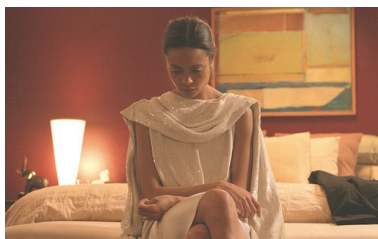




## CHRISTMAS WITH THE KRANKS ★

*Directed by Joe Roth*  
*Starring: Tim Allen, Jamie Lee Curtis, Dan Aykroyd*  
*Rated – PG*  
*95 Minutes*

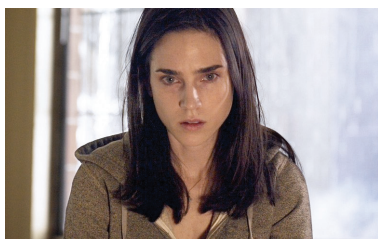
This is a rather dismal Christmas film whose stars seem to realise the depths to which they have sunk. If you crack even three smiles, consider yourself clinically insane! "Krank" is a worthless effort that doesn't even merit a rental.



## CRASH ★★★★

*Directed by Paul Haggis*  
*Starring: Don Cheadle, Matt Dillon, Terrence Howard & Thandie Newton*  
*Rated – 15*  
*113 Minutes*

This great film will assuredly get some recognition at next year's Oscar ceremony. A fabulous ensemble cast conveys the loneliness of Los Angeles in much the same way that the 1999 classic, "Magnolia" did. Some of the situations in the film rely too heavily on coincidence but, on the whole, the film works perfectly and will easily make the list of 2005's best.



## DARK WATER ★★★

*Directed by Walter Salles*  
*Starring: Jennifer Connelly & John C. Reilly*  
*Rated – 15*  
*100 Minutes*

In much the same way that the Hollywood version of "The Ring" was the equal to its Japanese counterpart, "Dark Water" succeeds in delivering a spine-chilling mood and powerful scares. Don't watch this DVD with the lights off! The disc is loaded with behind-the-scenes featurettes that will completely nullify all the terrifying moments for you.



## THE DESCENT ★★★

*Directed by Neil Marshall*  
*Starring: MyAnna Buring, Nora Jane Noone & Natalie Mendoza*  
*Rated – 18*  
*99 Minutes*

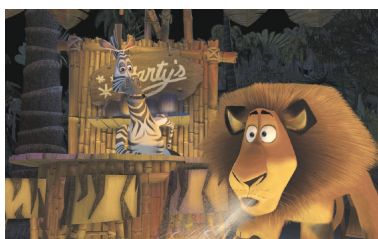
Total and utter rubbish executed with total and utter cinematic flare is tough to quantify. "The Descent" is a B-grade thriller that works tremendously well in parts. I think it's safe to say that if you think you'll enjoy a film about girls being chased around a cave by sinister and bloodthirsty creatures... You'd do well to check this DVD out.



## HERBIE: FULLY LOADED ★★★

*Directed by Angela Robinson*  
*Starring: Lindsay Lohan, Michael Keaton & Matt Dillon*  
*Rated – U*  
*101 Minutes*

"Herbie" is clearly a vehicle for Lindsay Lohan and her prominent talents. At least, it was until Disney intervened and digitally altered the "prominence" for fears that children may irrevocably be damaged psychologically by the size of her cleavage. I kid you not. All that being said, Lohan continues to star in cutesy films that tend to be better than the premise would suggest. She is a natural movie star. Let's hope she eventually becomes a good actress too.



## MADAGASCAR ★★

*Directed by Tom McGrath & Eric Darnell*  
*Starring: Voices: Ben Stiller, Cedric the Entertainer, Chris Rock, Sacha Baron Cohen*  
*Rated – U 90 Minutes*

This is a perfect baby-sitter DVD for parents who need to go into the other room, for whatever reasons you care to name. It is mildly entertaining for adults, but the kids will lap it up like ice cream. Bright colours, funny voices, numerous characters... "Madagascar" is a perfect distraction.



## MR & MRS SMITH ★★★

*Directed by Doug Liman*  
*Starring: Brad Pitt and Angelina Jolie*  
*Rated – 15*  
*120 Minutes*

Brangelina form a nice pair on and off screen. This consistently entertaining piece of fluff is worth a rental, if only for the interplay and chemistry between the two illegally good-looking leads. Look for one of the great camera winks of all time as Brad and his girl hit the dance floor!