

Alexander. Directed by Oliver Stone. Starring (in descending order of hot fee-males), Colin Farrell, Angelina Jolie (woof!), Rosario Dawson (whoa! and moving up fast, more I think about it); (in descending order of hot males) Colin Farrell (makes both lists... urf urf!), Val Kilmer, Anthony Hopkins (and if those liver spots aren't make-up, about at the end of his career in cineemah); Barbra Streisand in a cameo as the Temple of Diana of the Ephesians.

Hey! Got good news and bad news for you. The good news? You've just won a starring role in bigtime Oliver Stone's magnum opus, magnum *epos* (a lot like *epic*, only classy) *Alexander*... as one of the *hetairoi*, the "companions" of Alexander the Great. Lotta screen time! The bad news? You're gonna wear a mini skirt, pageboy bob, eyeliner, and kiss guys on the mouth. Oh, man... this thing is *awful*. Megalos Alexandros? Turns out the "megalos" is Stone's megalomania (Story is that he's been stewing on this project for fifteen years. Wonder why nobody took him up on it? Cost you eight bucks to find out...): The picture, according to all the heavy duty critics, is a sort of camouflaged biopic dramatizing Stone's own turbulent life, controversial genius, and ego the size of Zeus' butt (and let's hope it's not Stone's sexuality *en jeu* here, too...). Worserer yet, it's another veiled allegory of Western civilization crashing into the Eastern, with dark warnings about "going East," futile pursuits of evaporating "barbarian hordes," uplifting homilies about "culture older than ours" and on and on, in case you missed it, you dummy: the momentum of the Greek (read "Western") drive to bring enlightenment to the "Land Where the Sun is Born" (read "Iraq") falters and dissipates in fatigue, frustration, sickness (the moral kind), and—Marines in Fallujah will be surprised to hear about this—sexual dissolution among the universally comely maidens of the place!

Stone evidently wrote the screenplay his own self (with the help of someone called Laeta Kalogridis, obviously the source of the three Greek words that surface in this thing, and the Greek letters over which the Roman credits get superimposed so we read OLIVER STONE in Classical Greek characters, pretension itself of "epic" proportion as we hear in the final line of the drama MEGALOS ALEXANDROS, which Stone feels nonetheless obliged to translate for us: "...the greatest Alexander of them all.") drawing on the few early sources for the life of Alexander of Macedon, and—gotta hand it to Stone—most of the traditionally accepted episodes and players figure in the movie: Alexander (in Greek "far from man," if you catch my drift) mounts Bucephalos ("cement head") by facing him into sun so he doesn't see his shadow; Dad tries to jack him up at a public orgy, falls on his butt whereupon Alexander tells him he won't make it across Asia if he can't make it across a room; Mom a ~~bite~~ woman of rebarbative energy perhaps involved in assassination of Dad; student of Aristotle (Anthony Hopkins hamming it up as "modest" Aristotle... first I heard of *that*); buddy Phlatulos (or something) saves him in battle when he gets a smack on head, falls from horse; in his cups, he kills a buddy (maybe same one) in a public orgy (maybe same one... aren't they all?); outwits Darius (for some reason pronounced "Dah-RYE-us" and not "DAH-ree-us"... probably those heavy hitter Iv(or)y League "consultants" in History Stone laid on to "authenticate" this fairy tale and best argument I know against higher education) at battle of Gaugamela (present day Switzerland, only flat); marries Roxanne, hot Persian fee-male (Rosario Dawson, and whoa! buddy, you get your eight bucks' worth right there... what freeze-frame was invented for); cries; dies either poisoned or not, of "Asian swamp fever" or not.

If there's a story, it's that Mom (Angelina Jolie and way too hot to be a mom and way too hot not to shed some silk in this thing but doesn't although does wag "snake" around and you know what *that* means...) wants illegitimate "outsider" ("alexos" in Greek) son to make it big, doesn't get along with dad, Phillip ("horse lover," played by Val Kilmer with one eye tied behind his back—and there are about a dozen one-eyed guys in this thing including one, I swear, goes from right eye scarred shut to left... check it out... or maybe it's just all the guys wear beards and dresses and funny helmets and can't tell), so has him killed or not. Alexander, who likes guys or not, rampages through world to East slaughtering in the name of higher civilization but simultaneously slipping into barbarism and vice as his hair grows (lesson there) and his beard sprouts and his scars multiply (lotta scars in this thing), dragging an army of dubious "companions," emissaries of Greek (if you catch my drift... if you don't, better ask your Mom) culture, to the edges of the earth where they all get their butt kicked by new combat innovation, the "elly-fant," Bucephalos cops it, the Orient preserves its mystery for later generations to assay (mine in '68; your kid this week). On the way we have mom-on-son mouth-to-mouth kiss, guy-on-guy mouth-to-mouth kiss (don't not much like the way those guys look at exotic discovery from across Indus, the "mon-kee," neither), slim little hermaphrodites slinking around in eye shadow and proto-jockey shorts, graphic recreation of classic battle of Gaugamela (Persian for "taught at West Point to drowsing teddybear lieutenants") replete with sixteen-square *phalanxes* (count 'em) and eighteen-foot *syrrisas* (invention of Phillip, variously spellt), Rosario Dawson's butt, Colin Farrell's butt, along with—in this sad, overwrought, silly farce *and* despite my admiration for some of his stuff, too—*Oliver Stone's butt*, right in your face, you dummy!