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By Derek Zemrak



Patti Leidecker and Adam Reeves Photo provided

These days Hollywood is about producing sequels and reboots, formerly called remakes. If it makes money a sequel is immediately in the works. Prime example is the 2010 box office success, "Alice in Wonderland," which grossed over \$334 million in U. S. ticket sales on a \$200 million budget.

It was a box office triumph for Disney and Director Tim Burton but it received mixed reviews from moviegoers. But any victory in Hollywood seems to equal sequel, which brings us to the release of "Alice Through the Looking Glass." This time, director James Bobin ("The Muppets," "Muppets Most Wanted") is calling the shots, but with less gothic style and holding closer to Lewis Carroll's fantasy classic novel with a much more vibrant use of color and flamboyant flair.

You may or may not recall in the first film Alice started her voyage at sea and this is where this movie starts. Alice, once again played by Mia

Wasikowska, returns from her expedition only to be threatened by her ex-fianc Hamish (Leo Bill, "The Girl with the Dagon Tattoo") to regain her ship, the Wonder. Alice decides she must return to Wonderland, this time through a mirror and not the traditional rabbit hole.

Down under, Alice learns that her old friend, the Mad Hatter (Johnny Depp), is deeply depressed over the death of his family and asks Alice to help him. Alice believes she can make things better for Hatter by stealing the time traveling chronosphere from Time (Sacha Baron Cohen). Sacha is a positive addition to this franchise. Adventuring in the past Alice learns of the relationship between the Red Queen (Helena Bonham Carter) and the White Queen (Anne Hathaway).

All the flashy computer generated imagery (CGI) cannot save a subpar script and the characters just do not draw you in. "Alice Through the Looking Glass" has a total running time (TRT) of 1 hour and 53 minutes with a PG rating.

Now playing at the Rheem Theatre:

"X-Men: Apocalypse," "The Angry Birds Movie" and "Neighbors 2: Sorority Rising"

Now playing at the Orinda Theatre:

"Alice Through the Looking Glass," "Money Monster" and "The Meddler"

Upcoming Special Events at the Rheem and Orinda Theatres:

June 9, 7 p.m. - FREE MOVIE NIGHT in Orinda - "M\*A\*S\*H"

June 18, 7 p.m. - An evening with Litz Plummer as she performs the greatest Broadway and movie songs.

June 15, 2 p.m. - Moraga Movers Present, "Father of the Bride," hosted by Larry Swindell

July 14, 7 p.m. - FREE MOVIE NIGHT in Orinda - "Stand By Me"

July 23, 7 p.m. - Eileen and Brett sing the greatest American ballads from Judy Garland to Frank Sinatra.

July 30, 7 p.m. - Charlie Chaplin Festival screening of "The Kid" with live piano score written and performed by Patti Liedecker.

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