

# First Runs

\*Full-length reviews available online at [austinchronicle.com](http://austinchronicle.com). Dates at end of reviews indicate original publication date.

**BABY MAMA**  
*D: Michael McCullers; with Tina Fey, Amy Poehler, Greg Kinnear, Dax Shepard, Romany Malco, Sigourney Weaver, Steve Martin, Maura Tierney. (PG-13, 96 min.)*

As Kate Holbrook, a successful 37-year-old executive with no social life but a burning desire for a baby, Fey is supposed to be the solid (if insecure) sun around which a whole solar system of eccentrics revolves, including Fey's former SNL cast mate Poehler as Angie, a lower-class brat whom Kate hires to be her surrogate, and Martin as Kate's blissed-out, ponytailed boss at Round Earth Organic Market. Instead, Fey is perpetually tentative, either unwilling or unable to throw herself into the role of a no-longer-young single woman with a pounding biological clock and a natural neuroticism. Just like it is in the world of SNL that Fey, Poehler, and McCullers sprang from the choice gets made time and again to aim not for the high road but for the great, big, fat, juicy, unchallenging, uncontroversial middle ground, where everybody's laughing but nothing is all that funny. (04/25/2008) - Josh Rosenblatt

★★ Alamo Drafthouse Lake Creek, Alamo Drafthouse Village, Barton Creek Square, CM Cedar Park, Hill Country Galleria, CM Round Rock, Southpark Meadows, Gateway, Lakeline, Metropolitan, Tinseltown North, Westgate

**BHOOTHNATH**  
*D: Vivek Sharma; with Amitabh Bachchan, Shahrukh Khan, Juhi Chawla, Satish Shah. (NR, 137 min., subtitled)*

Not reviewed at press time. In this new Bollywood film featuring a couple of Indian superstars, a young boy is visited by the ghost of his dead grandfather. (05/09/2008) - Marjorie Baumgarten

★ **THE COUNTERFEITERS**  
*D: Stefan Ruzowitzky; with Karl Markovics, August Diehl, David Striesow, Martin Brambach. (R, 98 min., subtitled)*

Morality is the subject of this Austrian film, which won this year's Oscar for Best Foreign Film. Salomon "Sally" Sorowitsch (Markovics) is a Russian Jew in Germany before the Second World War who puts his keen artistic eye and hand to use as a forger; he has no desire to make art when making money is so much more lucrative. These scruples serve him well after he is busted for counterfeiting and sent to the Sachsenhausen concentration camp, where he is made the head of a special unit of currency counterfeiters, in a project based on the true story of Operation Bernhard, in which the Germans planned to destabilize international economies by flooding the market with bogus British pound notes and American dollars. The prisoners' dilemma over whether to assist the Germans and thereby ensure their continued survival is the heart of the movie, which keeps the focus on moral imperatives rather than the physical ravages of the camps. (04/11/2008) - Marjorie Baumgarten

★★★★ Arbor

**DR. SEUSS' HORTON HEARS A WHO!**  
*D: Steve Martino, Jimmy Hayward; with the voices of Jim Carrey, Steve Carell, Carol Burnett, Seth Rogen, Will Arnett, Isla Fisher, Dan Fogler. (G, 88 min.)*

For my money, I've never seen anything much wrong with the animated Chuck Jones version of this Seuss tale, made for TV in 1970. But everything needs an update, I suppose, and this new animated feature does the job nicely, staying true to the playfulness of the Seussian rhymes and messages while ably adding in new bits of business to expand Seuss' verse to feature length. Carrey's general tendency toward comic mania is gently toned down, allowing the rubbery elephant Horton to seem more a lovable goofball than a frenzied nut job, and Carell's readings as the Mayor of Who-ville are perfectly on target. Twentieth Century Fox's animation is in the mold of their previous films *Ice Age* and *Robots*: a nice blend of rudimentary and inventive touches. The story's key refrain, "A person's a person no matter how small," speaks directly to children's experience of the world; thus, this new movie should enjoy a long life. (03/14/2008) - Marjorie Baumgarten

★★★ CM Cedar Park, Hill Country Galleria, Tinseltown South

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