

# arts & entertainment

## Pulp, schlock and Cronos (what's Cronos?)

by Mark Farmer

Howdy, film fans. This week we've got a couple of commercial films and your regular Wormwood's fix, so settle back and enjoy the show. And please, no talking.

*Pulp Fiction*  
Quentin Tarantino  
Park Lane

Wham! Bam! Take me to the Mediterranean and back!

I'm sorry, but I can't say enough about this film. *Pulp Fiction* is a relentless 160-minute romp through the crazy, violent lives of a crime boss, his wife, his hoods, a boxer, his squeeze and a couple of small-time crooks thrown in for good measure.

Director Quentin Tarantino's name is going to be pure gold in Hollywood after this film. He was under a lot of pressure to match the cult success of *Reservoir Dogs*, but with *Pulp Fiction* he goes a step beyond.

The film follows three separate stories and Tarantino does a fantastic job of intertwining them. It's seamless. Next, consider the cast: John Travolta, Uma Thurman, Bruce Willis, Harvey Keitel, Tim Roth, Rosanna Arquette, Eric Stoltz... A lot of films advertise big casts but screw up royally with a bad story and bad directing, like *Soapdish* or *The Player*. Not here.

Maybe you just

want to see

Travolta's pot belly.

It's great watching Travolta and Willis try to outmacho each other in one story, then watch their paths cross a half hour later at the business end of an Uzi. Maybe you want to see Willis' girlfriend asking him for "oral pleasure" in a squeaky French accent. Or maybe you just want to see the pot belly Travolta's been cultivating for the last few years. Your choice.

Perhaps a little less well-known than the rest of the cast is Samuel L. Jackson, easily the runaway star of this film. He plays an ultra-hip, fast-talking bible-quoting hood with more savvy than any man alive, and Jackson deserves a best supporting or maybe lead actor nomination for it. In fact there's not a moment of weak acting in the whole film, which is an accomplishment in itself.

A couple of things that might turn you off are the violence, although not as much as in *Reservoir Dogs*, and the copious use of filthy language, especially "nigger." In the end it's a film you can't afford to miss, and the first one I've ever given — dare I say it? — A+

*Cronos*  
Guillermo del Toro  
Wormwood's

Think of *Cronos* as your warm-up for *Interview with the Vampire*.

It's a Mexican-American thriller about a mysterious scarab created by

a sixteenth-century alchemist. Found by a 20th-century watchmaker, he discovers its ability to prolong life...for a price.

*Cronos* is a vampire flick, but we don't see a single vampire until the middle of the film, which is unique. It's also okay, because there's enough going on besides bloodsucking to hold your interest. But once Mr. Undead himself shows up it's as scary as you'd expect, partly because the party in question doesn't realize he's a vampire until he's fairly far gone.

You might recognize Ron Perlman as the hunchback from *The Name of the Rose*, but the other actors are mostly unknown in North America. We follow the watchmaker as he uses the scarab to take years off, while he's hunted by a more powerful man, dying of cancer, who refuses to die while the strange insect trapped in the scarab can keep him alive.

*Cronos* is definitely creepy, and it's made all the more creepy by an amiable, loving vampire who can't bring himself to sacrifice his daughter to his own blood lust. Let's see if Anne Rice's vampire film can do any better when it comes out in a few weeks. B+

*Ed Wood*  
Tim Burton  
Park Lane

How dull could a movie about the world's worst cross-dressing B-movie director be? Surprisingly dull. Unfortunately dull, considering Tim

Burton's success with *Beetlejuice*, *Edward Scissorhands* and *The Nightmare Before Christmas*.

The one shining star throughout is Martin Landau, who toiled in obscurity for decades on such memorable shows as *Space 1999*, but who is positively deadly as Bela Lugosi, the man behind the original Dracula. Landau has Bela's blood-curdling Hungarian baritone down pat. He's got the gestures, the hunch... everything, and word is that he's in line for an Oscar for his work.

Unfortunately, aside from Landau, there's not much to this film. Johnny Depp tries to play the role of Ed Wood like a character actor, which is how it should be played. Unfortunately Depp's no character actor. Too bad, because Ed Wood has to carry the whole film, but Depp just hasn't got the depth to pull it off.

Aside from this obvious casting mistake, the jokes just aren't there.

It's supposed to be a comedy, and you know a comedy isn't going to work when there are lots of long, painful silences after the punch lines. This film has more than one of those silences.

Part of the reason must be that unless you're a B-movie fan and you've seen the wonderful trash that inspired this film, it's not going to mean much to you. So save yourself the trouble. Rent *Plan 9 From Outer Space* instead, if you can find it.

C+



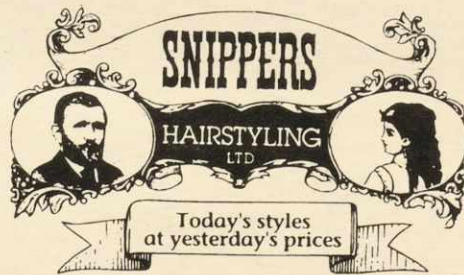
Uma Thurman messin' with John Travolta's head in *Pulp Fiction*

# WIN 1/2 YEAR TUITION FREE!

**FROM SNIPPER'S HAIRSTYLING**

Now you can get a great haircut and win up to \$800 of your tuition at the same time! Just visit Snipper's Hairstyling on Spring Garden Road. Family and friends can win for you so tell them all about

**Snippers Scholarship Contest today.**  
To be drawn October 31st, 1994.



5853 Spring Garden Road • Corner of Spring Garden & Summer  
420-0600  
Mon-Fri 8am - 6pm Sat 8am - 5pm.

**TEAR OFF ENTRY FORM**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
Phone # \_\_\_\_\_

**ENTER AT SNIPPER'S HAIRSTYLING**

5853 Spring Garden Road • Corner of Spring Garden & Summer  
420-0600  
Mon-Fri 8am - 6pm Sat 8am - 5pm.

# ANNOUNCEMENT!

PCPC would like to thank all who contributed to Pheonix House at the PCPC 3rd Annual Warehouse Sale.



Together we were able to collect **\$1326.83** for this deserving charity.

**PCPC**  
Personal Computer Purchase Center