

Arts & Entertainment

RocketMan blasts off with childish laughs

Harland Williams probably thought it was gonna be a long, long time 'til Hollywood recognized his loopy talents.

But the Toronto comic's time has indeed come thanks to the Walt Disney company and its new comedy *RocketMan*.

Williams stars as space cadet Fred Randall, a computer programmer who somehow manages to secure a seat aboard the first manned mission to Mars.

But for the accident-prone space-spaz, the mission is simply another excuse for him to get in all kinds of trouble.

It would be easy to dismiss *RocketMan* as mindless slapstick entertainment, which of course it is, but that doesn't change the fact that it has a fair number of laughs.

Rookie writers Craig Mazin and Greg Erb's script gets an over-the-top treatment by Canadian director Stuart Gillard, who milks every scene for maximum laughs.

But it's Williams that makes it all work.

Comparisons to Jim Carrey and Pee Wee Herman are inevitable, but that doesn't mean his style is derivative. He's an original, all right, and a talent to watch for.

Of course most of the humor is designed to be most appealing to pre-teens, but that doesn't mean you grown ups can't enjoy it as well.

Yes, *RocketMan* is childish but it's still a blast.

The Sweet Hereafter one of year's best

Toronto talent abounds behind the camera as well this week with the commercial release of Atom



Screen Scene

Stuart Green

Egoyan's Cannes and Toronto film festivals favourite, *The Sweet Hereafter*.

Based on the novel by celebrated American writer Russell Banks, the film follows the trials and tribulations of the residents of a small British Columbia town who are united in grief following a tragic school bus accident.

The arrival of a big city lawyer named Mitchell Stephens (Ian Holm) only serves to stir up feelings and emotions in the townsfolk that have, until this incident,

gone unchecked.

For the residents, the healing process includes coming to terms with personal demons, while Stephens has his own issues with which he must contend.

Utilizing a tremendous ensemble cast and a complex and clever series of overlapping flashbacks from three periods in time and numerous points of view, Egoyan weaves an intricately crafted tapestry of basic human emotions pushed to limit.

The film is a brooding, engrossing and deliberately paced epic that's as broad as it is deep.

The Sweet Hereafter is Egoyan's most ambitious and accomplished film to date, as well as being one of the best movies of the year.



Harland Williams reaches to the stars as he realizes every kid's dream of journeying to Mars in *RocketMan*.

Images serves as visual voice during the creative process

■ This is the first in a series of articles detailing the creative process, as seen through the eyes of a variety of artists from the three towns in our coverage area: Markham, Stouffville and Uxbridge.

“Being a visual person, I use images to portray my feelings and make statements about my environment. These images serve as my ‘visual voice.’”

This makes the task of describing, in words, my creative process more of a challenge.

It took me several years to finally arrive at my ‘artist’s statement’ and hopefully it will serve me well

for years to come.

“When seized by an idea...” is the beginning of my artist statement, and to some degree, the beginning of my creative process.

We are constantly bombarded with images.

When we stop merely identifying what we look at and start ‘seeing’ our world, we take the first step in the creative process.

As we take that long look at the patterns and rhythms, colours, and textures in our world we respond with new ideas and questions: How was that created? What if I was to represent what I see or feel? How do I portray to others my emotions or my response to this subject? If it is important to me, how do I make it important to others? What medium would I use?

This desire to externalize an appreciation of a scene or object, or share an emotional response to



LIVINGSTON

a situation, immediately puts the artist in a vulnerable position.

The artist is seized by the thrill of a new idea and feels obliged to take action in whatever medium seems appropriate.

During this time the artist is engaged in a high level of activity, a state of being, intensely personal, exhilarating and rewarding.

The evidence or by-product of this intense activity is the art object.

~Judy Livingston is a Markham artist who is holding an exhibit at The Kathleen Gormley McKay Art Centre, 197 Main St., Unionville, Oct. 18, 19, 22, 23.

Fullertons hosts Downchild frontman Chuck Jackson

THE TOWN CRIER RESTAURANT & PUB

Tuesdays at 8 p.m. Linda Kroon hosts the new Pub Quiz. You'll find live entertainment every Friday night. Party with Push at Halloween. Top class food prepared by chefs George and James, with daily specials. Beautiful English breakfasts served Friday, Saturday, and Sunday from 8-12. 6298 Main St. Stouffville, 642-6937.

FULLERTON'S

Tonight, Downchild frontman Chuck Jackson. Don't forget their \$2.50 for domestic beer on Mondays and their fine hot wings. 6211 Main St. Stouffville, 642-6360.

JUGHEAD'S DINER

Enjoy the sounds of the '50s from your own jukebox while sitting in a diner booth. Friendly staff, good food, good times. 6242

Main St. 642-9511.

BEAVER'S CABIN CAFE

Saturdays 8 p.m. to midnight, Tien Yeung Jazz Trio performs in a cozy, relaxing atmosphere. Home-style meals, fully licensed. 182 Main St. Unionville, 940-2507.

JAKE'S PUB AND GRILLE

NFL season is back at Jake's. Catch all the action on 20 TVs and a large screen. A live DJ spins the latest tunes on Friday and Saturday nights. 202 Main St., Markham, 470-6955.

BLACKSMITHS BISTRO

Jazz Night on Sundays: Oct. 19 - Sharon X, Grech Trio, Oct. 26 - Rick Washbrook. Tonight is the first Cigar Night. Complimentary cigar with dinner, \$40/person. 166 Main Street, Unionville, 305-0503.

RUSTY NICKELS BAR & GRILL

Progressive cuche every Wednesday starting at 7:30 p.m. All you can eat buffet kicks off this Sunday, 11 a.m. to 3 p.m., \$10.99. 9441 Hwy 48, Markham, 472-9832.

HERITAGE ARMS

Every Thursday Eric Prince and Boyces Road entertain. Before heading to Australia, Eric was the leader of one of Markham's favourite bands, The Ten O'clock People. 144 Main St. N., Markham, 294-1300.

CJ'S RESTAURANT/HILLY'S SALOON

Every Thursday, Open Stage Jam with Kim Brown. Call about bands on the weekends. 9582 Hwy. 48 Markham, north of 16th, 471-5250.

UNIONVILLE ARMS PUB

Laser Karaoke every Tuesday night starting at 9 p.m., live bands every Saturday

spotlight

night, 9 p.m. 189 Main St., 470-8831

SGT. PEPPERS PUB & GRILL

Join us every Monday night for 25 cent wings and enjoy a game of NTN or watch the hockey playoffs on our big screen. On Sunday nights bring your voice, instrument and friends to jam night. Saturday nights: live music provided by Rick Washbrook. 5694 Hwy. 7, Markham, 471-9876.

To promote your event in Spotlight, fax the details to (905) 294-1538, mail to 9 Heritage Rd., Markham, L3P 1M3, or e-mail to econsun@istar.ca.