

COMING ATTRACTIONS

Scheduled to open Friday, July 12
"COURAGE UNDER FIRE"
Drama set against the backdrop of the Gulf War. An army tank commander with a clouded record is placed in charge of the review of a female helicopter pilot's candidacy for the Medal of Honor. In the course of his inquiry he uncovers the facts of the woman's death in the line of duty and comes to grips with his own feelings. Stars Denzel Washington, Meg Ryan, "LOVE STAR"



Comedy adventure: NBA superstar Shaquille O'Neal stars as a genie with an attitude in Touchstone Pictures' new live-action comedy adventure "Kazaam," opening July 17 at metro Detroit movie theaters.

"Hunchback" memorable

BY DAVID GOODMAN ASSOCIATED PRESS WIRETER

From the wicked stepmother in "Snow White," to the heart-rending deaths of loving parents in "Bambi" and "The Lion King," the folks at Disney have shown themselves well-prepared to risk scaring younger members of the audience.

Each time, a few wonder if they've gone too far. Then people go see the film, and the finished animations are so full of lush imagery and memorable characters that they cast a spell upon moviegoers.

That's how it goes with "The Hunchback of Notre Dame," a charming, colorful version of Victor Hugo's gothic novel set in 15th century Paris.

Indeed, this ambitious fantasy makes a strong claim to be the best of Disney's animated features. It's a sophisticated tale with dazzling visual effects, a great score from eight-time Academy Award-winner Alan Menken, and a selfless hero.

This Quasimodo (voiced by Plymouth native Tom Hulce) is a sweet-spirited young man who spends his days talking to pigeons and friendly gargoyles and making figurines of the people he sees in the square below Notre Dame, the cathedral where he's consigned to live by the evil Judge Frollo (Anthony Jay).

He's a far cry from the fearsome figure of earlier movies. Yes, this Quasimodo has abnormal features — bulging eye sockets, a bit of a staggering gait and of course, the hump — but he's basically a regular guy who wants to see what it's like outside the stone walls.

When we take up with "Quasi" that's what they call him — he has gotten egged on by his friends, three gargoyles. He bungee-jumps out of his imposing prison and joins the "Feast of Fools" celebration on the cobble streets below.

At first, he's cheered by the raucous Parisians who crown him "King of Fools." But the crowd suddenly turns nasty. They tie Quasi down and begin to pelt him with fruit.

He is saved from these humiliations by Esmeralda (Demi Moore), a gypsy dancer whose people are hated by the dastardly Frollo. Quasimodo is smitten.

Frollo begins a campaign to capture the defiant girl, assisted by one of the king's guards, a handsome captain named Phoebus (Kevin Kline). But Phoebus quickly falls for Esmeralda, too.

After threatening to reduce Paris to ashes in the quest, Frollo finally nabs Esmeralda and sentences her to burn as a witch. So Quasimodo and Phoebus must join forces to pluck her from the fire.

To balance the slightly somber plot, directors Gary Trousdale and Kirk Wise ("Beauty and the Beast") weave in brilliant computer-generated images of medieval crowds and exquisitely detailed renderings of the famous cathedral.

Advertisement for the movie "Families Can Win Movie Passes!" featuring a photo of a family and text about a special sneak preview screening of the new family comedy "Kazaam" on Monday, July 15 at the Wait Disney Pictures, Oakland Mall Cinemas.

Advertisement for the movie "Harriet the Spy" featuring a photo of Rachel McAdams and text about the film's release on Wednesday, July 10.

Large advertisement for the movie "Harriet the Spy" featuring a large illustration of the character Harriet and text about the film's release on Wednesday, July 10.

GUIDE TO THE MOVIES

Main movie listings section containing various theater advertisements, movie titles, showtimes, and contact information for different venues across the Detroit area.