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## Short Redhead Reel Reviews

Wendy Schadewald

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"Fantastic Fungi"

Rating system: (4=Don't miss, 3=Good, 2=Worth a look, 1=Forget it)

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**"Blackbird" (R) (3)** [Language, some drug use, and brief sexual material.] [Opens Sept. 18 in Virtual Cinema sponsored by MSP Film Society; for more information, log on to [mspfilm.org](http://mspfilm.org).] — Emotions run raw in this powerful, moving, somber, well-acted, down-to-earth, heartbreaking, 97-minute remake of the 2014 Danish film "Silent Heart" based on Christian Torpe's work when troubled, distraught daughters (Kate Winslet and Mia Wasikowska), family (Rainn Wilson and Anson Boon), and a close friend (Lindsay Duncan) come to visit the ALS-afflicted wife (Susan Sarandon) and her devoted, physician husband (Sam Neill) during the Christmas holidays before she takes her own life.

**"Cop Out" (R) (3)** [Pervasive language including sexual references, violence, and brief sexuality.] [DVD only] — After an agile, taser-wielding petty thief (Sean William Scott) sells a valuable baseball card that belongs to a divorced Brooklyn detective (Bruce Willis) to a trigger-happy, bat-wielding drug dealer (Guillermo Diaz) in this wacky, action-packed, funny, tongue-in-cheek spoof, the suspended detective, who wants to pay for the lavish wedding of his daughter (Michelle Trachtenberg) rather than the arrogant husband (Jason Lee) of his ex-wife (Francie Swift), and his longtime partner (Tracy Morgan), who believes that his wife (Rashida Jones) is having an affair with a flirting neighbor (Michael Pitt), go after the drug dealer and his gang, which jeopardizes a sting operation by fellow cops (Kevin Pollak and Adam Brody).

**“The Crazies” (R) (3)** [Bloody violence and language.] [DVD only] — A suspenseful, violent, creepy remake of George A. Romero’s 1973 thriller in which a sheriff (Timothy Olyphant), his loyal deputy (Joie Anderson), the doctor (Radha Mitchell), and the baseball pitcher’s teenage girlfriend (Danielle Panabaker) try to escape a small Iowa farm community when the townspeople (Larry Cedar, Mike Hickman, et al.) turn on each other after being accidentally infected with a biochemical warfare agent and the government rushes in to establish a quarantine.

**“The End of the Line” (NR) (4)** [DVD only] — Ted Danson narrates this powerful, eye-opening, disturbing, conscience-raising, 90-minute, 2009 scientific documentary, which is based on journalist Charles Clover’s book and is punctuated with gorgeous and colorful photography, that interviews professors (such as Pete Peterson, Ray Hilborn, Steve Palumbi, Yvonne Sadovy, Jeffrey Hutchings, Daniel Pauly, and Boris Worm), fishermen (such as Matthew Moir, Hardy McKinney, Manolo Pacheco Luis, and Adama Mbergaul), WWF bluefin tuna expert Dr. Sergi Tudela, diver Haidar El Ali, west African fisheries expert Rashid Sumaila, former U.K. fisheries minister (2003-2007) Ben Bradshaw, Nobu’s managing partner Richie Notar, chefs Jamie Oliver and Chef Maxwell, and former tuna diver and whistleblower Roberto Mielgo Bregazzi in an attempt to raise public awareness about the alarming effects of overfishing (for example, the drastic depletion, if not extinction, of species such as bluefin tuna, Atlantic salmon and redfish, Southern hake, American plaice, and codfish) and to present solutions to film viewers to help prevent the extinction of marine life by 2050, including inquiring about sustainable seafood before purchase, changing eating habits, requesting that politicians reduce fishing fleets and make responsible decisions regarding the oceans, joining the campaign to promote protected marine reserves and responsible fishing, and enforcing the global fishing industry to abide by rules and change its capacity.

**“Fantastic Fungi: The Magic Beneath Us” (NR) (3.5)** [Played on Sept. 11 as part of AARP’s “Movie for Grownups” and available on YouTube and other VOD platforms.] — Brie Larson narrates this captivating, educational, entertaining, highly technical, 81-minute, 2019 documentary dominated by phenomenally stunning time-lapse photography and amazing computer graphics that examines the magical world of fungi and mushrooms, gives a history of the last 50 years or so of research into fungi and its medicinal potential to address otherwise intractable medical disorders, and consists of insightful commentary by mycologists (such as Paul Stamets, Gary Linkoff, and William Padilla-Brown), journalists Eugenia Bone and Michael Pollan, University of Arizona professor Andrew Weil, biomimicry inventor Jay Harman, Johns Hopkins psychologist Bill Richards, University of California psychology professor Charles Grob, social worker Mary P. Cosimano, county commissioner Art Goodtimes, ethno pharmacologist Dennis J. McKenna, University of British Columbia Suzanne Simard, palliative care specialist at NYU Langdon Center, Michael Bossis, Johns Hopkins neuroscience professor Roland Griffiths, Johns Hopkins psychiatry and behavioral science professor Bob Jesse, and University of Wisconsin professor Nicholas V. Cozzi.

**“Saint John of Las Vegas” (R) (1)** [Language and some nudity.] [DVD only] — A quirky, lackluster, humorless, cameo-dotted (Tom Blake Nelson, John Cho, and Danny Trejo) black comedy about the mishaps that ensue when an ambitious, lottery-playing, down-on-his-luck insurance company employee (Steve Buscemi) reluctantly leaves his girlfriend (Sarah Silverman) in Albuquerque after his boss (Peter Dinklage) sends him out on the road with a longtime insurance-fraud investigator (Romany Malco) to check out an insurance claim of a Las Vegas stripper (Emmanuelle Chriqui).

**“Second Skin” (R) (2.5)** [Subtitled] [DVD only] — A risqué, heartbreaking, down-to-earth, 2002 film about an unhappy, bisexual, Spanish airport manager (Jordi Mollà) who tries to balance, to justify, and to reconcile his “normal,” closeted life and the love he feels for his wife (Ariadna Gil) and young son (Adrian Sac) and the all-consuming, passionate feelings he has for an orthopedic surgeon (Javier Bardem).

**“The Way I See It” (PG-13) (3.5)** [Brief strong language.] [Opens on Sept. 18 in theaters and MSNBC on Oct. 9 at 9 p.m. CDT.] – Amazing, intimate photographs highlight this informative, insightful, engaging, candid, fascinating, 102-minute documentary, which is inspired by former chief official White House photographer Pete Souza bestselling books “Shade: The Tale of Two Presidents” and “Obama: An Intimate Portrait: The Historic Presidency Through Photographs,” that builds an impactful public image and historical account of President Ronald Reagan and President Barack Obama’s presidencies through photojournalist Pete Souza’s myriad of photographs and consists of film clips and commentary by historian Doris Goodwin, former White House photographer Mary Anne Fackelman-Miner, former Obama’s personal aide Ferial Govashiri, mother Lillian Souza, sister Jane Hulstrunk, former Director of Photography Alice Gabriner, former Deputy National Security advisor Ben Rhodes, former U. N. ambassador Samantha Power, former White House Deputy Chief of Staff Nancy-Ann Deparle, former Director of Oval Office Operations Brian Mosteller, Sandy Hook victim father David Wheeler, Souza’s speaking manager Diane Goodman, and former National Security Advisor Susan Rice.

**“The White Gorilla” (NR) (2.5)** [DVD only] – After being attacked by a dangerous, outcast, albino gorilla in this hokey, overly melodramatic, black-and-white, 61-minute, classic 1945 film, which was created by splicing footage from the 1927 silent movie “Perils of the Jungle,” a safari guide (Ray Corrigan stars) recounts a tale to the staff (Charles King, Harry Belmore, Eugenia Gilbert, et al.) at a trading post in Africa about a treasure allegedly located in the Cave of the Cyclops, a jungle boy (Bobby Nelson) riding an elephant, and white men (Bud Buster, Frank Merrill, et al.) captured by tiger men.

Wendy Schadewald is a Burnsville resident.