

ENTERTAINMENT

Word Of The Week:

cohenite - noun - a rare microscopic mineral, carbide of iron, nickel, or cobalt, (Fe, Ni, Co)₃C, found in lunar rocks and some meteorites.

When a meteorite flew from space and hit my friend Jeff in his chest, we were all speechless. When the cohenite cleared, not only was he alive, but we had a nice YouTube video.

Golden Compass meets pro-tests, controversies, and resistance

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The *Golden Compass* has drawn both rave reviews and protests outside of movie theatres around the country. While the author of the book that this movie is based off of is a self-proclaimed atheist or agnostic, there still remain mixed views of the movie. There are many people, for instance, who honestly believe that this movie is meant solely for children to watch. They also believe that the movie will cause children to ask for the book series for Christmas, read them and be influenced by the values held by the author.

Nicole Kidman stars as Marisa Coulter in the controversial movie. Of course, while there is the obvious controversy, there is also the captivating story, characters, special effects, and animals to focus on. Dakota Blue Richards plays Lyra Belacqua, the main character of this story. In Lyra's world, there is an authority called the Magisterium that governs the people. Everyone has a daemon — the other half of their soul — who has an animal form and follows them everywhere. The story line is something to this effect: Lyra is given an alethiometer, which measures the truth in anyone depending on what you ask it. When children are being stolen all around her, Lyra ventures to the north and uses anyone she can to aid her in her search for these stolen children—Gyptians, armored bears, aeronauts, witches, and her daemon, Pantalaimon. Along the way, Mrs. Coulter (Kidman) finds her, and quick-

ly becomes a confusingly bad character. Each actor and actress truly portrayed the character from the book that they were cast in. Even Kidman, who had some people skeptical of her role at first, played her part very well.

The *Golden Compass* was praised for its fantastic special effects. Throughout the movie, the different animals spoke and the magic compass was very well portrayed. The special effects were dazzling to anyone who would watch, and children around eight years and older will easily become enthralled in this movie. Aside from the movie's criticism on moral bounds, the largest issue most take from the film is that it did not follow the book well; it even cut out the book's ending. This movie was very action packed, but it was at best a basic summary of the book. On the main points of the plot, however, it stuck to the book's original ideas, and the movie was overall a decent interpretation of its predecessor.

The big controversy over the movie was the fact that Christians and Catholics alike point to the clear anti-God message that the movie contains. Widespread opposition amongst religious groups has been occurring ever since the movie had been announced. Many claimed that the author of the book, being an outspoken Atheist, would reflect his views in the movie.

Those who argue in favor of the movie cite the fact that while movies come out every day which are obviously in favor of God, very few movies are in opposition to Christianity.

Either way this controversy spins, there is a facet that brings the film and the books alike more publicity. It was a great movie, well worth the money spent to see it at the theatre on opening night.



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO
The *Golden Compass* released amidst public protest and controversy.

Psychological thriller *Awake* finds success in theatres at release

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Written and directed by Joby Harold, *Awake* is the story of a young man who must undergo open-heart surgery. The movie stars Hayden Christensen and Jessica Alba as a young married couple. When Christensen's character, the young, rich, and handsome Clay Beresford, is forced to have very risky surgery, his wife, Sam Lockwood, played by Alba, is by his side the entire time. During his surgery, Clay wakes up, realizing that his anesthetic has not fully worked. Although he is paralyzed and cannot communicate with his doctors, played by Terrence Howard, Fisher Stevens, and Christopher McDonald, to let them know he is awake, he is still completely alert, and can feel every incision that the doctors are making on his body.

Awake is a psychological thriller, and the feeling that the main character, Clay experiences is actually a somewhat fairly common occurrence in hospitals. It is known as "anesthetic awareness," and generally happens when not enough anesthetic medication is given for a particular patient's body weight.

As soon as Clay realizes that something is wrong, and that he is awake for the surgery, he also comes to the conclusion that the doctors that he thought were his friends are truly his enemies, and that if he cannot find a way to show that he is awake,

then he will be murdered in order for his fortune to be taken from him. As Clay is in surgery, his wife, Sam, is struggling with her own personal demons as the situation intensifies. In addition to dealing with the potential death of her new husband, Sam must



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A still photo from the new movie *Awake*.

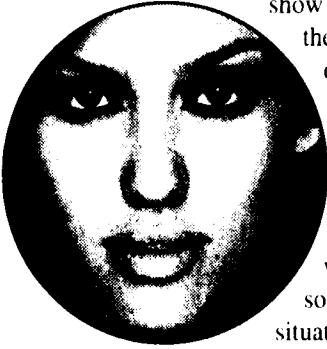
also deal with the fact that her new mother-in-law hates her, and tries relentlessly throughout the surgery to change the situation.

The movie *Awake* had a decent storyline, and many twists and turns. With impressive actors like those in *Awake*, most would have expected the movie to be somewhat better. The movie is hard to follow at times, due to the fact that while Clay is under the knife, but aware of what is going on, he has out of body experiences and travels backwards in time.

The acting presented in the movie is good overall. Alba does an excellent job at portraying the upset wife. The doctors, Howard, Stevens, and McDonald are each good at playing the role of doctors, however the hospital and surgery in the movie is not exactly what would be called realistic.

Awake was the first feature movie debut for Joby Harold as both the writer and director, however, he played both roles fairly well. His only flaw would have been trying to include too many twists and turns within the plot line in too short of a time span. Although the movie might not be entirely plausible, the movie does a good job of keeping the audience guessing, and on their toes.

The movie was released on Nov. 30, 2007, and has made over \$10,745,000 since then. It is due to be released on video March 11, 2008. It is rated R for language, a brief scene of drug use, and an intensely disturbing situation.



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO
Actress Jessica Alba.

Upcoming releases: Movies

Charlie Wilson's War
~Dec. 21~
Charlie Wilson (Tom Hanks) leads efforts to assist a group which starts the largest covert war ever.
Rating: R.



P. S. I Love You
~Dec. 21~
Holly Kennedy (Hilary Swank) attempts to put her life back together after the death of her husband, played by Gerard Butler.
Rating: PG-13.

Walk Hard: The Dewey Cox Story
~Dec. 21~
Musician Dewey Cox (John C. Reilly) sets out on a quest for musical dominance.
Rating: R.

National Treasure: The Book of Secrets
~Dec. 21~
Ben Gates (Nicholas Cage) sets out again in this sequel to the hit "National Treasure."
Rating: PG.

Wyclef Jean assembles all-star crew for new album release

Wyclef Jean assembles all-star crew for new album release

By Erik Holman
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In 1997, a year after being a part of The Fugees' Grammy-winning *The Score*, Wyclef Jean decided to try things on his own as a soloist when he released his album titled *The Carnival*. Jean received major success from his debut with singles spawning hits such as "We Trying to Stay Alive," "Gone 'Til November," and "Guantanamo." Seeing Wyclef's accomplishments as an solo artists, the remainder of The Fugees decided to try their approach as a solo artists as well. Group member Lauryn Hill would eventually release a well-critically acclaimed and Grammy-winning "The Miseducation of Lauryn Hill" while the other member Pras would release his hit album titled *Ghetto Superstar*. With success rising up, members of the group were determined to try to expand their move as soloists even more.

Ten years later, however, things seem to have changed drastically. Lauryn Hill hasn't released an official album for years as Pras' success as a solo artist has faded. On the other hand, Jean is still living up to his prime alone with five albums deep, each receiving gold and platinum status. The group undertook a Fugees reunion years before,

which haven't lasted long due to their struggling relationships. Jean then shrugged it off as he now releases his sixth album titled, *The Carnival II: Memoirs of an Immigrant*. The album's title is a continuation of his debut as he digs deeper into his "Carnival" thesis. The title is a significance of his past as he had originally lived in Haiti as a child before he immigrated with his parents to America. While he spent time in Haiti, there were many carnivals and festivals that Jean would go to celebrate the Creole culture. Jean would always cherish and remember as he faces a new life on American soil. This album is like a carnival, because it contains variety of styles that Jean has explored with any boundaries. Due to its limitless margins, *The*

Carnival II cannot be considered as just a rap album, nor reggae, pop, rock, or soul. In fact, Jean combines all of those genres and mixes it with even more styles that it can be only be called "carnival music."

Starting the album with rock, Wyclef collaborated with reggae Rastafarian Sizzla and System of a Down frontman Serj Tankian on "Riot (Trouble Again)." The strumming of electric guitars, booming bass and drums, wailing of Tankian, howling of Sizzla, and droning of Jean all combined equals the best of both worlds of alternative rock and reggae. "Sweetest Girl (Dollar Bill)," featuring Akon, Lil' Wayne, and Niiya, shows a story of a struggle of a woman becoming trapped in the system where giving money would become her only main source in life.

Atlanta rapper T.I. appears in relaxing "Slow Down" as Chamillionaire shows up on the Indian "Hollywood Meets Bollywood (Immigration)." Jean then escapes the rap roots as R&B singer Mary J. Blige croons on "What About the Baby" and Norah Jones soothingly emerges on "Any Other Day." The album's surprise, however, may be on Paul Simon's appearance on quick-strumming "Fast Car." While not many hip-hop artists may consider Simon for a feature on their album, Jean makes it work nonetheless with his eclectic personality. After all, Jean did get country singer Kenny Rogers to appear on his second album.

Columbian singer Shakira teams up again with Jean on appropriately-titled "King and Queen" as the music shifts tempo as much as Jean's energy on this entire album enjoyably. An all-star lineup, including Black Eyed Peas' Brazilian singer Daniela Mercury, and dancehall legend Shabba Ranks, all celebrate festively on the album's finale "Touch Your Button Carnival Jam." Overall, this album is very enjoyable whether a Wyclef fan or a fan of music.

This album not only touches all of the genres in music, but it breaks the mode of a rap album as Jean adds his own rule — explore limitless possibilities and have fun while you're ahead.



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Wyclef Jean has assembled a very diverse and popular crew for his new album.

No Country for Old Men surprises audiences

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"No Country for Old Men" is a film adaptation from the novel written by Cormac McCarthy with the same title. The film was directed by Joel and Ethan Coen, a brother team who have been making critically acclaimed films for years. Some of their older materials include such films as "Fargo" and "Oh Brother, Where Art Thou?" They have been known for doing many films involving money, crime, violence and ironic dry humor. The film had an estimated budget of \$30 million and was filmed on location in West Texas, New Mexico and Mexico. "No Country for Old Men" has an intriguing plot with many complexities.

The story follows Llewelyn Moss (Josh Brolin) who stumbles upon a drug deal gone bad while out hunting. All the men are shot and dead, but Moss finds a truck of heroin and a case of \$2 million. He decides to return to the scene later that night to give a man who was dying some water. When he arrives, he finds the man is dead but another truck pulls up. A group of men chase him off and he returns home wounded by a shotgun blast. Now, a psychopathic hit man named Anton Chigurh (Javier Bardem) who kills his victims with an air operated cow gun and a silenced shotgun knows about Moss and suspects he has the missing money. Mayhem ensues as Moss, Chigurh, and drug men from Mexico chase one another in a bloody battle for the money.

Another, Sheriff Tom Bell (Tommy Lee Jones) follows the trail and tries to bring Moss back home for his own safety. The film does not follow expectations for a normal plot line. I do not want to give away any details that will ruin it, but many people found the ending upsetting. The film is themed around how increasingly violent our country is becoming and how incredibly sad the violence created from human greed is.

I saw this film last Wednesday night and really enjoyed it. The more I think back on it, the more I appreciate it. All the actors in the film are absolutely amazing. Most effective is Javier Bardem's character Anton Chigurh who is entirely terrifying and psychotic. I highly recommend this film to anyone who does not just want to watch a violent crime movie, but who likes a heavily character driven film with numerous moral implications. Some scenes will truly blow you away, making you uneasy and surprised.



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO
Actor Tommy Lee Jones