

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 17

Sunday 7/10**dance**

Salsa Class. Learn to salsa and strut your stuff. \$6-8, 7pm. 1x Art Park, 522 Second St. SE. ixartpark.org

stage

Charlottesville Opera Presents: *The Sound of Music*. See listing for Thursday, June 7. \$15-75, 2pm. The Paramount Theater, 215 E. Main St., Downtown Mall. charlottesvilleopera.org

classes

Paint and Sip with Catelyn Kelsey Designs. Sip on wine and learn a variety of acrylic paint techniques and skills. \$35, 2pm. Eastwood Farm and Winery, 2531 Scottsville Rd. catelynkelseydesigns.com

etc.

Sangria Ramble Summer '22. Join the Route 29 South wineries and cideries to try their unique twists on Sangria. Price varies, all day. Various locations. @R29Ramble

Monday 7/11**music**

Baby Jo's. Tunes from the seven-piece New Orleans-inspired boogie and blues band. Free, 6:30pm. The Whiskey Jar, 227 W. Main St., Downtown Mall. thewhiskeyjarville.com

Berto & Vincent. Rumba rumba. Free, 7pm. South and Central Latin Grill, Dairy Market. southandcentralgrill.com

Gin & Jazz. Brian Caputo Trio performs in the hotel lobby bar. Free, 5:30pm. Oakhurst Hall, 122 Oakhurst Cir. oakhurstinn.com

outside

Archaeology Plantation Walking Tour. See listing for Wednesday, June 6. Included with admission, 1:30pm. Thomas Jefferson's Monticello, 931 Thomas Jefferson Pkwy. monticello.org

Summer Celebration Series: Music Mondays. Live music from Matt Johnson, and complimentary access to the one-acre putting course. Free, 6pm. Birdwood Bar & Grill, 410 Golf Course Dr. boarsheadresort.com

etc.

Astronomy on Tap. Astronomy themed talks and trivia for all ages. Free, 7pm. Three Notch'd Brewing Company, Dairy Market. aotcville.com

Tuesday 7/12**music**

Madeline Holly-Sales. Bossa nova, samba, and soul. Free, 7pm. South and Central Latin Grill, Dairy Market. southandcentralgrill.com

Vincent Zorn. Solo wild gypsy rumba. Free, 7pm. The Bebedero, 225 W. Main St., Downtown Mall. thebebedero.com

outside

Archaeology Plantation Walking Tour. See listing for Wednesday, June 6. Included with admission, 1:30pm. Thomas Jefferson's Monticello, 931 Thomas Jefferson Pkwy. monticello.org

etc.

Geeks Who Drink Tuesday Trivia Night. Useless knowledge means everything at this authentic homegrown trivia quiz. Free, 8pm. Firefly, 1304 E. Market St. fireflyville.com

Best original organ

David Cronenberg makes a brilliant return with *Crimes of the Future*



With *Crimes of the Future*, starring Léa Seydoux, Viggo Mortensen, and Kristen Stewart, director David Cronenberg makes a graphic return to form.

By Justin Humphreys
arts@c-ville.com

For fans of writer/director David Cronenberg's films, his newest, *Crimes of the Future*, is cause for celebration. It's 100 percent unadulterated Cronenberg, and marks a return to the subgenre he essentially invented: body horror—unsettling excursions into human biology in revolt against itself. And for those unversed in Cronenberg, this will be a thought-provoking, observant, shocking, funny, and rewarding experience.

Set in a run-down future, the film focuses on performance artists whose specialty is physically altering themselves in front of audiences. Among them, Saul Tenser (Viggo Mortensen) develops entirely new organs that his performing partner Caprice (Léa Seydoux) surgically removes. As Tenser prepares for more groundbreaking shows, he works undercover with a detective in the NVU—New Vice Unit—seeking out a dangerous cult intent on developing a unique breed of human.

If all this sounds surreal, it is, in the best possible sense. Although it's not a masterpiece, this is Cronenberg's finest, most peculiarly inventive film since his excellent *Existenz*. It feels like it was made decades beyond

2022, or was designed for another, humanlike species. Cronenberg aficionados will recognize echoes of his great works here, including *Videodrome*, *The Brood*, and *The Fly*. As in those films, he eschews preachiness and didacticism in *Crimes of the Future*, in favor of pointed observation. That's not to say it's cold or nihilistic—it's neither—just that he doesn't lecture his audience: He imaginatively extrapolates on current trends in his own unique, intense, and wryly witty voice. His latest is loaded with dark comedy and is distinctly Cronenbergian with expressions like “best original organ,” or “designer cancer.” And, in his inimitable way, if there's a place the audience might consider too shocking, Cronenberg immediately goes there.

Crimes of the Future is a refreshing reminder of how wonderful it is to see a gifted director allowed to express his personal vision without dull studio interference. The film is devoid of pandering, and never insults its audience's intelligence, successfully commenting on everything from human-kind's adaptability to the most hideous environments, to the pretentious side of performance art—better still, it actually leaves you thinking.

The cast has no weak links. Mortensen eloquently physicalizes Tenser's torturous occupation and its physiological hazards.

Kristin Stewart is hilarious as jittery bureaucrat Timlin, a kind of surgical groupie, and Don McKellar is very good as her boss, Yevgeny Nourish. (Odd names like these are another Cronenberg hallmark.) Also outstanding are Nadia Litz and Tanaya Beatty as the dryly funny repairwomen Router and Berst.

The unsung hero of *Crimes of the Future*, though, is Cronenberg's longtime production designer Carol Spier, whose contributions to his movies are incalculably important. For decades, Spier has ingeniously

Crimes of the Future

R, 107 minutes
Streaming (Google Play, Vudu)

shown the unshowable, to borrow one of the director's phrases. Her ability to give his highly abnormal worlds believable form is the stuff of genius.

Crimes of the Future will likely appall viewers with weak stomachs. But Cronenberg's violence and sexuality possess a sensibility, and that makes all the difference. Unlike so many outstanding horror filmmakers who slid into making junk in their elder years, 79-year-old Cronenberg's chops—no pun intended—are strong. He still really delivers. **C**

For those unversed in Cronenberg, this will nonetheless be a thought-provoking, observant, shocking, funny, and rewarding experience.

July 6 – 12, 2022 c-ville.com



@cville_culture



facebook.com/cvilleweekly

Wednesday 8/17

music

Berto and Matt. Brazilian and Latin guitar night. Free, 7pm. The Bebedero, 225 W. Main St., Downtown Mall. thebebedero.com

Greensky Bluegrass. With The Wood Brothers. \$47, 7pm. Ting Pavilion, 700 E. Main St., Downtown Mall. tingpavilion.com

Vincent Zorn. Performing live on the patio. Free, 6:30pm. Red Pump Kitchen, 401 E. Main St., Downtown Mall. redpumpkitchen.com

Wavelength trio. A midweek music boost. Free, 6:30pm. The Whiskey Jar, 227 W. Main St., Downtown Mall. thewhiskeyjarville.com

Wednesday Night Karaoke. Jen DeVille hosts this weekly song party. Free, 9pm. Rapture, 303 E. Main St., Downtown Mall. rapturerestaurant.com

dance

Dance with SwingCville. Learn vintage swing dance. Free, 7pm. The Front Porch, 221 E. Water St. swingcville.org

classes

Brown Bag Webinar: Tree of Heaven & the Spotted Lanternfly. Learn about the relationship between tree of heaven (*Ailanthus altissima*) and the spotted lanternfly, and how best to control each of these invasive species in late summer. Free, noon. Online. blueridgeprism.org

outside

Farmers in the Park. Local farmers with seasonal produce and meats, cut and potted flowers, baked goods, hot meals, value-added products, prepared food, and crafts. Free, 3pm. Farmers in the Park, 300 Meade Ave. charlottesville.gov

Wind Down Wednesday. Acoustic music, food trucks, and a stunning Charlottesville sunset. \$5, 6pm. Carter Mountain Orchard, 1435 Carters Mountain Trl. chilesfamilyorchards.com

Wine Down Wednesday. Live music, award-winning wines, delicious eats, and sunsets over the vineyard. Free, 5:30pm. Keswick Vineyards, 1575 Keswick Winery Dr., Keswick. keswickvineyards.com

etc.

Family Film Series: The Wiz. Perennial favorites alongside modern classics. Free, 11am. Violet Crown Cinema, 200 W. Main St., Downtown Mall. violetcrown.com

Trivia in the Orchard. Hosted by Katalin Magyar, who tests your knowledge of history, pop culture, holidays past, and, of course, cider. Free, 6:30pm. Albemarle CiderWorks, 2545 Rural Ridge Ln., North Garden. albemarle ciderworks.com

Thursday 8/18

music

Berto & Vincent. Wild gypsy rumba and Latin guitar night. Free, 7pm. The Bebedero, 225 W. Main St., Downtown Mall. thebebedero.com

Cougar Beatrice, Orange Culture, and The Flops. Rock the night away with tunes from three bands. \$7-10, 8pm. The Southern Café & Music Hall, 103 S. First St. thesouthern cville.com

Wavelength trio. Vintage rock and jazzy bluesy vibrations. Free, 6pm. Pro Re Nata, 6135 Rockfish Gap Tpke., Crozet. prnbrewery.com

In hot pursuit

Fire of Love documents the extreme lives of volcano-exploring couple

NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC

For almost 30 years, Maurice and Katia Krafft lived life on the edge, traveling the world to film closeups of volcanic activity.

By Justin Humphreys

arts@c-ville.com

National Geographic's documentary *Fire of Love* is easily one of this year's most engaging films. Its larger-than-life subjects are the late Maurice and Katia Krafft, the world's only well-known volcanologist couple. Devoted to studying volcanoes closely, the Kraffts shot astonishing footage under extremely dangerous conditions. The intensity of the film relies on the couple's fascinating archives, but an unfortunate series of precious animated vignettes and pretentious narration partly undercut the story's extraordinary power.

From the 1960s until their death in July 1991 on Japan's Mount Unzen, the Kraffts led globetrotting lives, exploring volcanoes as intimately as humanly possible. Throughout the film, we see them venture into risky situations that most people would avoid at all costs. Maurice Krafft aptly refers to their lives as "a kamikaze existence lived in the beauty of volcanic things." In contemporary interviews, the pair come off as personable and warm, making light of the life-threatening

circumstances their métier took them to. The Kraffts were daredevils, but with a quiet courage and cheerfulness that makes them all the more appealing.

What the Kraffts recorded isn't dry science, but a sweeping visual feast. Countless hours of film are distilled into mesmerizing montages of volcanic power, alternating between epic eruptions and smaller, specific details of their aftermath. The scenes of devastation volcanoes leave in their wake are chilling. The tight shots of glowing molten lava, pyroclastic flows, and other volcanic phenomena become almost abstract. The volcanoes are the true stars of *Fire of Love*, and in what is likely a cinematic first, they get screen credits.

The Kraffts were fully aware of how puny human beings appear alongside their subjects' primeval fury, and their footage continually bears this out. The film also explores the pair's daily life and work between misadventures. Occasionally, they take even wilder risks, like when Maurice goes rafting on a lake that's mostly sulfuric acid.

Where the flow ebbs in *Fire of Love* is in its narration, delivered in a pretentious deadpan by actress Miranda July. The text

is largely well-written, but her delivery is tonally completely wrong for this epic tale. Aside from this misjudged artistic choice, a string of interstitial animated inserts is also jarring and unwelcome. Done in a simplistic style, they come off as twee and out of place. Like the narration, their calculated clumsiness (à la Wes Anderson) clashes with the Kraffts' films' majesty.

Fire of Love

PG, 93 minutes
Violet Crown Cinema

It's rare to see a documentary that is so extraordinarily strong in certain respects and so weak in others, but *Fire of Love* has so much in its favor that it's worthwhile viewing. The film clocks in at 93 minutes (a miracle in these days of ridiculously overlong movies), proving that economy is an artistic virtue.

Fire of Love is a vivid reminder that all it takes to make exciting spectacles beyond mainstream Hollywood's explosive CGI excess is two intrepid souls with vision, bravery, and a camera. ☺

What the Kraffts recorded isn't dry science, but a sweeping visual feast.

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 27

Sunday 10/16**Fall Festival at Mountaintop Montessori.**

Celebrate fall with games for all ages, live music, kids' crafts, miniature pony carriage rides, food, and drinks. Free, 1pm. Mountaintop Montessori, 440 Pinnacle Pl. mountaintopmontessori.org

Oktoberfest. Live oompah music from Willie Hayes & the Alpen Travelers, German beer tap takeover, brats, pretzels, and more. Free, noon. The Batesville Market, 6624 Plank Rd. batesvillemarket.com

Paramount at the Movies Presents: *Minari*.

A Korean-American family moves to an Arkansas farm in search of its own American dream. 25 cents, 2pm. The Paramount Theater, 215 E. Main St., Downtown Mall. theparamount.net

Monday 10/17**music**

Baby Jo's. Tunes from the seven-piece, New Orleans-inspired boogie and blues band. Free, 6:30pm. The Whiskey Jar, 227 W. Main St., Downtown Mall. thewhiskeyjarville.com

Gin & Jazz. Brian Caputo Trio performs in the hotel lobby bar. Free, 5:30pm. Oakhurst Hall, 122 Oakhurst Cir. oakhurstinn.com

Berto & Vincent. Rumba rumba. Free, 7pm. South and Central Latin Grill, Dairy Market. southandcentralgrill.com

words

The Power of Visual Storytelling. Photographer, filmmaker, and conservationist Michael O. Snyder discusses his unique, visual approach to telling climate stories as a tool for social impact. Free, 6pm. PVCC's V. Earl Dickinson Building, 501 College Dr. pvcc.edu

Tuesday 10/18**music**

Josh Mayo Tuesdays Tuesday. A bi-weekly jam session with local favorites. Free, 9pm. Rapture, 303 E. Main St., Downtown Mall. rapturerestaurant.com

Madison Cunningham. With Bendingo Fletcher. \$22-25, 8pm. The Jefferson Theater, 110 E. Main St., Downtown Mall. jeffersontheater.com

The Flaming Lips. Eclectic, alternative rock. \$49, 7pm. Ting Pavilion, 700 E. Main St., Downtown Mall. jeffersontheater.com

Vincent Zorn. Solo wild gypsy rumba. Free, 7pm. The Bebedero, 225 W. Main St., Downtown Mall. thebebedero.com

outside

Playdates at the Playscape. See listing for Friday, October 14. \$20, 9:30am. Wildrock, 6600 Blackwells Hollow Rd., Crozet. wildrock.org

etc.

Daily Tour of Indigenous Australian Art. See listing for Wednesday, October 12. Free, 10:30am and 1:30pm. Kluge-Ruhe Aboriginal Art Collection of UVA, 400 Worrell Dr. kluge-ruhe.org

Family Game Night. Enjoy dinner, refreshing cocktails, mocktails, and beers, and play a variety of games for all ages, including corn hole, jumbo Jenga, cards, and more. Free, 5pm. Dairy Market, 946 Grady Ave. dairymarketville.com

Geeks Who Drink Trivia Night. Useless knowledge means everything at this authentic homegrown trivia quiz. Free, 8pm. Firefly, 1304 E. Market St. fireflyville.com

Not Chevy's Fletch

John Hamm affectionately reinvents the glib detective

John Hamm charms as the wisecracking investigator in the breezy comedy *Confess, Fletch*.

By Justin Humphreys
arts@c-ville.com

If you say “Fletch” to people 40 and up, Chevy Chase immediately comes to mind. Chase’s portrayal of Irwin “Fletch” Fletcher, a former investigative-reporter-turned-detective in the ’80s comedies *Fletch* and *Fletch Lives*, linked him forever with the title character.

But Jon Hamm has wanted to revive the wisecracking investigator for years, and his long-gestating pet project has finally come to fruition with director Greg Mottola’s funny and unpretentious *Confess, Fletch*. Hamm’s take on the lead character is less goofy and more self-effacing than Chase’s, cleaving more closely to Gregory McDonald’s original Fletch novels. He successfully reinvents Fletch in a straightforward, breezy comedy that defies deep analysis and stays consistently amusing.

Set mostly in Boston, *Confess, Fletch* finds the private investigator looking into an Italian count’s kidnapping and missing paintings, including a \$20 million Picasso. After discovering a seemingly unrelated corpse in his Airbnb rental, Fletch finds himself being questioned for murder by police detective

Morris “Slo Mo” Monroe (Roy Wood, Jr.) and his assistant Griz (Ayden Mayeri). Fletch’s work is further complicated by romantic involvement with the count’s daughter, Angela (Lorenza Izzo), and the irksome presence of her stepmother, the contessa (Marcia Gay Harden). An inveterate liar, the relentlessly glib Fletch assumes various ridiculous aliases and personas to solve the mystery and clear his name.

Confess, Fletch is largely character driven, and the cast and the script really sell it. Mottola’s direction is not about visual flourishes or tricky camera angles: He points his camera at his very able cast and lets them do their work. This approach works better in comedy—especially a modestly budgeted one like this—than perhaps any other genre.

The supporting cast members make distinct impressions in their disparate comic roles, particularly Kyle MacLachlan as a shady art dealer, Annie Mumolo as Fletch’s stoned, oblivious neighbor, and Hamm’s fellow “Mad Men” alum John Slattery as a foul-mouthed, cantankerous former co-worker. Airhead interior decorator Tatiána’s (Lucy Punch) klutzy attempt to define bespoke is a standout scene. And hilarious bits by Kenneth Kimmins as a yacht club’s

chatty commodore and Eugene Mirman as its security guard are vivid reminders of how skilled character actors can make even minimal roles funny and memorable.

Another highlight of *Confess, Fletch* is its soundtrack of vintage Blue Note Records jazz. Mottola is an avowed Blue Note fan, and building the film around the label’s classics was a labor of love. By making Detective Monroe a jazz aficionado, tracks get organically worked into various scenes throughout the film, and

Confess, Fletch

R, 99 minutes
Amazon Prime

the audience is treated to outstanding pieces by Astrud Gilberto and Walter Wanderley, Chet Baker, Dexter Gordon, and Art Blakey.

Confess, Fletch isn’t deep cinema; it’s a relatively low-key comedy that will amuse some people and probably not others, which is all it needs to be. Fans of the ’80s Fletch might be put off by the lack of goofy disguises and Chase-style farce, but younger viewers won’t remember them. The steady stream of laughs from solid performers—anchored by Hamm—make *Confess, Fletch* a worthy stand-alone film and not just another dull reimagining. **C**

Confess, Fletch is largely character driven, and the cast and the script really sell it.

