

Cruise shows he's an actor in 'Rain Man'

RECENT RELEASES:

"Rain Man" (A+) (R) 130 minutes. There's only one movie opening this week, but it's so good there's no need for any others.

Tom Cruise and Dustin Hoffman star as brothers — one a fast-talking sports car salesman, the other an autistic savant. Cruise looks young again, he's ditched the unseemly fat that slowed him down in "Cocktail." More important, however, he demonstrates forcibly that he can act. We all knew Hoffman could and together they present a sometimes sad, sometimes funny, but always touching story of two very diverse characters who become brothers in every sense.

STILL PLAYING:

"The Accused" (C) (R) 109 minutes.

Sara Tobias (Judy Foster) is gang-raped by three men, but Deputy D.A. Kathryn Murphy (Kelly McCullough) stills out to defense, realizes her mistake and prosecutes spectators who encouraged the rape. This poignant drama about mishandled rape cases is too long and slow to be as effective. Rape scene is particularly horrible. Reviewed by Kim Brown.

"Child's Play" (B-) (R).

Horror story about a mother who buys possessed doll for son's birthday. Plot is a bit corny at times, but film makes up for it with great special effects and unintentional humor. Reviewed by Fred Baker.

"Cocoon: The Return" (B-) (PG) 115 minutes.

Highly unlikely, overly sentimental — bordering on the dippy — but pleasant enough family entertainment for the holiday season as all the old gang are back to save a cocoon-being.

"Crime Zone" (C) (R).

David Carradine in a futuristic Hell on Earth.

"Crossing Delancy" (A) (PG) 95 minutes.

Isabella "Izzy" Grossman (Amy Irving) is a liberated young New Yorker with her eye on author Anton Maes (Jerome Krambe). But never mind that modern stuff, Grandma Ida (Rita Borsky) hires matchmaker Hannah Mandelbaum (Sylvia Miles) to arrange things with Sam the policeman. Don't worry about true love, it takes care of itself and this is a charming comedy.

"A Cry in the Dark" (C+) (PG-13) 120 minutes.

Lindy and Michael Chamberlin (Meryl Streep and Sam Neill) are camping in Australia's Northern Territory with their three children when the baby is killed by a wild dog. But police mania and public hysteria lead to Lindy's indictment and conviction for the child's murder. It doesn't matter that this story is true because the film fails to convince us that such an incredible story occurred. The police motivation in prosecuting the case and the generative force for public hysteria are poorly depicted and not at all convincing. Some Aussie accents are inaudible and camerawork leaves much to be desired. Despite good acting, the film is unpleasant with no redeeming quality, just a dippy hal-luh-jah ending.

"Dirty Rotten Scoundrels" (B+) (PG) 100 minutes.

Michael Caine is super-slick as a con-man on the Riviera while Steve Martin only seems to bumble



the movies

Dan Greenberg

Grading the movies

A+	Top marks - sure to please
A	Close behind - excellent
A-	Still in running for top honors
B+	Pretty good stuff, not perfect
B	Good
B-	Good but notable deficiencies
C+	Just a cut above average
C	Mediocre
C-	Not so hot and slipping fast
D+	The very best of the poor stuff
D	Poor
D-	It doesn't get much worse
F	Truly awful
Z	Reserved for the cossally bad
*	No advanced screening

through the game of parking rich women from their money. Despite the obvious twists and turns as the two out-manoeuvre one another, the film is polished and funny with very few slow moments.

"Ernest Saves Christmas" (C+) (PG).

Jack Palance has the role of a lifetime in "Ernest" and is wisely trying to make it pay while the market is hot. This time out there are consistent, but predictable, chuckles and a very earnest Douglas Seale as Santa Claus in search of a replacement. In an age when kids look to see a man stop bleeding by exploding gunpowder in the wound, "Ernest Saves Christmas" is a refreshing change. Ernest P. Worrell is what we need to call good, clean fun. Knowwhatmean, Vern! Reviewed by Susan Finc-ham.

"Everybody's All American" (A-) (R) 127 minutes.

In the best sense, a fine, sentimental, nostalgic look at a quarter century (1955-1981) of America, centering on a Louisiana football hero, the "Grey Ghost" (Dennis Quaid), his sweetheart, the "Magnolia Queen" (Jessica Lange), and his scholarly nephew (Timothy Hutton). The intricacies of their relationships and social change in that period are nicely blended. Excellent acting carries this long film past soap opera and should cause a lot of sighs for the good old days.

"Fresh Horses" (C) (PG-13).

Molly Ringwald and Andrew McCarthy as seductive rural girl and conservative college senior.

"The Good Mother" (A+) (R).

Superb acting by entire ensemble creates memorable film whose haunting images will remain with you long after final credits. Anna Dunlop (Diane Keaton), a single parent, is liberated, in part, from a conventional background by the love of sculptor, Leo Cutter (Liam Neeson). However, their relaxed attitudes offend ex-husband Brian (James Naughton), who sues for custody of daughter Molly (Asia Vieira). Six-



Dustin Hoffman (right) plays Raymond Babbitt and Tom Cruise (left) his brother Charlie in United Artists Pictures' "Rain Man," based on a story by Barry Morrow.

year-old Miss Vieira is a talented charmer in her film debut. Jason Roberts, Ralph Bellamy and Teresa Wright are excellent in supporting roles. Based on Sue Miller's best seller of the same name, with fine direction by Leonard Nimoy.

"Iron Eagle II".

Soviet-American strike team pitted against terrorist forces.

"Land Before Time" (A) (G) 75 minutes.

Touching story of a group of young dinosaurs and their journey to the promised land. Excellent animation combined with many heart-warming scenes make this film great entertainment for all ages.

Reviewed by Fred Baker.

"Last Rites" (C) (R) 95 minutes.

Father Michael Pace (Tom Berenger) is incredible as a priest trying to rescue his brother-in-law's mistress, Angela (Daphne Zuniga), from the Mafia. What kind of priest smokes, drinks and sleeps with the girl? Confusing and disturbing violence and sexuality. Reviewed by Kim Brown.

"Madame Sousatzka" (A) (PG-13) 122 minutes.

Lush, sensual photography, inspired music and brilliant acting plus John Schlesinger's fine direction equal an excellent film. This touching portrait of Madame Sousatzka (Shirley MacLaine) and her obsessive piano-teaching techniques also tells the story of a young genius, Manek Sen (Vivian Chowdhury). His desire to please his mother (Shabana Azmi) and his teacher, Madame Sousatzka, tears at him as does his desire for success and his awakening sexual impulses focusing on a slightly shopworn singer, Jenny (Twiggy).

"My Stepmother Is an Alien" (B+) (PG-13) 108 minutes.

A bloated Dan Aykroyd slows pace, particularly at opening, but once extra-terrestrial Celeste (Kim Basinger) touches down, this comedy takes off. Basinger's sexy visitor from another galaxy saves production from its own silliness and her performance is well worth the trip.

"Mystic Pizza" (A) (R) 102 minutes.

Warm, wonderful comedy about

three young women dealing with life's unpredictable experiences in a pizza restaurant where they work, sharing the joys and pain of love and friendship. Reviewed by Kathy Guyer.

"Naked Gun" (D) (PG-13) 90 minutes.

Obviously David Zucker doesn't know the difference between comedy and mugging. Satire takes more than repetition of clichés so miss this childish, overly broad farce, which never gets off the ground.

"Oliver and Company" (A) (G) 70 minutes.

Wide range of voices — Billy Joel, Bette Midler and Cheech Marin, for example — place this film with the best of Walt Disney animation. It's sensitive, heart-warming and entertaining with good music to boot. Reviewed by Patrick Harris.

"Scrooged" (B+) (PG-13) 90 minutes.

Get in the holiday spirit and try this updated romp through Dickens' "Christmas Carol" starring a very off-beat Bill Murray. He's the mod-

ern-day Scrooge, Frank Cross, a television network executive who doesn't know the meaning of nice. Star-studded cast includes Karen Allen, Buddy Hackett, Mary Lou Retton, Robert Mitchum, Michael Pollard, Carol Kane, John Forsythe and Bobcat Goldthwait.

"Tequila Sunrise" (C+) (R) 115 minutes.

Slick, glib production gets lost trying for high-concept, hi-tech look in an old-fashioned, hard-boiled detective story. Retired drug dealer, Dale McKussie (Mel Gibson), and best friend, Lt. Nick Frescia (Kurt Russell) of L.A. Narcotics Squad, tangle over beautiful restaurateur, Jo Ann Vallenari (Michelle Pfeiffer). There's also a big shipment of drugs, lots of money, the shadowy Carlos, a Mexican policeman, Commandante Escalante (Raul Julia), and an unpleasant, bumbling drug enforcement officer, McGuire (J.T. Walsh). Despite good acting and slick surface, this tequila doesn't rise above complicated clichés that are sometimes confusing and seldom work well.

The do's and don'ts of best-dressed tree

By Charlene Mitchell
special writer

Like everything else, there's do's and don'ts for the well-dressed Christmas tree.

Starting with a fresh tree is most important, since the wonderful smell of a live tree can't be duplicated.

Then add the trimmings.

Trimming that are IN this year are:

- White mini lights (non-flash-light).
- Theme decorating.
- Silver ornaments.
- Silver sprigs of dried flowers (spray painted).
- Bows on top of the tree.
- Fresh bunches of eucalyptus for added aroma.

Trimming that are OUT this year are:

- Flashing lights.
- Gold-colored fake garland.
- Angels on top of the tree.
- Popcorn balls (except in very

traditional homes where furnishings require that kind of look).

Needless to say, the look for indoor trees in the 1990s is changing a lot, according to local retailers.

Stores like Franks Nursery and English Gardens are carrying a wide variety of more contemporary decorations.

"Traditional looks will always be the thing for some people, but we're getting requests today that are different than in years past," said one salesperson.

One of the major changes, according to retailers is with lighting.

It seems customers are using more lights than ever, both indoors, on the trees and outdoors on the house, on shrubs and in trees.

And whole neighborhoods are lit up in many areas of metropolitan Detroit, where people are celebrating the holiday with all the sacredness of the past along with the joy of the occasion.

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