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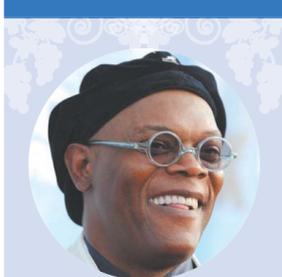
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April 22 - 28, 2011

ENTERTAINMENT | B1

The Grapevine



Samuel L. Jackson
FRAZER HARRISON/GETTY IMAGES

SAMUEL L. JACKSON NARRATES DISNEY DOC

Samuel L. Jackson can be found on the big screen this week in Disney's nature documentary "African Cats." The film follows the real-life adventures of lion cub Mara, cheetah Sita, and pride leader Fang and is narrated by the Oscar-winning actor. "African Cats" opens on Earth Day, April 22.

THE GREATEST TOWN EVER SOLD

Filmmaker Morgan Spurlock has taken his product placement experiment to a new level, convincing the central Pennsylvania town of Altoona to go by the name of Spurlock's much buzzed about documentary, "Pom Wonderful Presents: The Greatest Movie Ever Sold." According to Time, the asking price was \$25,000 for the 60-day name change beginning April 27. Spurlock, best known for his film, "Super Size Me," is taking on the world of marketing and advertising this time around, having created a documentary about securing product-placement and sponsorship deals in a film that is fully funded via product-placement and presented with the utmost transparency. "Pom Wonderful Presents: The Greatest Movie Ever Sold" has enjoyed substantial film festival recognition and opens in select cities April 22.

CRUZ, BARDEM TAKE STAGE WITH PRINCE

Husband and wife actors Penelope Cruz and Javier Bardem were seen on a different kind of stage recently, as they danced alongside legendary musician Prince at his show at the Forum in Inglewood, California. Music seems to be top of mind for Cruz lately. The actress recently told "Entertainment Weekly," "I would love to do more musicals in TV or film. Not on Broadway, because I'm not brave enough to do that yet. But I love musicals."

Compiled by Barbara Danza,
Epoch Times Staff.

Brilliant and utterly engaging 3-D

Movie Review 'Rio'

By HELENA CHAO
Epoch Times Staff

The creators of the successful "Ice Age" series have spent years on "Rio," an awe-inspiring, completely immersive 3-D experience that will delight children and bring out the child in every adult.

Director Carlos Saldanha decided to honour his hometown of Rio de Janeiro in "Rio," and he and the team at Blue Sky Studios worked tirelessly to create an experience that feels so realistic you almost feel like you're a character drawn into the richly textured, entirely realistic scenes.

Blu (Jesse Eisenberg), the last male blue macaw in the world, is captured from Brazil as a hatchling and rescued and raised by Linda (Leslie Mann), a mousy bookshop owner in Minnesota. They become best friends and life companions, and Blu appears to almost be a human; he brushes his own teeth/beak, makes coffee, serves as Linda's alarm clock, and so on.

He's also very well read, domesticated, and let's just say that Jesse Eisenberg was a terrific selection to voice Blu—he's the Urkel of the feathered world. One thing he has not yet mastered, however, is flying. Despite reading many scientific books on the act of flying, Blu for whatever reason, cannot seem to take flight.

One fateful day, ornithologist Tulio (Rodrigo Santoro) pays Linda and Blu a visit from Brazil, begging them to return to Rio with him to give Blu the opportunity to mate with the world's last remaining female blue macaw, Jewel (Anne Hathaway). After deliberating between themselves, Linda and Blu decide to make the trip and take a step outside their homebody existence.

Blu's first encounter with Jewel, however, is far from love at first sight. Jewel, it turns out, is the exact opposite of Blu. She's distrustful of humans, hates being caged up, and isn't afraid of anything. In her eyes, Blu is a sellout, undeserving of her affections.

But before the two have a chance to really get to know each other, they are stolen by smugglers. Adventure, plenty of laughs, and action ensue as Blu and Jewel, along with feathered pals Nico (Jamie Foxx), Pedro (will.i.am), and Rafael (George Lopez) try to thwart their captors and their evil cockatoo Nigel (voiced by the super-talented Jemaine Clement from "The Flight of the Conchords").

The always-hilarious Tracy Morgan also makes a cameo voice



(Top) Linda (Leslie Mann) and her best pal, a rare macaw named Blu (Jesse Eisenberg), enjoy a morning ritual in the 3D animation "Rio."
(Bottom L-R) Nico (Jamie Foxx) and Pedro (will.i.am) delight in a magical, colourful world in the 3D animation "Rio."
BLUE SKY STUDIOS AND TWENTIETH CENTURY FOX FILM CORPORATION

appearance as Luiz, a hysterical bulldog with a severe drooling problem.

Will Blu and Jewel escape and end up falling in love and producing offspring to carry on their species? Will Blu and Linda be reunited?

In addition to the colourful cast of birds and human extras for the film's Carnival parade, Saldanha's Rio in and of itself plays a sparkling

leading character full of beauty, zest, and excitement.

The catchy music throughout the film, including Latin-inspired samba beats and original hits by the Black Eyed Peas' will.i.am, and the Flight of the Conchords' Jemaine Clement (guaranteed to have you laughing out loud), will delight your auditory senses while the supercharged 3-D animation will titillate your visual

receptors.

This is one of the most ambitious and realistic animated features ever produced, and in addition to enjoying the terrific cast and character development, it's impossible not to be mesmerized and fully immersed in the three-dimensional experience that is Rio de Janeiro.

★★★★★

in Tune

By STACY FOGARTY

SADÉ'S NEW RELEASE AND TOUR
Nigeria-born singer-songwriter Sade returns to the stage this year for a world tour kicking off in Nice, France, on April 29. Along with the tour is a new release, "The Ultimate Collection," which contains classics like "Your Love Is King" and "The Sweetest Taboo" plus four brand new tracks, including "The Moon and The Sky" featuring Jay-Z.

Sade had great success last year with her "Soldier of Love" release—only her sixth album in 27 years—which garnered a Grammy and a whole new legion of fans for the silky toned chanteuse. Her U.S. leg of the tour kicks off mid-June in Maryland where she'll be joined by special guest John Mayer. For more details and tickets: www.sade.com.

PIA TOSCANO MAY INK DEAL WITH INTERSCOPE

Fresh off the heels of her surprise elimination on "American Idol," Pia Toscano is rumoured to have a recording contract in the works.

The 22-year-old Toscano was considered a favourite on this year's show and stunned judges Jennifer Lopez and Randy Jackson when she was eliminated by voters last week. According to Usmagazine.com, Toscano was contacted by Interscope immediately following the elimination and offered a deal.

GIL ROBBINS PASSES AT AGE 80

Gil Robbins, folk singer, guitarist, and father to actor Tim Robbins, passed away at his home in Mexico last week at the age of 80. Robbins was a member of the 1960s folk group The Highwaymen (not to be confused with the later group of the same name featuring Willie Nelson and Johnny Cash).

Robbins studied music at the University of California and then crossed the country to be a part of the burgeoning New York Greenwich Village folk scene, playing with both the Cumberland Three and the Belafonte Singers. In 1962, he joined The Highwaymen where he remained a driving force until their 1964 breakup.

He continued to stay involved with music, even working with his son on the 1992 film "Bob Roberts," where he's credited as a vocal coach and choral consultant. In a statement to the Associated Press, Tim Robbins referred to his dad as "a fantastic father," "a great musician," and "a man of unshakable integrity."

Stacy Fogarty is an on-air radio personality and music director for a popular radio station in the heart of the Colorado Rockies.

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