



Greg The Bunny: Best Of The Film Parodies/Shout! Factory

Once upon a time, there was a show on Fox. It was half an hour long, and it was called "Greg The Bunny." On it, there were puppets. It was a magical time. 2002. The puppets were called Greg The Bunny, Warren The Ape, Count Blah and others. Seth Green was there too. Eleven episodes aired before the network pulled the plug.

As it goes with the quality product Fox cancels to replace with absolute crap, the DVD sales on *Greg The Bunny: Season One* were strong, and it was clear that there was still plenty of interest in the characters and the whole idea of an adult comedy in which puppets and humans interact. Rather than bring the show back, a la "Family Guy," however, Fox let Greg The Bunny go to IFC.

It was a different show that aired on IFC in fall/winter 2005, but an appropriate one considering that "Greg The Bunny" first aired on that channel back in 1999. Now doing short film parodies—as opposed to parodies of short films—Greg, Warren, Blah and super-agent Pal Friendlies are back in their element, poking fun at *Pulp Fiction*, *Eraserhead*, the Coen Brothers (they do *Fargo* and *Barton Fink*), *Natural Born Killers*, *Easy Rider* and more.

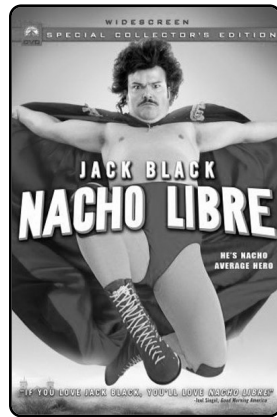
Fans of the Fox show will be happy to have the characters back, and even for those who didn't have the chance to check it out when it was on network tv, it's not like you had to watch the one to enjoy the other. The IFC version is a completely different entity, and this compilation of some favorite parodies should be a welcome addition to the collection of "Greg" fans, movie buffs and wiseasses everywhere. Highly recommended.

—by JJ Koczan

Nacho Libre/Paramount

Nacho Libre is an easy-to-digest, easier-to-forget adventure featuring the irrepressible Jack Black as a nauseatingly obnoxious friar frustrated by desires which have him questioning his religious calling. By day, he is Padre Ignacio, a dedicated servant of God who toils away tirelessly as the cook at a Mexican monastery which caters to orphans.

But by night, because the Catholic



Church frowns on fighting, he secretly dons a mask, cape and "stretchy pants" to morph into his alter ego, a professional wrestler known only as Nacho Libre. Ignacio's other interest is Sister Encarnacion (Ana de la Reguera), an angel of mercy who has been newly assigned to the orphanage. This infatuation has the priest pining away for the pretty young nun's affections and questioning the wisdom of his vow of celibacy, while he summons up the nerve to seduce her.

Relentlessly irreverent, unrepentantly mean-spirited, and wantonly crude, excuse me for failing to find any of the humor in this sick, sadistic flick funny. An ear of corn is pounded into an eye, excrement is inexplicably smeared on a face, and a bee hive is tossed at an innocent person.

The skits amount to little more than placing Black in front of the camera and having him improvise with a series of cheap props. What ended up on screen is an awful lot of awkward slapstick, forced sight gags, and tiresome feces and fart jokes, all of which fall flat.

What is most remarkable about this morally bankrupt movie is its obvious impropriety of a priest constantly soliciting a nun for sex. And any script having Jack Black in spandex and showing off a belly-full of stretch marks should never have been greenlighted in the first place.

Poor.

In English and Spanish sans subtitles.

Running time: 92 minutes.

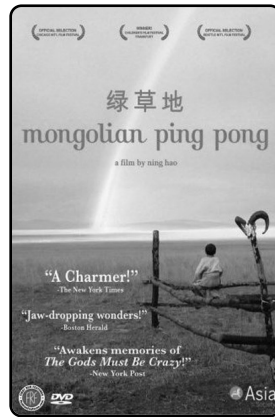
DVD Extras: Deleted scenes, Photo Gallery, Comic Book, Luchador Mask Creator, audio commentary by Jack Black and the scriptwriters, "Behind-the Scenes," "Jack Sings!" plus another featurette.

—by Kam Williams

Mongolian Ping Pong (Lu cao di)/First Run

The Gods Must Be Crazy was the surprise hit of 1980, setting all sorts of box office records for an independent film. That charming comedy from South Africa revolved around a Bushman baffled by a Coke bottle tossed out of a passing airplane which lands at his feet.

Having no clue what this mysterious object might be, he brings it back to his village where it becomes



a source not only of curiosity but of considerable conflict. Deciding that "The Gods Must Be Crazy," he then sets off on an eventful journey across the Kalahari Desert which brings him in contact with encroaching Western civilization on his way to toss the cursed item off the edge of the Earth.

A quarter century later, *Mongolian Ping Pong* relies on a similar scenario to examine the lost innocence of another naïve primitive. In this instance, six-year-old Biliike happens upon a ping pong ball floating in a creek. Because he hails from a tribe of grassland nomads whose lifestyle hasn't changed much since the 13th Century reign of Genghis Khan, no one has a clue as to the meaning of this mysterious sphere.

Biliike surmises he has found an egg, though his grandma guesses it's a glowing pearl. Ultimately, the boy and his two best friends set off on a perilous adventure across the Gobi Desert in search of an answer they expect to find in the City of Beijing.

The good news is that *Ping Pong* has a unique feel and relates a totally different tale than *The Gods*. More atmospheric than funny, this deliberately paced picture features some of the most breathtaking cinematography of the year. Best of all, it makes a persuasive case against the voracious onslaught of so-called progress.

Innocence recaptured.

Excellent.

In Mongolian with subtitles.

Running time: 102 minutes.

DVD Extras: Director's notes and biography and a photo gallery.

—by Kam Williams

SoulMate/Clean Heart

Everybody is well aware of the dire statistics: Black women are five times as likely to never marry as white women, 70% of new AIDS cases in this country are among African-American females in America, and the disease is the leading killer of black women between the ages of 25 and 34, over 40% of black women have never been married, and the more money they make, the less likely they are to tie the knot or procreate. All of this might lead one to wonder how sisters are coping in the face of such insurmountable odds. Fortunately, some

rather revealing answers have arrived

in *SoulMate*, a moving documentary in which some very intelligent, educated, attractive, successful and spiritual black women open up to share their heartfelt feelings about their predicament.

Directed by veteran tv-producer Andrea Wiley ("The Fresh Prince Of Bel-Air"), the picture features testimonials from subjects so ostensibly desirable it is mind-boggling to believe it when they speak of their loneliness and how badly they'd like to share their abundance with a brother ready to settle down and start a family. But whether a businesswoman, a model, a doctor, a company president, a shrink, a sales exec, a minister, an actress, or in another walk-of-life, they all recite a similar refrain, namely, that they have long-since made peace with the distinct possibility of growing old alone.



Why is marriage so elusive for accomplished black women, the most unpartnered segment of the US population? The participants cite the skyrocketing black male incarceration rate, the down-low phenomenon, and brothers dating women of other colors as all contributing factors.

One sees the problem as more deep-seated, surmising that "the institution of slavery systematically tore our families apart, and some of the process that began then, continues now... And since the '60s, our ability to partner has deteriorated considerably."

Another points to the fact that even Oprah Winfrey and Condoleezza Rice are still single as proof of how serious a situation we're dealing with. Yet another interviewee, unwilling to be in the "freak file" in anybody's Rolodex, says resolutely that she'd rather remain celibate till she finds a spot in the right man's "forever file."

Candid conversations with Christ as the common denominator, *Soulmate* offers a fascinating, frank and ultimately optimistic exploration of a woefully unaddressed issue.

Excellent.

Running time: 83 minutes.

DVD Extras: Bonus footage, profile of the director and a faith-based featurette.

For info and to order the dvd, visit soulmatefilm.com/thetrailer.htm

—by Kam Williams



That's My Bush!: The Definitive Collection Comedy Central-Paramount

May 2001. A simpler time. A time when George W. Bush was adorably stupid, rather than harrowingly idiotic, as a President. Did Sept. 11 change public opinion of Bush? Undeniably. Did it cancel "That's My Bush!" Possibly, although the official word on the street was the show was too expensive.

It'll be something to watch this DVD fly off the shelves. Not only for its witty balance of sitcom conventions and official-sounding matters of state, or the show's creators' sizable fan base, but as a simple result of the political climate. People who might have thought the show uncouth and too irreverent at the time might even find "That's My Bush!" too tame now. There's nothing like a good lynching—by the way, the 7th is just around the corner—and there's little coincidence that this show would be released on DVD in a mid-term election year that shows overwhelming disapproval of Bush's administration.

Probably not the creators' intention, either, just the way these things go. But now as the President's *actual* ineptitude is in full-on "had the dream where I was naked again" public scrutiny, the *fictitious* ineptitude portrayed on "That's My Bush!" is, well, charming. We all wish he was that adorable again.

There's the well-cited debut abortion episode, featuring a fetus for the pro-life movement, which is reason enough to buy the set. But don't forget when George is on ecstasy, the death penalty improvisational troupe, the gun control episode with Charlton Heston (spoof, of course) and the guard-bear. Brilliant, all of them.

And paired with excellent acting from character actor Kurt Fuller as Karl Rove, Timothy Bottoms as Bush (who later played Bush in a serious made-for-tv film about the events during 9/11) and Marcia Wallace as the maid, the show did virtually nothing wrong.

Yet it was canceled nonetheless. Couldn't compete with 90% approval, I suppose.

DVD extras include commentary from Trey Parker and Matt Stone, as well as separate commentary from the main cast.

Highly recommended.

—by Patrick Slevin

CSI MIAMI: THE COMPLETE FOURTH SEASON
Paramount

EVERYTIME I DIE:
SHIT HAPPENS
Red

GHOST WHISPERER:
THE COMPLETE
FIRST SEASON
Paramount

GORILLAZ: PHASE 2:
SLOW BOAT TO HADES
EMI

MISSION: IMPOSSIBLE III
Paramount

SCRATCH/Genius

SUPER MARIO BROS.
SUPER SHOW VOL. 2
Sony

TALES OF THE RAT FINK
Sony

nov. 7th

BEVERLY HILLS 90210:
THE COMPLETE FIRST
SEASON/Paramount

CARS
Disney

COALITION
Image

THE JUNKY'S CHRISTMAS
Koch

LITTLE MAN/Revolution

MELROSE PLACE:
THE COMPLETE FIRST
SEASON/Paramount

POLICE SQUAD:
THE COMPLETE SERIES
Paramount

WORDPLAY
IFC

nov. 14th

ACCEPTED
Universal

THE DA VINCI CODE
Sony

FAMILY GUY:
VOLUME 4/Fox

THE GROOMSMEN
Vivendi

JOHN TUCKER MUST DIE
Fox

PAUL MCCARTNEY:
THE SPACE WITHIN US
A&E

STRANGERS WITH CANDY
ThinkFilm

WHO KILLED THE ELECTRIC
CAR?/Sony

nov. 21st

DALAI LAMA:
A PATH TO HAPPINESS
Vivendi

DAVID ELLEFSON METAL
BASS: LEVEL 1/MVD

DR. KATZ PROFESSIONAL
THERAPIST:
SEASON TWO/Paramount

ICE AGE: THE MELTDOWN
Fox

AN INCONVENIENT TRUTH
Paramount Classics

SCOOP/Focus

SLAYER/Anchor Bay

YOU, ME & DUPREE
Universal