



Over the years, numerous superheroes have had the opportunity of headlining their own films. Actors Christopher Reeve (Superman), Michael Keaton (Batman), Wesley Snipes (Blade), Hugh Jackman (Wolverine), Tobey Maguire (Spider-Man) and Ben Affleck (Daredevil) have portrayed some of the more high-profile roles, but they haven't been the only ones. Michael Jai White portrayed the lesser-known Spawn in 1997 and Eric Bana will become The Incredible Hulk this summer.

Big screen dominated by reign of the supermen

By Brian Kibble
Staff Writer

Hey! Look, up on the movie screen! It's Wolverine! It's Spider-Man! It's... Ok, by now the flooding of big screen superhero adaptations is becoming pretty obvious.

After seemingly being killed off by the 1997 flop *Batman & Robin*, movies based on comic book superheroes made a come back with the hit *X-Men* in 2000.

But why are all of them being made and released so fast?

The main reason for this is thanks to Marvel Comics, one of the major comic book publishing companies, going bankrupt in the late 1990s and filing for Chapter 11 due to sagging book sales. In an effort to make money and hopefully attract more readers, Marvel started to sell the rights to their character properties to film companies.

First came *Blade* in 1998, which was a moderate success. Few knew it was based on a comic book though.

Then, in 2000, the big screen adaptation of the best selling comic series

ever, *X-Men*, was released. It was a big hit, becoming one of the highest grossing movies of the year. Of course, film companies knew they had it box office gold when they saw it and began buying the rights to Marvel's other creations.

Sony Pictures won out with its release of *Spider-Man* in 2002. With smashing opening weekend numbers, it became the highest grossing movie of the year, and number five of all-time, earning over \$400 million. With that, the sequels were planned before the movie even finished its run in theaters, the first of which is set to come out in 2004.

Now, as a result, 2003 will see more comic book superheroes on the big screen than ever. Starting with today's release of *Daredevil*, continuing with the sequel to *X-Men*, *X2*, in May and then a "remake" of *The Hulk* in June. Unfortunately for Marvel, movie audiences might be a little overwhelmed.

According to senior Ryan Kotarski, the films are positive, especially for the comics industry, as the big screen adaptations will attract more business.

"I think these movies are good. All of them will get more people to read the comic books," he said.

Marvel executives are hoping for just that. And many of the moviegoers who are not followers of the comics, such as senior Jessica Sandycyk, think along the same lines.

"I think it is good these superhero movies are coming out," she said. "It's something different from the rest of the movies out now and they will probably broaden people's interests."

However, there is a downside to superheroes getting a big screen debut. With the major characters such as Spider-Man and the X-Men making it big, the "B" characters are likely to get their shot as well. Audiences will probably not recognize them as comic book heroes and therefore movies about characters like *The Fantastic Four* and *Ghost Rider* that are in the works, could be super flops.

Once these movies start hitting theaters too quickly, many people might agree with sophomore Dan Peterson, who said that all the new films like

Daredevil and *The Hulk*, combined with overlapping sequel releases like *Blade II* and *X2*, might scare audiences away from the box-office.

"I think all of these superhero movies are a bit much," Peterson said. "There are just too many of them coming out so soon after the last."

But so far, all of the recent films coming out on superheroes are based on Marvel Comics characters. What about DC Comics, Marvel's leading competitor and the famed creators of the hits *Superman* and *Batman*?

DC is currently trying to make more sequels to both the man of steel series and the dark knight franchise, along with a possible *Wonder Woman* movie. But will they succeed amongst the other super characters competing on the big screen?

For now, the movies are entertaining and fun, but if the film industry keeps releasing super powered films, audiences will more than likely lose interest and the superheroes might end up being the ones who need rescuing after all.

For Valentine's Day...

"I am writing an 11 page research paper on the significance of the renaissance in accordance with modern-day philosophy."
— Bill Lambusta

"I am getting drunk and picking up lonely chicks."
— Dan Gallagher

"My celebration will include three objects: a duck costume, a jar of peanut butter and fuzzy handcuffs."
— Rebecca Knabb

"I'm having a drunken romance."
— Carina Corrigan

"My girlfriend and I believe the holiday is over-commercialized and we won't love each other any more or less because of it."
— Mike Palace

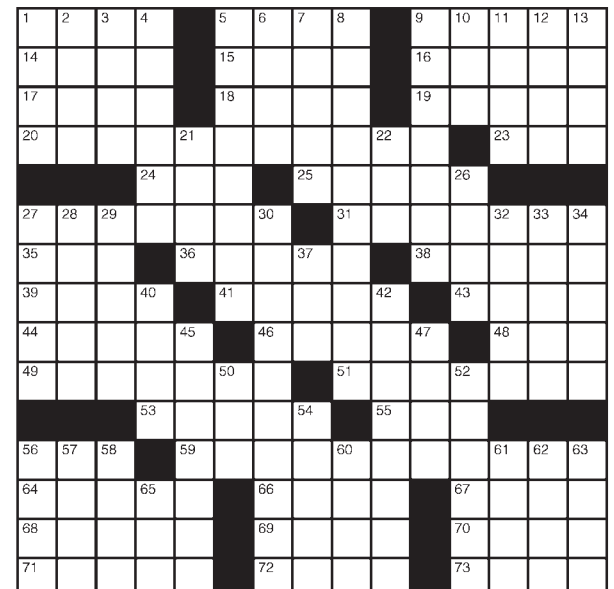
The Rider News staff would like to wish everyone a **Happy Valentine's Day!**



Crossword

- ACROSS
- Peddle by shouting
 - Droll fellows
 - Type of tiger or towel
 - Sound on the rebound
 - Complexion woe
 - "La Boheme" or "The Bat"
 - Met song
 - God of thunder
 - Doe wooers
 - Stand-in
 - Prune
 - Hearth residue
 - Listlessness
 - Sink to the bottom
 - Kind of exercise
 - "__" in the Family
 - Tricked
 - Practice piece
 - Beehive State
 - Boarding points
 - Desertlike
 - Blubbers
 - Painful places
 - Leader of the Three Stooges
 - Cap attachment
 - Deep bows
 - Melodies
 - Heavy imbiber
 - Egyptian viper
 - Author of "Frankenstein"
 - Scale
 - Part of A.D.
 - Top-notch
 - Greek letter
 - Hide house
 - Junket
 - Winter drift
 - Take an oath
 - Margin
 - Hardy heroine

- DOWN
- Listen to
 - Field measure
 - Flog
 - Eucalyptus eaters
 - Property guardian
 - Muscle pain
 - Dwarflike



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Solutions

S	S	E	L	E	G	E	D	E	A	V	E	M	S	
M	O	N	S	R	N	O	L	E	E	P	E	E	L	
E	N	O	V	O	N	N	A	V	B	W	I	T	C	
A	E	L	T	E	H	S	A	R	V	A	P	S	V	
S	M	A	V	A	T	V	S	P	A	V	T	R	V	E
O	M	E	S	R	E	O	S	S	E	I	C	R	E	
D	I	R	V	S	E	L	V	G	H	V	L	N		
E	D	E	T	E	D	X	O	F	E	T	V			
C	I	B	O	R	E	V	E	D	I	S	B	N	S	
P	O	L	I	N	N	E	H	S	V	A				
S	G	V	L	S	R	O	H	L	V	I	R	V		
V	R	E	P	O	E	N	O	V	O	H	C	E		
R	A	P	E	R	S	A	G	S	A	W	K	A	W	

47 Blackthorn fruit
50 Santa __, CA
52 Finally!
54 Church council
56 Play components
57 Whole lot of

58 Conduit
60 Cozy
61 "The __ Ranger"
62 Son of Seth
63 Poisonous evergreens
65 __ culpa