

## MOVING PICTURES

# 'Red October' misses mark as a 'thriller'

Films set against the backdrop of international politics and conflict lose their impact when those tensions are defused. Then they become historical dramas — but they still need to discover excitement and drama in the material.

None of which exists in "The Hunt for Red October" (C, PG, 135 minutes). There's just endless, confusing underwater shots, control panel shots and storm-at-sea shots. Seldom are those shots immediately or clearly identified.

Soviet Naval Officer Marko Ramius (Sean Connery) captains the "Red October," the Soviet's latest and most threatening submarine. Together with a few of his trusted officers he plans to defect to the United States.

Meanwhile in Washington, Admiral James Greer (James Earl Jones), a major figure in the CIA, summons his favorite analyst, Jack Ryan (Alec Baldwin) to figure out what's going on.

Naturally, Jack is quiet but heroic. Is Captain Ramius defecting? Is he going to bomb the East Coast? Who knows? National Security Advisor Jeffrey Pelt (Richard Jordan) doesn't and he isn't getting much help from Soviet Ambassador Andrei Lyssenko (Gos Ackland). Let Jack figure it out.

SEAN CONNERY, James Earl Jones and the rest of the cast are far too accomplished for this clichéd screenplay by Larry Ferguson and Donald Stewart and the murky direction by John McTiernan ("Die Hard" and "Predator"). The cast walks through their lines, looking faintly embarrassed, but striving as professionals to do the job they were paid for. But now that



the movies  
**Dan Greenberg**

Comrade Glasnost has come to roost in the Soviet Embassy, there's just no story here — and it's told very poorly.

Can you believe Sonoran Jonesy aboard the U.S. submarine Dallas? He wears Petty Officer Second Class insignia but he's listed as a plain seaman. He sits there with his sonar, rumpuses and 140 million computer figuring out major technical secrets.

Does he have trouble convincing the Chief Boatwain (Larry Ferguson) or his Captain (Scott Glenn)? Of course not, they are eager to make major decisions based on an enlisted man's theory. That's not the Navy I remember.

By the way, did Ramius defect? In the end he discusses the issue at length with Jack Ryan but never explains his position. It may have been because both Ramius and Ryan were taught to fish by their grandfathers. That makes as much sense as the rest of "The Hunt for Red October."

**STILL PLAYING:**  
"All Dogs Go to Heaven" (B+) (G) 90 minutes.  
Well-known voices back this animated story about Charlie the German Shepherd and his doggy friends.  
"Always" (B) (PG) 110 minutes.  
Sometimes poignant, sometimes sappy story of airborne fire fighter who returns from death as a spirit.  
"Back to the Future Part II" (B+) (PG) 80 minutes.  
All your favorite time-travelers are in



Sean Connery stars as Marko Alexandrovich Ramius, a Russian nuclear submarine captain. Borodin is Captain. Second Rank Vasily Borodin in "The Hunt for Red October."

other dimensions once again.

"Basket Case II" (G) (R).  
A disturbing descent into madness — neither instantly nor bad movies are fun.

"Blood of Heroes" (G) (R).  
Savage combat in post-apocalyptic times.

"Born on the Fourth of July" (A) (R) 144 minutes.  
Touching, graphically disturbing, poignant, frightening autobiography of Ron Kovic (Tom Cruise), a paraplegic Viet

"Courage Mountain" (A+) (PG) 100 minutes.  
Held's story retold in an exciting, entertaining film.

"Crimes and Misdemeanors" (A+) (PG-13) 100 minutes.  
Woody Allen at his best in this romantic comedy about family life with all its joy and sadness.

"Driving Miss Daisy" (A) (PG) 100 minutes.  
Fine acting highlights personal drama

of Jewish widow (Jessica Tandy) chauffeured by a black man (Morgan Freeman) set against southern changes from 1946-1973.

"Eisenstein: A Love Story" (R).  
Man emotionally involved with second wife and mistress is distressed when his first wife — presumed dead in the Holocaust — turns up.

"Glory" (A) (R) 110 minutes.  
The glory of the first black infantry regiment during the Civil War is captured in this outstanding film.

"Hard to Kill" (R) (R).  
Martial arts film.

"Heart Condition" (B) (R) 95 minutes.  
Harris' detective (Bob Hoskins) receives heart transplant from black dame whose spirit turns up to help solve crime.

"Henry V" (unrated).  
Kenneth Branagh's superb new adaptation of Shakespeare's play. The director stars in the title role.

"Internal Affairs" (B) (R) 80 minutes.  
Cop show never fulfills its initial promise.

"The Little Mermaid" (A) (G) 80 minutes.  
Disney animation of Hans Christian Andersen tale of mermaid in love with

human.

"Look Who's Talking" (B+) (PG) 95 minutes.  
Contrived, poorly structured story of pregnant CPA (Kirstie Alley) and her search for a perfect father for her baby.

"Lower Cannon" (C+) (R) 85 minutes.  
Two wacky detectives, Gene Hackman and Dan Aykroyd, with a few screws loose, are occasionally funny.

"Madhouse" (Z) (PG-13) 85 minutes.  
Ridiculous, exaggerated behind-the-scenes story about house guests. Neither funny nor entertaining.

"Mrs. Doubtful" (B) (PG-13) 100 minutes.  
Jessica Lange as the widow Marquise coping in a sometimes sappy, sometimes energetic melodrama.

"The Music Box" (C+) (R) 123 minutes.  
A shadow of doubt flows this statement about the terror and brutality of the Holocaust. Jessica Lange stars as attorney defending her father against war crime charges.

"The Nightbreed" (G) (R).  
A thriller based on Oliver Barker's book "Cabal."

## 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	Terrible
Z	Reserved for the colossally bad
-	No advanced screening

## ALTERNATIVE VIEWING

## 'Speaking Parts:' Video rules

By John Menegham  
special writer

Atom Egoyan's "Speaking Parts" is about the lack of communication in a world of muted emotions. Intentionally slow and often madcap, it proves somewhat why respected directors like Wim Wenders take the young Canadian so seriously.

Screening this weekend at the Tele-Arts Theatre, "Speaking Parts" spends its first 10 minutes without a single word of dialogue. Dissonant electronic music fills the soundtrack while the film focuses on a pair of women obsessed with video-taped images.

Alone in her apartment, Lisa (Arline Khanjian) zooms in slowly on a man in the background of a scene — a handsome extra named Lance (Michael McManus). The second woman, Clara (Gabrielle Rose), seated in a new-age mausoleum, watches her deceased brother walk toward her across a field.

In Egoyan's world of the very near future, people thrive on empty compliments and never really get to the heart of a conversation. Lisa, who works with Lance in the housekeeping department of a small hotel, tries to confront Lance with real feelings, but he literally runs from her.

THE FILM brings home Lance's vacuousness when he finally finds an audition for a speaking part. He talks in monotone during an emotional hospital scene.

"Do you think he's real enough?" asks the God-like movie producer, presiding over script meetings on an imposing video screen. Of course, he is, because everyone acts in a similarly detached way.

Clara, the screenwriter, also falls in love with Lance, mostly because he so resembles her dead brother. But all emotions with them — even

love-making — are prompted by the video image. The scary part is how readily they accept it.

Blackness, sterility and claustrophobia permeate the film, from the gray laundry and hotel rooms where Lance and Lisa work to the artificially lit mausoleum. None of the scenes take place outside, except in Clara's dead brother's video image.

"Speaking Parts" is hard to watch because Egoyan gives us no one to relate to. Lisa, the apparent heroine of the film, longs for an emotional breakthrough, but also relishes heavily on video to accomplish it. We can't tell what's going on behind actress Khanjian's intentionally lifeless performance.

In many ways, "Speaking Parts" is a more intense, though less mature, companion piece to "sex, lies and videotape." It's the ambition and obvious thought behind the project that allow us to see beyond Egoyan's student art-film pretensions.

## SCREEN SCENE

DETROIT FILM SOCIETY, 5201 Woodward Ave., Detroit. Call 533-0448 for information. (\$15 membership, \$25 students and senior citizens).

Musicals — "Gold Diggers of 1935" (USA — 1935) and "The Pirate" (USA — 1940), starting at 7 p.m. March 9-10. Directed by Busby Berkeley, "Gold Diggers" stars Dick Powell and features the Oscar-winning "Lullaby of Broadway" number. "The Pirate" is a colorful stylized musical starring Judy Garland and Gene Kelly. Vincente Minnelli directed, with music by Cole Porter.

DETROIT FILM THEATRE, Detroit Institute of Arts, 5200 Woodward Ave., Detroit. Call 533-2123 for information. (\$4) "Weapons of the Spirit" (USA — 1989). From 1940-44, the small French town of Le Chambon hid more than 5,000 Jews from the occupying Nazis. The documentary chronicles their "conspiracy of goodness."

HENRY FORD CENTENNIAL LI-BRARY, 1801 Michigan Ave., Dearborn. Call 943-2339 for information. (Free) "His Girl Friday" (USA — 1940), 7 p.m. March 5. Director Howard Hawks reportedly used a stopwatch to get his stars to deliver their dialogue even quicker in this mile-a-minute comedy. Newspaper editor Cary Grant doesn't want to lose star reporter Rosalind Russell, so he devises an elaborate scheme to get her back.

LIVONIA MALL, Seven Mile at Middlebelt, Livonia. Call 476-1166 for information. (Free) "Camille" (USA — 1936), 10 a.m. March 6. Greta Garbo stars as the malevolent French beauty suffering from

fatal illness who trades wealth for true love (Robert Taylor). Launching the film's month-long tribute to Robert Taylor.

MICHIGAN THEATRE, 603 E. Liberty, Ann Arbor. Call 668-8397 for information. (\$4 general, \$2.25 for students and senior citizens) "Apocalypse Now" (USA — 1979), March 7-11 (all show times). Francis Ford Coppola's epic Vietnam War film, based on Joseph Conrad's "Heart of Darkness." Martin Sheen plays a special agent assigned to "terminate the command" of lunatic officer Kurtz (Marlon Brando). With Robert Duvall as a surging major, this black comedy, now rereleased in 70mm.

"The Unbearable Lightness of Being" (USA — 1988), 9:35 p.m. March 7-8 and 9 p.m. March 9. Phillip Kaufman directs Daniel Day-Lewis as a womanizing Czech director who becomes intensely involved in his country's turbulent political scene.

"The Bear" (France — 1989), 5:30 p.m. March 11. Jean-Jacques Annoud directs this simple, beautifully photographed film of a big bear and a little bear who survive in the Canadian Rockies. Marred by bad sound effects, but still entertaining.

REDFORD THEATRE, 17380 Lahser, Detroit. Call 537-2560 for information. (\$2.50) "The Quiet Man" (USA — 1952), 8 p.m. March 9-10. John Wayne stars as a retired boxer who returns to his hometown in Ireland in search of a wife. John Ford directs, Maureen O'Sullivan co-stars.

TELE-ARTS, 1540 Woodward, Detroit. Call 965-3914 for information. (\$3.50, \$2.50 students and senior citizens) "The Adventures of Baron Munchausen" (USA — 1988), 7:30 p.m. March 8-9. In Terry Gilliam's epic adventure, the Baron, a teller of tall tales, embarks on a journey that finds him waiting with Venus, flying across enemy lines while clutching a cannon ball, and trapped in the belly of a monster fish. Great fun.

—John Menegham

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### BEST PICTURE

☐ Born on the Fourth of July  
☐ Dead Poets Society  
☐ Driving Miss Daisy  
☐ Field of Dreams  
☐ My Left Foot

### BEST ACTRESS

☐ Isabelle Adjani (Camille Claudel)  
☐ Pauline Collins (Shirley Valentine)  
☐ Jessica Lange (Music Box)  
☐ Michelle Pfeiffer (The Fabulous Baker Boys)  
☐ Jessica Tandy (Driving Miss Daisy)

### BEST ACTOR

☐ Kenneth Branagh (Henry V)  
☐ Tom Cruise (Born on the Fourth of July)  
☐ Daniel Day-Lewis (My Left Foot)  
☐ Morgan Freeman (Driving Miss Daisy)  
☐ Robin Williams (Dead Poets Society)

### BEST SUPPORTING ACTOR

☐ Danny Aiello (Do the Right Thing)  
☐ Dan Aykroyd (Driving Miss Daisy)  
☐ Marlon Brando (A Dry White Season)  
☐ Marlon Landau (Crimes and Misdemeanors)  
☐ Donzel Washington (Glory)

### BEST SUPPORTING ACTRESS

☐ Branda Fricker (My Left Foot)  
☐ Anjelica Huston (Enemies, A Love Story)  
☐ Lena Olin (Enemies, A Love Story)  
☐ Julia Roberts (Steel Magnolias)  
☐ Dianne Wiest (Parenthood)

### BEST DIRECTOR

☐ Oliver Stone (Born on the Fourth of July)  
☐ Woody Allen (Crimes and Misdemeanors)  
☐ Peter Weir (Dead Poets Society)  
☐ Kenneth Branagh (Henry V)  
☐ Jim Sheridan (My Left Foot)

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