

Wooden plot fails to create magic

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Somewhere in "Magic" (R), a character says that magic is not tricks: it's middrection. That's just what we get in this film, misdirection.

Richard Attenbrough is able to elicit excellent individual performances from the cast, but his direction and William Goldman's script fall to build the suspense and create the sense of terror we expect from this film. "Magic" promises much more than it delivers.

It is the story of a ventriloquist whose dummy becomes his alter ego and finally takes control of his life. The idea of a psychotic ventriloquist was exploited in a British horror film of the "Ms, "Deed of Night."

Night."
In comparison with my vivid childhood memories of that film, I did not expect much from "Magic," and I was not disappointed.

ANTHONY HOPKINS plays Corky who is both master and slave to his wooden dummy Fats. Corky's act consists of playing straight man to the x-rated dummy who delivers a barrage of abrasive, foul-mouthed lines.

lines.

Corky is discovered by a top Hollywood agent (Burgess Meredith) who builds him into a national sensation. Why this dull act should be of interest to anyone other than woodcarvers is one of the mysteries of this movie.

Nevertheless, just when Corky's career is about to peak with a network contract, he panies and runs away to think things over. He heads for the Catishilis and the home of his high school sweetheart. It obpains English accent is explained by a limey father who emigrated to the U.S. Thus, "Magic" may be the first movie to expound the theory of genetic inheritance of acquired characteristics). Ann-Margaret is his lost love, now living in an isolated house among the deserted cabins of a resort closed for the winter. She's an excheerleader, and her husband Duke (Ed Lauter) is an ex-high school football player. Their lives have been downfull since graduation. Duke's away on a trip when Corky arrives, Corky overwhelms his old flame with Fats, who turns her on with his bold remarks about her anatomy. So much for courtship.

THE FIRST HALF of "Magic" sets up the situation with the elements of suspense: An isolated setting: a lonely, unhappy wife; an absent husband; and a ventriloquist who is becoming increasingly schizoid and dangerous.

The second half of "Magic," boasting no elever twists of plot, plodingly develops the situation as the mad magician starts disposing of recoile.

people.

The most mesmerizing moments all belong to Anthony Hopkins. He is splendid as Corky. The scenes of Corky with Fats have a weird, commanding power. They create a hair-raising effect unmatched by any of the more violent action.

Thanks to Hopkins. "Magic" is a film whose magic moments derive entirely from his performance with a 18-lb dummy.



Imprisoned

Brad Davis, playing Billy Hayes, is visited in a Turkish jail by his pirtfriend, trene Miracle, in a sensitive scene from the motion picture Midnight Express." The film was first shown at the 1978 Cannes Yim Festival and received international acciaim.

Climpses

NEW RELEASES

THE BIG FIX (PG). Another fetching performance by Richard Drey-fuss who plays a former college activist turned private eye. BLOODBROTHESS (R). Hard look at lives of two blue-collar brothers whose macho values affect their families. THE BOYS FROM BRAZII. (B). Some fine actors at their worst (except for Laurence Olivier) in bony film about fiendish Nazi plot. A DREAM OF PASSION (R). Melina Mercouri and Ellen Burstyn star in modern story that strains in its parallels with Greek drama,

GIRL FRIENDS (PG). Melanie Mayron and Anita Skinner star in Claudia Weill's directorial debut that focuses on marriage versus

GOIN' SOUTH (PG). Fine character study by Jack Nicholson in adven-ture that proves there's still hope for the Western.

INTERIORS (PG). Woody Allen's serious film explores the tensions within a family where neuroses and artistic sensitivity dominate their lives.

their lives.

NYTONAL LAMPOON'S ANIMAL HOUSE (R). Outrageous and raunchy comedy about life at Delta Fratemity House, the bottom-of-the-barrel internity on a small college campus in the early '85.

PARADISE ALLEY (PG). Comball sentimentality but also a lot of vitality in Sylvester Sallone's upbeat film about three brothers from tough neighborhood.

tough neighborhood.

SEPTEMBER 30, 1955 (PG). Richard Thomas stars in wistful reminiscence of the '50s set at time of James Dean's death.

UP IN SMOKE (R). Dope jokes from Cheech and Chong who celebrate the weed in their usual gross manner.

YOLETTE. Claude Chabrol directed Isabelle Huppert as the beautiful and complex girl who poisoned her parents in sensational French murder case of the '30s.

muror case of use '98.

A WEDDING (PG). All the action takes place in one day as director Robert Altman dissects "the last of our country's big rituals."

THE WILD GEESE (R). Action film with Richard Burton, Roger Moore and Richard Harris as mercenaries on a suicidal mission in Africa.

THE WIZ (G). Lavish but lumbering version of the Broadway musical presenting Diana Ross in an update black "The Wizard of Oz."

MOVIE RATING GUIDE

G General audiences admitted.
PG Parental guidance suggested. All ages admitted.
R Restricted. Adults must accompany person under 18.

No one under 18 admitted.

Fox Theatre relives splendor By GRETCHEN McHUGH

Theatre.

It was the middle of a poignant parting scene between a mother and her son leaving for World War I, in "Wings." an epic-style silent film classic that won an Oscar for best picture 50 years ago.

The Fox Theatre celebrated its 50th birthdey Sunday morning. Nov. 12, with the help of Friends of the Fox, who showed the film and invited its star Buddy Rogers to come.

We don't know how old the woman was, and we don't know why she said she was glad she was old.

BUT WE WERE glad to have gone to the Fox's party. It must have said, too, "I'm glad I'm old" Nov. 12 as more than 2,000 people of every description and age filed into its pala-

tial, Hindu temple style lobby, gazing with awe at the Samurai warriors, elephants. Ilons, peacocks, dolphins, dancing maidens, camels, sorcerers, monkeys, dragons, goddesses, swans and eagles that abound there in plaster, marble, brass, wood and stone. While the lobby is huge and glittering, the theater itself is even more expansive, giving the impression of a luge tent—"its draped, jewelled and tasseled celling supported by spears, opening in the center to a starry, deep hive sty." according to the anniversary program.

sary program.

Of the score of grand old Detroit
Theaters, only six remain, and of
those, the Fox is special for its rere
writter theater organ, upon which
virtuoso Dennis James improvised
magnificently for over two hours during "Wings."

This organ, which rose and vanished again from depths below the stage. has four manuals and 36 ranks, and it needs seven chambers to hold its

pipes, percussions and effects, some of which are a locomotive whistle. Chi-nese gong, tuned sleigh bells and a door bell.

For a year, dedicated organ buffs have come to work on its complicated machinery during long, late night hours, for no pay.

bours. for no pay.

VOLUNTEER WORKERS, too, have labored to rekindle the glowing maze of lighted alcowes which ring the vast thesier. Sitting in a seat in the Fox is smeching like sitting in its facets of read and paid and flowing in its facets of read and gold. It's an immense place (it seats 5.042 second only to Radio City Music Hall), and its balcony steel work was the largest clearapan of its type in the world when built, and maybe still its. No seat's view is obstructed. Designed for live productions as well as for movies, it has sophisticated, valued backstage facilities.

The work of architects D. Howard Crane and Associates, who designed

Orchestra Hall and 250 other theaters in the country, the Fox is a monument to a bygone age.

Except that there's no reason the age has to be bygone. Minutes from the five-lowerd Renaissance Center, the Fox is another heartening symbol itself that Detroit's Self-image as a place of beauty and culture is restirring.

The saving and restoration of orchestra Hall is such a sign. General Motors' plans for a \$50 million shopping and office complex in the Grand Boulevard area; the revitehization of Harmonic Park and the opening of restaurants near the waterfront; the creat announcement of Phase III of the Ren Cen development, by David Rockerfeller, the Henry Ford Motor Young, and the plant Corp. and Mayor Young, and the plant is the control of the renaint of the control of the renaint of the control sports are now under construction—all are unmistachle signs of the momentum of a renaissance that's real.









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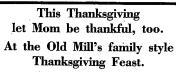


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