

# Crowe's new film: flop or not?

Bruce Newman  
KRT CAMPUS

Life doesn't imitate art. Not really. Art just has a way of flinging big ideas into the air, and sometimes life forgets to duck.

Take what happened to Cameron Crowe, the writer-director of " Elizabethtown," who was trying to make a movie "about the redemptive nature of a fiasco" and, instead, found himself in the middle of one. For sheer buzz kill, it would be difficult to top last week's cover story in Entertainment Weekly

that examined whether "Elizabethtown" would be dead on arrival when it opens in theaters this Friday.

The idea that originally propelled Crowe's script was to look over his shoulder to see if "Vanilla Sky" was still falling. A confusing psychological thriller starring Tom Cruise, "Vanilla Sky" was widely seen as Crowe's first career stumble. "People were seeing it and going, 'What was going on in your head?'" he said. So for "Elizabethtown," he created a character whose career as a shoe designer implodes disastrously, and then did what

anybody trying to fix his life on screen would do: He cast Orlando Bloom as a stand-in for himself.

But when Crowe took "Elizabethtown" to the recent Venice and Toronto film festivals, it was as a sprawling 135-minute "work in progress" that drew some withering early reviews. Crowe even used some of his sessions with reporters during the festivals to ask where he should cut the film. He trimmed about 18 minutes from the final version, but the cuts left so much blood in the water that Crowe could

be facing his second helping of redemptive failure.

Or not. The thing is, you never really know. Crowe was forced to cut several treasured scenes from "Almost Famous," his rock 'n' roll ode to the road that came out in 2000, and then was vindicated by critics who preferred his longer cut on the DVD. But in Toronto, Crowe seemed torn between allowing his story about a career disaster, a family funeral and quirky love that's conducted mostly by phone to remain unruly — like life itself — or reining it in.

WUSC • CONTINUED FROM 9

year, the garage sale was called a "vinyl fair" and helped to expand the fundraising effort. This year's event offers more items and live music.

"Last year, there were at least 250 people, but probably more," Stevenson said. "This year we are expecting about 500."

Stevenson encouraged students to come at noon if they want first dibs on the music, although she added "there will be enough to go around, and we will be putting out new stuff all day."

WUSC- is a free-format alternative station providing listeners with a selection of music from all genres.

"We are merely cleaning out the WUSC library that is packed full, creating more space for new music and raising money for a good cause," Stevenson said.

Comments on this story? E-mail [gamecockfeatures@ugm.sc.edu](mailto:gamecockfeatures@ugm.sc.edu)



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