



DAILY NEWS
Movie Reviews



Search for



Current



Home

News & Views

Sports

Entertainment

Biz/Money

Boroughs

City Life

Services

Movie Digest



Henri Cartier-Bresson: The Impassioned Eye

Documentary at the Quad (1:12). Not rated.

The subtitle of this interview/documentary about the late, great French photojournalist should be "For Collectors Only." There is no theme, no point, no history, no illuminating insights - it's just Bresson talking about his individual photos and early sketches, interspersed with testimonials from people like Isabelle Huppert and the late Arthur Miller talking about his genius.

Forget their reactions. Wait for the DVD where you can freeze-frame on the images and enjoy your own experience.

Jack Mathews



State of Fear

At Film Forum (1:34). Not rated: Adult themes, disturbing images. In English and Spanish with subtitles.

Pamela Yates' unblinking chronicle of recent Peruvian history paints a devastating picture of a people nearly destroyed by their own leaders.

Basing her research on the findings of the nation's recent Truth Commission, Yates details decades of blatant corruption, extreme human-rights abuses and rampant terrorism.

Though the central villain is Abimael Guzmán, the founder of the Maoist guerrilla cult Shining Path, there are few heroes to be found here. Even the democratically elected president who pledged to destroy Guzman, Alberto Fujimori, wasted little time in instituting a near-dictatorial reign.

The country's ongoing problems, one observer contends, are the result of "a careful cultivation of ignorance and forgetfulness." If that's so, this powerful work ought to be

screened yearly at every school in Peru.

Elizabeth Weitzman

★★½

That Man: Peter Berlin

*Documentary at Cinema Village (1:20). Not rated:
Sexuality, nudity.*

"I was amazed by how little one has to do to be picked up by the press," recalls an aging - but still spry - Peter Berlin in Jim Tushinski's mildly diverting documentary about the 1970s gay icon.

Berlin, who became a demicelebrity thanks to an obsessively cultivated public persona, is perfectly happy to acknowledge his own lack of depth, even as various talking heads debate his cultural relevance. The best moments, therefore, come from either Berlin or from John Waters, who appears entirely amused by the notion of analyzing a man most famous for walking down Chelsea streets in skin-tight pants and no shirt.

Fortunately, Tushinski strikes the right balance throughout, interspersing old erotic photos and stills from Berlin's adult films with entertaining, current-day sound bites. Things only turn serious when Berlin reflects on the friends he lost to AIDS, while he remained healthy. What saved him, it turns out, was his extreme narcissism: No other man could compete with his self-infatuated fantasies.

Elizabeth Weitzman

★★½

The Keeper: The Legend of Omar Khayyam

*At the Landmark Sunshine (1:35). PG: violence, mild
romance.*

There probably aren't too many kids clamoring for a fictionalized biography of Omar Khayyam, but those who make their way to Kayvan Mashayekh's ambitious first film will find plenty to enjoy in his epic history lesson about the Poet of Persia.

Mashayekh wraps Khayyam's story in a present-day plot about Kamran (Adam Echahly), a Houston preteen who hears of his family's Iranian past from his older brother, Nader (Puya Behinaein). Nader's favorite tale takes us back to the 11th century, where we meet the young Khayyam as he's about to embark on his remarkable career.

The time-traveling is a little awkward, and a mawkish turn of

events feels forced and unnecessary. But the director approaches the enormity of his task with an earnest enthusiasm, offering a likable alternative to the assembly-line banality of so many family films.

Elizabeth Weitzman

★ ½

April's Shower

At the Quad (1:38). R: Language, sexuality, alcohol.

If there is a single phrase that should strike fear in the hearts of innocent moviegoers, it is "writer-director-producer-star."

Exhibit A: this aggressively self-indulgent comedy created by actress-turned-filmmaker Trish Doolan.

Given that it's her movie, Doolan has cast herself as Alex, the most likable participant in the titular bridal shower. Though Alex, who is the party's host, is interminably neurotic, she's a joy compared with the other women in attendance. That some of these women are not merely shrill but also confused lesbians, devout Catholics or seemingly insane does very little to alleviate the high-pitched tedium.

Doolan does deserve some credit for tackling such an unwieldy project on her own. The result, however, feels as if she gathered all her friends, turned on her camera and let them loose. Which is perfectly fine, if you don't expect anyone to pay to watch the finished product.

Elizabeth Weitzman

★★ ½

When the Sea Rises

At Cinema Village, Lincoln Plaza (1:30). Not rated: Brief nudity and sexuality. In French with English subtitles.

There's something sweet yet chilling in "When the Sea Rises." If it had explored more of the chill, it might have turned into a knockout, absurdist thriller.



A fat, lonely, middle-aged trouper roams the French-Belgian border with her strange one-woman show, a kind of performance art in which she dons a fright mask and pulls a male audience member onstage - she calls him "Chicken" - for a pretend romance. In one small town, her Chicken (Wim Willaert) seems smitten for real. He keeps coming back, and something leisurely, wonderful and just a touch unsettling develops between performer and groupie.

Star Yolande Moreau teamed up with cinematographer Gilles Porte; together they write and direct. It's a bountiful showcase for Moreau, whose lopsided, squinty beauty grows on you just as it grows on the drifter who eagerly volunteers from the audience each night.

Too bad "Sea" doesn't rise high enough to explore the twisty recesses of their faintly threatening connection.

Jami Bernard

Originally published on January 13, 2006

	Fresh stories hot off the site every day via RSS!
	Have stories like this emailed right to your inbox!
	Email this story
	Printer-friendly version



LEFT

[Home](#) | [News & Views](#) | [Sports](#) | [Entertainment](#) | [Business](#) | [Boroughs](#) | [City Life](#) | [Services](#)

All contents © 2006 Daily News, L.P.
[Disclaimer and Copyright Notice](#) | [Our Privacy Policy](#)