Kids deserve better movies than 'Jungle 2 Jungle'



No longer sat-isfied with sim-ply remaking their own pic-tures, the people at Walt Disney

have begun importing movie ideas from over-seas. Worse yet they're being coy

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Information for "Jurgle 2

Jungle" barely makes mention of "Un Indien Dans La Ville," a 1994 French comedy about a boy

named Mimi-Siku, raised in the Amazon jungle, who visits the big city with his recently-discovered father.

Disney released a dubbed version of that movie as "Little Indian, Big City" just a couple of years ago to middling success, Audiences hopefully won't realize that they've already seen this story until they're in the theater. The American version stars Tim Allen as a commodities trad-

Tim Allen as a commodities trador who must travel to the Amazon jungle to dissolve his marriage to a woman (Jo Beth Williams) who has been living there since they split. When she

reveals that they have a son, Allen inadverteatly offers to take the wild child to visit him in New York.

Among the boy's possessions are a loin cloth, a blow gun, and a pet tarantula. The gags should surprise no one, especially after Dianoy's extensive TV advertising companier.

Diancy's extensive TV advertising campaig.
While he's charming enough
on the small screen hit "Home
Improvement," local guy-madegood Tim Allon looks ill-at-ease
on the big screen. Neither he nor
c-star Martin Short (as his nervous business partner) are able
to develop any comit rapport to develop any comic rapport

during their scuffle with the Russian mafia.

Mimi-Siku is played by Sam Huntington, the result of the usual Disney nationwide search to find the perfect little kid. Ho's bright oyed and lovable and even gets a kiss from a 12-year-love interest that looks suspiciously like a miniature Helen Hunt. Even New York City, which the movie films extensively in, comes off surprisingly sterile.

When Mimi-Siku. still drossad

ly in, comes off surprisingly sterile.

When Mimi-Siku, still dressed in his jungle garb, strolls through a happily integrated Central Park, even the bums look somehow savory. You have many tribes in your village, the boy says poignantly. What he really means is that Disney has enough money to completely yeatock the park with ethnic stereotypes, including a Hassidic lew who broak dances in porhaps the movies depices acene. Were the Disney movies was, raised on any better? Certainly not. 'Son of Flubber' and "The Computer Wore Tennis Shoes' employed the same hammy television actors in contrived stories that always seemed to end on



Family feature: Raised in the Amazon, Mimi-Siku (Sam Huntington, center) shakes up the routine life of his father (Tim Allen, left) and business partner Richar (Martin Short, right) in "Jungle 2 Jungle.

the lamest of all possible notes.
I know the movie is for kids. I know I should lighten up. But with so few appropriate choices for them to see, maybe kids deserve better than another tired old Disney retread. John Monaghan welcomes your

ten to him on Dave Dixon's Radio Show AM 1270, 8 p.m. to midnight Saturdays. To leave John a voice mail message, dial (313) 953-2047 on a touch-tone phone;

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SCREEN SCENE

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

Birmingham Theatre 211 S. Woodward, Birmingham. Call Woodward, Birmingham. Call Gillo 644-FILM for information. (\$6.50; \$4.25 matinees and seniors)

Oscar-winning films — The heater has gotten shold of all five contenders for the Best Picture Oscar for a limited engagement March 14-24. Party Maguire" can be seen individually or in special packages that include a black tie gala and simulcast viewing of the Academy Awards on March 24.

Detroit Film Theatre Detroit Institute of Arts, 5020 Woodward, Fornadae, Call 6810 institute of Arts, 5020 Woodward, Pernadae, Call 6810 institute

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THE ENGLISH PATIENT

"Buckaroo Banzai" has developed a small cult following with Peter Weller as an expert who races across the eighth dimension to save the world. Shown on big-sercen video. (Free "The Usual Suspecta" (USA 1995), 9:30 p.m. Wednesday March 19. Gabriel Byrns leads a troupe of missit crooks in this well-executed thriller. The talented ensemble includes Oscar-winner Kevin Spacey, (\$2) Main Art Theatre 118 N. Main Street at 11 Mile, Royal Oak. Films play through at least Thursday, unless noted etherwise Call (910) 542-0180 for information and showtimes.

wise. Call (810) 642-0180 for information and showtimes. (\$6.50; \$4 students, seniors and matinee; \$3 twilight) "Kolya" (Czechoslovakia 1996). This Oscar-nominated for-eign film finds a marriage of convenience turn into a personal revolution for a middle-aged, down-on-his-luck cellist.



BEST of THE: ACMINATION OF THE STATE OF THE

The Birmingham Theatre Filmfest: March 14-23

The Birmingham Theatre presents: "Best of the: Academy Filmfest" featuring the five Oscar-Nominated Films for the Best Picture of 1996: Fargo, The English Patient, Jerry Maguire, Shine and Secrets and Lies. All five fillms will be shown each day at different times.

The Birmingham Theatre Festival Package

By purchasing an "Academy B" festival package for \$45 you will receive a ticket to all five films, two guest passes to a future film, a filmfest t-shirt; filmfest poster and a chance to enter a special drawing for a Birmingham Theatre Premiere Pass good for one year of unlimited movies.

The Academy Award® Black tie Benefit: March 24

The Birmingham Theatre is holding its Academy Award® black tie benefit gala on Oscar Night, March 241 By purchasing an "Academy A" package for \$125 you will receive: a ticket to the Academy Awards Simulcast Party in the Birmingham Theatre, admittance to the pregiow reception, aftergiow reception and live auction, filmfest gifts, entry in a special drawing and a ticket to all five films during the filmfest.

For additional information or to purchase tickets by phone call 810-644-3419 Tickets can also be purchased directly from the theatre box office

THE BIRMINGHAM THEATRE 211 South Woodward Avenue Birmingham, Michigan 810.644.FILM









A portion of the proceeds will benefit The Karmanos Institute and Variety The Childr This event is neither sponsored by nor affiliated with the Academy of Motlon Picture Art