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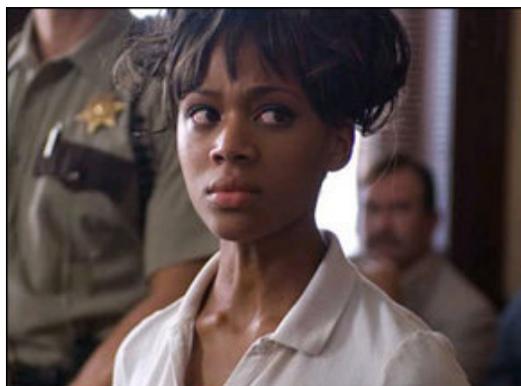
## NEWS

Indie film news, reviews, commentary, interviews, podcasts and more, updated throughout the week.

# High Kicks From Both a Chorus Line and Jason Statham

By Neil Pedley

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Nicole Beharie stars in "American Violet," Samuel Goldwyn

This week brings a bumper crop of indie and arthouse releases with something to suit all tastes, even if their added box office is outdone by "Crank: High Voltage."

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### "American Violet"

In our politically expedient, hyper-ADD times, director Tim Disney reminds us African-Americans had it tough in the post-civil rights era long before Katrina with this Texas-set drama based on true story. As much a legal thriller as anything else, "American Violet" stars Alfre

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## FEATURES

Films, 2009

Woodward as the steely mother of Dee Roberts (Nicole Beharie), a woman wrongly scooped up from the projects amidst a mass drug raid and harassed into a plea bargain. With the help of an ACLU attorney (Tim Blake Nelson) and an ex-cop (Will Patton), she must go up against a callous district attorney (Michael O'Keefe), who's playing a numbers game in pursuit of federal money, seemingly indifferent to the human cost of his action.

*Opens in limited release.*

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*Opens in limited release.*

### "The Butterfly Tattoo"

Rolled out on the back of the shiny digital fireworks show that was "The Golden Compass," this big screen adaptation of "The White Mercedes," Philip Pullman's first book for young adults, may not have that same Blu-ray demo disc wow factor to it, but keeps to similar dark revenge themes minus the fantasy elements. Brit helmer Phil Hawkins oversees the perplexing romance of sweet-natured Chris (Duncan Stuart) and cute Manchester cupcake Jenny (Jessica Blake), who hook up at an Oxford ball unaware that each has a dark past that's about to come back to haunt them.

*Opens in limited release.*

### "Chasing The Green"

After holding almost every job imaginable on a film set, Russ Emanuel gets his second session in the director's chair for this cautionary rags-to-riches-to-rags tale about two tech industry entrepreneurs in the early '90s who are singled out by bigger rivals that use their political clout to put the brakes on their flourishing company. Jeremy London leads a cast of veteran small screen players, including Ryan Hurst, Heather McComb and William Devane.

*Opens in Los Angeles.*

### "Crank: High Voltage"

You've really got to hand it to Jason Statham; he's nothing if not a good sport. It's hard to imagine anyone, even Sly circa "Stop or My Mom Will Shoot," getting the script for a film with the eventual tagline "He was dead...but he got better" and not speed-dialing their agent in a desperate search for contractual wiggle room. Under the watchful eye of returning co-writers/directors Mark Neveldine and Brian Taylor, Statham reprises his role of scowling, ultra-

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violent hit man Chev Chelios for another relentlessly silly stunt reel that sees Chev in hot pursuit of the baddie who stole his heart and replaced it with an artificial one that requires constant jolts of electricity to continue functioning.

*Opens wide.*

### "Desert Dream"

On the desolate Mongolian steppes, Chinese helmer Zhang Lu finds a strange poetry to the breathtakingly slow pace of life, transcending subject and geography to showcase the universal language of compassion. Planting trees to hold off the encroaching sands from his farm, Hungai (Bat-ulzii) is abandoned by his wife, who leaves with their hearing-impaired daughter in search of a doctor. A North Korean political refugee arrives with her son, seeking sanctuary, and slowly bonds with Hungai and his rural way of life despite the constant and unassailable language barrier that exists between them. In Korean and Mongolian with subtitles.

*Opens in New York.*

### "Every Little Step"

There's a deliciously Ouroboros irony to this documentary that follows the hopes and dreams of wide-eyed hopefuls desperate to be plucked from background obscurity by landing a role in the Broadway revival of "A Chorus Line" -- the classic tale of wide-eyed hopefuls desperate to be plucked from background obscurity by... In 2006, James D. Stern and Adam Del Deo were on hand to capture the casting of the revival of the late Michael Bennett's famed musical, which whittled down nearly 3000 would-be stars to two dozen slots in the spotlight. The grueling process is intercut with archival footage of the origins of this celebrated story.

*Opens in New York and Los Angeles.*

### "The Golden Boys"

Writer/director Daniel Adams returns with his first film in 12 years, an adaptation of Joseph Lincoln's 1915 page-turner "Cap'n Eri" that demonstrates that while the body may wither, the heart remains ageless. Bruce Dern, Rip Torn and David Carradine star as a trio of salty seadogs-turned-cantankerous crusty barnacles on Cape Cod who deem the only way to keep their house in order is for one of their number to get married. A quick ad in the paper leads to the arrival of a mail order bride (Mariel Hemingway) whose presence upsets their plans when the wrong captain falls in love.

*Opens in limited release.*

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