

Jordan's FURNITURE | **IMAX 3D THEATER**
 in Natick & Reading
 8-story high screen.
 Tempurpedic seating.
 Personal sub-woofers.

STARTS FRIDAY
MARS NEEDS MOMS
 IN IMAX 3D
 TICKETS ONSALE NOW
CLICK HERE

HOME	TODAY'S GLOBE	NEWS	YOUR TOWN	BUSINESS	SPORTS	LIFESTYLE	A&E	THINGS TO DO	TRAVEL	CARS	JOBS	REAL ESTATE
Movies	Restaurants	Music	Theater/Art	Television	Books	Celebrity news	Events	Games	Comics			

HOME / A&E / MOVIES

MOVIE REVIEW

The Boston Globe

A futuristic thriller tied to a web of conspiracy



Jack (Peter Scanavino) makes a living dealing expired pharmaceuticals in "Zenith." (Solo Films/Cinema Purgatorio)

By [Loren King](#)
Globe Correspondent / January 28, 2011

[E-mail](#) | [Print](#) | [Reprints](#) |

Text size − +

It's not surprising that Vladan Nikolic's "Zenith" — a low-budget, indie futuristic thriller trying to get noticed in Oscar season— might resort to Internet-based gimmicks to intrigue an audience. And there are gimmicks aplenty.

From the opening teaser that warns of legal threats and "illegal images" to the billing of the director as "Experiment Supervisor," "Zenith" is a high-concept, brave-new-world sci-fi puzzle that invites Internet audiences to fill narrative gaps by visiting assorted websites and adding their own clues and plot points to the film's twists and time leaps.

For traditionalists who prefer their movies unfettered and non-interactive, "Zenith" happens to be pretty good, though it's longer on style and atmosphere than clarity of storytelling.

The film is set amid a grim wasteland of warehouses in the year 2044. People have been genetically modified to be happy and ageless, while words like "solace," "consciousness," and "virtue" have been scrapped from the language. Former medical student Jack (Peter Scanavino), the film's narrator, makes a living trolling the stark, graffiti-strewn streets and dealing expired pharmaceuticals, whose painful side effects are coveted by citizens eager to be jolted out of their numbness. By night, Jack sits in a squalid room and

Movie listings search



[Movie times](#) [Globe review archive](#)

[Find theaters by town](#) | [Search all movie listings](#)

ADVERTISEMENT

Gift Cards Available NOW!

CLICK HERE

THE BARKING CRAB

VIDEO: MOVIE REVIEWS »

loading video...
(please wait a moment)

Requires Adobe Flash Player

[Take 2 reviews and podcast](#)

Look for new reviews by Ty Burr and Wesley Morris at

memorizes definitions of banned words.

He's drawn into the web of a conspiracy by the sudden appearance of 30-year-old videotapes made by his late father, Ed (Jason Robards III), a former priest who became convinced of the existence of a covert group bent on destroying civilization. This group's machinations were recorded in a book titled "Zenith." The script plays like a CliffsNotes version of "The Da Vinci Code": Jack descends into an increasingly complex underworld of secret societies and shady characters, including Lisa (Ana Asensio), a hooker with a creepy, surgically enhanced father (David Thornton), and a bookstore proprietor (Bernie Rachele) whose frenzied, epithet-laden rants may be the words of a truth-teller or a madman. "Zenith" skillfully weaves flashbacks of Ed's 2012 investigation, captured on his tapes, and his son's desperate attempts to revisit the mystery decades into the future.

With its bleak fatalism, "Zenith" at times echoes futuristic thrillers such as "12 Monkeys" and "Children of Men." The shoestring budget is often obvious, with one too many strobe-light sequences, and it is dispiriting that even a movie set in 2044 has a gold-hearted hooker as the hero's object of desire. But "Zenith" boasts terrific photography by Vladimir Subotic and offers a few genuine surprises. Director Nikolic shouldn't remain "anonymous" for long: He gets solid performances from all the actors and creates an atmosphere of mounting paranoia that's grim and chilling.

Loren King can be reached at loren.king@comcast.net. ■

© Copyright 2011 Globe Newspaper Company.



Start your week off right with in-depth coverage. [Subscribe now to the Globe.](#)



READER COMMENTS »

[View reader comments \(\) »](#) [Comment on this story »](#)

Ads by Google [what's this?](#)

Economist Film Project

Create Buzz Around Your Film, Details Here
www.film.economist.com

Zenith 6912B22007B

Lowest Prices-Since 1983 -w/Housing Ready To Ship ! - Call 800-678-8585
Electrified.com

Zenith TV Lamps in Stock

Zenith DLP Television Bulbs \$157.00 In Stock, Your lamp will ship Today
www.PurelandSupply.com



the end of each week in multiple formats.

AUDIO PODCAST: [1-CLICK](#)
VIDEO PODCAST: [1-CLICK](#)

[MORE 'TAKE 2' MOVIE REVIEWS »](#)

CURRENT RELEASES »

- ★★★★★ 'Poetry'
- ★★★★★ 'Even the Rain'
- ★★★★☆ 'The Last Lions'
- ★★★★☆ 'Carmen in 3D'
- ★★★★☆ 'Rango'
- ★★★★☆ 'Take Me Home Tonight'
- ★★★★☆ 'The Adjustment Bureau'
- ★★★★☆ 'Beastly'

[ALL NEW RELEASES »](#)

[Click Here](#)

INSIDE BOSTON.COM

WHERE BOSTON RANKS IN US



How the city ranks in flirting, drinking, exercising, more

'INDIE' DOUGHNUT SHOPS



16 local shops that make the region go 'round

GAGA AT THE GARDEN



Chameleon-like pop star Lady Gaga played Boston on Tuesday

CANADIENS 4, BRUINS 1



The Habs walked away with the win and some bruises

PLUS...

- [Blogs](#) | [Crossword](#) | [Comics](#)
- [Horoscopes](#) | [Games](#) | [Lottery](#)
- [Caption contest](#) | [Today in](#)