MOVIES

Hollywood 'Godzilla' just another trip to Jurassic Park

TICKETS PLEASE

JOHN MONAGHAN

Size doesn't mean squat. Sure, Hollywood spent $120 million to make Godzilla look more realistic, but he's also lost his soul.

Soul? you ask incredulously. Are we talking about the same Godzilla, who, since his first screen appearance in 1954, has been comprised of a Japanese guy in a rubber suit kicking Tenka trucks and stomping model kit versions of Tokyo?

For all his faults, Godzilla was dedicated and unapologetic when it came to his dubious exploits. And I was right there with him. Like most kids, I watched Godzilla (in the pre-cable days, when Channel 7 really was Channel 7) battle that giant lobster on the 4:30 p.m. movie. Unlike most adults, I still think these movies have a kind of kookie merit.

The new "Godzilla" is the product (and I stress product) of Roland Emmerich and Dean Devlin, the creators of "Independence Day." In that summer mega-hit, alien space ships were the villains and, though it looked like the script as well as the special effects were generated by computer, it paid a decent homage.

After all the hype about what Godzilla looks like, our man is nothing more than a cross between a Kimodo dragon and a T-Rex. Heck, he's not even a man anymore, but a new breed of asexual reptile who lays eggs from which spring a whole nest of hungry baby dinosaurs. It might as well be called "Jurassic Park 3."

Still, expect a wink or two to loyal fans. An early scene with the Japanese fishing boat that becomes the lizard king's first on-screen meal has the proper atmosphere. The one surviving seaman, eyes rolling into the back of his head, keeps repeating "Gojira, Gojira," (the original movie's Japanese title), which the American media butchers as Godzilla.

New York's skyscrapers and labyrinth streets provide a fitting home for Godzilla to roam (what other city is so big that a dinosaur could get lost in it?). These scenes are the movie's best, as a battalion of helicopters engage in dogfights reminiscent of "Star Wars."

In fact, several movies will spring to mind when watching the new "Godzilla," all of them better.

Matthew Broderick plays scientist Nick Tatopolous, plucked from his work with mutant Chernobyl nightcrawlers to join the Stop Godzilla mission. If you didn't guess from his name (butchered by just about everyone in the movie), you know he's Greek because he's got an ethnic *cap and square*, black-rimmed Nina Mouskouri glasses.

His "college sweetheart" (Maria Pitillo) is now an aspiring newspaper reporter who snatches a top secret videotape and gets him fired from the project. He joins up instead with a team of French secret service agents trying to clean up the mess their country made by launching more nuclear bombs.

Even when Godzilla appears, he's drenched in shadows and rain. Most of the movie takes place at night, and in a downpour, presumably to make the creature look less computer generated. (There hasn't been this much effort to hide an actor's flaws since, well, "The Horse Whisperer.")

It doesn't work. This impostor Godzilla isn't fooling anyone. Our only solace is that renewed interest in the green guy may force some video re-releases of the original Toho series, when Godzilla really was, as the original movie's extended title suggests, "King of Monsters."

John Monaghan welcomes your calls and comments. You can listen to him WYUR-1310 AM 6:50 a.m. Fridays. To leave John a voice mail message, dial (734) 953-2047 on a touch-tone phone, mailbox 1866.

CENTROPOLIS EFFECTS

King of Monsters: *The giant creature, Godzilla continues his unmerciful march through the steets of Manhattan in "Godzilla."*

OBSERVER & ECCENTRIC GUIDE TO THE MOVIES

General Cinemas
Bargain matinee daily plus $3.25 (Twi-Lite) show daily

Keego Twin Cinema
Orchard Lake Rd. at Cass Lake Rd.
682-1900
All Seats $1.50 before 6 PM
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FREE PATZING BURGER KING LOT
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THE WEDDING SINGER (PG13)
HUSH (PG 13)

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National Amusements Showcase Cinemas

Showcase Auburn Hills 1-14
2150 N. Opdyke Rd.
Between University & Walton Blvd
810-373-2660
Bargain Matinees Daily.
All Shows until 6 pm
Continuous Shows Daily
Late Shows Wed Thurs. Fri. Sat.

FEAR AND LOATHING IN LAS VEGAS (R)
BULWORTH (R)
GODZILLA (PG13)
QUEST FOR CAMELOT (G)
HORSE WHISPERERS (PG13)
DEEP IMPACT (PG13)
WOO (R)
HE GOT GAME (R)
CITY OF ANGELS (PG13)
TITANIC (PG13)

CALL FOR COMPLETE LISTINGS AND TIMES

Showcase Dearborn 1-8
Michigan & Telegraph
313-561-3449
Bargain Matinees Daily.
All Shows until 6 pm
Continuous Shows Daily
Late Shows Fri. & Sat. & Sun.

GODZILLA (PG13)
QUEST FOR CAMELOT (G)
HORSE WHISPERERS(PG13)
WOO (R)
HE GOT GAME (R)
CITY OF ANGELS (PG13)

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Showcase Pontiac 1-5
Telegraph Sq. Lake Rd. W Side of Telegraph
810-332-0241
Bargain Matinees Daily
• All Shows Until 6 pm
Continuous Shows Daily •

FEAR AND LOATHING IN LAS VEGAS (R)
GODZILLA (PG13)

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Showcase Pontiac 6-12
2405 Telegraph Rd. East side of Telegraph
810-334-6777
Bargain Matinees Daily
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Late Shows Fri. & Sat.

BULWORTH (R)
QUEST FOR CAMELOT (G)
DEEP IMPACT (PG13)
HORSE WHISPERERS (PG13)
HE GOT GAME (R)

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Oak Vadis
Warren & Wayne Rds
313-425-7700
Bargain Matinees Daily
All Shows Until 6 pm
Continuous Shows Daily
Late Shows Wed Thurs. Fri. & Sat.

GODZILLA (PG13)
WOO (R)
PAULIE (PG)
CITY OF ANGELS (PG13)
TITANIC (PG13)

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Showcase Westland 1-8
6500 Wayne Rd.,
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313-729-1060
Bargain Matinees Daily
All Shows Until 6 pm
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Late Shows Wed Thurs. Fri. & Sat.

FEAR AND LOATHING IN LAS VEGAS (R)
BULWORTH (R)
QUEST FOR CAMELOT (G)
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DEEP IMPACT (PG13)

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The World's Best Theatres
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NP GODZILLA (PG13)
NP SUICIDE KINGS (R)
NP QUEST FOR CAMELOT (G)
NP HORSE WHISPERER (PG 13)
PRIMARY COLORS (R)
BARNEY'S GREAT ADVENTURE (G)
TITANIC (PG13)
LOST IN SPACE (PG13)
THE OBJECT OF MY AFFECTION (R)
BLACK DOG (PG13)
GOODWILL HUNTING (R)
PAULIE (PG)

CALL THEATRE FOR THIS WEEK'S FEATURES AND TIMES

CALL FOR COMPLETE LISTINGS AND TIMES

Star Rochester Hills
200 Barclay Circle
853-2260

No one under age 6 admitted for PG13 & R rated films after 6 pm

NP BULWORTH (R) NV
NP GODZILLA (PG13)
NP THE HORSE WHISPERER (PG13)
DEEP IMPACT (PG13)

CALL FOR COMPLETE LISTINGS AND TIMES

Star Southfield
12 Mile between Telegraph and Northwestern, Off I-696
248-353-STAR
No one under age 6 admitted for PG13 & R rated films after 6 pm

NP GODZILLA (PG13)
NP BURWORTH (R)
NP FEAR AND LOATHING IN LAS VEGAS (R)
NP THE HORSE WHISPERER (PG13)
NP QUEST FOR CAMELOT (G)
NP DEEP IMPACT (PG13)
NP WOO (R)
HE GOT GAME (R)
CITY OF ANGELS (PG13)

CALL FOR COMPLETE LISTINGS AND TIMES

Star Winchester
1136 S. Rochester Rd, Winchester Mall
248-656-1160
No one under age 6 admitted for PG13 & R rated films after 6 pm

NP FEAR AND LOATHING IN LAS VEGAS (R)
NP QUEST FOR CAMELOT (G)
PAULIE (PG)
NP SPANISH PRISONER (PG)
TITANIC (PG13)
LES MISERABLES (PG13)
CITY OF ANGELS (PG13)

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United Artists Theatres
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Same day advance tickets available.
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United Artists Fairlane
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ALL TIMES FOR FRI-THURS
MIDNIGHT SHOWS FRIDAY AND SATURDAY ONLY

BULWORTH (R) NV
DEEP IMPACT (PG13) NV
THE SPANISH PRISONER (PG)
THE BIG HIT (R) NV
SLIDING DOORS (PG13)
PAULIE (PG)

FOR COMPLETE LISTINGS AND TIMES

United Artist Oakland
Inside Oakland Mall
248-988-0706

DEEP IMPACT (PG13) NV
PRICE ABOVE RUBIES (R)
SLIDING DOORS (R)
THE BIG HIT (R) NV
ODD COUPLE II (PG13)

CALL FOR COMPLETE LISTINGS AND TIMES

United Artists 12 Oaks
Inside Twelve Oaks Mall
248-349-4311

BULWORTH (R) NV
GODZILLA (PG13) NV
DEEP IMPACT (PG13) NV

CALL FOR COMPLETE LISTINGS AND TIMES

United Artists West River
9 Mile,
2 Block West of Middlebelt
248-788-6572

BULWORTH (R) NV
GODZILLA (PG13) NV
HORSE WHISPERER (PG13)
DEEP IMPACT (PG13) NV
PAULIE (PG) NV
HE GOT GAME (R) NV
QUEST FOR CAMELOT (G) NV
CITY OF ANGELS (PG13) NV

CALL FOR COMPLETE LISTINGS AND TIMES

Birmingham Theatre
211 S. Woodward
Downtown Birmingham
248-644-3419
NP Denotes No Pass Engagements

Order Movie tickets by phone! Call 644-3419 and have your VISA or MasterCard ready! ($.75 ¢ surcharge will apply to all telephone sales)

NP GODZILLA (PG13)
NP BULWORTH (R)
NP THE HORSE WHISPERER (PG13)
DEEP IMPACT (PG13)
NP QUEST FOR CAMELOT (G)
LES MISERABLES (PG13)
SLIDING DOORS (R)

CALL FOR COMPLETE LISTINGS AND TIMES

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$1.00 til 6 pm
After 6 pm $1.50
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Please Call Theatre for Showtimes

PRIMARY COLORS (LR)
U.S. MARSHAL (PG13)
AS GOOD AS IT GETS (PG13)

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CALL 77 FILMS #541
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PRIMARY COLORS (R)
MAJOR LEAGUE: BACK TO THE MINORS (PG13)
MEET THE DEEDLES (PG)
AS GOOD AS IT GETS (PG13)

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S.E. corner M-59 & Williams Lake Rd.

24 Hour Movie Line
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Stadium Seating and Digital sound Makes for the Best Movie Experience in Oakland County
$3.25 (TWI-LITE) SHOWS DAILY

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NP QUEST FOR CAMELOT (G)
NP DEEP IMPACT (PG13)
NP LES MISERABLES (PG13)
NP BLACK DOG (PG13)
NP HE GOT GAME (R)
PAULIE (PG)
OBJECT OF MY AFFECTION (R)
CITY OF ANGELS (PG13)
TITANIC (PG13)

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SUN.-THURS
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Main Art Theatre III
Main - 11 Mile
Royal Oak
(248) 542-0180
$3.00 (TWI-LITE) SHOWS DAILY

THE SPANISH PRISONER (PG)
CHINESE BOX (R)
DEJA VU (PG)

CALL FOR COMPLETE LISTINGS AND TIMES
Children Under 6 Not Admitted

Maple Art Cinema III
4135 W. Maple, West of Telegraph
Bloomfield Hills
248-855-9090
DISCOUNTED SHOWS!!

HORSE WHISPERER (PG13)
ARTEMISIA (R)
DEJA VU (R)

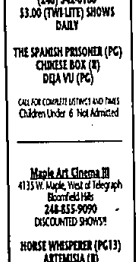
CALL FOR COMPLETE LISTINGS AND TIMES

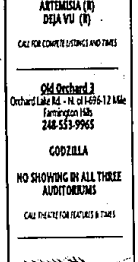
Old Orchard 3
Orchard Lake Rd - N. of I-696-12 Mile
Farmington Hills
248-553-9965

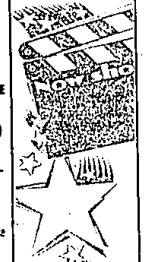
GODZILLA

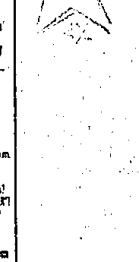
NO SHOWING IN ALL THREE AUDITORIUMS

CALL THEATRE FOR FEATURES & TIMES









COMING ATTRACTIONS

CHRISTINE LOSS

Romance: *Justin (Harry Connick, Jr.) sweeps Birdee (Sandra Bullock) off her feet in "Hope Floats."*

Scheduled to open Friday, May 29

"HOPE FLOATS"
When a woman's picture perfect life comes crashing down around her, she returns home to start over. There her life becomes even more complicated, but she finds the strength to reclaim her life and rediscovers something she had almost given up on, hope. Stars Sandra Bullock, Harry Connick, Jr.

"ALMOST HEROES"
Rollicking comedy about two explorers who lead a band of hopeless and clueless misadventures in a race to beat Lewis & Clark across the uncharted American West. Stars Chris Farley and Matthew Guest.

"BEYOND SILENCE"
Movie set in a small German town chronicles the life of a young girl raised by deaf parents.

"WHIT STILLMAN'S THE LAST DAYS OF DISCO
Set in the late 1970s this romantic comedy centers around a youthful group, living, working, and playing in New York City. Stars Mac Kenzie Astin, Kate Beckinsale, David Conrad.

"WILDE"
Exclusively at the Landmark Main Theatre. A biography of the legendary Irish wit Oscar Wilde. Stars Stephen Fry, Jude Law, Vanessa Redgrave.

Scheduled to open Wednesday, June 3

"I WENT DOWN"
Action thriller about an ex-con forced to team with a small-time hood to find a missing gangster and his loot. Stars Brendan Gleeson, Peter McDonald.

Scheduled to open Friday, June 5

"A PERFECT MURDER"
A wealthy and powerful man hires someone to murder his unfaithful wife. Unknown to him, the man he hires is his wife's lover. This sets off a deadly cat-and-mouse game among the three people involved. Stars Michael Douglas, Gwyneth Paltrow.

Scheduled to open Friday, June 12

"CAN'T HARDLY WAIT"
Comedy about teens graduating from high school and searching for their next move while making a statement about their future and their past.

"HAV PLENTY"
Based on a true story, a funny modern-day love story about a man who wants nothing out of life, except for a woman who has everything. Stars Christopher Scott Cherot who also wrote and directed.

Scheduled to open Friday, June 19

"THE X-FILES"
Inspired by the TV series, the movie follows FBI Special Agents Mulder and Scully as they are drawn into a web of intrigue while investigating the mysterious bombing of a Dallas office building.

Scheduled to open Friday, June 26

"DOCTOR DOLITTLE"
A talented physician finds he has the ability to communicate with animals, who, in turn, teach him a few new things about being human. Stars Eddie Murphy.

Scheduled to open Friday, July 10

"LETHAL WEAPON 4"
Detectives Mutaugh and Riggs are reunited in a struggle to unravel a complex and deadly mission of revenge. Stars Mel Gibson.

SCREEN SCENE

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

Magic Bag – 22920 Woodward, Ferndale. Call (248) 544-3030 for information. ($2)

"Palmetto" (USA-1998). 9:30 p.m. Thursday, May 28. An intricate "film noir" thriller starring Woody Harrelson.

"The Wedding Singer" (USA - 1998). 9:30 p.m. Saturday, May 30. Adam Sandler plays the title character, who falls in love with a young woman (Drew Barrymore) who happens to be already engaged. The movies' first dose of unapologetic '80s nostalgia is a surprising charmer.

Main Art Theatre – 118 N. Main (at 11 Mile Road), Royal Oak. Call (248) 542-0180 for information. ($6.50; $4 students/seniors and matinees; $3 twilight)

"The Spanish Prisoner" (USA-1998). Campbell Scott plays a young businessman who develops a dangerous relationship with a mysterious tycoon (Steve Martin). Expect plenty of fascinating verbal interplay in this latest film written and directed by David Mamet ("Glengarry Glen Ross").

"Deja Vu" (USA - 1998). Another talkfest from writer/director Henry Jaglom, this time about the strange relationships that can sometimes develop between strangers. Victorin Foyt co-wrote and stars with Stephen Dillane and Vanessa Redgrave.

"Wilde" (Britain - 1998). Stephen Fry plays the English playwright Oscar Wilde, whose brilliance in plays ("The Importance of Being Earnest") and stories ("The Portrait of Dorian Gray") were partially eclipsed by his scandalous trial involving a male lover. Starts Friday.

"The Last Days of Disco" (USA-1998). Whit Stillman, the introspective director of "Metropolitan" and "Barcelona," delivers what he calls the third story in a loosely woven triptych about the well-heeled young people who populate New York's club scene in the early 1980s. Starts Friday.

Maple Art Theatre – Maple at Telegraph, Bloomfield. Call (248) 855-9090 for information. ($6.50; $4 before 6 p.m.)

"Artemesia" (France/Italy - 1998). Seventeenth Century painter Artemesia Gentileschi was the first woman of note to make it into the art history book. Writer/director Agnes Merlet focuses on her struggle to work in a male-dominated field as well as the relationship that nearly destroyed her.

"The Horse Whisperer" (USA - 1998). Robert Redford directs and stars in this quiet tale of a man who has the power to heal, in this case a horse who, along with its young rider, was traumatized in a freak accident. Early Oscar predictions have already surfaced for the film and its excellent cast, including Kristin Scott Thomas ("The English Patient") and Diane Wiest as a no-nonsense ranch wife.

"Shooting Fish" (Britain-1998). An American romantic caper comedy about a group of young people who plan the perfect crime.

Redford Theatre – 1730 Lahser Rd. (at Grand River), Detroit. Call (313) 537-2560 for information. ($2.50)

"This Time for Keeps" (USA-1947). 8 p.m. Friday, May 29; 2 p.m. and 8 p.m. Saturday, May 30 (organ overture begins a half hour before showtime). Esther Williams stars in this flashy MGM "aquacaper" which has the distinction of being filmed partially on Mackinac Island. In fact, the pool at the Grand Hotel was built specially to film the star's intricate swimming scenes.