

FILM SHORTS

Reviewers: Bob Grimm and Juan-Carlos Selznick.

Opening this week

Arctic Dogs

A big-dog cast (Jeremy Renner, Alec Baldwin, Anjelica Huston, John Cleese, James Franco, and more) provides voices for this animated feature about a mail-delivering Arctic Fox who dreams of joining the huskies as a Top Dog. Cinemark 14, Feather River Cinemas. Rated PG.

Harriet

Biography of famous abolitionist/activist Harriet Tubman (played by Cynthia Erivo) who, after escaping slavery in 1849, returned to guide more than 300 others to freedom from America's slave states via the Underground Railroad. Cinemark 14. Rated PG-13.

The Lighthouse

Writer/director Robert Eggers follows up *The Witch* with a black-and-white psychological horror about a couple of lighthouse keepers (Willem Dafoe and Robert Pattinson) who start to lose their minds during a storm on a remote island. Cinemark 14. Rated R.



Monos

See review this issue. Pageant Theatre. Rated R —J.C.S.

Motherless Brooklyn

Edward Norton directed and stars in this film set in 1950s New York City about a private investigator with Tourette Syndrome (Norton) who is trying to solve the murder of his mentor (Bruce Willis). Cinemark 14. Rated R.

Terminator: Dark Fate

The sixth film in the Terminator franchise is a sequel to the first two films (those directed by James Cameron, who returns to produce this latest installment), and stars Linda Hamilton as Sarah Connor, who teams up with a cyborg human hybrid to protect a girl from the Terminator hunting her. Cinemark 14, Feather River Cinemas. Rated R.

The Wicker Man – Final Cut (1973)

Director Robin Hardy's re-cut and restored update to his classic horror flick about a cop who, during the course of investigating a missing person on an isolated Scottish island, uncovers disturbing local rituals. Two showings: Nov. 1-2, 10 p.m. Pageant Theatre. Rated R.

Now playing

The Addams Family

The creepy family made famous in the 1960s television series gets the CGI animation treatment. Cinemark 14, Feather River Cinemas. Rated PG.

Black and Blue

An action thriller about a rookie New Orleans cop (Naomie Harris) who, after realizing some of her fellow cops are part of a criminal enterprise, partners with a stranger (Tyrese Gibson) outside the force to try to expose their crimes. Cinemark 14, Feather River Cinemas. Rated R.

Countdown

After downloading an app on her phone that supposedly can predict a person's date of

death, a nurse (Elizabeth Lail) learns she only has three days to live. Cinemark 14, Feather River Cinemas. Rated PG-13.

The Current War

The story of the war of the currents in the late-19th century that pitted Thomas Edison and George Westinghouse against one another in competition for the electric-power transmission systems that would be used in America. Originally distributed by the Weinstein Co. in 2017, the film was shelved at the time in the wake of the sexual assault allegations against Harvey Weinstein. Cinemark 14. Rated PG-13.



Joker

Joker, the latest take on DC Comics' Clown Prince of Crime, will go down as one of 2019's big missed opportunities. Director/co-screenwriter Todd Phillips apparently had the green light to do whatever he wanted with the character's story, and he also landed the perfect lead (Joaquin Phoenix) for the title role. This was a chance to tell a fresh, dark origin story from the Joker's point of view. Phillips blew it. Phoenix, on the other hand, did not. He is otherworldly good as Arthur Fleck, a severely troubled clown and wannabe standup comic (and mama's boy) with a condition that causes him to laugh uncontrollably at inappropriate moments. He physically and mentally disappears into the part—to the point where you may become concerned for the actor's well-being. He accomplishes this in a film that has a major identity crisis. It's trying to do something new (mostly via the use of extreme violence), while also riffing on something old (Frank Miller's *The Dark Knight Returns*, as well as various other comic book and cinematic influences). What's delivered is a muddy, predictable and ultimately unoriginal film. Cinemark 14, Feather River Cinemas. Rated R —B.G.

Maleficent: Mistress of Evil

In this sequel to *Maleficent* (2014), Angelina Jolie reprises her role as the evil fairy, and Elle Fanning is back as her goddaughter, Princess Aurora (aka Sleeping Beauty), and the two are at odds with one another thanks to outside forces intent on sowing discord between humans and fairies. Cinemark, Feather River Cinemas. Rated PG.



Zombieland: Double Tap

For this sequel, director Ruben Fleischer returns with the whole zombie-killing crew—Emma Stone, Jesse Eisenberg, Woody Harrelson and Abigail Breslin—for a film that does little to reinvigorate the genre, but still delivers plenty of laughs and zombie gore. It's 10 years later, and the rag-tag team has taken up residence in the abandoned White House. The basic story involves a zombie-killing road trip that leads to Graceland (sort of) and then a commune called Babylon, with a lot more zombie killing. Along the way, fun new characters are introduced, including Nevada (played by Rosario Dawson), owner of an Elvis-themed hotel, and Albuquerque (Luke Wilson) and Flagstaff (Thomas Middleditch), two zombie hunters who look and sound an awful lot like Harrelson and Eisenberg's Tallahassee and Columbus. The best, though, is Madison, played by Zoey Deutch, a "valley girl" type who has survived all these years living inside the freezer of food-court yogurt shop in a decimated mall. Whenever the film threatens to go a bit stale, Madison will swoop in decked out in a pink leisure suit with fake fur (she's also a vegan) to liven things up. Cinemark, Feather River Cinemas. Rated R —B.G.



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