fashioned values: faith, hope and love. *The Rising* centers on personal connections lost and sought among the survivors; it's no coincidence that the word "rise" appears in eight of this disc's 15 songs.

It's Springsteen's first full album with his E Street Band

in 18 years, easily the most aggressively accessible since *Born in the USA*.

He wants this music heard, talked about, danced to. He wants to uplift.

Waiting on a Sunny Day, Countin' on a Miracle and Let's Be Friends (Skin to Skin) are bouncy pop songs on the order of *Tinny Heart*.

The new *Mary's Place* is a raver about chasing the blues away with a party. Both the title cut and *My City of Ruins* offer gospel-like redemption, their placement at the disc's end meant to leave a distinct impression.

The E Street Band sounds tougher, though less nuanced. New producer Brendan O'Brien brings new ideas: Drum loops, cellos and even Pakistani vocalists.

The album's chief weakness is its 75-minute length; editing out *Further on (Up the Road)* and *The Fuse* would have made a more succinct statement.

The Rising offers an outward-looking Springsteen infused with a sense of purpose. He seems to realize he has a job to do for his country and the New York area he calls home. He's made an album for needy music fans, not for himself.

— David Baudet, AP Writer

X BY DEF LEPPARD

This collection of power ballads from Def Leppard is allegedly all new material, but it seems to have been transmitted directly from somewhere deep in the mid-1980s.

Of course, that's when the British arena-rock group had

AUDIO REVIEWS

its greatest success with 1987's *Hysteria*, featuring such air-guitar enthusiast anthems as *Pour Some Sugar on Me* and *Love Bites*.

X, so-named because it's their 10th studio album, is a pale echo of their sexually charged rock 'n' roll past, and its songs could be lesser B-sides to their more popular singles.

The music is standard guitar and drum dirges with lyrics straight out of adolescent angst poetry: "I can't sleep at night/ The darkness enslaves me/ I turn out the light/ And no one can save me begins" *Gravity*; the album's eighth track.

Virtually every song is a hopeless collage of clichés, whining for love or warning about the power of love.

X has little to offer that countless glam-rock albums of the past haven't already expressed.

— Anthony Breznican, AP Writer

ROSES BY KATHY MATTEA

Kathy Mattea is taking a chance with a new label — and the label's willing to take a chance with her eclectic mix of country, folk and Celtic on *Roses*. Somehow, it works.

Her lyrical voice lifts delightfully with story songs such as *That's All the Lumber You Sent* and *Who We Are*, rocks a little with Celtic overtones on *Guns of Love*, and works beautifully on the poignant *Ashes in the Wind*, written by her husband, Jon Venable, about a love lost too soon and a lover taken too early. A subtle undercurrent of spirituality seasons all four.

The largely acoustic album

uses an occasional string section with an otherwise economical background that tosses in a concertina, Celtic whistles and a harmonium along with the more traditional fiddle, mandolin, guitar and drums to make things interesting.

Two instrumental tunes — an Irish air and jig — add to the menu of an album that makes Mattea's chance-taking appetizing.

— Tom Gardner, AP Writer

FACES & NAMES BY DAVE PIRNER

Soul Asylum frontman Dave Pirner has ventured into the realm of solo projects with less-than-stellar results.

Many of the songs on his new CD, *Faces & Names*, have the right elements — decent hooks, easy rhythms, guitar solos, even the occasional horn. Yet when compiled, the elements just sound formulaic and repetitive.

The album does have a few high points. The melancholy *Teach Me to Breathe* has a solid groove and a catchy chorus.

The piano-tinged soothing melody of *Start Treating People Right* couples well with Pirner's husky vocals.

Overall, *Faces & Names* lacks a definitive sound to set it apart from the hordes of roots rock albums that have come before it. Fans of Soul Asylum might appreciate the new material, but those hoping to be blown away by a unique offering from the band's frontman will probably be disappointed.

— Angela Watercutter, AP Writer

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with the Detroit Symphony Orchestra
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Thomas Wilkins, conductor

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