

MOVING PICTURES

'Beverly roop' doesn't deserve its merit badge

"The Adventures of Baron Munchausen" (A, PG, 126 minutes) finally opened and, as noted here on March 13, it's a marvelous fantasy with magical elements highlighting the story of Baron Munchausen and his fabulous friends.

Terry Gilliam ("Brazil," "Time Bandits") amply demonstrates his conviction that if you believe, magic is possible. Great entertainment for all ages.

"Dead-Bang" (C, R) looks like a big, splashy detective movie based on the actual experiences of a Los Angeles homicide detective, Jerry Beck.

Starring Don Johnson of TV's "Miami Vice," "Dead-Bang" was directed by John Frankenheimer whose noted 1952 film, "The Manchurian Candidate" was recently re-released. Frankenheimer's other credits include "Birdman of Alcatraz," "The Fencer," "Seven Days in May," "French Connection II" plus 152 live television dramas in the '50s.

Space precludes listing all the ridiculous, foolish and terminally idiotic elements in "Troop Beverly Hills" (PG, 100 minutes). Try just one: The film's conclusion turns on a woman—Velda, the nasty Wilderness Girl's Club leader—with a broken leg suddenly going up and walking away after Shelley Long and eight weedy, over-indulged adolescents schlepped her several miles through the forest to prove their metal.

If you must have that, then the rest won't bother you. Miss Long portrays a useless Beverly Hills soon-to-be divorcee who assumes leadership of her daughter's Wilderness Girl's group and thereby affirms her human potential (and



the movies Dan Greenberg

theirs) with an unimaginative application of wealth, prestige and family connections to sell Wilderness Girl Cookies, get merit badges in jewelry appraisal and generally display ugly Americanism at its worst.

STILL PLAYING:

"The Accidental Tourist" (C+) (PG) 120 minutes.

Slow-paced family melodrama.

"The Adventures of Baron Munchausen" (A) PG, 126 minutes.

Marvelous fantasy, super special effects and great performances by all-star cast.

"Beaches" (A+) (PG-13) 120 minutes.

Bette Midler and Barbara Hershey in fine show of friendship.

"Bill & Ted's Excellent Adventure" (B-) (PG-13).

George Carlin gives the boys the key to a time-traveling, A-plus history project.

"The Godfather" (D) (PG) 95 minutes.

Tom Hanks in slow-paced, absurd satire of horror films.

"Chances Are" (C) (PG).

Cybil Shepard, Robert Downey Jr. and Ryan O'Neal in a romantic comedy about two lives mixed together.

"Cosinus" (A) (PG-13) (115 minutes).

Charming romantic comedy about life, love and marriage.

"Dangerous Liaisons" (C+) (R) 115 minutes.



After failing to locate a band of dangerous killers, Chief Dixon (Tim Reiff) informs detective Jerry Beck (Don Johnson) that the criminals have escaped in a scene from Warner Bros.' "Dead-Bang."

Even lush images and good acting can't overcome the non-entertaining quality of this boring story of pre-Revolutionary French decadence.

"Dream a Little Dream" (F) (PG-13) 110 minutes.

Impossible muddle with Jason Roberts in Corey Feldman's body.

"Farewell to the King" (C-) (PG-13) 105 minutes.

Pompous and ponderous World War II movie behind Japanese lines in Borneo.

"Fleisch Lives" B, PG.

Chevy Chase is back as Fleitch and brings along a gang of familiar faces in this mindless, but funny, sequel.

"I'm Gonna Get You Socka" (C+) (R) 85 minutes.

Slow-paced satire of B-movies from the Black point of view.

"Kiljette" (F) (R).

More violence for Bronson fans only.

"Lean On Me" (PG-13) (A-) 100 minutes.

True, inspirational, intense story of high school principal Joe Clark

and his revival of Eastside High in Paterson, N.J.

"Leviathan" (B+) (R) 95 minutes.

Peter Weller is pretty good in a watery nightmare with mutant monster.

"The Mighty Quinn" (C-) (R) 90 minutes.

Murder, money and spies in the Caribbean.

"Mississippi Burning" (A+) (R) 130 minutes.

Brilliant political film about

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 colossal bad
*	No advanced screening

human greed, fear and cruelty. A must-see.

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

Overly broad farce never gets off the ground floor of the police squad room.

"New York Stories" (A+) (PG) 130 minutes.

Three superior short stories about life in New York's fast lanes directed by Martin Scorsese, Francis Ford Coppola and Woody Allen.

"Police Academy 6: City Under Siege" (F) (PG).

One's sensibilities are also under siege.

"Raisa Man" (A+) (R) 130 minutes.

Tom Cruise and Dustin Hoffman star as brothers in every sense.

"The Rescuers" (A) (G) 77 minutes.

Disney animation about two brave mice who rescue kidnapped orphan.

"Rudolph" (D) (R) 95 minutes.

Super-silly dance epic pitting inner-city N.Y. youth against drug dealers.

"Skin Deep" (F) (R).

John Ritter drinks, womanizes and wonders why his marriage fails.

VIDEO VIEWING

By Dan Greenberg  
staff writer

What could be more appropriate for your VCR during Oscar week than the release (March 30) of last year's best foreign film, Gabriel Byrne's "Babette's Feast" (B+, G, 105 minutes), along with one of the top contenders for that honor, Louis Malle's "Au Revoir Les Enfants" (A+, PG, 103 minutes).

Both are excellent, although I think the Academy made a mistake (when do we agree?) because as good as "Babette's," Malle's film is much better.

Malle's personal memories from 1944 are most touching and are tremendously moving. In 1944 three young Jewish boys were hidden from the

Gestapo at a Catholic school Malle attended near Fontainebleau. Malle's quiet film of schoolboy life is all the more significant in the way its understatement emphasizes Nazi horror without rhetoric or bombast. Color, music, photography, acting and directing—all combine to perfection with a singleness of purpose, a coherence and unity which inexorably march to a tragic but inevitable conclusion—all that the sensitive presentation emphasizes the very best and the very worst in humanity.

"Babette's Feast" is a very different sort of film. Based on a story by Isak Dinesen—Karen Blixen, whose experiences were the subject of "Out of Africa"—"Babette" has a smaller message and a more individual tranquility than Malle's.

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BABETTE (Stephanie Audran) is recommended as a housekeeper to two maiden Danish sisters, Martine and Philippa, who live in a remote village on the Jutland coast. Via kindness, religious leadership and care of the ill and infirm, these ladies support the community their dead father, a Lutheran pastor, founded.

Both Martine and Philippa had had lovers when they were younger, but devotion to their father and his mission aborted those affairs.

As a matter of fact, Philippa's lover, a famous French opera singer, Achille Pappe (Jean-Philippe Lafont), recommends Babette to them after her husband and son are killed in the Paris Commune of 1871.

For many years, with no wages, Babette cooks and cleans, scrubs and mends with great panache, vastly improving the sisters' lives—and that of their community as well. To honor the 100th anniversary of the pastor's birth, the sisters plan a celebration which Babette takes over as her own affirmation of friendship, love and artistry.

Having just won the lottery, Babette travels to Paris and purchases an incredible array of gourmet specialties so as to stage a monumental French dinner in honor of the pastor. Her feast is a magnificent display of food art and it is that dedication and Babette's fervor that impels the film forward to its gustatory conclusion.

Stephanie Audran remains one of Europe's best actresses—and love-

liest women—as are the four ladies (Birgitte Foderholm, Bodil Kjer, Vibeke Hastrup and Hanne Stensgaard) who play the sisters at various ages. Directing, photography, music, costume, every detail of the film is marvelously well done, and the screenplay's concept affirms love, warmth and compassion in human affairs.

WHAT DETRACTS from "Babette's Feast" is the larger scheme of things is the smallness of its story. The film turns on the honor paid the dead pastor, the devotion of his daughters and, in turn, the emotional attachment they stimulate in Babette, an emotion which leads to her incredible, and very, expensive feast.

But the basic premise of all that devotion is a rather selfish father, the pastor, who felt service to him and his community was more important than self-fulfillment and the natural lives his daughters might have led had he not been their loveless father.

That story, no matter how well told, doesn't touch or teach us nearly as much as Malle's story about schoolboys and friendship born and destroyed of amidst catch-as-catch-can, tragic forces.

Nonetheless, both "Babette's Feast" and "Au Revoir Les Enfants" are excellent, with their excellent subtitles, are fine additions to every tape library. Check them out when they hit the streets on March 30.

ALTERNATIVE VIEWING

AFC debuts gay, lesbian film fest

By Anne Sharp  
staff writer

Film has traditionally been one of those industries in which men and women could work in an atmosphere of relative peace and acceptance. Acceptance, that is, as long as they weren't too open about their styles.

Popular acts like Charles Laughton, Rock Hudson and John Garfield were always careful not to flaunt their same sex preference before the public.

These days, self-censorship is still by and large the rule. (Note that

John Waters and Pedro Almodovar, whose earlier films dealt frankly with homosexuality, made their first commercial successes in the United States with works that focus exclusively on heterosexual characters.) Still, in the world of alternative cinema, at least, there's a growing acceptance of works by and about gay males and lesbians. Gay film festivals in New York, Berlin and San Francisco showcase such material.

And now, following its tradition of innovative programming, the Ann Arbor Film Cooperative will debut its Michigan Lesbian and Gay Male

Film Festival March 29 through April 9.

If, as AAFIC hopes, the festival becomes an annual event, I hope they find a catcher title for it. Still, this year's offerings include an intriguing lineup of recently released works you rarely get to see elsewhere.

SCREENINGS for the festival will rotate from evening to evening between three locations on the University of Michigan—Ann Arbor campus—The Modern Language Building, 812 E. Washington, Auditorium A of Angell Hall, 455 S. State, and the Natural Science Auditorium, 830 N.

University. Admission is \$2.50 per show. The number for information is 769-7787.

The festival opens March 29 with a double feature on the subject of AIDS (at 7 and 9:30 p.m. in the Natural Science Auditorium).

"A Death in the Family" (1988), directed by Stewart Main and Peter Wells, concerns a young AIDS victim in New Zealand. Rosa von Praunheim, who's a sort of German John Waters, directed "A Virus Has No Morals" (1986), a black comedy about society's bizarre reactions to the epidemic.

The festival continues with

"Strome: The Lady of the Jewel Box" (1987), Michelle Parkinson's documentary about the leader of a "Cage Aux Folles" type drag review, and "Virgin Machine" (1988), a whimsical exploration of love and sex by Monika Tspat, at 7 and 9:45 p.m. March 31 in the Natural Science Auditorium.

"Mala Noche" (1988), Gus Van Sant's study of a young Oregon man's love for an illegal Mexican immigrant, showcases at 7 and 9:30 p.m. April in the Modern Language Building, with "Gay Shorts Night," an evening of short subjects reflecting the gay male experience, at that same building at 4, 7 and 9:30 p.m. April 7.

"Novembermoon" (1984), a World War II drama by Alexandra von

Grotte, about a woman's desperate attempt to save her lover from the Nazis, will be shown at 7 and 9 p.m. April 8 in the Modern Language Building.

"FOX AND HIS FRIENDS" (1975), Rainer Werner Fassbinder's story of an affair between a working class entertainer and a bourgeois dandy, will be shown at 7 p.m. April 9 in the Modern Language Building, on a double bill with two films featuring the work of celebrated French felon-turned-filmmaker Jean Genet.

"Un Chant d'Amour" (1950) at 8:15 p.m. is a short film directed by Genet himself. "Querelle" (1982), based on a novel by Genet, was the late Fassbinder's last completed film. It stars Brad Davis and Jeanne Moreau.

SCREEN SCENE

DETROIT FILM THEATRE, Detroit Institute of Arts, Detroit, Call 833-2730 for information. (\$3 all seats)  
"Distant Voices, Still Lives" (1988), 7 and 9:30 p.m. March 31 and April 1, 5 and 7 p.m. April 2. British director Terence Davies' autobiographical study of a working class family.

EASTERN MICHIGAN UNIVERSITY, Strong Auditorium, Ypsilanti, Call 487-3045 for information. (\$3 all seats)  
"A Fish Called Wanda" (1988), 8 and 10 p.m. March 28-30, 8, 10 p.m. and midnight March 31. Nasty farce about an uptight English lawyer (John Cleese) who loses his heart to an American jewel thief (Jamie Lee Curtis).

HENRY FORD CENTENNIAL LIBRARY, 16301 Michigan Ave., Dearborn, Call 943-2330 for information. (Free)  
"An Evening of Short" 7 p.m. March 27. A selection of short subjects from HFLC's film library.

MICHIGAN THEATRE, 16301 E. Liberty, Ann Arbor. For information, call

649-4397. (A regular and \$3.25 students and senior citizens)  
"Festival of Claymation" 8 p.m. March 27, 10 p.m. March 28 and 7:10 p.m. March 29-30. An anthology of shorts by various filmmakers that proves there's more to the art of clay animation than those gang blasted singing rainbows on TV.  
"The Best Years of Our Lives" (1946), 7 p.m. March 28. William Wyler's acclaimed drama about the homecoming of three World War II veterans.

"The Accused" (1988), 9 p.m. March 29. Effective courtroom melodrama about a rape victim (Jodie Foster) who shames the system into punishing her attackers.

OAKLAND UNIVERSITY, 16301 Dodge Hall, Rochester. For information, call 370-2028. (\$1 all seats)  
Independent Filmmakers Festival, 7 p.m. April 1. Program of amateur-made super-8 and 16mm works, sponsored by Oakland's Cinematheque film society.

PARK THEATRE, 804 Erie St. E., Windsor, Call (519) 971-9983 for dates and time (\$4 regular and \$2.50 seniors, children and members).

"Pelle the Conqueror" (1987), Bille August's satisfying drama about the struggles of a child farm laborer in 19th century Denmark.

"Tapeheads" (1988), reportedly, a burgeoning cult hit on the East Coast, this deals with two wacky dudes trying to break into the L.A. video-making business.

REDFORD THEATRE, 17360 Lashler, Detroit. For information, call 537-3560. (\$3 all seats)

"Sweethearts" (1939), 7:30 p.m. March 31 and April 1. Jeanette MacDonald-Nelson Eddy musical features music by Victor Herbert and dialogue by Dorothy Parker.

TELE-ARTS, 1640 Woodward, Detroit. Call 983-6490 for dates and times. (\$2 matinee, students and seniors, \$3.50 regular)

"The Mozart Brothers" (1988), 5:30 and 7:15 p.m. March 29-April 1, 1, 3:15 and 5:30 p.m. April 2. Swedish comedy about an opera director who rocks Amadeus with an outrageous staging of "Don Giovanni."

"The Brothers Quay" (1988) 10 p.m. March 31 and April 1, 7:45 p.m. April 2. Nightmarish, surreal, breathtakingly beautiful short films by Timothy and Stephen Quay, the greatest puppet animators this side of the Italians.



Sliv Bator and Lords of the New Church perform in Avenue Pictures' energetic comedy "Tapeheads," which is coming to the Park Theatre in Windsor.

University of Michigan-ANN ARBOR, showings at Auditorium A, Angell Hall; 455 S. State; 1429 Hill St.; Lorch Hall, corner of Tappan and Monroe; Modern Language Building, 812 E. Washington, and Natural Science Auditorium, 830 N. University. (Prices usually \$2.50 for single film and \$3.50 for a double feature.)

"Au Revoir Les Enfants" (1987), 7 and 9:15 p.m. March 28, Hill St. Louis Malle's drama about a Catholic schoolboy and his Jewish friend in Nazi-occupied France.

"Murderers Among Us: The Simon Wiesenthal Story" (1989), 7 p.m. March 29, Angell (free). Michigan premiere of a new film biography of Nazi hunter Simon Wiesenthal, featuring Don Kingpley.

"Naked Spaces: Living in the Round" (1985), 7:30 p.m., March 30, Lorch (Free). This feature by avant-garde ethnographic filmmaker Trinh Minh-ha offers an impressionistic view of life in rural West Africa.

"Vagabond" (1985) 7 and 9 p.m. March 31, MLD 3. French director Agnes Varda's heartbreaking story of the aimless, dangerous life of a homeless adolescent girl.

"Cat Ballou" (1988), 7 p.m. March 31, Angell, with "The Harder They Come" (1973) at 9 p.m.