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2006: *The Year in* { **Beyond the Multiplex** }

Hurray for Indiewood!

Al Gore and "Little Miss Sunshine" shone brightest at the box office. But which indie films did we warm to the most?

By Andrew O'Hehir

1. "Pan's Labyrinth"

2. "Agnes and His Brothers"

I've been lauding this thrilling, disturbing and maddeningly inconsistent German movie to the skies, to no discernible effect, since it was (very briefly) first released. Marc Mauceri at First Run now says he never thought it would work, and, boy howdy, he was right. Let's see: One brother in Oskar Roehler's film is a transsexual (hence the bewildering title), another is a dorky, porn-addicted librarian, and the third is a workaholic, quasi-corrupt politician. The tone veers from madcap sex farce to torch song to murderous family satire, and the debts to Almodóvar, Fassbinder and, especially, "American Beauty" are so clear they feel like rip-offs. Sounds golden, right? (Total reported U.S. gross: \$2,731. No lie!) "Agnes" is a prickly, ambitious high-wire act that doesn't always work, but is always trying to piss you off and mess with your head. If you're exactly the right person for that sort of thing, go get it. (Roehler directed a previous film called "Suck My Dick." I can't wait to see it!)

3. "Half Nelson"

4. "Volver"

5. "The Proposition"

6. "Friends With Money"

7. "Duck Season"

8. "Lady Vengeance"

9. "Jonestown: The Life and Death of People's Temple"

10. "Rolling Family"