

# Disney finally offers swinging film

■ After stumbling in the past few years, Disney makes a smashing comeback in children's hearts with "Tarzan."

BY SAMUEL MCKEWN  
Editor

No more preachy morals like those in "Mulan" or "Pocahontas." No more unknown fables like "Hercules."

No, Disney finally played it smart and kept it stupid. The result, "Tarzan," is the best animated movie to come out since "The Lion King."

"Tarzan," which made a little more than \$33 million in its first weekend, is an inspired piece of animation. It's short, so the kids stay awake and, more importantly, it plays to them, unlike the aforementioned films, which were fine in their own right, but were aimed more at a more mature thinking.

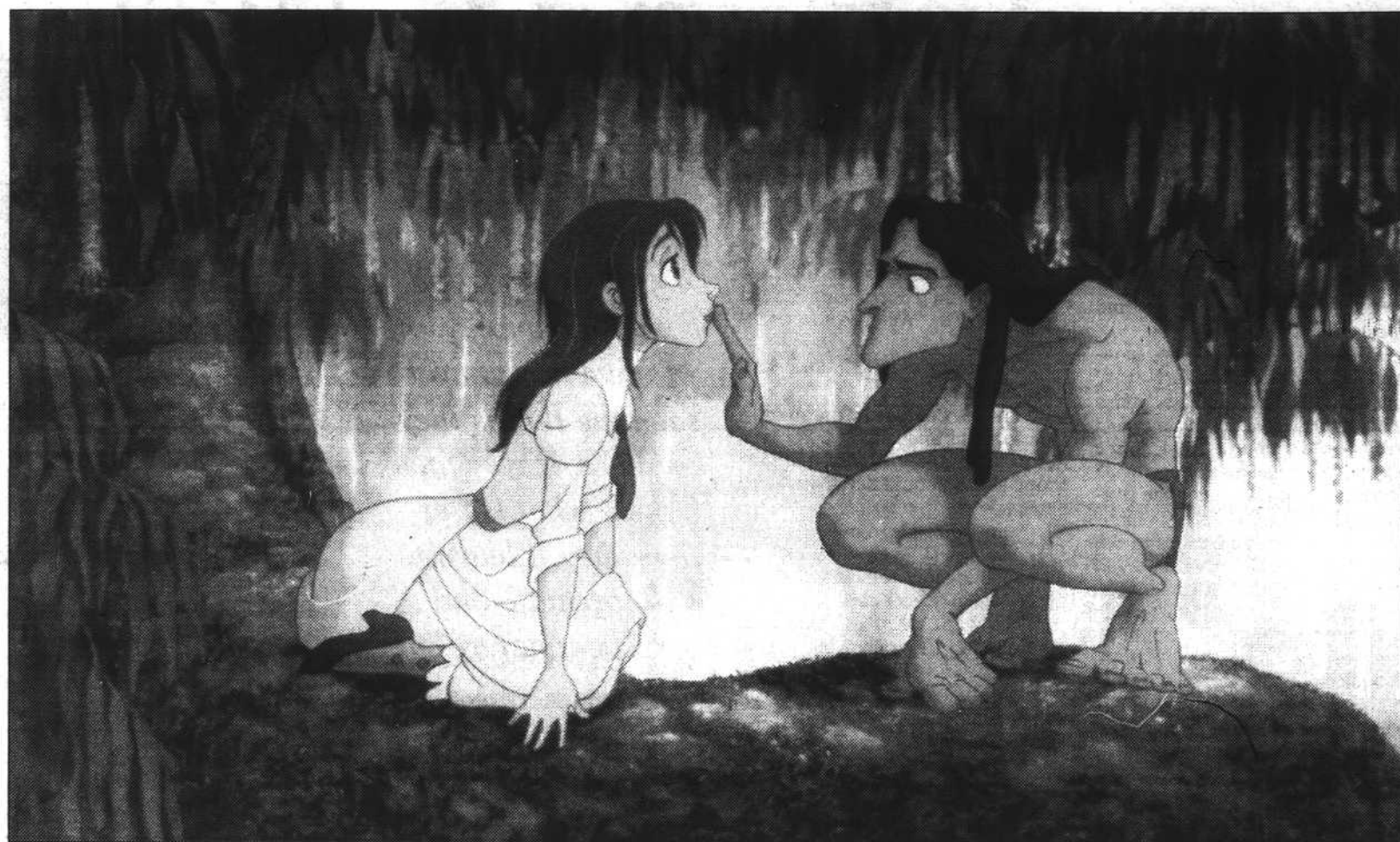
Not this jungle tale, which vaguely follows Edgar Rice Burroughs' novel of a boy who loses his parents amid the forest of Africa and is raised by gorillas from then on.

As a young boy, Tarzan (later voiced by Tony Goldwyn when a man) knows he's different. But at urging of his mother Kala (Glenn Close) and a need to impress his father Kerchak (Lance Henriksen), the boy fits in with his gorilla brethren and even finds a best friend in Turk (Rosie O'Donnell).

Then come the humans.

There are three in the group, most notably Jane (Minnie Driver), a stuffy, yet amiable Englishwoman who, along with her father (Nigel Hawthorne) and a mean hunter Clayton (Brian Blessed) are on a search for gorillas. They find Tarzan instead and a likely story unfolds over the next hour.

It's easy to get down to it in review-



COURTESY PHOTO  
Tarzan and Jane star in, predictably, "Tarzan" the feature-length animated film from Disney.

ing animated films. Does it look good? Yes, especially with a new animation called Deep Canvas, which gives the jungle a 3D effect. Is it funny? Reasonably, although O'Donnell gets on the nerves. Do the songs work? Well enough, as Phil Collins spares us from listening to characters croon. Save one pointless musical scene, there are no other pointless musical scenes in Tarzan.

The story exists only to further along the few amazing jungle scenes,

which feature Tarzan surfing on tree branches. One chase scene involving Jane and a gaggle of baboons is better than most live action bits, based on sheer pacing and quality of the editing. I was impressed.

Will kids love it? Yes, and it's not too long, so they won't get bored. It provides a good message about tolerance of nature and species.

Not surprisingly, it does a better job of this than another primate-loving film, "Instinct."

## The Facts

Title: "Tarzan"

Stars: Tony Goldwyn, Glenn Close, Minnie Driver

Director: Chris Buck III and Kevin Lima

Rating: G

Running Time: 1:28 (88 minutes)

Grade: B+

Five Words: "Tarzan" gets Disney on track

## Music

### The Damnations "Half Mad Moon" Sire Records Grade: A-

It's rare to find a band that captures the elements of roots rock music while keeping the music fresh and alive with spontaneity. Fortunately the Damnations have managed just that.

The band's first album for Sire Records serves as a testament to the band's energy and creativity. The first track "Unholy Train" is an up-tempo (rockin' as some might say) track which displays the band's strengths rather nicely. Amy Boone and Deborah Kelly's use of harmony is reminiscent of The Jayhawks, as is Rob Bernard's well-placed, treble-laden guitar lines.

Songs such as "Spit and Tears" and "Jack's Waltz" show the band's aptitude for bluegrass-tinged folk with banjos and mandolins. However, the band makes good use of diversity. Once a slower song is played, the band immediately follows it with quicker-paced tracks like "Commercial Zone Blues" and "Catch You Alive" which give the band a harder edge.

Apart from being exceptionally well-played, the album is a showcase of well-written songs. Tracks like "No Sign of Water" and "Black Widow" combine wry sentiment with bitter-sweet irony.

The Austin-based band has a sound indicating a particularly vibrant live-set which explains the band's extensive touring. To the band's credit they have proven that they can use that charisma in the studio. That being the case, this band has a promising career ahead.

—Patrick Kelly

### Groovie Ghoulies "Fun In The Dark" Lookout Records Grade: B

The Groovie Ghoulies are a lot like a cute kid — you just can't help but love them. And they're crazy about monsters.

Their sound is rooted in punk rock tradition directly inspired by the Ramones, and like the Ramones, they're pretty catchy. Songs rarely incorporate more than three chord changes, the

tempo only varies slightly from song to song, there are usually no back up vocals or guitar leads and the songs are always about monsters, spacemen, mummies, computers or some other aspect of cartoon pop horror.

But despite this simplicity, and sometimes predictability, their songs just feel too good to be ignored.

Just like a cute kid. Ah.

Like all four of the Ghoulies' previous albums their latest release lives up to the tradition they started with their first album, "Appetite for Adrenochrome." It's raw, gritty and good, just like grandpa's stew. And even though the group, like grandpa, hasn't changed the recipe in 20 years, every bowl has a new flavor.

To get the Ghoulie flavor combine three parts Ramones, two parts Motorhead, one part Beach Boys and one part Misfits. Slop it in a Crock Pot, bring to a boil, let simmer and in 30 minutes pop out their latest album, "Fun In The Dark."

With songs like "She Gets All The Girls," "Vampire Girl," "Brain Scrambling Device" and "Let's Go To The Moon," the Ghoulies have put together another fun ride from start to finish. The

fun house even stops off for two covers, "Lonely Planet Boy," originally by the New York Dolls and "Laugh at Me," by Sonny and Cher, joining the ranks of other Ghoulies covers by Neil Diamond, the Monkees and the Rolling Stones.

While retaining the same overall feel of other Ghoulies albums "Fun In The Dark" has enough innovative elements to set it apart. "Let's Go To The Moon" features a fuzzed out voice posing weird poetic questions and "Vampire Girl" ends with a repetitive cadence chanting "I wanna rock n roll every night, and sleep in every day" that will still be in your head next week.

Unfortunately with three-chord punk some songs inevitably sound like something you've heard before and the Ghoulies are guilty as charged. Both "Carly Simon" and "The Spell Is On" sound like a Ramones rip off of a Beach Boys song.

But despite its moments of weak song writing, the album is still a fun collection of feel-good rock n roll. It's simple and silly but fast and edgy at the same time.

—Jason Hardy