

MOVIES

'Never Been Kissed' is All-American high school fun

BY KEELY WYONK STAFF WRITER kwyonk@oe.homedomain.net You wouldn't recognize Josie Geller in a crowd. She doesn't stand out. But in high school, well that's another story. She's 'Never Been Kissed,' and the cool kids don't like her. Geller's got a problem, she's 25, not 17, and an undercover reporter for the Chicago Sun-Times. If she doesn't 'transition' into the cool clique, she'll lose her job, so will her boss, Gus. That's the story behind 'Never Been Kissed' starring Drew Barrymore as the enterprising Josie who blossoms into a beauty, and John C. Reilly as her cantankerous boss with a heart of gold.

"This is so not a dream," says Geller as the film begins. "I was just trying to do my job when this happened." A copy editor who dreams of being a reporter, Geller gets her chance when Gus' boss Rigort decides he wants to do a story on high schools. He spots Geller, who looks younger than she is, at a staff meeting and gives her the job. Geller's euphoria over getting a break fades when she tells her younger brother Rob (David Arquette). "Remember what they called you in high school," he says — "Josie Grossie." A wave of nausea sweeps over her, but it's too late to turn back. If you've ever wondered about what it would be like to return to

high school after you're all grown up, you'll get a kick out of 'Never Been Kissed.' Who did you hang out with? The brainy nerds or the cool kids? Fashions and music change, but group dynamics don't. There are still the beautiful cool girls, Kristin (Jennifer Aniston), Kristin (Jennifer Aniston) and Gibby (Jordan Ladd) who have the perfect clothes, hair and makeup. Guy Perkins (Jeremy Jordan) is the handsome one, every girl's dream, who makes Brainsy kids like Alyda (Leelee Sobieski) hang out with the other nerds, except now they hang together for protection. You know, safety in numbers.

Geller falls for her English teacher, the very hip Sam Couson (Michael Vartan). "Disguise changes all the rules," he says while talking about Shakespeare. "Disguises can be liberating. They can give you to do things you normally would not do." Geller's doing a lot of things she would normally not do and changes in the process. As she stumbles through high school her co-workers watch and cheer her on in the newsroom. Everything's being taped, and watching Josie in high school is better than a soap opera. Anita (Molly Shannon), the office floozy, visits Josie at school and is mistaken for the sex education teacher. Her lecture is one you'll laugh about for a long time.



Back in school: Drew Barrymore as Josie Geller reads her paper to her English class, while her friend Alyda (Leelee Sobieski, seated, right) listens in 'Never Been Kissed.'

human dragged to the show by their kids. The cast and staff are identified by name and yearbook picture in the credits. A nice touch. Abby Kohn and Marc Silverstein make their screenwriting debut with 'Never Been Kissed.' Raja Gosnell 'Home Alone 3' directs. Barrymore makes her

film debut as producer. "Never Been Kissed" marks Barrymore's debut as a film producer. In 1995, Barrymore and Nancy Juvonen founded Flower Films Inc. In the summer of 1997 they began a two-year, first-look deal with Fox 2000 Pictures, a division of Twentieth Century Fox. "Never Been Kissed" is the first film to go into production.

GUIDE TO THE MOVIES

National Amusements Showcase Cinemas Showtimes: Anthem Hills 1-14 215-N 0242-12 Between University & Wilson Blvd 248-373-2660 Bargain Matinee Daily All Shows start 6 pm Continuous Show Daily Late Show Wed-Thurs. Fri. & Sat. NP DENOTES NO PASS NP FOOLISH (R) NP GO (R) NP NEVER BEEN KISSED (PG-13) NP TWIN DRAGONS (PG-13) NP THE OUT OF TOWNS (PG-13) NP 10 THINGS I HATE ABOUT YOU (PG-13) NP MATRIX (R) NP DOUG'S 1ST MOVIE (G) THE KING AND I (C) BARTY GENIESES (PG) ANALYZE THIS (R) CALL FOR COMPLETE LISTINGS AND TIMES

Star Theatres The York's Best Theaters Bargain Matinee Daily 11:00 AM Show Starting before 6:00 pm New Accepting All Major Cards NP Denotes No Pass Engagement Star Cinemas Lakeshore Crossing Great Lakes Shopping Center 248-454-3366 NP NEVER BEEN KISSED (PG-13) NP GO (R) NP TWIN DRAGONS (PG-13) NP FOOLISH (R) NP THE MATRIX (R) NP 10 THINGS I HATE ABOUT YOU (PG-13) NP THE OUT OF TOWNS (PG-13) NP ED TV (PG-13) NP DOUG'S 1ST MOVIE (G) FORCES OF NATURE (PG-13) SHAKESPEARE IN LOVE (R) SAYING PRIVATE RYAN (R) ANALYZE THIS (R) MOOD SQUAD (R) THE KING AND I (C) BARTY GENIESES (PG) TRUZE COME (R) SHAKESPEARE IN LOVE (R) CALL FOR COMPLETE LISTINGS AND TIMES

Star Rochester Hills 200 Barclay Circle 833-2266 No one under age 6 admitted for PG-13 & rated films after 8 pm NP NEVER BEEN KISSED (PG-13) NP GO (R) NP THE OUT OF TOWNS (PG-13) MATRIX (R) 10 THINGS I HATE ABOUT YOU (PG-13) TRUZE COME (R) THE FORCES OF NATURE (PG-13) ANALYZE THIS (R) SHAKESPEARE IN LOVE (R) CALL FOR COMPLETE LISTINGS AND TIMES

Star Southfield 12 Mile between Telegraph and Woodward, 5015 248-553-3749 No one under age 6 admitted for PG-13 & rated films after 8 pm NP NEVER BEEN KISSED (PG-13) NP TWIN DRAGONS (PG-13) NP THE MATRIX (R) NP 10 THINGS I HATE ABOUT YOU (PG-13) THE OUT OF TOWNS (R) THE KING AND I (C) DOUG'S 1ST MOVIE (G) FORCES OF NATURE (PG-13) TRUZE COME (R) THE KING AND I (C) BARTY GENIESES (PG) ANALYZE THIS (R) SHAKESPEARE IN LOVE (R) CALL FOR COMPLETE LISTINGS AND TIMES

Star Westchester 11365 S. Rochester Rd., Westchester 248-656-1160 No one under age 6 admitted for PG-13 & rated films after 8 pm NP TWIN DRAGONS (PG-13) MOOD SQUAD (R) LIFE IS BEAUTIFUL (PG-13) DOUG'S 1ST MOVIE (G) BARTY GENIESES (PG) THE KING AND I (C) WING COMMANDER (PG-13) OCTOBER SKY (PG) PROMISE OF EGYPT (PG) SAYING PRIVATE RYAN (R) & MAN (R) CALL FOR COMPLETE LISTINGS AND TIMES

Star Woodbridge 211 S. Woodward Downtown Birmingham 248-644-3419 No one under 6 Pass Engagements Order Movie Tickets by phone! Call 844-3493 and have your VISA or MasterCard ready! (A 7% surcharge will apply to all telephone sales) NEVER BEEN KISSED (PG-13) NP GO (R) NP A WALK ON THE MOON (R) NP 10 THINGS I HATE ABOUT YOU (PG-13) ANALYZE THIS (R) ED TV (PG-13) SHAKESPEARE IN LOVE (R) CALL FOR COMPLETE LISTINGS AND TIMES

Star Westland 1-8 6800 Wayne Rd. One E. of Warren Rd. 313-729-1060 Bargain Matinee Daily All Shows start 6 pm Continuous Show Daily Late Show Wed-Thurs. Fri. & Sat. NP DENOTES NO PASS NP NEVER BEEN KISSED (PG-13) NP GO (R) NP THE OUT OF TOWNS (PG-13) NP 10 THINGS I HATE ABOUT YOU (PG-13) SHAKESPEARE IN LOVE (R) NP THE KING AND I (C) BARTY GENIESES (PG) ANALYZE THIS (R) CALL FOR COMPLETE LISTINGS AND TIMES

Star Westland 1-8 313-561-3449 Bargain Matinee Daily All Shows start 6 pm Continuous Show Daily Late Show Fri. & Sat. & Sun. NP DENOTES NO PASS NP FOOLISH (R) NP GO (R) NP TWIN DRAGONS (PG-13) NP 10 THINGS I HATE ABOUT YOU (PG-13) NP MATRIX (R) NP MOOD SQUAD (R) ANALYZE THIS (R) BARTY GENIESES (PG) CALL FOR COMPLETE LISTINGS AND TIMES

Star Westland 1-8 313-561-3449 Bargain Matinee Daily All Shows start 6 pm Continuous Show Daily Late Show Fri. & Sat. & Sun. NP DENOTES NO PASS NP FOOLISH (R) NP GO (R) NP TWIN DRAGONS (PG-13) NP 10 THINGS I HATE ABOUT YOU (PG-13) NP MATRIX (R) NP MOOD SQUAD (R) ANALYZE THIS (R) BARTY GENIESES (PG) CALL FOR COMPLETE LISTINGS AND TIMES

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THE MATRIX

BY HUGH GALLAGHER STAFF WRITER hgallagher@oe.homedomain.net The ads ask "What is the Matrix?" The answer is the first hit movie of 1999, a springtime appetizer before George Lucas' new "Star Wars" arrives. Written and directed by Andy and Larry Wachowski, "The Matrix" is a visually interesting sci-fi comic book with mythic pronouncements that don't seriously intrude on the action. It's reasonably entertaining if you don't take it too seriously or become bogged down by logic, even its own squirrely internal logic.

Not to worry. This movie is really about stunning stop motion photography, state-of-the-art computer graphics, karate, explosions and well choreographed gunplay. It's violent, but it's the kind of fast, mindless, non specific violence that we associate with comic books and Saturday matinees. The Wachowskis visual imagination is richer than their story telling skills. They've created a mock world within a mock world and both are convincing in their way. The story has been called confusing by some reviewers, but

'The Matrix' is entertaining summer movie appetizer

humans in line while they suck human energy (or something like that). And our hero Neo is the One, the Messiah, the whatever who can save mankind and free their minds. Laurence Fishburne, usually a serious actor in Morpheus, the leader of an underground movement. He and his small cadre have broken free and inhabit the real world (a pretty dreary place). Also in the cadre is Trinity (Carrie Ann Moss), a woman who has also discovered the truth and is willing to have her prophesy fulfilled. As you can see, with names like Neo, Morpheus and Trinity, we are getting pretty deep into symbolism.

if you pay attention you'll be able to follow it without too much trouble. That's not the same thing as saying it makes any rational sense, of course. Reeves and Fishburne bring some serious acting chops to their roles and probably had a good time. Reeves is quite good, at swaggering in a long black coat. The real acting honors go to Australian actor Hugo Weaving as the top bad guy. The costume here is that the bad guys all wear like Secret Service agents, which is also a nod to "Men in Black." They wear dark glasses and radios in their ears. Weaving is slick, no nonsense government agent. The visuals include some flying, kick boxing fights between Reeves and Weaving, bullets that are visible in their and some dramatic morphing. The Wachowskis also have a sense of humor and there are some visual references to the Bible, Greek mythology, "Alice in Wonderland," "The Wizard of Oz," "Twenty-thousand Leagues Under the Sea" and other inspirations. So what is the Matrix? An entertaining, mindless escape, perfect for a rainy day. As an appetizer it's pretty tasty.

Surf's up for guitarist Dick Dale

BACKSTAGE PASS Surf City, here we come. The spring arts scene is rolling in like a tasty wave, so let's ride it with the surf guitarist, Dick Dale. Then, we'll discover the virtual galleries of local artists available when you surf

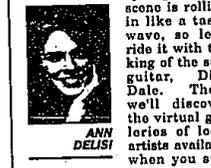
the web. Dick's in town this week to perform at the Magic Stick in Detroit and on Detroit Public TV's BACKSTAGE PASS. Dale's story is one of a kind. He's credited with creating the surf sound in the 1950s, and was featured in beach movies with Frankie and Annette. When Leo Fender handed him his new Stratocaster, Dick played it upside down and backward, as an astonished Leo saw his right-handed baby played left handed. The sound was outrageous and demonstrated the potential of the electric instrument and the guitarist. Forty years later, how relevant is Dick Dale to today's music? "Backstage Pass" checked in with a decade of playing lead guitar for Bad Dog and other less-than-legendary southeast

Michigan bands, packed up his stratocaster in the early '90s and headed for Southern California. Ahhhh... a life complete with a low-paying job at a failed music school and the rouging surf. Who better to comment on the Dick Dale phenomenon? "Dick Dale has been my mentor ever since Keith Richards died," he joked, noting that the Rolling Stone has never been alive.

How is the surf civilization in the cradle of the surf civilization? "Dick is undoubtedly a Southern California icon. You see him in television commercials and many musicians know him from his signature guitars. When his name was featured in that unforgettable scene in 'Pulp Fiction,' his popularity surged." "If I had to label it, I'd describe it as pre-funk punk — a raw sound that was modified by the distortion of Jimi Hendrix. When I hear an alternative band like Green Day, I usually detect some aspect of surf music with a bit of technical twinking."

Next, moon goggles, let's surf the web for innovative approaches a local artist is using to exhibit his work in this new medium. Lowell Boileau started as a painter but now uses the computer as his canvas. His Web site, www.bhore.com, receives 2 million hits annually and was honored as Yahoo Pick of the Year.

"When I was introduced to the internet, I knew immediately that things would never be the same. I began using it to exhibit my work because it appealed to me as an eternal art opening. It's no longer a case of some guy buying your work, and you never see it again. Now, I consider it a new art medium." With such intriguing galleries as "The Fabulous Ruins of Detroit" on the site, it is no wonder Boileau appreciates the feedback he receives through e-mail messages, and considers the ability to interact with the viewer a major advantage to the medium. We'll introduce you to the exciting work of the new BACKSTAGE PASS artist-in-residence, Lowell Boileau, and reverberate with Dick Dale on Detroit Public TV, Sunday, April 18 at 7:30 p.m. Surf's up.



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