

ENTERTAINMENT

Word Of The Week:

tytonidae - noun - as defined by Dictionary.com - "comprising only the barn owls"

When they told me to let the animals loose, I decided to open the tytonidae cage first, but then I saw my friend Jeff huddled in the back of the cage. I guess it wasn't "tytonaeic."

Writers' strike shows some signs of ending; writers still demand income from internet broadcasts

By Rachel Reeves
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After another turbulent week between striking writers and television and film studios, current negotiations are finally making progress. The week began with unsuccessful negotiations. The Writer's Guild of America and the studios met at the table on Thursday, Nov. 29 to try to reach a compromise.

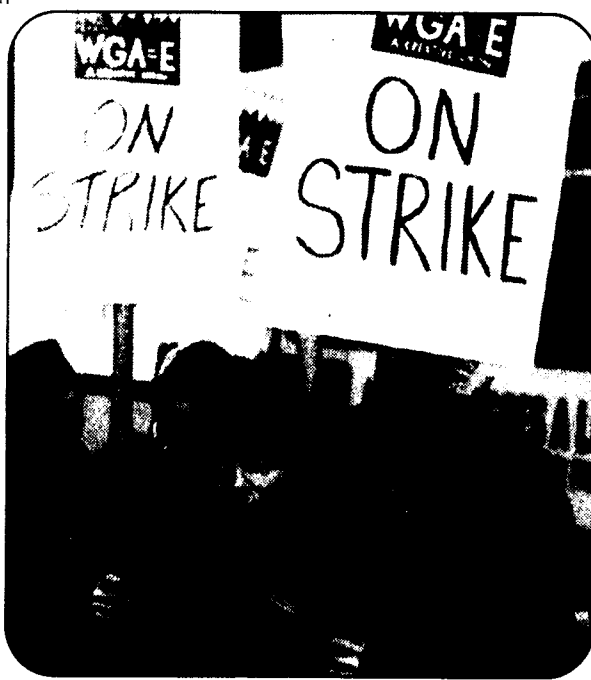
However, the writers rejected the studios' proposal without discussion. The Guild called it an ineffective PR stunt ignoring the Guild's core demands. "You can't put lipstick on a pig," Mona Mangan, executive director of the East Coast Guild, told the New York Times. "They're trying to make a statement that they are, in fact, looking for a solution. It's illusory."

The studios expressed similar indignation. Already concerned about the damage that uncontrolled Internet access has caused entertainment industries, most studios were unwilling to meet the Guild's demands. Studio executives began to appeal to the media, making statements and even calling reporters, expressing that giving in to the

strike would mean company suicide. They wanted to make it very clear that their resolve was not weakening.

The writers, with renewed energy, returned to picketing full-force on Monday morning. In a plea to guild members, Jeff Hermanson, Assistant Executive Director and Strike Coordinator of the Writer's Guild, says of the protests, "We created a climate of unity and strength -- and shutting down production all over town is a major reason the companies are feeling pressure to deal with us fairly."

Television studios are indeed beginning to feel the pressure. After one month of blackouts, late-night TV has had to lay off non-writing staff. Carson



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO
Recent negotiations have brought both sides closer to reaching an agreement and a new contract.



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The Writers strike has had an extreme effect on TV shows.

Daly is the first late-night host to return to the air in order to save the jobs of his 75-member non-writing staff. Other late-night stars like Jimmy Kimmel, Conan O'Brien and Jay Leno are paying their non-writing staff's salaries out-of-pocket until further notice.

Since some television shows have already run out of script (like "The Office" and "Heroes"), and most others will in the upcoming weeks, television stations are turning to reality TV and game shows to fill prime time space. Viewers can expect to see a modernized "American Gladiator" on NBC, and the first-ever winter showing of CBS's "Big Brother."

The biggest cancellation due to the strike

so far is probably the Democratic debate, scheduled for Dec. 10 on CBS. Many of the Democratic candidates openly supported the writers from the very beginning, and none of them want to be seen crossing picket lines to get into the CBS studio for the debate.

However, writers and studio executives came to the table again on Tuesday, Dec. 4, and these negotiations went more smoothly. Although at the time of the negotiations any news coverage was blacked out, and even the location of the discussion was unknown, the Guild has recently released a statement. "For the last

two days we have had substantive discussions of the issues important to writers, the first time this has occurred in this negotiation." The writers recessed to collect responses to the proposal, and further negotiations began Thursday, Dec 6.

The writers are asking for one year of fixed residual income, which is the system currently in place. However, they want that rate increased with every 100,000 streams per quarter. After one year, they demand a 2.5 percent gross for any television show or movie broadcasted over the Internet; online broadcasting has become an ever-growing outlet for entertainment.

The last writer's strike took place in 1988, lasted for five months, and cost the studios over \$500 million. The projected cost of this strike, if it continues the same amount of time, is over \$1 billion.

Top Box Office Hits

Weekend of

Nov. 30 - Dec. 2

Enchanted kept its #1 spot from last week as Awake made its debut at #5.

1. *Enchanted*
\$16,403,316
2. *Beowulf*
\$8,208,565
3. *This Christmas*
\$7,941,068
4. *Hitman*
\$6,021,927
5. *Awake*
\$5,856,872
6. *Fred Claus*
\$5,501,437
7. *August Rush*
\$5,021,435
8. *The Mist*
\$4,553,008
9. *Bee Movie*
\$4,444,798
10. *No Country for Old Men*
\$4,385,290

Upcoming releases:

Movies

I Am Legend

~Dec. 14~

Will Smith stars as the last man on earth in this upcoming blockbuster. He searches for a cure to a virus which only he is immune to.

Rating: PG-13.



Alvin and the Chipmunks

~Dec. 14~

Alvin, Simon, and Theodore come to life to stir things up for their guardian Dave Seville (played by Jason Lee).

Rating: PG.

Music

Mary J. Blige

~Dec. 18~

Growing Pains



The Wu-Tang Clan

~Dec. 18~

The 8 Diagrams

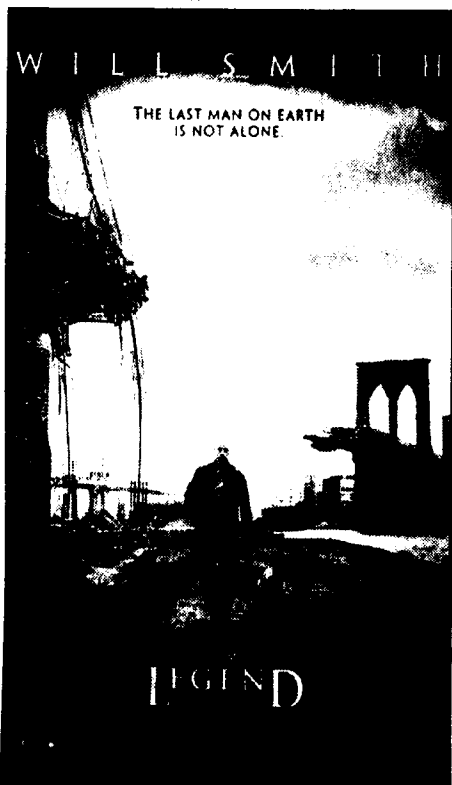


I Am Legend: 2007's top movie?

By Samuel Levine
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It is a very dark future for Robert Neville, the protagonist of the upcoming movie *I Am Legend* set to hit theaters Dec. 14. The film stars Oscar nominated actor Will Smith and is directed by Francis Lawrence. The plot is mainly about Neville, an ordinary man who appears to be Earth's only survivor after a global viral epidemic, which claims the lives of everyone that Neville knows. During Neville's search for other survivors, he encounters something that is less than human. This plot was first dreamed up by acclaimed author of speculative fiction, Richard Matheson in 1954, who, in addition to *I Am Legend*, has written the inspirations to the films *Star of Echoes* and *What Dreams May Come*.

I Am Legend however, is Matheson's most enduring work, having been adapted to the big screen twice before. That's right, this version of *I Am Legend* is actually the third time the story has been adapted into a film, although it is the first time the film has taken the title of the original Matheson novel. The first, retitled to *The Last Man on Earth*, which starred Vincent Price, the second, retitled, *The Omega Man*, which starred



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

I am Legend is expected to be one of this winter's most exciting movies.

Charlton Heston. These productions however were not doing a very

good job accurately transferring the book's original source material, often by changing key elements of the story such as the main character's name.

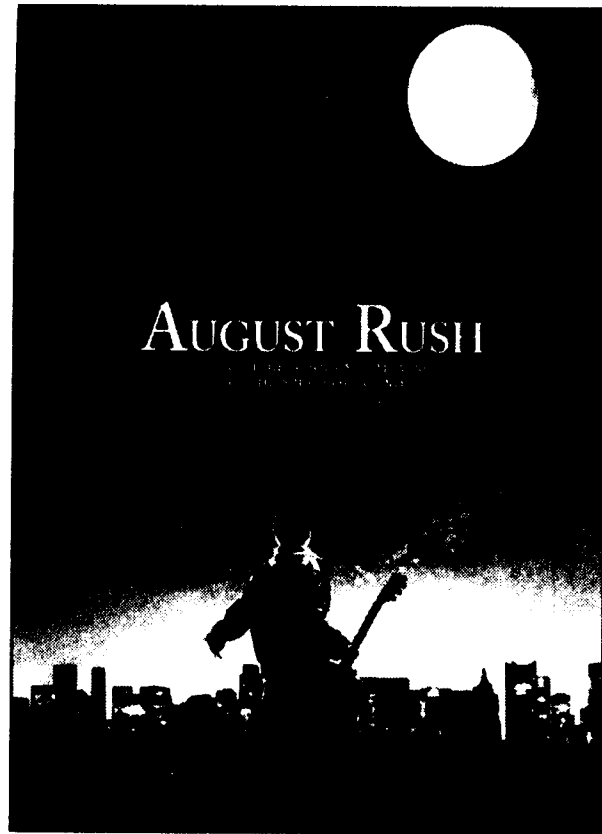
This project was originally conceived by Ridley Scott, the famous director of movies such as *Blade Runner* and the more recent *American Gangster*, however the film did not make it past initial production stages due to an inflating budget and now director Francis Lawrence is finally setting the project to life. Lawrence got his start directing various music videos and commercials before he got his break directing the religious action movie, *Constantine*. *I Am Legend* will be the young director's second released movie with two more set to be released, most likely over the next two years.

The writing credits are also very strong in this film. The screenplay's co-writer, Akiva Goldsman, is an academy award-winning writer for his adapted script for the film, *A Beautiful Mind*. Newcomer Mark Protosevich has written the screenplay, in addition to Goldsman. According to Goldsman, the script has been written almost as an adaptation of *The Omega Man*, of which he is a fan. Several story elements have been changed. For instance, the setting has been moved from Los Angeles to New York City, in order to take advantage of the location (the Brooklyn Bridge serves for the most expensive scene filmed costing five million dollars) and to more easily create a desolate setting, the isolation of the main character is of course, one of the most important parts of the film.

Despite its possible deviation from its original source material, *I Am Legend* looks promising. The film is sure to appeal to fans of the horror and action genres. Be sure to catch what looks to be one of the most exciting films of the winter.



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO
Actor Will Smith.



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Above: *August Rush*.

August Rush finds success with audiences

By Brittany Sexton
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The new hit movie *August Rush*, which debuted Nov. 21, 2007 stars Freddie Highmore as a young boy given up at birth and it shows his the incredible journey. August Rush starts out as an orphan, listening to the sounds of his surroundings and then slowly makes his way to the "Big Apple," New York City, in which he tries to find his birth parents. Deep down Evan, also known as August Rush, knows that his parents still want him.

He endures many hardships during his journey, including one mischievous Robin Williams who plays the role of Wizard. Wizard is why August began playing guitar in the park, and that opened up other paths for young August to take which eventually did lead him to his parents.

It was not an easy journey though, and he meets many different kinds of people and learns life lessons along the way. His mother, played by the very beautiful Keri Russell is a well-known cello player and his father played by Jonathan Rhys Meyers is the lead singer of an Irish rock band, which is where August's love for music comes from.

The movie runs 100 minutes and is full of beautiful music along with some pretty cool contemporary sounds. The movie keeps you attentive because you never know if he is actually going to find his parents. This is definitely a great film for the family and children or even a great date movie. Perfect for the holiday season!