

## MOVING PICTURES



Joe Bradshaw (Bernard Hill) is angry when his wife Shirley (Pauline Collins) tells him that she is planning to go on a holiday in Greece in Paramount's "Shirley Valentine."

## 'Shirley Valentine': It's a cinematic tour-de-force

"Shirley Valentine" (A R, 110 minutes) may not be the greatest movie ever made, but it'll do until perfection comes along.

The story of Shirley Valentine (Pauline Collins), a 40-plus English housewife rediscovering life, love and a positive self-image, is one of the spiciest, funniest movies in a long time — if not forever.

Based on Pauline Collins' Tony-award winning Broadway performance, "Shirley Valentine" is a cinematic tour-de-force — an excellent, entertaining film that speaks fervently to reaching your highest potential.

But Shirley Valentine lives a humdrum existence. She's married to a hardworking but dull fellow, Joe Bradshaw (Bernard Hill), who means well but wants his tea precisely at six. Romance and adventure are gone from his life and Shirley's as well.

They have two grown children, Melandra (Tracey Bennett) and Brian (Garth Jefferson), neither of whom would warm a grandparent's heart, but they mean well.

Faced with that dismal life, Shirley exists in an isolated world totally devoid of the sense of adventure and spirit which characterized her childhood.

The opportunity to reaffirm life arrives when her good friend, Jane (Alison Steadman), wins a trip for two to Greece. Jane invites and insists that Shirley accompany her.

Despite Jane's insistence and encouragement, it's not easy for a housewife of some 30 years to vacation without her husband. But Shirley does and, boy, is she glad she did.

AMONG OTHER things, she gets to sit and drink retinas while watching beautiful sunsets. As an added bonus, she meets Costas Caldas (Tom Conti), the slickest backwater tavern owner since the serpent hustled Eve. Costas just believes in living life the best you can.

None of this is earthshaking, but the way the story is told makes all the difference in the world. Alan Hume's ("A Fish Called Wanda," "The Eye of the Needle" and "The Return of the Jedi") photography catches vivid impressions of the brilliant Greek sun that has inspired so many down through the years. His photography captures the essence of Britain's long-standing love affair with Greece.

The editing of "Shirley Valentine" is a masterful display of continuity which preserves the intimacy of Collins' one-woman Broadway play while effectively using the remarkable range of images a motion picture camera can capture.

What makes that continuity particularly noteworthy is the performance mode of "Shirley Valentine" — direct eye contact with the camera and the audience.

Most films pretend that they have created a remarkable world for audiences to enjoy. "Shirley Valentine" makes no bones about the fact that "Pauline Collins is talking directly to each and every one of us about the importance of living well and achieving our greatest potential."

The editing from personal eye contact to voice over narration to "conventional" presentation is as smooth as any could imagine. Seamless as they say. It's also, when so well done, a very attractive style.

FINALLY, THERE'S the matter of Pauline Collins' performance. It's a superb and humanistic rendition of scannier Willy Russell's ("Educating Rita") witty, whimsical and poignant observations on men, women, life and love.



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-	Doesn't get much worse
F	Truly awful
Z	Reserved for the colossally bad
	No advanced screening

Indeed, an excellent film! Anyone who knows anything about Japan will be appalled at "Black Rain" (D-, R, 120 minutes), a visually unpleasant, murky picture, painted in long, boring shots intended to set the scene for a grisly struggle between Japanese gangsters. Other long, boring interludes apparently are intended to develop characterization. The net result is a long, boring film with occasional moments of unpleasant graphic violence.

The title, minimalist plot concerns another burnt-out, divorced New York City detective (sound familiar?) Nick Conklin (Michael Douglas), assigned with his partner, Charlie Vincent (Andy Garcia), to escort Japanese criminal Sato (Yusaku Matsuda) back to Japan.

The film further suffers from lack of charisma, first between detective partners Conklin and Vincent, and later between Conklin and Japanese detective Masahiro Matsumoto (Ken Takakura).

The New York detective's smart-alecky jargon is almost as difficult to understand as the Japanese-accented English. It's also difficult to believe the stupid coincidence on which the whole plot turns.

**DIRECTOR RIDLEY Scott's** ("Alien," "Blade Runner") style — tedious, dismal, runny visuals occasionally interrupted by excessive brutality — seems to sell tickets, but I find it unattractive, unamusing and unentertaining.

If those two major releases aren't to your liking, there are a couple of junkies operating: "Phantom of the Mask: Eric's Revenge" (D) (R) features Morgan Fairchild and Jonathan Goldsmith in a tale of love, horror and revenge. If you get bored you can hang out at the fast-food place or get a hit at the candy store. "Cage" (D) (R) seems like a poor excuse for another Vietnam movie as two Nam veterans get involved in cage fighting. Great sport, if you survive.

**STILL PLAYING:**  
"The Abyss" (D-) (PG-13) 135 minutes. Despite excellent underwater sequences, this muddled and murky sci-fi sea saga sinks.

"Batman" (C+) (PG-13) 120 minutes. Michael Keaton is a dud in the title role but Jack Nicholson's Joker is terrific.

"Casualties of War" (B+) (R) 105 minutes. Grim, gripping and graphically violent story of Vietnam war.

"Cretaceous" (D-) (G) 75 minutes. Slow, clichéd Disney in Africa epic that left its excitement at the airport.

"Cookie" (C+) (R) 90 minutes. A couple of confusing stories run together as mobster Peter Falk tries to reconcile with daughter, Cookie (Emily Lloyd) while scamming mob and fed.

"Dead Poets Society" (A+) (PG) 124 minutes. Robin Williams' sensitive portrait of a fine teacher is complimented by excellent young actors as his students.

"Eddie and the Cruisers II: Eddie Lives!" (PG-13). They're still looking for Eddie's body.

"Heart of Dixie" (A) (PG). Southern gentility faced with late '50s civil rights movement.

"Honey, I Shrank the Kids" (B+) (PG) 105 minutes. It's fun but it ain't easy to be small.

"Indiana Jones and the Last Crusade" (B+) (PG-13) 120 minutes. Good entertainment, but enough already.

"Kickboxer" (A) (R). Vengeance and rescue are in order as an American kickboxer travels to Thailand.

"Lethal Weapon II" (B+) (R) 115 minutes. Glover and Gibson do it again in high, albeit violent, style.

"Predator" (A) (R) 107 minutes. Stallone in jail and Donald Sutherland is the warden. Best wishes to the latter.

"Nightmare on Elm Street V" (R). Freddie's back.

"Parenoth" (A) (R) 120 minutes. Large, talented cast in complex, but entertaining story about a family which includes Jason Robards, Steve Martin, Tom Hulce, Martha Plimpton and Diane Wiest, among others.

"Peter Pan" (A) (G) 77 minutes. Disney's classic animation of Sir James Barrie's story.

"The Package" (R). Gene Hackman and Joanna Cassidy in story of deceit on the international scene as career military man escorts prisoner back from Russia.

"Raiders" (A) (R). Judd Nelson, Robert Loggia, Lee Ross and Meg Foster in story of driven young man who becomes a killer.

"Romero" (A) (PG-13) 105 minutes. Disturbing and frightening, but provocative story of El Salvador Archbishop Oscar Romero and the events leading to his assassination. Superb performance by Paul Sisto in title role.

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## ALTERNATIVE VIEWING

## 'Sun of Satan' has arrived

By John Monaghan  
special writer

More than two years have passed since Maurice Pialat's "Under the Sun of Satan" took first prize at the 1987 Cannes Film Festival. It will finally surface for local audiences this weekend at the Tele-Arts Theatre in Detroit.

Reasons for its late arrival are not hard to gauge.

Although some critics hail the film as a masterpiece of uncompromising vision, others say it won by default in an unusually dry year at Cannes. American audiences, meanwhile, typically shy away from films with religious themes.

Still, "Under the Sun of Satan" has plenty to offer fans of grueling, masochistic stories about the search for spiritual faith. The film has been compared favorably to "Therese," the more highly stylized chronicle of the life of St. Therese.

Pialat's films often deal with people on the edge of a crisis. In his "Po-

lice" (1985), Gerard Depardieu starred as a violent, sex-obsessed Paris police officer trying to crack a drug ring while dealing with his own problems.

DEPARDIEU ALSO stars in "Under the Sun of Satan," here as Father Donissson, a country priest engaged in a fevered battle with his dwindling faith. Is he really doing the Lord's bidding or working on the side of Satan?

His superior, Father Menou-Segrals (played by director Pialat), offers only more confusion. The older priest is a carnal, less spiritual man who sends the confused seeker to a remote parish in the hopes that he'll straighten out.

Here, Donissson encounters Mouchette (Sandrine Bonnaire), a 15-year-old femme fatale involved in affairs with a string of married and influential men. When she ends up murdering one of them, Donissson grows more and more frustrated in his inability to help her.

The film takes place in no particular time in history. Horses are carriages line the streets, but the sound of thundering trucks are also heard.

In one of the more bizarre moments, Donissson meets a stranger on a dark and deserted road. The man, who talks to him intimately and even kisses him on the lips, may or may not be an incarnation of Satan. It's one of the film's many ambiguities.

THE VERSATILE Depardieu is especially effective as the priest.

Critic Stanley Kauffmann noted that "his (Donissson) bulk seems an extra task that heaven has given this delicate man, an extra burden that he must lug around in his dalliance."

Pialat's intent was to stay as close as possible to his source, the first book by George Bernano. Known for his realistic approach to film, the director (with cinematographer Willy Kurant) creates a timeless, shadowy field for this epic battle of faith.

## SCREEN SCENE

ANN ARBOR FILM CO-OP, various locations on the University of Michigan campus, 435 S. State, Ann Arbor. Call 769-7787 for information. (\$2.50 single, \$3.50 double feature)

"Hotel Terminus: The Life and Times of Klaus Barbie" (France — 1988, 2 and 7 p.m. Sept. 30-Oct. 1 (call for location). A documentary about the trial of the notorious "Butcher of Lyon" has been called another lengthy and brilliant study of wartime horror by Marcel Ophuls. An area premiere.

CENTER FOR JAPANESE STUDIES, Lorch Hall, 909 Monroe, Ann Arbor. Call 764-4307 for information. (Free)

"The 47 Ronin" (Japan — 1942) at 7 p.m. Sept. 29. Forty-seven samurais avenge their master in this two-part film. As part of the center's tribute to rare Japanese films.

CINEMA GUILD, Lorch Hall, 909 Monroe, Ann Arbor. Call 764-4307 for information. (\$2.50 single, \$3.50 double feature)

Screenplay comedy — "My Man Godfrey" (USA — 1936), 7 p.m. Sept. 29 (call for location). Depression-era tramp William Powell is hired as a butler in Ripley Keane's house. With "I Hated Christmas" (USA — 1944) at 8:15 p.m., starring Clark Gable as a reporter hooking up with runaway heiress Claudette Colbert.

"L'Amour" (France — 1988), 7, 8:40 and 10:20 p.m. Sept. 30 (call for location). Another in a series of films by unappreciated French director Jacques Dailion. In a typically European premise, an American student comes to a house outside of Paris and becomes the object of desire for three young women.

DETROIT FILM THEATRE, Detroit Institute of Arts, 4200 Woodward Ave., Detroit. Call 832-2730 for information. (3)

"Four Adventures of Reinette and Mirabelle" (France — 1988), 7 and 9:30 p.m. Sept. 29-30. Another of Rohmer's delightful "moral tales" finds a pair of young women enjoying the French countryside and the cases of Paris. Rohmer, well into his 60s, still directs with an incredibly light and youthful touch.

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Teng Ru-jan (center) plays Luohan, a distillery foreman, in Zhang Yimou's "Red Sorghum."

Much better than it sounds, produced by Val Lewton.

LIVONIA MALL CINEMA, 29415 Seven Mile, Livonia. Call 476-1166 for information. (Free)

"Dark Victory" (USA — 1939), 10 a.m. Sept. 26. Betty Davis at her melodramatic best as a spirited woman coping with a fatal illness. With Ronald Reagan and Humphrey Bogart in the unlikely role of an Irish horse trainer.

MEDIA-TRICS, Auditorium A, Angell Hall, 435 S. State St. Call 763-1107 for information. (\$2.50 single, \$3.50 double feature)

Cary Grant — "The Awful Truth" (USA — 1937), 7 p.m. Sept. 29. When a divorced Grant and Irene Dunne both plan to remarry, each tries to screw up the other's plan for happiness. Certainly, one of the funniest shows ever made.

"Only Angels Have Wings" (USA — 1939) at 9 p.m. about mail pilots in South America and how things get stirred up when showgirl Jean Arthur shows up. Howard Hawks directed.

MICHIGAN THEATRE, 16301 E. Liberty, Ann Arbor. For information, call 668-4387. (14 regular and \$3.35 students and senior citizens)

"Animation Celebration," Sept. 25-30 (call for show times). A brand new collection of contemporary animated shorts highlighted here by a Soviet tribute to Mickey Mouse, the Academy Award-winning "The Tin Toy," "Felix-Koach-Umbraurum," a new film commissioned by David Byrne, and Bill Plympton's "35 Ways to Quit Smoking."

"The Maltese Falcon" (USA — 1940), 7

p.m. Sept. 26-27. The third film version of Dashiell Hammett's hard-boiled mystery is also the best. Bogart is Sam Spade, caught up in a deadly hunt for the "black bird."

"Red Sorghum" (China — 1988), 8:30 p.m. Sept. 28-29. A sprawling epic tracing the immense changes in China during the '20s and '30s, focusing on a peasant woman and her bizarre relationship with a man of the fields.

TELE-ARTS, 1540 Woodward Ave., Detroit. Call 963-3918 for information and show times. (\$2.50 adults, \$2 students and senior citizens)

"Under the Sun of Satan" (France — 1987), Sept. 27-Oct. 1 (call for show times). The winner of the 1987 Cannes Festival stars Gerard Depardieu as a young priest undergoing an agony of self-doubt and convinced that he is losing his battle against Satan. With Sandrine Bonnaire.

"Voices of Sarafin" (USA — 1988), 3:30 p.m. Sept. 30. Behind-the-scenes look at the 28 South African school children who performed "Sarafin" at the Lincoln Center in 1987. Featuring singer Miriam Makeba in a stirring finale.

UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN-DEARBORN, Recreation Center, 4901 Evergreen, Dearborn. Call 593-5390 for information. (Free)

"Bill and Ted's Excellent Adventure" (USA — 1989). Courtesy of a time-traveling telephone booth, a pair of high-school dropouts learn history first hand.

— John Monaghan

## VIDEO VIEWING

By Dan Greenberg  
special writer

"For what I got on you, Rico, I could burn you a dozen times over."

Not the polite dialogue expected of a District Attorney, but there's a certain gritty realism in Bogart's delivery of those words in his own special style.

Warner Brothers' "The Enforcer" (1950, black and white, 67 minutes) is now being re-released by Republic Home Video in their classic collection along with Gary Cooper in "Distant Drums" (1951, color, 101 minutes).

"The Enforcer" now seems rather typical of gangster movies, this one the story of D.A. Martin Ferguson (Bogart) cleaning up on a Murder, Inc. type gang, led by the mysterious Albert Mendoza (Everett Sloane).

A good deal of the film's appeal is the talented performances. Besides Sloane and Bogart, Zero Mostel is "Big Babe" Leach, a fat nobody from the streets who wants to belong and make money at any price. Ted De Corsia is Mendoza's number two, a tough, evil sort who turns to jelly

when fear sets in.

Michael Tolan, brother of Detroit attorney Jerry Tuchow, then using the name Lawrence, is "Duke" Malloy, who hangs himself after confessing that the mob made him murder his girl.

His various and divergent moods reflect the psychotic world of violence and the film's structure — an involved set of flashbacks leading us along Bogart's trail to behind Malloy's confession to unearth the murder-for-pay gang. All very much of the 30s.

BEHIND THE film and its now rather naive and simple play is a whole world of American folklore and ideal history.

While not quite a major motion picture, "The Enforcer" was a significant, mainstream production released by a major studio. In fact, Warner Brothers hired Sen. Estes Kefauver of Tennessee, then Chairman of the Senate committee to investigate organized crime, to make a few remarks, presented as a current-rather than the movie prem-

iered at New York's Capitol Theatre. "The picture you are about to see deals with an assault upon society," Kefauver said. "These men were finally apprehended and completely destroyed legally by relentless investigation without denying them any of the rights that American citizens are guaranteed."

Kefauver later became famous for his televised Senate hearings on organized crime, so he was an appropriate choice to lend credence to this film, something that Hollywood desperately strove to do in the period when television was destroying the movie box office.

By today's standards, of course, it's a pretty tame film despite it's watchfulness by 1950s standards. Watching it today is a relief as the camera gracefully pulls away from violence. The film is content suggesting rather than graphically depicting violence.

The remnants of numerous bodies recovered from the gang's burial swamp shown in black and white long shot is hardly anything given the mangled body parts routinely appearing in today's films. But, for the

time, it was a different matter.

BOSLEY CROWTHER noted the excessive gore in his New York Times review: "no less than eight or 10 ripe killings are rather graphically depicted in camera range and possibly some 20-30 others are frankly implied."

Not worth mentioning these days. Times have, indeed changed. They've also changed insofar as realism goes and "The Enforcer" would never make it by today's standards where realism and technical accuracy count for so much.

"The Enforcer" has everyone running around in wide lapels and driving 1937 Buicks. Bogart listens to key testimony on an audiotape recorder that was 1950s stuff. Bogart's wilder wonderment when anyone discusses "contracts" and "hits" only works in a '30s context. It just doesn't hang together for 1989.

It's entertaining watching these well-done performances which lead to pretty tense endings. These dark, gangland vistas are an integral part of our cinematic landscape. But watch Bogart, he'll get the bad guys and that's a relief.