

Festival favours 'local jewel'

Movie
Eagle vs Shark
 Cinemas nationwide
 Showing now
 Directed by Taika Waititi
 Reviewed by Jessica Harkins

"People either get it or they don't," says Kiwi director Taika Waititi. If you're a New Zealander, you will most definitely get *Eagle vs. Shark*.

Considered by some to be the local jewel in the Auckland International Film Festival's crown, it was with great trepidation that Waititi introduced us to his film.

"Just remember that there are more of you than there are of the film," he pleaded.

The story revolves around Lily (Loren Horsley) and Jarrod (Jemaine

Clement), endearing characters of a geeky nature, who suck you right into their mundane but oddly intriguing lives.

After getting the sack from her job at the local non-descript burger joint and playing computer games in animal costumes, Lily joins Jarrod on the quest every geek dreams of – his revenge mission. The Target: The high school nemesis.

Two peas in the same misfit pod, Lily and Jarrod promptly fall into what can only be described as love. It is a love story after all, once you get past the blunt humour and weird colloquialisms that are sure to be at one with Will-Ferrellisms the world over.

Caught in the midst of another family, Lily struggles with her feelings towards Jarrod and finds sanctuary in the company of Jarrod's father and

illegitimate nine-year-old daughter.

There isn't a character in this film you won't like. You almost wish you were a part of their lives, that you had weird quirks and could say what they do without sounding like a complete dork.

You can't criticise Horsley and Clement without insulting them, because they play their socially inept characters so well you'd think they were just being themselves.

But Clement's role in the comic duo *Flight of the Concorde* and Horsley's in writing the screenplay for *Eagle vs. Shark* means they are nothing of the sort. It must be hard to play the nerd when you so clearly aren't one in real life.

The soundtrack, produced by fellow Kiwi masters the Phoenix Foundation, punctuates the action

(and non-action) with such ease you never actually realise you're listening to background music. It feels like a band is playing right in the thick of it.

Overseas viewers have told Waititi, "I liked your film but I wasn't sure if I was allowed to laugh." Trust me, you're allowed to laugh, in fact you probably won't be able to stop yourself, despite any moral high-ground you choose to tread on.

By the end of the film I couldn't help but feel that Jarrod's character was based on Waititi himself, when he seriously intones, "I have to keep creating or I'll just die."

Waititi has defended his work to foreign critics, some of whom have blasted this film. His justification: "It was a low budget film. I can do what I want."

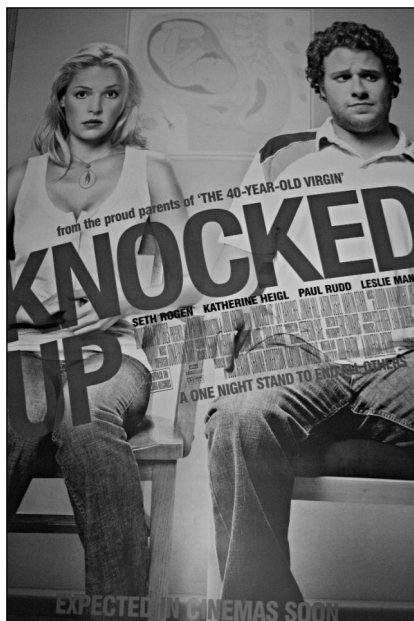
Self-serving? Maybe, but after this



gem and *Two Cars, One Night*, we should let Taika Waititi do what he wants, because it's so clearly what he wants.

Let Hollywood have the American audience, we never liked *Napoleon Dynamite* anyway.

Lewd, crude, but positively funny



Movie
Knocked Up
 Cinemas nationwide
 Showing now
 Directed by Judd Apatow
 Reviewed by Mike Kilpatrick

If a film with jokes about Stephen Hawking's genitalia, sex during pregnancy and gynaecologists saying inappropriate things sounds like fun, grab a bucket of popcorn and see *Knocked Up* now.

That's not to say *Knocked Up* is just sick jokes – it's not. It tries to be romantic and heart-warming with varying degrees of success, but sick jokes are where it excels.

As well as being funny, at times it's also deliberately uncomfortable to watch (à la *The Office*). But when it tries to be touching, some of its fail-

ings become apparent.

While Seth Rogen (*Freaks and Geeks*) and Katherine Heigl (*Grey's Anatomy*) are good actors, their dialogue and on-screen chemistry just don't tug the heartstrings as well as other pregnancy films, such as John Hughes's 80s film *She's Having a Baby*.

The film started as a follow-up to director Judd Apatow's 2005 film *The 40 Year Old Virgin*, in which Rogen and Paul Rudd (*Anchorman* and Heigl's brother-in-law in this film) starred as Steve Carrell's co-workers.

But moving away from the constraints of a sequel proved successful. It allows Carrell the chance to make a cameo appearance – one of many during the film, but the only one which really works.

The film is a family affair for Apatow. His wife, Leslie Mann

(*George of the Jungle*), plays Heigl's unhappily married sister and their two children are cast as Mann and Rudd's adorable and pop-culture-aware kids.

The film centres on the relationship between Ben Stone (Rogen) and Alison Scott (Heigl). Scott is an E! Entertainment presenter who gets pregnant after a drunken one-night stand with Stone. She has to come to terms with the impact of a baby on her life and Stone has to decide whether to give up his stoner lifestyle.

Overall, the film works well, and will play well with its target audience.

However, it would be a better film if 20 minutes were cut off the running time. There are scenes that add little to the overall story, but reduce the pace of the film. Chief-in-culprit is a boy's trip to Las Vegas involving magic mushrooms and a psychedelic trip to Cirque du Soleil.

While it may have been homage to *Fear and Loathing in Las Vegas* it turned into an overlong advert for the Cirque and a bizarre conversation about hotel room chairs.

But there is plenty going on in the film which will keep movie-buffs happy and dragged-along partners chuckling. There are many references to other films which give film geeks the chance to laugh at the in-jokes. And at times it hints at the elements of self-doubt that can arise in relationships, in ways that it was easy to relate to. For the type of film it is, the positives outweigh the negatives.

Towards the end of the film a gynaecologist tells Rogen's character "if you want a special experience, go to a Jimmy Buffett concert." How true. But if you want an enjoyable two hours and 20 minutes, go and see *Knocked Up*.

music

Blindspot Farewell Tour

Powerstation
 August 25
 After 10 years of musical mayhem, Blindspot are calling it a day, performing one last time.
 Tickets from Ticketek and Real Groovy

Ice Cube

TelstraClear Pacific Events Centre
 August 22

Rapper Ice Cube is bringing his political rhymes and hip-hop beats to New Zealand for a one-off concert in Manakau.
 Tickets from Ticket Direct

The Ten Tenors

The Civic
 August 18
 Ten opera singers combine their singing with a show full of laughs, cheeky camaraderie and fun.
 Tickets from Ticketek

Rhombus - Winter Tour '07

Galatos
 August 24
 After a successful Australian tour Rhombus is back playing for New Zealand fans.
 Tickets from Real Groovy

Static fm 88.1

Mon -	8-10am Gavin & Luke 10-12pm Holly M & Kinsey 4-6pm Tina & Holly J 6-8pm Liz & Nick
Tues -	8-10am "AA" 12-2pm Lauren and Dom 2-4pm Rich & Nancy 4-6pm Vaughan & Althea
Wed -	10-12pm Amber M & Lisa 2-4pm Lana & Sara C 4-6pm Amy & Alea
Thur -	8-10am Tim & Erin 12-2pm Scott & Clint 4-6pm Jax & Livi
Fri -	2-4pm Amber & Ilsa 4-6pm Leon & Thomas

Planet fm 104.6

Mon-	Tongan 6.30am Mandarin 1.35pm Arabic 2.10pm Singhalese 6.00pm
Tue-	Nuiean 8.00am Ghanaian 6.15pm Russian 7.20pm Kiribati 9.20pm
Wed-	Hindi 8.00am Cantonese 1.35pm Punjabi 4.25pm Sri Lankan 8.15pm
Thur-	Tongan 6.00am Korean 11.35am Cook Islands 6.30pm Samoan 7.40pm
Fri-	Fijian 4.55pm Dutch 7.25pm Romanian 8.30pm Latino 10.40pm
Sat-	Albanian 9.25am Scottish 11.05am French 3.35pm Portuguese 8.40pm
Sun-	Jewish 9.00am Finnish 1.15pm South African 2.55pm Bangladeshi 7.10pm

Entertainment editor's picks:

King Lear - Royal Shakespeare Company

ASB Theatre, Aotea Centre
 August 18-25
 Sir Ian McKellen returns to the company after 17 years to take the lead role in *King Lear*. Shakespeare's epic drama investigates old age, mortality, family and a man's capacity to endure.



Danny Bhoj

Bruce Mason Centre, Takapuna
 August 21
 Danny Bhoj returns to New Zealand with his solo stand-up comedy routine. His new show is about heroism and the inevitability of failure.

Erotica - Lifestyles Expo

ASB Showgrounds, Greenlane
 August 24-26.
 Intriguing displays, stage shows, international guests and free product giveaways are up for grabs as Auckland's naughtiest expo returns for another year. For the ladies there is an all-male revue starring New Zealand's Men of Steel.

Bob Dylan at The Civic

The Civic
 August 26
 Contemporary music's most influential artist comes back to Auckland to perform his only theatre show for this part of the world. The intimacy of *The Civic* and Dylan's classic songs can will justify the somewhat pricey tickets.