Actress Ali Larter reprises her role in Final Destination 2

Art Seavey talks with Ali Larter to learn about the new film, as well as her acting history and future goals

By Art Seavey

Ali Larter reprises her role as Clear Rivers in Final Destination 2. Has appeared in many films since.

Her biggest thing is death can manifest itself in anything. This time however, Clear Rivers steps in to help the fated youth. She has checked herself into a mental ward and lives in a padded room—her only means to distance herself from the reach of death. That gig has turned stale, and although giving a rather nasty response to A.J.’s plea for help, she decides to leave.

“She has to get out there and help people. She’d rather die than believing this existence in this room,” Larter said.

Final Destination 2 offers up the same recipe for success as the first one. This time, though, the magnitude of the freak accidents and gore has increased ten-fold. Is it not meant to be an Oscar-winning production, or even meant to be a horror film. In a way it’s a twisted comedy. It is simply meant to entertain.

“It was surprising reading things today, and the journalists got it, they got it,” said Larter. “It’s like they know that we’re winking while we’re making this too.”

There are moments where the audience cannot but laugh, and it should. Without giving too much away, the trailer scene with the ladder is tad misleading. Please, don’t forget about the airbag. “Everybody knows that this is what we’re getting the laughs from, it’s like we’re aware of these things,” said Larter. “It’s the tone of the movie. It has a wink aspect to it.”

Larter was brought on early in the pre-production process to develop the new Rivers character. “I got the script and worked a little bit of where she came from, when she had checked herself into a mental hospital. There was some stuff that I thought was too out there. You can’t do this dramatic thing and have it in a movie like this.”

The new Rivers comes off extremely jaded and even creepier than the first. Which isn’t too shabby considering all her friends died in freak accidents and she’s been cooped up in a small white room.

Rivers is an odd character, so preparation for Larter was more than usual. For me, the biggest thing I did with both these movies is just heightening my senses. Watching everything, listening to everything, really being aware of what’s happening around me,” said Larter.

Publicity, as with any movie, is a key factor for success. Larter has spent hours promoting FD2. Just because the film is finished doesn’t mean her work is. “It’s like that’s what they pay you for, this is part of the job. I want people to go and see the movie, and I want to get it out there, and if me doing this is part of that, that’s what I need to do.”

Despite maintaining a low-key status in the media, Larter has been around for a while. Her first ground-breaking appearance was actually a hoax. In 1996, Esquire Magazine published a fake article about an up-and-coming star. It was meant as a satire on the Hollywood hype machine. The model they used to represent this fictitious star was, of course, Ali Larter. The photograp her, I had this beautiful suburban childhood. My dog walked us to school…my dad coached our team.

By Daniel Uhlig / STUDENT PUBLICATIONS

DramaTech’s newest play honors Black History Month

By Amy Schmisseur

Today DramaTech opens their new play, “Advice to the Players,” in conjunction with the African Student Union in honor of Black History Month. This Friday and Saturday DramaTech’s Improv Comedy Troupe, let’s try this, will perform following the play. Next weekend, after the show, DramaTech will be presenting the one act play “Precipice.”

Bruce Bonafede’s “Advice to the Players” delinates the struggles of South African freedom fighters. Greg Abbott, the faculty advisor of DramaTech, is directing the play. “Adv ice to the Players” conveys the poignant human rights struggle in South Africa through moments of dire seriousness, softened by light hearted laughter.

In the play, Robert (Olufemi Sowemimo) and Oliver (Yianni El lis), two South African actors, are rehearsing “Waiting for Godot” when Mr. Moore (James Lentini) shows up and threatens the play’s director (Wes Schrader) with a protest if the play is not cancelled.

While Robert and Oliver have no problems with both resisting and mocking Mr. Moore, they find it much harder to refuse the second person that asks them not to perform. They will perform the play! Do they even have a choice in the matter? When informed they have no choice, Robert asserts that he does say, “I could make them into the monsters they were threatening to be.”

Nationality is not the only issue at stake in this play. It is much more about art and politics, and the ways in which they collide. The actor must decide what political responsibility they have to their freedom, their companions’ freedom, and their audience.

“They are literally in a situation where they are damned if they do and damned if they don’t,” said director Greg Abbott.

This one act play elucidates the importance of choices. The characters’ choices change the lives of the others in a very direct, lucid manner. In this web of interwoven communication, friendship and brotherhood, there is no easy way out.

The play captivates the audience, even before the first word. The intensity of the actors never allows the audience to not be watching a play. The simplicity of the costumes, lighting and set provides a superb background to highlight the acting talent. The acting by Ellis and Sowemimo was excellent, as were their South African accents. Thabisile Ndlebe, a South African Georgia Tech student, was their voice coach and a general resource for information on South Africa.

“Advice to the Players” contains many parallels to “Waiting for Godot.” Robert and Oliver wait throughout the play and their lives for freedom to come. Their interactions are manipulated from above. Beckett’s play has the same essential structure.

You can purchase tickets to “Advice to the Players” by visiting www.dramatech.org or calling 404-894-7515. Tickets are $5 for students, $8 for faculty and staff, and $10 for the general public.

Actors rehearse a scene from DramaTech’s “Advice for Players.” The play, which shows this weekend, is about human rights in South Africa.
I just feel really lucky... that I was able to grow up in a world where it wasn’t influenced by, you know, Hollywood and things like that.”

Larter started at a young age working with the prestigious Ford Modeling Agency. “It just kind of happened when I was 13,” she recalled. Pictures were sent in and the rest fell into place. “It was more just like this kind of exciting thing when I was younger, and it just turned into a career.”

That career whisked her away to three countries and many cities. “I was able to go and experience these different cultures while somebody else was footing the bill.”

Her favorite place by far is Italy, having traveled there four times. “I think I was Italian in a past life.” Larter enjoyed her career in high school, unlike the usual horror stories heard from the teen modeling industry. “For me I only have positive things to say about my experience in that world.”

Despite the globetrotting, Larter still managed to finish high school, and even graduate early. “By the time I was a junior I was going to New York a lot. I was really ready to move on so I skipped my senior year and went to a community college for a semester.”

Larter and New York City seem to share a special bond. “I really just adore the city. I was there doing The Virginia Monologues during September 11. For me just being there and around the people, I wanted to move back immediately,” she said.

After finishing filming for FD2 in Vancouver, she went straight to New York and sent for her things. “There’s just kind of a different language on the East Coast. I’m not good with the BS. I just try to talk it straight, and really be honest, and it gets me in trouble sometimes, but not as much when I’m in New York.”

Living in the city allows her to pursue work with independent films. “I really want to do things that are darker and push me as an actor to a different level,” she said. Her current endeavor is a movie titled The Tenants, which is based on the novel by Bernard Malamud. Productions like these demand more of her technical skill, rather than a creative, tasteful wardrobe. Hopefully audiences will be able to remember her name in the future.

“I just want to be a great actor, period,” said Larter.
Shanghai Knights takes strengths from Noon to create good sequel

By Joseph Jeong
Contributing Writer

Shanghai Knights
Starring: Jackie Chan, Owen Wilson, Aaron Johnson, Fann Wong
Director: David Dobkin
Rating: PG-13
Runtime: 114 minutes
Score: 3 out of 5 stars

Why mess with a formula that works? Take Shanghai Noon, move the location from the Old West to England, change the female lead from a princess to a sister, change the motive from patriotic duty to family duty, and leave the rest alone. The end result is Shanghai Knights. Innovative? No. Effective? Yes. Shanghai Knights is a great sequel. It delivers what most sequels strive for—more of the stuff that people liked and less of the fluff. That does not make it a great movie, but it makes a great sequel.

The movie starts out with the family of Chon Wang (Jackie Chan) suffering a tragedy. His father’s job was to protect China’s most important artifact, the Imperial Seal. Enter the villain, Lord Rathbone (Aidan Gillen), an evil English nobleman who steals the seal and kills off the Chon patriarch while he’s at it.

Having established the basis of a very flimsy plot, the movie now has an excuse to move the setting to England. Before our heroes make the trip, we have a brief and unmemorable sequence of seeing Wang as a successful sheriff in a small town in the West and Roy O’Bannon (Owen Wilson) in New York living a life of mischief and decadence.

Once in England, the final major character in the movie is introduced—Wu Yip (Donnie Yen), the evil brother of the Emperor of China. Shockingly enough, he is in cahoots with Lord Rathbone, both men having designs on the ultimate prize in their respective countries, the Imperial throne. In exchange for stealing the Imperial Seal for Wu Yip, Rathbone wants Yip to clear the way for his ascension to the English throne, which basically involves genocide. Wu Yip, of course, has no qualms about killing a bunch of royalty as long as he gets what he wants, the Imperial Seal.

By this time, our dynamic duo has arrived in England, and they have their hands full. Not only do they have to save the day and foil their evil counterparts’ dastardly plans, they have to figure out a way to get Chon Lin (Fann Wong), Wang’s sister, out of jail for a failed attempt to assassinate Lord Rathbone. Of course, after overcoming a few mishaps and misunderstandings, our heroes save the day in the nick of time. How else are they going to plan for Shanghai Noon III? (And trust me, they’ll be out with another one. Shanghai Knights is a tad better than its predecessor. The first fight scene in England is one of the better ones that Jackie Chan has done in a while, quite possibly the best by him in a Hollywood movie. This scene, inspired by Gene Kelly in Singing in the Rain, impresses not because of the fast-paced action and acrobatics that have become Chan’s signature, but for its grace and elegance that is seldom seen in any action movie.

The movie tries to add more comedic value by introducing historical characters and venues into the movie, at the expense of maintaining any sort of historical accuracy. Since this is a movie and not a documentary, inconsistencies like that do not really matter too much. However, introducing familiar historical figures and venues works in the beginning when the concept is still kind of fresh, but it becomes a little too contrived towards the end.

Fann Wong has a meatier role as Wang’s sister. She has a fair share of action and involvement in the plot, and doesn’t serve as just pretty wallpaper for the movie. She certainly adds more to the movie than Lucy Liu’s princess character in Shanghai Noon. However, her romance with Roy O’Bannon was distracting and could have been done away with.

As usual, stick around for the outtakes at the end of movie, another Jackie Chan signature. It’s almost always worth the price of the ticket alone.

It’s simple: if you liked or didn’t mind Shanghai Noon, this one won’t disappoint. If you weren’t impressed with the first one, your mind won’t be changed with this sophomore attempt.
Spiderman. DareDevil. The Hulk. All great heroes, all great Americans. But the Two Bits Man wonders. "Why is it that a great number of comic book heroes have their other identities as a geek/scientist/nerd/insecure outcast?" The answer is not found by solving an impossible partial differential equation. And, believe it or not, it does not come from your secret desire to have Cat Woman pouce on your penguin.

It comes from the simple fact that we, the comic book readers, need to have an inspirational hero who came out of the nerdy ranks and rose to be desired by the super heroines that is collectively known as Wonder Woman. Why do we need this, you ask? Like you don’t know the answer already—for hope, of course! It is in the back of every mind always going to be like this course! It is in the back of every dream of being the rich asset to society that the comic book store promises you in order to entice your naïve self to come to the Evil Death Institute of Technology.

Ben, being the eye candy that he is, is quite an improvement from our old poster boy, Bill Gates, who, while motivating the insightful youth towards acquiring large amounts of worldly wealth, does not provide the extra allure of The Alias chick from the Super Bowl commercials falling for us. We’ve known for a long time that the deaf dumb blind kid sure can play a mean pinball, but him being elevated to the status of a super hero is not only something new, it is an incentive to strive forward towards that fantasyland greatness.

While most of us will never reach our dream of being the rich asset to society that the comic book store owner is, with his fresh shirt stain from last night’s pizza included, we can always enjoy a round trip to a land where the beer flows like wine and the women instinctively flock like the salmon of Capistrano. I’m talking about a little place called comic book land.
By Joey Katzen
Staff Writer

Technique Crossword: Edsels Everywhere

Across
1. ___ a wrap
4. Character of tank engine fame
10. Dry
14. Carry
16. Hammer in at an angle
17. Grimm’s witch demise
18. Albino flop
20. Aniston husband Brad
21. Baked Native American cake
22. Student
24. Mimic
25. Downtown concert venue
28. TV host Rafael, to friends
30. Biltmore basement lounge
31. Anoint
32. Handheld flop
36. Fro partner
37. Murder investigator
38. African religion
40. Grandma’s daughter
43. Ryder Cup and Stanley Cup
45. Troll the ancient ______ carol
46. Ms. Clinton, for short
49. Hello from Honolulu
50. Tapes for use on a rerun
51. Article, before A... or O...
52. Extra sweet flop
54. Golden
57. Very long period of time (var.)
58. Attempt
59. Tapes for use on a rerun
62. Mai___
64. Chain gang appendage
65. Dead body
69. Seven year ___
70. Video flops
74. Dynasty famous for vases
75. Paper art
76. Quantum jump
77. Sonar-emitting creatures
78. High schools in Normandy
79. Arid
16. Abscond
19. ___ Dance Kid
23. Excommunication
25. Large marble
26. Alternative to 10 Down
27. Kind of trap
28. Anthrax unit
29. Chef’s attire
30. Therexpon
32. Tempest sections
33. Augmenter
34. Simon or Diamond
35. Zero charge particle
39. Billy’s brother
40. Prelaw or modern language, maybe
41. Strangely enough
42. Arizona town
44. Clip Dolly
46. Skillfully planned and executed
49. Amazed
51. Fireside chats, for instance
53. Sin complement
54. Confidence
55. Kidney disease
56. University system officer
60. Archaic programming language
61. Cantankerous, with dialect
62. Chicago checker
63. It can be liberal
65. Web ___ : desk items
66. Previously did 24 Across
67. Chair
68. Glimpse
71. ___ Tac Toe

Down
1. Seven year ___
2. Mower manufacturer
3. Eye ailment
4. Gilded metalware
5. Rosebush fruit
6. The loneliest number
7. Cartographer’s concern
8. Odds and evens division?
9. More foxy
10. TV therapist patient Tony
11. Demonstrate
12. Convey again
13. Main course
15. Shellfish delicacy item
16. Abscond
19. ___ Dance Kid
23. Excommunication
25. Large marble
26. Alternative to 10 Down
27. Kind of trap
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