

**Jackie Chan returns**

Chan's new movie opens today in theaters. Check out the review to see if it's worth seeing. **Page 24**

**Track team rules**

Tech's track team dominated at UNC's tournament, and they're ready for the ACC championship. **Page 29**

# 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 Shane Harvey / © 2003 New Line Productions

Ali Larter reprises her role as Clear Rivers in *Final Destination 2*. Her big break was in *Esquire Magazine*, and she has appeared in many films since.

By Art Seavey  
Staff Writer

Trivia time. What actress held a role in each of the following: *American Outlaws*, *Legally Blonde*, *House*

*on Haunted Hill*, *Final Destination*, *Varsity Blues*, and *Jay and Silent Bob Strike Back*? Here's a hint: She once sported a whipped cream bikini. That actress would be the talented, yet underappreciated, Ali Larter. Un-

like some other victims of the teen-movie genre, Larter has managed to endure in the industry, appearing in numerous films, all without being swallowed by the hype these idols often receive.

Her most recent project is reviving the character of Clear Rivers for the film *Final Destination 2*, which opened Jan. 31. Rivers is the only character to return from the previous film. "One of the reasons I came back for the sequel was that there's something really amazing about being in movies that people enjoy," Larter said.

The premise of the movie is still the same: "Her biggest thing is death can manifest itself into anything." This time, A.J. Cook, played by Kimberley Corman, experiences a vision of a gruesome pile-up on the highway. She stops her car and blocks the entrance ramp, thereby letting a whole line of vehicle occupants escape death.

Once again, death works its way down the line of people in as horrific a manner as possible. This time however, Clear Rivers steps in to help the fated youths. She has checked herself into a mental ward and lives in a padded room—her only means to distance herself from the reaches 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 be living 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. It is 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.

"I was surprised reading things today; a lot of 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 help but laugh, and it should. Without giving too much away, the trailer scene with the ladder is a tad misleading. Plus, don't

"There's something really amazing about being in movies that people enjoy."

Ali Larter  
Actress

forget about the airbag. "Everybody knew 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 up 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 groundbreaking 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 photographer had worked with her before.

"He remembered me because I've always had a bit of a mouth on me, and they wanted someone that could handle the press that came along with that... we didn't realize it would cause such a mini-scandal."

The glamorous Hollywood life seems in stark contrast to her quiet Cherry Hill, New Jersey, upbringing. "I had this beautiful suburban childhood. My dog walked us to school... my dad coached our team.

See Larter, page 20

## DramaTech's newest play honors Black History Month

By Amy Schmisser  
Contributing Writer

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" delineates the struggles of South African freedom fighters. Greg Abbott, the faculty advisor of DramaTech, is directing the play. "Advice 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 Ellis), 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. Will they perform the play? Do they even have a choice in the matter? When informed they have no choice, Robert asserts that he does saying, "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 actors must decide what political responsibility they have to their freedom, their compatriots' 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 realize that they are 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 them concerning background information. Brandi Wysche, Wes Schrader, Jordan Bethea, and James Lentini also turned in outstanding performances.

"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 with people who 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](http://www.dramatech.org) or calling 404.894.2745. Tickets are \$5 for students, \$8 for faculty and staff, and \$10 for the general public.



By Daniel Uhlig / STUDENT PUBLICATIONS

Actors rehearse a scene from DramaTech's "Advice for Players." The play, which shows this weekend, is about human rights in South Africa.

## Larter

from page 19

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 sto-

ries 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 Vagina 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

"It was more just like this kind of exciting thing when I was younger, and it just turned into a career."

**Ali Larter**  
Actress



By Shane Harvey / © 2003 New Line Productions

**AJ. Cook (left) and Ali Larter try to avoid death in *Final Destination 2*. The original film, released in 2000, left Larter's character, Clear Rivers, as the only survivor among her group of friends and in constant fear of death.**

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

Title: *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 Chi-

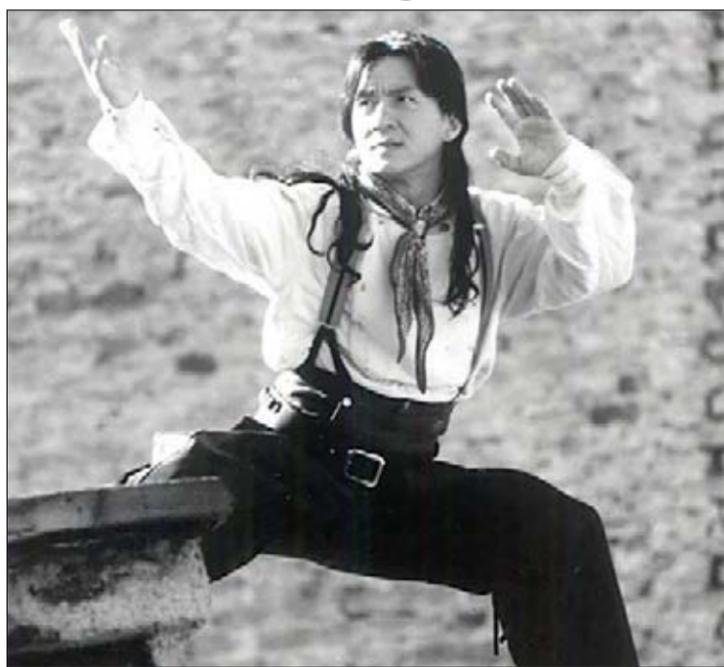
*Shanghai Knights...*  
delivers what most  
sequels strive for—  
more of the stuff that  
people liked and less  
of the fluff.

na. 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 3*? 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



By Richard Cartwright / © Buena Vista Pictures Distribution

**Wang (Jackie Chan) has used his martial arts expertise to become sheriff of Carson City, Nevada. He leaves the States to avenge his father's death.**

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.



**Technique Crossword: Edsels Everywhere**

By *Joey Katzen*  
Staff Writer

**Across**

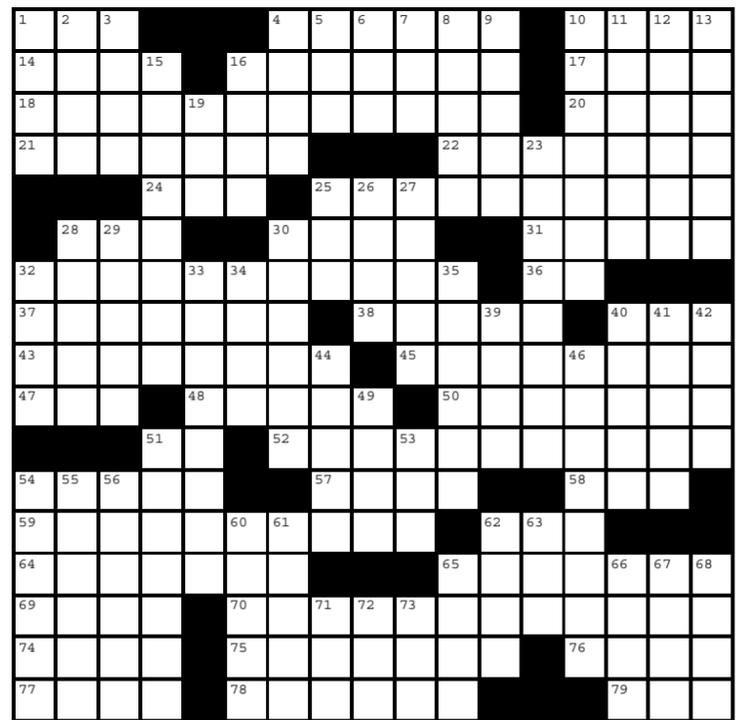
- 1. \_\_\_ a wrap
- 4. Character of tank engine fame
- 10. Dry
- 14. Carry
- 16. Hammer in at an angle
- 17. Grimm's witch demise
- 18. Albino flop
- 20. Aniston husband Brad
- 21. Baked Native American cake
- 22. Student
- 24. Mimic
- 25. Downtown concert venue
- 28. TV host Rafael, to friends
- 30. 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
- 47. Ms. Clinton, for short
- 48. Hello from Honolulu
- 50. Sends back
- 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. Foreboding sign
- 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

**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
- 28. Anthrax unit
- 29. Chef's attire
- 30. Thereupon
- 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. Char
- 68. Glimpse
- 71. \_\_\_\_\_ Tac Toe

- 72. Bronze or Ice follower
- 73. Actress West

*Solutions on page 25*