

MOVING PICTURES



Ray Kinsella (Kevin Costner), his wife Annie (Amy Madigan) and daughter Karin (Gaby Hoffman) are greeted by a youthful Jon Kinsella.

Acting brightens 'Dreams'

Promises, promises . . . but no delivery. Once again, "Jackknife" (B+, R, 85 minutes), the Robert DeNiro Vietnam vet story, was rescheduled at the last minute. DeNiro's acting is so good that I hope they open it this week as promised (again).

"Field of Dreams" (B+, PG, 111 minutes) features an all-star cast in a baseball story. In an Iowa cornfield, Ray Kinsella (Kevin Costner) hears voices and sees as baseball field, which he takes as a sign that he should build a baseball diamond so that Shoeless Joe Jackson (Ray Liotta) can play again. Jackson was one of the eight Chicago White Sox who were banned from the game when they threw the 1919 World Series in the Infamous Black Sox Scandal.

Kinsella and his wife Annie (Amy Madigan) follow his vision and encounter memorable characters along the way — Terence Mann (John Goodman), "Duke" (John Goodman), and "Doc" (Graham Beckel).

Writer-director Phil Alden Robinson spent seven years translating W.P. Kinsella's novel, "Shoeless Joe," to the screen and notes that "everything good about the film is from the book . . . it's an extraordinary vision about the power of love to make dreams come true."

Well, not quite. Excellent acting by the principals brightens this fanciful and nostalgic film. Reviewed by Verdel Waites.

Some had the bizarre idea that peeking in on the most intimate and disturbed moments in the lives of adolescents from broken but well-to-do homes would make a great movie. Well, scenarist Michael Wellar and director Hugh Hudson were wrong and "Lost Angels" (D, R, 105 minutes) is a very unpleasant, uncomfortable experience.

Not all movies have to be happy-go-lucky affairs, but this one went too far the other way — and for no purpose other than sensationalism.



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 colossally bad
	No advanced screening

True, the photography was acceptable, the music decent, the continuity clear and the acting quite good. That's where it was when the volume was too low to hear what was going on and a few spots in which the action was unexplained.

Even so, the film wasn't much fun. It has a lot of strange ideas and an unbelievable Pollyanna ending.

Tim Doolan (Adam Horovitz) is from a broken home — several, in fact. His mother, Felicia (Marks) (Celia Weston) and his stepfather, Barton Marks (Ron Fraizer), get him out of the juvenile prison, where he was sent for shoplifting, and return to his father, Richard Doolan (Graham Beckel), and unmercifully dump him in a juvenile psychiatric facility.

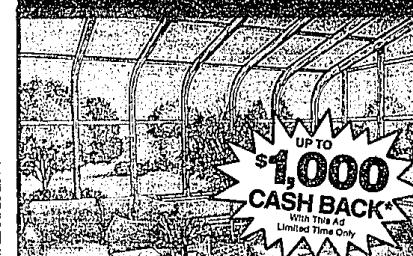
Adam has a goal for a gal from another broken home, Cheryl Anderson (Amy Locane), who is also in the psychiatric facility. Cheryl likes Adam and his half-brother, Andy (Don Bloomfield), who is a real case. It gets strange for in the psychiatric facility Adam finds understanding in an aloof, part-psychiatrist, Dr. Charles Lottis (Donald Sutherland). Had enough? I did, but the film goes on and on. Miss it.

"Scandal" (R, R, 100 minutes) is based on the story that rocked the British government just over a quarter of a century ago, when the minister of war, John Profumo (Ian McKellen), was caught up in a scandal with several ladies of easy virtue, Christine Keeler (Joanne Whalley-Kilmer) and Mandy Rice-Davies (Brigit Fonda). The girls were prostitutes of Dr. Stephen Ward (John Hurt) and the scandal was international.

Although Keeler was Profumo's

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ALTERNATIVE VIEWING

'Chocolat': Skillful film about sensitive subject

By Anne Sharp
special writer

"Chocolat" (at the Detroit Film Theatre this weekend) is an impressive debut by first-time director-screenwriter Claire Denis. She's made a film that's auto-biographical, without being the least bit self-conscious — quite an achievement for a newcomer.

She's also managed, with skill, sensitivity and good taste, to tackle a subject that many experienced directors have bungled badly in the past. One only has to have a look at Alan Parker's gallumphing emulsion "Milkshake" (1984) to appreciate Denis' delicate, thoughtful approach to the topic of racism.

France is currently experiencing a violent upsurge of racial strife, a legacy of its former attempt to dominate Third World countries. As a white French woman raised in West Africa during the last days of French colonial occupation, Denis sees firsthand the roots of conflict between white Europeans and black Africans. "Chocolat" expresses, almost a child's eye view of colonial misery.

We first see little France (Cécile de France), the daughter of a French colonial governor in northern Cameroun, being tended by her family's African manservant Protee (Isaach de Bankole).

AFFECTIONATELY, he tells her riddles and prepares for her a snack of bread and butter, garnished with onions, which she happily eats. He seems as contented with his lot as she is with this exotic meal. But this illusion won't last.

When she is introduced to France's actually fetching mother, played by Giulia Borsig, it looks as if the tired old topic of forbidden love is about to be hauled out of mothballs. It is, but in a totally unexpected way.

Denis uses the natural attraction between Protee and France's mother not for tacky romantic thrills, but to demonstrate how love, like friendship, is simply impossible when one partner is degraded and at the mercy of the other.

Although they are supposed to be France's memories, this child herself remains mostly in the background. By unobtrusively observing groupings at work and play, she

comes to understand the complex and disturbing nature of the social situation surrounding her.

Bankole's performance makes this film. His Protee is an intelligent, likeable man who's clearly the equal of his employers, whether they realize it or not.

Bankole makes it clear that Protee is a good and faithful servant, not because he's a servile person, but because he's patient enough to put up with the humiliation and injustice of his situation.

BUT HIS patience is tested once too often and France watches him transformed from a cheerful father figure into an embittered stranger.

Although sympathetic to the Europeans' viewpoint, Denis is clearly on the side of the Africans. In the film's exuberant final shot, which deserves to become famous, she offers a celebratory vision of post-colonial Africans enjoying their freedom.

Wisely, however, she insists on making this France's story, not Protee's. It's up to the African writers and filmmakers, she implies, to give us his version of things.

SCREEN SCENE

DETROIT FILM THEATER, Detroit Institute of Arts, Detroit. Call 832-2733 for information. (83 for all shows.)

"Freaks" (1932), 1 p.m. May 9-14. Tod Browning's notorious horror talk about a woman who tries to exploit them.

"Chocolat" (1988), and 8:30 p.m. May 12-13. Sensitive drama by Claire Denis about the last days of French colonial rule in West Africa.

DETROIT PUBLIC LIBRARY, 5201 Woodward, Detroit. Call 835-4048 for information. (54)

"The Grapes of Wrath" (1940), 7 p.m. May 12-13, with "Gentlemen's Agreement" (1947). "Grapes" stars Henry Fonda as an impoverished sharecropper struggling to survive the Great Depression. "Agreement" features Gregory Peck as a writer who poses as a Jew to experience anti-Semitism.

FARMINGTON COMMUNITY LIBRARY, 23100 Liberty, Farmington. Call 474-7770 for information.

"Swing Time" (1936), 7 p.m. May 11. Swell Galler Rogers-Fred Astaire vehicle. Oakland Community College film prof Thomas Kegel will be on hand to discuss the film.

HENRY FORD CENTENNIAL LIBRARY, 16301 Michigan Ave., Dearborn. Call 943-3330, (free)

"Yours, Mine and Ours" (1948), 7 p.m. May 8. The late, great Lucille Ball stars in this comedy about the mother of eight who marries a father of 10.

MICHIGAN THEATRE, 16301 E. Liberty, Ann Arbor. For information, call 669-8337. (84 regular and \$3.25 students and senior citizens)

"Tampopo" (1985) 8 p.m. May 9 and 9:30 p.m. May 10. Jiro Taniguchi's satirical comedy about the Japanese way of eating.

"Tap" (1989), 7 p.m. May 11. Percussive dancer Gregory Hines clatters his way into your hearts.

"Little Dorrit, Parts one and two" (1937). Part one shown at 7:45 p.m. May 11, 12, 13 and 14; part two at 2:30 p.m. May 11, 12, 13 and 14. Both shown at 7:45 p.m. May 13 and 6:15 p.m. May 14. Charlotte Edman's two-part, six-hour adaptation of Charles Dickens' classic novel of love and penal servitude in Victorian England.

PARK THEATRE, 804 Erie St. E., Windsor. Call (519) 971-9883 for dates and time. (\$4 regular and \$2.50 seniors)

"Malarck" (1988), 7 p.m. May 10, 12 and 14, 8:30 p.m. May 11 and 13. True story of Canadian journalist Roger

Malarck, who exposed inhumane conditions in a juvenile detention facility he once suffered in as a child.

"Red Sorghum" (1987), 2 p.m. May 11 and 13 and 9:30 p.m. May 10, 12 and 14. Zhang Yimou's epic tale of Chinese peasant life before the Revolution.

RDFORD THEATRE, 17360 Lahser, Detroit. Call 537-2560 for information. (52)

"The African Queen" (1951), 7:30 p.m. May 12-13. Classic adventure-romance stars Katharine Hepburn and Humphrey Bogart as mismatched lovers on a perilous journey down an African River.

TELE-ARTS, 1540 Woodward Ave., Detroit. For information, call 983-0650. (\$2 matinee, students and seniors, \$3.50 regular)

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