MOVING PICTURES

A financially devastated Rocky Balboa (Sylvester Stallone) returns to his roots to fight the toughest fight of his life in "Rocky V."

Filmmakers take a break for Thanksgiving holiday

the movies
Dan Greenberg

There are no new films opening this week since the distributors took advantage of the long holiday weekend and introduced 10 new movies for Thanksgiving. If you didn't get a chance to see them all last weekend, there's still plenty of time between daily doses of leftover turkey.

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

STILL PLAYING:

"Avalon" (A+, PG, 126 minutes).
Excellent film chronicles an immigrant family's successes and failures in America.

"Child's Play 2" (*), R).

"Chucky" returns.

"Dances With Wolves" (A, PG-13, 180 minutes).
Kevin Costner's magnificent ode to brotherhood and brutality on America's western frontier during and after the Civil War.

"Fantasia" (A+, G).
Excellent restoration of Disney's 1940 masterpiece.

"Ghost" (A-, PG-13, 118 minutes).
Banker's ghost (Patrick Swayze) hangs around after life to protect loved one (Demi Moore). Spiritualist (Whoopi Goldberg) helps him and this romantic/comedy/thriller.

"GoodFellas" (B+, R, 145 minutes).
Martin Scorsese's intense, compelling saga of three mobsters. Fine production techniques and excellent performances by Robert DeNiro, Joe Pesci and Ray Liotta, notwithstanding, they are bad guys.

"Graffiti Bridge" (*, PG-13).
Written and directed by Prince who also stars in another production for his fans and his pocketbook.

"Henry and June" (C-, NC-17, 135 minutes).
Boring, repetitious discussions of sexuality complemented by darkly lit sexual scenes.

"Home Alone" (B-, PG, 100 minutes).
Engaging comedy about young boy (Macaulay Culkin) left at home by accident.

"Jacob's Ladder" (A, R, 115 minutes).
Sensational, riveting film experience redeems and rewards with its story of Jacob Singer's (Tim Robbins) re-entry to civilian life after Vietnam trauma.

"The King of New York" (R, 103 minutes).
Violent return of recently paroled drug lord.

Little Mary (Robin Weisman) is back with her three "fathers," including Tom Selleck, in "Three Men and a Little Lady."

"The Krays" (*, R).
Twins run vicious underworld empire in London.

"Marked for Death" (*, R).
Retired DEA agent wars with drug dealer.

"Memphis Belle" (D+, PG-13, 100 minutes).
Boring, trite World War II bomber film with Matthew Modine sleeping behind the joystick.

"Miller's Crossing" (B+, R, 110 minutes).
Irish and Italian mobs in conflict during Prohibition era.

"Mr. Destiny" (A-, PG-13, 102 minutes).
Belushi is effective as middle-aged fellow haunted by a youthful strikeout. Michael Caine gives him another swing.

"The Nightcracker Prince" (G).
Animated fantasy based on Tchaikovsky's classical ballet.

"Pacific Heights" (A-, R, 105 minutes).
Suspense and excitement as psychotic tenant terrorizes his landlords.

"Postcards From the Edge" (C+, R, 105 minutes).
Disappointing, jumbled, show biz story of mother-daughter conflict doesn't live up to its advanced billing nor to its superb cast.

"Predator 2" (R).
The hunt continues, this time in the urban jungle of Los Angeles in 1997.

"Quigley Down Under" (D, PG-13).
Humorless, trite western with Tom Selleck in Australia.

"Rescuers Down Under" (*, G).
Disney animation has Bernard and Miss Bianca off to Australia to save rare eagle from poacher.

ALTERNATIVE VIEWING

Recalling bittersweet summer

By John Monaghan
special writer

Summer 1958. Thirteen-year-old Frederique (Jule Bataille) and her little sister Sophie (Candice LeFranc) spend it at a rented summer house in France. They enjoy countless hours building sandcastles, reading comics on the beach, and exploring with their cousins, the Mandels.

This vacation is different, however. They have overheard whisperings about divorce, moving to Paris and their mother seeking a job. Instead of having their mother spend the entire summer with them, a flustered maid is put in charge.

Painful divorce and playful memories of summer make up "C'est La Vie," the latest film from writer/director Diane Kurys. Full of honesty, fun and vivid characterizations, this deceptively simple summer at the beach grows into one of the most insightful films of the year. It currently screens at the Maple Theatre.

NATHALIE BAYE plays Lena, the girls' mother, who has initiated the divorce. To complicate matters, she has met a young artist and would certainly run away with him if it weren't for the children. One night, Frederique watches them ride off on his motorcycle.

The loving father, Michel (Richard Berry), who arrives unexpectedly one morning, tries to manipulate the children's emotions. He also shows his nasty temper by driving Lena's new car, a symbol of her independence, promptly into a tree.

There are no villains in "C'est La Vie," which is reportedly based on

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SCREEN SCENE

DETROIT FILM THEATRE, 5200 Woodward Ave., Detroit. Call 833-2323 for information.

"Day of Wrath" (Denmark — 1943), 1 p.m. Nov. 29-Dec. 2. Director Carl Dreyer's haunting drama concerns a young woman accused of witchcraft in 17th century Denmark. Many have compared Dreyer's stark and stylized imagery to that of Rembrandt. ($2.50/recital hall)

"Mr. Universe" (USA/Hungary — 1989), 7 and 9:30 p.m. Nov. 30 and 9:30 p.m. Dec. 1. A part-time actor leaves Budapest from Hungary to look up an old friend — the former Mr. Universe who was married to Jane Mansfield. ($4/auditorium)

"Terezin Diary" (USA — 1989), 1, 3, 5 and 7 p.m. Dec. 3. A new documentary examines Theresienstadt near Prague, which was considered a model concentration camp by the Nazis. ($4/auditorium)

DETROIT SCIENCE CENTER, 5020 John R, Detroit. Call 577-8400 for information. ($5 adult admission, $2.4 children)

"To the Limit" (USA — 1990), through April 1991. The latest Omnimax spectacular intercuts amazing athletic feats with an analysis of how muscles and blood work. Not intended for people with claustrophobia, the movie becomes a first-person "Fantastic Voyage" into the human body.

HENRY FORD CENTENNIAL LIBRARY, 13671 Michigan Ave., Dearborn. Call 943-2330 for information. (Free)

"Shorts," 7 p.m. Nov. 26. A trio of film shorts will be presented, featuring "The Baloonatic."

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

"Look for the Silver Lining" (USA — 1949), 10 a.m. Nov. 27. June Haver recreates the life and career of vaudevillian Marilyn Miller in this musical.

MAPLE THEATRE, 4135 W. Maple, Bloomfield. Call 855-9090 for show times. ($5.50 general, $3.50 twilight)

"Henry and June" (USA — 1990). The first film to receive the controversial NC-17 rating is the story of writer Henry Miller (Fred Ward) and his bizarre relationship with his wife (Uma Thurmond). Directed by Phil Kaufman.

"C'est La Vie" (France — 1989). The effects of separation and divorce are felt by all members of a family during a summer vacation in 1958 France. Director Diane Kurys bases the story on her own early life.

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VIDEO VIEWING

By Dan Greenberg
special writer

Despite the overwhelming popularity of theatrical motion pictures, producers continue to grind out potboiler films for the home video cassette market. HBO Home Video generally has the best product in that category since they produce for their cable network as well as for theatrical distribution.

But some of the stuff is so bad it's a wonder the raw videotape stock doesn't curl up in agony and die.

Take Academy Ente.tainment's **"Mortal Sins" (1990, color, R, 85 minutes),** one of the most scattered, disorganized, annoying and offensive films to appear in a long time. It's not just a matter of bad filmmaking, although that's certainly a big part of the indictment. But here's a case where an attempt at an off-beat private eye film has taken satire to the point of idiocy.

Private-eye Nathan Weinschenk (Brian Benben) is hired by TV evangelist Malcolm Rollins (James Harper) because his associate, Park Sung (James Saito), has been murdered. Nathan falls in love with Rollins' daughter, Laura (Debrah Farentino).

Nathan has a strange family and weird friends and associates. What could have been a clever satire turns out to be adolescent and amateurish, a mish-mash of private jokes and disassociated sequences that detract from an inconsequential, hackneyed attempt to make fun of TV evangelism.

DESPITE THOSE weaknesses, "Mortal Sins" will be at local video stores on Nov. 29 in competition with theatrical motion pictures. On the latest available Variety chart of the "Top 50 Video Titles" for the week ending Nov. 10, all but two were theatrically released motion pictures.

Clearly public taste is engaged by Hollywood's feature presentations. Witness "Pretty Woman," a major box-office success with $178 million in the till after 33 weeks at the box office. As of Nov. 8 it was still running on 262 screens even though the videocassette had been available for three weeks.

Further emphasizing theatrical films' appeal, "Pretty Woman's" videocassette was ranked third on the "Top 50 Video Titles" with a 116 rating out of a possible 130. "Total Recall" with 118 and "The Hunt for Red October" with 117 ran one and two for the week of Nov. 10.

In addition to the high visibility and extensive publicity generated for Hollywood's theatrical releases, it's also clear that their most successful products are far superior in production values to low-end videopics like "Mortal Sins."

There ought to be some minimum standards of coherence and sensibility in videopic production but viewers with that attitude will be disappointed in "Mortal Sins" and numerous other videos currently available.

ON THE brighter side, three recent theatrical successes, "Betsy's Wedding," "Another 48 Hours" and "Men at Work" hit the video racks on Nov. 20 for holiday viewing. Stallone/Rocky fans will be pleased to learn that "Rocky I-IV" were made available at a new low price on Nov. 21.

That also was the release date for "The Elvis Files" (1990, not rated, color, 55 minutes). Billed as an "exciting and controversial video documentary," it may prove to be so for Elvis fans.

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THE NEW! Q95 FM

Max & Erma's 2 JINGLE BELL RUN FOR ARTHRITIS

JOIN US!

It's Max & Erma's Third Annual Jingle Bell Run for Arthritis. Bring family and friends, neighbors and co-workers to join you for this unique holiday event. You will receive a complimentary pair of jingle bells for your shoelaces and the first 1200 preregistered entrants will receive the official Max & Erma's Jingle Bell Run T-shirt.

THE EVENT

It's a 5K course. (Erma says that's a little over three miles.) Starting and finishing at the Oakland University in Rochester, this course runs through campus and is for serious or amateur athletes—young or old, tall or short, fit or fat, runners or walkers!

RACE DIVISIONS

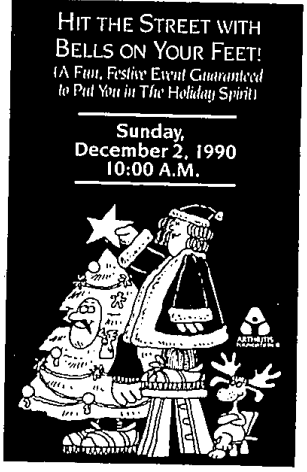
10 and under	30-39	60 +
11-17	40-49	Wheelchair
18-29	50-59	

AWARDS

The top three male and female finishers overall will receive trophies and a $20 Max & Erma's gift certificate. The top three finishers in each race division will be presented with plaques. The awards ceremony will immediately follow the race at Meadowbrook Village Mall. Although walkers will not be eligible for trophies and plaques, they are able to participate in the costume competition and the pledge incentive program.

HIT THE STREET WITH BELLS ON YOUR FEET!
(A Fun, Festive Event Guaranteed to Put You in The Holiday Spirit)

Sunday, December 2, 1990
10:00 A.M.



PACKET PICK-UP

Entrants may pick up their race packet or register November 28th from 10:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. at Meadowbrook Village Mall in Rochester (Adams and Walton).

Registration and packet pickup can also be done on race day from 8:30 a.m. to 9:30 a.m. at the Lepley Sports Center on the Oakland University Campus.

DON YOUR HOLIDAY DUDS!

Don reindeer antlers or elf's garb, dress as a Snowman, Santa, or Good King Wenceslas! (Don't be a Scrooge, at least wear your holiday colors and get festive!)

Judging will begin one hour before the start of the race. Judged by a celebrity panel, and the costume competition will be based on originality, holiday theme, humor and skill.

The overall winner will receive a wealth of prizes and a $100 gift certificate to Meadowbrook Village Mall plus a $100 gift certificate to Max & Erma's. A $100 gift certificate to Max & Erma's will also be awarded to the best group costume.

THANK YOU

Your entry fee donation and your pledges all go to support the programs and services of the Metro Detroit Branch of the Arthritis Foundation, an agency of the United Way of Michigan.

CRITTENTON Health Care For Our Community
THE Observer & Eccentric NEWSPAPERS
MeadowBrook Village Mall

Information Hotline is...350-3030
or...register race day at the Lepley Sports Center on the Oakland University Campus from 8:30 a.m. to 9:30 a.m.