

## REVIEW

## Latest OO7 movie was one of 2006's best

Adam W. Morrison

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Casino Royale came as a huge surprise. Upon my first viewing in Nov. 2006, I expected an entertaining action movie. Instead, it turned out to be one of the best films of the year and quite possibly the best OO7 movie to date (I used to think 1963's *From Russia with Love* was the best). It's completely invigorating and exactly what the series needed. Gone are the gadgets like invisible cars (Master of gadgets, Q, is nowhere to be found) and the campy humour that dominated many of the previous OO7 films.

Like *Batman Begins*, *Casino Royale* starts the series anew with a new actor in the lead and a much more mature take on the subject matter. When announced Daniel Craig would replace Pierce Brosnan (who did a great job as Bond), there was uproar from fans and movies nerds alike because Craig didn't look the part. People even went as far as creating a website dedicated to having him replaced. After watching him in this movie, I think people's fears can put to rest. He's terrific in the role made most famous by Sean Connery by bringing a real humanity to the character, but also doesn't shy away from being a hardened killer. He's also much more physically imposing than the past actors, having put on 20lb of muscle for this role.

The story, with Bond being only recently appointed to OO status, first finds him in Madagascar chasing a seemingly insignificant bomb maker. This entire sequence, lasting several minutes, is thrilling stuff. This bomb maker, only a minor cog in a big machine, leads Bond to the Bahamas and Alex Dimitrios (Simon Abkarian), a wealthy criminal work-

ing for Le Chiffre (Mads Mikkelsen), an arms dealer holding a poker tournament at the Casino Royale in Montenegro with a total prize amount is \$150 million. A master player, Le Chiffre gambles money from dictators and terrorist organizations to earn them more money. If he loses, he's in very serious trouble. Naturally, he can't be allowed to win the game, so MI-6 sends Bond to play for them. He's accompanied by Vesper Lynd (the impossibly beautiful Eva Green), an accountant with MI-6, who'll eventually prove the love interest. His romance with Lynd works pretty well, though the audience knows it can't last.

Le Chiffre is an interesting change of pace for a Bond villain. Not intent on destroying the world with giant death rays, he is a villain that can exist in reality. He doesn't waste his time with drawn out monologues explaining his master plan. For the most part, he's cool and calculating. It's really only during a nasty torture sequence he shows his ruthlessness. Did I mention he weeps blood?

The poker sequence takes up a considerable part of the movie, and may try people's patience for those wanting endless action. Movie goers need not worry as several sequences are definitely action heavy. Aside the from chase sequence, there's a wild sequence at Miami Airport and the climax takes place inside a sinking building on the Venetian waterfront.

Though kids and teenagers are usually the prime audience for this series, this film is aimed more at adults. It's exciting, but not at the sacrifice of intelligence. One only hopes the film makers can strike gold again with the next movie.

Rating: \*\*\*\* (out of \*\*\*\*)

## Book review: The End of the Alphabet

Beth Lassaline  
*Reporter*

*The End of the Alphabet*, written by C. S. Richardson, is a novella that is quick to read, but not quick to leave the mind. A recent addition to the New York Times bestseller list, the story of Ambrose Zephyr and his wife, Zappora Ashkenazi sadly enough is one that many people will experience.

The main character is a quiet and gentle copywriter, who has always had a fascination with the alphabet.

The story begins when Ambrose Zephyr, age fifty, fails his annual medical exam. His doctor predicts that Ambrose has about one month to live. As soon as Ambrose hears his grim prediction from his doctor, he frantically begins making lists of all the places he would like to see before he dies. Appropriately, enough, the lists follows the alphabet. A for Amsterdam, B for Berlin, C for Calcutta.

At first glance, this book appears to be simple. However, Richardson has ex-

pertly constructed a story that is authentic and sincere. As the couple frantically race around Europe, Ambrose begins to come to a realization. Life is not meant to be a collection of random experiences but rather, it is about spending time with the people you love. Zephyr, still fearing his imminent death, decides to scrap the expedition. The couple returns to their small home in London where Zephyr quietly dies.

Although this review may make this book sound depressing, it's quite the opposite. Richardson has penned a book that is inspirational and moving. Interestingly, Richardson has written this entire book with the absence of quotation marks. His unique style creates an interesting sense of fusion and cohesion.

Anybody who has a background in art history will also appreciate the subtle smattering of references to Van Gogh and Rembrandt, among others.

This book definitely comes highly recommended. You will not be disappointed.



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## Play Review: The Rez Sisters

Stacey Murray  
*Advertising Manager*

Vagabond Productions brought life and flavour to *The Rez Sisters*, a Tomson Highway play, showing just how professional they can be.

The play was about a group of aboriginal women living in Wasaychigan, a reserve in Ontario. While the play was about their hopes of winning the world's largest bingo, it's themes were much deeper and more profound.

*The Rez Sisters* was a play about the social inequalities faced by aboriginal women in Canada and how they learn to survive and thrive in those conditions.

The hero of the play was Emily Dictionary, played by Alison Jenkins. Dictionary had left the reserve for years living as a free spirit and traveling throughout North America, but she gave it all up to move back to the reserve to live with her boyfriend. Even so, her free spirit inspired the other women, who had faced years of oppression on the reserve. Dictionary would never ask 'can we do with?' but instead 'Why are we still standing here?'

During her youth she suffered abuse, but she fought back. In the play she sported a black eye, but assured the others she had not been abused. "Take a look at this eye," she said. "I earned it." The best performance of the night went to Katelyn Dykstra, who played Zhaboonigan Peterson. Peterson lost her family at a young age and never recovered from the loss, wandering through life with the mentality of a child.

When she first appeared on stage, one could think she was playing a child. She carried a teddybear and counted fence

posts - one, two, three. It's only a few minutes in that you realize she's a grown woman, one that never found the support and counseling she needed in her time of loss, something that says a lot about the services for those living on reserves.

Even so, she had the spirit of a child, something Dykstra performed beautifully. She took her tantrums, hiding under a table at times, but also held on to her innocence somehow even when the world was so cruel to her.

Each woman suffered differently on the reserve, yet they all stuck together. While the play may seem like a somber look at aboriginal oppression, it was surprisingly upbeat as the women saw their dream of attending the world's largest bingo become a reality.

Another element of the play was audience interaction, which was done seamlessly. Each audience member was given a bingo card at the beginning to play along with the characters. The actors also used the entire Duffy Amphitheatre as their stage, climbing stairs and platforms. At one point I felt a breeze and looked up only to see Nanabush climbing on the projection table. He was played by Brian Ansems.

Nanabush is considered the trickster, and is common in Native American mythology. He is meant to be a comic, but one that teaches us about the world in which we live.

Overall this play was done extremely well. It had all the elements necessary to entertain, but it also made real a long-standing problem faced by aboriginal women in Canada.

Very nicely done.