

Counting Crows song adopted by Omaha

By Paula Lavigne
Staff Reporter

When the San Francisco-based band Counting Crows released "August and Everything After," the album touched residents in America's heartland.

The band's song "Omaha" delighted that city's residents so much it remained the city's most popular song for weeks.

“Like any rock and roll song, some of the lyrics can be confusing to laymen.”

—Terry,
Omaha City
Councilmember

And, with the help of two local radio personalities and a member of Omaha's City Council, it soon became an official song of the city for 1994.

Councilmember Lee Terry worked with members of KEZO-FM's Todd and Tyler morning show to write up an official resolution.

"I'm into rock and roll. I've had the CD weeks before they started playing it on the air," Terry said. "I bought it because I heard Mr. Jones on MTV."

He said there was an official "ragtime-type" song written specifically for the city of Omaha saying "Omaha's a great place, etc.," but it was written in the 1930s.

After he wrote up the resolution

to make "Omaha" an official song instead of the city's official song for just 1994, Terry presented it to his colleagues who received it with a fairly positive response.

"Like any rock and roll song, some of the lyrics can be confusing to laymen," he said. "We had a few of the councilmembers balk at the lyrics they didn't understand."

Terry said the resolution passed in part because of a younger city council who "just wanted to do something fun ... really!"

Terry sent the resolution to the band's label and Jam Productions.

Charlie Gillingham, keyboardist for Counting Crows said the resolution was tacked to a wall in the bus.

"It's charming," he laughed. "I have been to Omaha three or four times. It's a nice place to have been through."

Unlike many of their other songs, "Omaha" is not a story-song, he said, rather it is a series of images that have to do with the heart and the "middle of America."

Omaha is a very musical name, Gillingham said.

"Isn't it a wonderful set of syllables?" he said. "All these great American names from all these states, Dakota, Nebraska, Ohio — all of them are Indian-oriented."

The Counting Crows will be performing "Omaha" and other songs off their recent release "August and Everything After" at 7:30 tonight to a crowd at Omaha's Mancuso Convention Center.

Special guests Sam Phillips and Frente! will open the show. Tickets are still available.

Costner solid in Earp role

"Wyatt Earp"



By Joel Strauch
Staff Reporter

An epic tale of the life of the legendary Wyatt Earp, the film does justice to the lawman, but strains the eyes a bit as the filmmakers found it difficult to quit.

Wyatt (Kevin Costner) is raised by a lawyer father (Gene Hackman) who believes that blood is much thicker than water. Wyatt grows up with strong sense of justice and even stronger ties to his brothers.

The first segment of the film deals with Wyatt's first marriage. Ending in tragedy, it plunges him to the depths of alcoholism. Saved from a possible hanging by his father, Wyatt escapes to a part of the country that he has already fallen in love with — the West.

In the untamed cattle town of Dodge City, Wyatt finds his niche — as a lawman. Joined by his brothers Virgil (Michael Madsen) and Morgan (Linden Ashby), he quickly cleans up the town. Unfortunately, Wyatt is replaced by the more political and less violent Ed Masterson (Bill Pullman).

Wyatt serves a stint as a Texas lawman and crosses paths with a gambler suffering from tuberculosis, Doc Holliday (Dennis Quaid).

Tired of being the law, Wyatt and his brothers move to the mining town of Tombstone to start a business. But the Earps' strong sense of justice prevails and they find themselves wearing silver stars again. Clashing with a band of ruffians led by Ike Clanton (Jeff Fahey), the Earps, along with Doc Holliday, are sucked into the infamous shootout at the OK Corral.

Venturing past this possible climax, the film looks at the effect that a brother's death has on Wyatt, as well as his troubling decision to leave his second wife Mattie Blaylock (Mare Winningham) for his new romantic interest Josie Marcus (Joanna Going).

Over three hours long, the film tries to get at everything and, as a result, loses something. Mesmerizing and exciting in some scenes, it drags on incredibly slowly in others. Kevin Costner has a thing for epic sagas. It worked in "Dances with Wolves," but it doesn't work that well here.



Courtesy of Warner Bros.

Kevin Costner stars in "Wyatt Earp."

The film also lacks a significant anti-hero. The heroes are abundant, but the villains are lacking. In Wyatt Earp's life, he faced many resourceful and conniving law-breakers. But in this film, the threat of Ike Clanton is almost trivial. Johnny Behan (Mark Harmon), the corrupt sheriff of Tombstone, hits closer to the mark, but even he poses no real danger to Wyatt.

The acting is quite sound. Kevin Costner captures the character development of Wyatt very well. He makes the peaks and valleys of Wyatt's life and his reactions to them believable.

Gene Hackman, as Wyatt's father, has a small but very strong part in the film. As always, Hackman makes his presence known.

It is Dennis Quaid who deserves the highest honors. Losing 45 pounds to fit into the role of the "lunger" Holliday, Quaid captures the accent and attitude impeccably. (Although those that have seen "Tombstone" might argue that it would be impossible to top Val Kilmer's phenomenal performance.)

Not exactly a short and powerful work, "Wyatt Earp" still deserves to be watched (with a little patience and a comfortable seat).

Disney's 'Lion King' deserves praise

"The Lion King"



By Gerry Beltz
Staff Reporter

Walt Disney's "The Lion King" is sure to be one of the "mane" box office draws this summer, and deservedly so.

"The Lion King" is Disney's first all-original screenplay, and features some of the best animation that Disney has ever done, including an incredible wildebeest stampede and a breathtaking opening sequence.

The incredible African landscape is the setting of Disney's latest film, as the audience sees the beginning of life for Simba, a lion cub destined to one day be the leader for his people, currently led by Simba's father, Mufasa (voice provided by James Earl Jones).

However, Mufasa's brother Scar (Jeremy Irons) has other plans. He wants to get rid of both Simba and Mufasa so he can take over the Pride Lands, along with his hyena cohorts

(Whoopi Goldberg, Cheech Marin and Jim Cummings).

Scar does manage to kill Mufasa. He then convinces Simba that the cub has killed his own father, and that Simba must run away and never return.

Naturally, the film has loads of lovable characters, ranging from Pumbaa the warthog (Ernie Sabella) to a Zen baboon (Robert Guillaume) named Rafiki that lets Simba know who he is and what he must do.

The vocal talents in "The Lion King" are no less than incredible, with the exception of Matthew Broderick as the adult Simba. It is a strange combination to say the least, but after all, Disney was the company that put Robby Benson in as the voice of the Beast in "Beauty and the Beast."

However, James Earl Jones more than makes up for any problems that Broderick may cause; Jones is the only person that could even be considered for the role of a lion king.

The music is great too, courtesy of rock legend Elton John and lyricist Tim Rice. The soundtrack isn't nearly as incredible when compared to the last three Disney animated films, but



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Disney released its latest animated movie, "The Lion King" last weekend to a large turnout. The movie features the voices of James Earl Jones and Matthew Broderick.

it is still well worth a listen.

Also, in typical Disney fashion, the film is hilarious. Although it doesn't reach the barbarically funny peaks that "Aladdin" achieved with the help of Robin Williams, "The Lion King" does have laugh after laugh for young

and old. Fair warning should be given that the screenwriters must have stayed up nights thinking up some of the puns that bounce around throughout the film.

"The Lion King" is a film with pride.

Highly praised films released on videotape

From Staff Reports

"Philadelphia" — Tom Hanks won an Oscar for Best Actor for his work in this film as a lawyer infected with the AIDS virus. He is fired from his law firm because of it and files a suit against his former partners. Denzel Washington appears as a homophobic ambulance-chaser who takes Hanks' case.

"In the Name of the Father" — Based on a true story, "In the Name of the Father" brings a compelling story and very fine acting. Three actors — Daniel Day-Lewis, Emma Thompson and Pete Postlethwaite — landed Academy Award nominations for their work in this film.

"Death Wish V" — Chuck Bronson is back (plus a few more pounds) in another unwanted sequel to "Death Wish." Good judgment kept this one away from Lincoln theaters.