

MOVING PICTURES

'Disorganized Crime': It's a crime it was produced

Despite last week's winter weather, spring films appeared on neighborhood screens everywhere. New films include "Say Anything" (PG-13) with John Cusack and Ione Skye. It's a family romance as the heroine learns her father isn't as heroic as she thought. That's a tough lesson for a young girl getting involved in her first romance.

Even if you can overlook the vast array of improbable, nonsensical events, you'll still find that "Disorganized Crime" (R, 95 minutes) is just that — disorganized — and it's criminal that Touchstone Pictures spent millions to make such a poor film.

Frank Salazar (Corbin Bernsen) assembles a gang of master thieves — Carlos Barrios (Ruben Blades), Max Green (Fred Gwynne), Ray Forgy (Lon Diamond Phillips) and Nick Bartkowski (William Russ) — to rob a bank in a small Montana town. For no reason — explained or otherwise — the bank vault supposedly contains \$500,000 in cash. It turns out later to be well over \$1 million.

That's "reasonable" for comedy, but pre-adolescent toilet jokes — ants in the pants and manure in the face — just aren't funny and neither is this cast. Presumably, "Disorganized Crime" is a farcical comedy, but no one seems to have told the director or the cast that broad farce needs to be played fast and furious.

The slow, laconic delivery and pacing here is more befuddling than the wit of Noel Coward. Or maybe they were just tired. Certainly, "Disorganized Crime" is tiresome.

Speaking of tiresome and criminal, "She's Out of Control" (R, PG, 90 minutes) is linden and sloppid, a farce that starts over-the-top and goes downhill. When the basic premise is faulted, there's not much hope.

Daddy's little girl (Amy Dolan) suddenly blossoms into an attractive young woman, so Daddy (Tony Danza) goes berserk — with his psychiatrist's help — trying to keep the boys away.

The whole project is silly and simple-minded with gags delivered so slowly they die aborning, and when they're repeated, it's even less funny. "She's out of Control" was written by screenwriters that had none.

Imagine a Greek tragedy with a Hollywood ending. Despite that unlikely combination, "Winter People" (B+, PG-13, 110 minutes) works well as an engrossing, sometimes violent, drama about passion, love, devotion, sacrifice, revenge and family feuds in Depression-era Tennessee hills.

That's a pretty big bill, but "Winter People" fills it nicely with dense, packed images and rich, evocative performances.

Clockmaker Wayland Jackson (Kurt Russell) and his daughter, Paula (Amelia Burnette), head toward Philadelphia after "Mistake" Jackson dies. While it's never clear why they took the route they did, that isn't as



the movies

Dan Greenberg

Grading the movies

A+	Top marks - sure to please
A	Glisse 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 colossally bad
+	No advanced screening

bothersome a detail as one might think.

What matters is that their truck gets stuck near Collie Wright's (Kelly McGillis) cabin. She lives a solitary existence with her baby son, Jonathan (Dashiell Coleman). Of course there's a reason she's segregated from the town. Back-country Tennessee, in the mid-'30s, was neither the time nor the place for an unwed mother.

The darkly colored set decoration, the preponderance of night-time scenes and dimly lit, muted interiors immediately telegraph the story's tragic portent as does the music which, regrettably and periodically, gets heavy-handed, announcing itself riding in the night, usually Jonathan's father, Cole Campbell (Jeffrey Meek), and Collie's sometimes lover, sometimes abuser.

Well, he's a Campbell and she's a Wright. So there you have the basic tragic ingredients: Star-crossed lovers unable to fulfill themselves because of the family feud. It doesn't advance the cause of love that Cole Campbell is a brutal, drunken mountain man and Wayland is a gentleman in every sense of the term.

"Winter People" is well photographed, nicely directed and features excellent acting in an earthy and very basic story about hard times in a rough, natural environment. While I think the ending is effective, it is surprisingly out of kilter with the film's overall tone and atmosphere.

"Working Girl" (B) (R) 115 minutes. Obstacles on the road to success in Big Business.



Lou Diamond Phillips plays Roy Forgy, a member of a team of master thieves planning to rob a Montana bank in "Disorganized Crime."

VIDEO VIEWING

By Dan Greenberg
special writer

"Hollywood" hits the shelves of your favorite video store Wednesday, April 19.

No, that's not a geographical move, or a new movie, it's a 13-part series about the Hollywood movie industry from earliest times until sound technology radically changed the name of the game.

Narrated by James Mason, the series features recent interviews with old-time film production workers and silent stars as well as lots of excellent footage from the good old days. The 13 shows cover virtually every aspect of silent filmmaking.

Each video runs 52 minutes, so one can pick and choose, perhaps a curtain-raiser for your video movie of the evening. The first video is "The Pioneers," which describes establishment of the industry.

The second video, "In the Beginning," shows the transformation of a

ly '20s and led to the establishment of the Hays Office and its Production Code Authority.

"Hollywood Goes to War," that's World War I, not II, features early, powerful war films, such as "The Big Parade" ("Wings") and "All Quiet on the Western Front."

Fifth in the series is "Hazard of the Game," the story of silent film stunts and it's not hard to guess what number six is — "Swanson and Valentino" — is all about.

TWO VERY different, but equally great, Hollywood directors, Cecil B. DeMille and Erich von Stroheim are the subject of "The Autocrat" and "Comedy — A Serious Business" highlights the careers of four major film comedies — Harold Lloyd, Buster Keaton, Harry Langdon and Charlie Chaplin.

Right behind silent comedy, road westerns as a major attraction in the silent era, just as they are today. "Out West" stars Tom Mix and William S. Hart, among other early cowboy stars.

"The Man with the Megaphone," was the silent film director and is number 10 in this series, all 13 of which include very excellent and ex-

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, great performances by all-star cast.

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

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

"The Barin" (D) (PG) 85 minutes. Tom Hanks in slow-paced, absurd satire of horror films.

"Chances Are" (C) (PG).

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

"Cyborg" (C) (R).

Futuristic thriller.

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

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

"Dead Bang" (C) (R).

Slam-bang detective story with Don Johnson.

"Dead Calm" (C) (R).

Australian thriller stars Sam Neill.

"The Dream Team" (B+) (PG-13) 105 minutes.

Psychiatric patients have quite a trip trying to see a ballgame at Yankee Stadium.

"Fletch Lives" (B) (PG).

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

"I, Madman" (C) (R).

Storybook villains hunt salesgirl in antique bookstore.

"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 Patterson, N.J.

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

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

"Major League" (A) (R) 110 minutes.

The American sports dream, live, before your very eyes.

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

Brilliant political film about human greed, fear and cruelty. A must-see.

"New Year Stories" (A+) (PG) 120 minutes.

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

"Night Evil" (C) (R).

Be careful what number you dial in Garden City, Calif., where evil lurks everywhere.

"Rain 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.

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

Spirited, energetic musical presenting the show which must go on Brooklyn's Central High School auditorium stage.

"Skin Deep" (C) (R).

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

"Tap" (C+) (PG-13) 105 minutes.

Nice dancing, but trite story with Sammy Davis Jr. and Gregory Hines.

"Working Girl" (B) (R) 115 minutes.

Obstacles on the road to success in Big Business.

Cameras, of course, are integral to creating images on celluloid and no director worth his view finds a special look at Clara Bow, Lillian Gish and John Gilbert.

Quite appropriately, the last show looks at the advent of sound. The end of an era" commented as Al Jolson prophetically called out, "You ain't heard nothin' yet!" He was right, you ain't.

While those descriptions sound enticing — the silent era footage is terrific — "The Pioneers" which was available for screening was, on the whole, disappointing.

GIVEN the opportunity, I would gladly watch the entire series. But knowing that they were written by Kevin Brownlow, along with David Gill and an impressive list of technical advisors, well, it's rather scuffed.

ALTERNATIVE VIEWING



Nick Zed's "Cinema of Transgression" is coming to the Majestic Theatre in Detroit Thursday, April 20.

Majestic Theatre shows off 'Cinema of Transgression'

By Anne Sharp
special writer

New York is an ugly place right now. Greed, corruption and misery are the order of the day.

The city's young artists respond to the decadence surrounding them in strange disturbing ways. One displays containers filled with his own urine. Another bites heads off live mice.

And then there's Nick Zed.

Zed is a filmmaker, the founder and leading light of an underground movement he calls the "Cinema of Transgression."

Transgression comes to Detroit Thursday, April 20, when Film Threat magazine — that gritty, indispensable local organ of subversive cinema — presents an evening of works by Zed at the Majestic Theatre.

The show, a multimedia event featuring video, slides and poetry readings as well as film, will be presented at 8 and 11 p.m. The redoubtable Zed himself will be there to read, answer questions and presumably explain himself.

AND HE has a lot of explaining to do.

Zed is a self-described anarchist, and his work is deliberately meant to provoke controversy, shatter taboos and appeal to his audience's most antisocial urges.

Describing his "Cinema of

Transgression," Zed said: "It's about breaking rules and violent criticism. It's about turning our subconscious, most passionate desires into concrete reality and documenting it on film."

A NOTORIOUS example is his 1984 short, "Thrust in Me." It depicts a woman (played by Zed himself) who commits suicide. Her lover (also played by Zed) discovers the body and performs what Zed terms a "transgressive act of necrophilia."

When the film was shown three years ago at the Ann Arbor Film Festival, angry women accused Zed of promoting sexual violence. Zed responded by circulating a flyer explaining his philosophy of art. It concludes, "I hate women. But I also love them. And you, ladies, are no different than I."

Graphic stagings of mayhem and sexual behavior (much of it illegal) are typical of Zed's films. Although he says he has no political allegiance, his work also expresses defiance toward the conservative establishment.

ZEDD CHARACTERIZES his "Bogus Man" (1980) as a film "about how all the presidents of the U.S. have been puppets of the military-industrial complex . . . It's about how all these public figures who we're supposed to admire are really clones of dead ideas which should be obliterated."

His "Police State" (1987) is based

on actual, all-too-common incidents of police brutality in New York City. Rockets Redglare, a character actor featured in "Stranger Than Paradise" and "Talk Radio," plays a sadistic police officer and Zed a hapless victim who's threatened with castration.

Zed's rebellious art puts him on the horns of a nasty dilemma. His works reflect his need to show what society insists must not be shown. His films are made deliberately to hurt, to frighten and to arouse outrage.

BUT IT'S those qualities that make them especially vulnerable to censorship. Last May a shipment of his films, meant to be shown at a film festival in Montreal, was confiscated by Canadian officials at the border. According to Film Threat, "Police State" has been banned in Toronto, New York and Los Angeles.

In a review of Zed's recent film, "Whoregasm," one critic said, "Zed seems to have electrified the underground to a degree not seen since the early '60s and I admit, begrudging respect for his almost single-handed ability to shock people in this day and age."

"If this film doesn't land him jail, I don't know what will."

The Majestic Theatre is at 4140 Woodward Ave., Detroit. For more information about the Zed show, call 833-9700.

SCREEN SCENE

AFTERNOON FILM THEATRE, Detroit Institute of Arts, 5200 Woodward, Detroit. For information, call 833-3710. "The Phantom of the Opera" (1925), 1 p.m. April 18-23. Lon Chaney's definitive rendering of the disfigured madman fatally attracted to a pretty opera diva.

DETROIT FILM THEATRE, Detroit Institute of Arts, Detroit. Call 832-2730 for information. "Little Dorrit" (1887), 7 p.m. April 21-22, 22 and 7 p.m. April 16. Part Two of Charles Dickens' dramatization of the Charles Dickens novel, starring Alec Guinness and Derek Jacobi.

HENRY FORD CENTENNIAL LIBRARY, 18301 Michigan Ave., Dearborn. Call 943-2330. (free) "Itain" (1932), 7 p.m. April 17. Joan Crawford plays a sexy slinger trapped on a South Sea island with a hostile preacher man (Walter Houston).

MICHIGAN THEATRE, 16301 E. Liberty, Ann Arbor. For information, call 669-8397. (44 regular and \$3.25 students and senior citizens)

"The Accidental Tourist" (1988) 8 p.m. April 17. Enjoyable version of Anne Tyler's novel about a shy travel writer (William Hurt) wooed by a vivacious dog trainer (Geena Davis).

"Tapeheads" (1988), 7:15 p.m. April 19, 9 p.m. April 20, 9:30 p.m. April 21, 5:15 and 11:30 p.m. April 22. Bill Fishman's comedy about many videomakers, starring John Cusack and Tim Robbins.

"Cousins" (1988), 9 p.m. April 19-20. Remake of Claude Lelouch's "Cousin, Cousine" features Isabelle Huppert and Ted Danson as a couple involved in naughty family affairs.

"Mississippi Burning" (1988), 7 p.m. April 21-22. Alan Parker's controversial tale of the civil rights era in the South, starring Gene Hackman and Willem Dafoe.

"Dirty Rotten Scoundrels" (1988), 9:15 p.m. April 22. Two ambitious con men (Steve Martin and Michael Caine) vie for power in Frank O. Geary's comedy.

PARK THEATRE, 804 Erie St. E., Windsor. Call (519) 971-9983 for dates and times (44 regular and \$2.50 seniors, children and members).

"Parents" (1988), April 19-23. Bob Balaban's farce concerns a cheerful, average suburban family that just happens to practice cannibalism.

"Law of Desire" April 19-23. Another sardonic, semi-surreal work by Spanish wildman Pedro Almodovar.

TELE-ARTS, 1540 Woodward, Detroit. Call 963-8590 for dates and times. (83 minutes, students and seniors, \$3.50 regular)

"High Hopes," (1988), 8:30 and 7:45 p.m. April 19-21, 1, 3:15 and 5:30 p.m. April 23. Mike Leigh's on-target satire about a downwardly mobile couple in Margaret Thatcher's Britain.

"Night of the Living Dead" (1968), 10 p.m. April 21-22, 7:45 p.m. April 23. George Romero's shocker about flesh-eating zombies is still one of the scariest films ever made.

TROY PUBLIC LIBRARY, 510 W. Big Beaver Road, Troy. Call 334-3546.

"Bill the Goats Head Boy" (1986), 7 p.m. April 17. Star-studded bit of composer Jerome Kern features Van Heflin, Jody Garland, Lena Horne and many, many more.