

Here She Comes, Miss Glamouresse

Will Miss Bible Belt Beat Miss Industrial Northeast? Find out in Pageant



Six contestants, each representing a different region of the United States, compete for the title of Miss Glamouresse.

By Mary Damiano

The Miami premiere of *Pageant*, the inaugural production of the newly renovated Miami Shores Performing Arts Theater, is a hysterical show guaranteed to make you laugh.

Pageant is not a musical spoof about a beauty pageant. *Pageant* is a beauty pageant. Despite the all-male cast, *Pageant* is not a drag show. *Pageant* is about women vying for a crown, not men dressed as women vying for a crown. The all-male cast adds another dimension to the hilarity, but it is not the point.

The setup is simple. Six contestants, each representing a different region of the United States, compete for the title of Miss Glamouresse. An international beauty product company sponsors the pageant, and the winner will represent the company for the coming year. Contestants compete in the spokes model, swimsuit, evening gown, fitness, talent and the very crucial, beauty crisis counseling categories. They are scored by randomly selected audience members who serve as judges, so the outcome is always different.

If there was ever a Beauty Pageant Barbie, this is what it would look like. To say the set is pink would be an understatement. It actually gives new meaning to the concept of pink and provides the perfect backdrop for the contestants.

Miss West Coast, played by Steph Eckman, is a ditzy New-Ager whose talent is performing an interpretive dance titled, *The Seven Ages of Me*.

Miss Great Plains, played by Cannon Starnes, is a buff beauty who looks like she is competing for the title of Miss Muscle-esse.

Miss Industrial Northeast, played by William "Terry" Bellamy, is a hot little number who studies hair styling by mail and is the best tutu wearing, roller-skating accordion player you'll ever see.

Miss Deep South, played by Daniel Bonnett is a Scarlett O'Hara wannabe with

a penchant for puppets.

Miss Texas, played by Richard Zendarski, ropes, shoots and rides a hobbyhorse through her talent moment.

Miss Bible Belt, played by Rich Simone, is a bible-thumping babe who's banking on Jesus.

And Wayne LeGette is a perfect Master of Ceremonies. His Frankie Cavalier is pure kitsch with shellacked hair and a bad prom night tux. Musical Director Eric Alsford provides some funny moments as the on-stage musical accompanist.

The cast is excellent. Each actor conveys the sweetness and old-fashioned wonder the show calls for. The standout is Bellamy. His Miss Industrial Northeast is adorable as she bounces and flirts her way down the runway. Bellamy pulls double-duty in *Pageant*; he is also choreographer of the splashy dance numbers. Simone is a quadruple threat. In addition to playing Miss Bible Belt, he is the theater's artistic director as well as *Pageant*'s director and set designer. He excels at each job.

The Shores Performing Arts Theater provides a wonderful showcase for *Pageant*. There are plenty of seats, the stage is big and spacious and the acoustics are clear. One hopes that more musicals are planned for this venue.

The great thing about *Pageant* is that we've all seen enough beauty pageants to know that this stuff isn't that far from the truth. And truth is usually funnier than fiction.

Pageant runs through December 2 at the Shores Performing Arts Theater, 9806 NE 2 Avenue, Miami Shores. Show times are Friday and Saturday, 8pm; Sunday 7pm; Matinees Thursday, Saturday and Sunday at 2pm. Tickets are \$27 for evening performances, \$25 for matinees. Discounts are available for groups of 20 or more. For more info, call 305.751.0562.

Hey Doc, Give Me Something for the Pain

Novocaine is a Long Strange and Unsexy Trip

By Mary Damiano

Steve Martin has sex onscreen!

In Martin's new movie, *Novocaine*, apparently named because you need a few hits of drugs to numb you from the pain of this mess, Martin has some full throttle sex scenes with co-stars Laura Dern and Helena Bonham-Carter.

Personally, Martin and Bonham-Carter doing the nasty in a dentist's chair is not the image I need in my head when I go to the dentist. Root canal is painful enough.

As a big proponent of seeing as much sex in movies as possible, *Novocaine* has shown me the error of my ways. There is such a thing as bad movie sex.

Steve Martin shouldn't really take the blame here; I think it's a comedian thing. I hope we're never subjected to Jim Carrey having sex. Can you imagine the Grinch getting it on with a Who? I hope not. (Damn, I just did.)

Need an example of good movie sex? We've all got a favorite moment. Think about the body-painting scene in *Better Than*

Chocolate, or Tom Cruise and Rebecca De Mornay engaging in some locomotion in the train scene in *Risky Business*. Think about the videotape with that one worn out spot because you hit pause every time that certain scene comes on. Think about Brendan Fraser in *Gods and Monsters*. I know he doesn't actually have sex in *Gods and Monsters*, but Brendan Fraser stripping down for Ian McKellen is a nice image to get stuck in one's head.

As a big proponent of seeing as much sex in movies as possible, *Novocaine* has shown me the error of my ways.

Good movie sex is like the shower scene in *Psycho*. Remember, in *Psycho*, we never actually see the knife hit Janet Leigh's body,

yet it feels like we're watching her get hacked to pieces. And while it's always nice to see actors and actresses strip down to the buff and get down and dirty, that usually works best if they're buff in the first place. But with really good movie sex, we don't need to see the whole enchilada to savor the flavor. Let's face it, Angelina Jolie just has to appear on screen to give good movie sex.

Bad movie sex is the least of the things wrong with *Novocaine*. The biggest problem is that it never makes up its mind about what it wants to be.

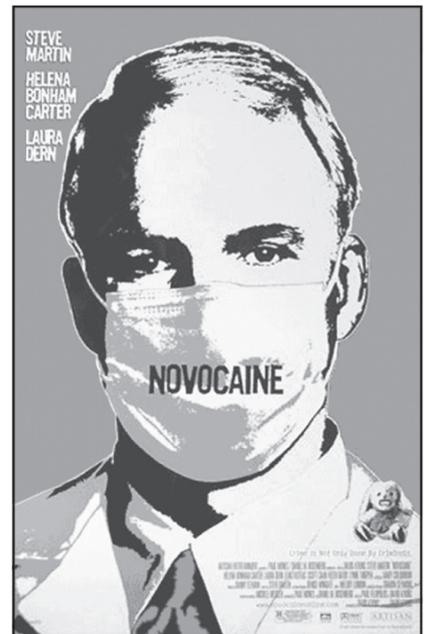
Is it a comedy? Some of the images in *Novocaine* are a little too gruesome for even dark comedy, and, the movie itself falls flat.

Is it film noir? The plot, a dentist being framed for murder, lends itself well to that genre, as do the voice-overs by Martin, but the movie is too sunny to be film noir.

Drama? Yeah, right.

Mystery? Barely.

I don't know what *Novocaine* is supposed to be, but I can tell you what it is. It's bad. It's really bad.



If you need a Steve Martin fix, go rent *The Jerk* or *Roxanne*. Better yet, re-watch an old favorite with some great movie sex. Those are, after all, the only movies that are better viewed at home than in a movie theater.

"Without promotion something terrible happens - NOTHING!

-P.T. Barnum

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