

MOVING PICTURES



Dwight Shultz and Sissy Spacek star in Richard Pearce's "The Long Walk Home."

Costner and 'Wolves' set to clean up at the Oscars

Tonight's the night Hollywood struts its stuff, with the annual Oscar Derby stroking some egos and wounding others. Whatever damage is done and whoever sobers up tomorrow to see their dreams realized, viewers tonight can feast their eyes on Hollywood glamour at its glitziest.

And sometimes moments of high drama, good entertainment and touching emotion interrupt the industry's annual self-congratulatory party.

This year's show should be pretty class, as, according to my predictions, Kevin Costner and his team will be up there quite often with acceptance speeches for their work on "Dances With Wolves." Nominated for 12 Oscars, recipient of three Golden Globe Awards (best drama, screenplay and director), named best picture by the prestigious National Board of Review and, after four months, more than \$125 million at the box office — it all adds up to a considerable accomplishment for Costner.

Particularly since "Dances With Wolves" is the movie they said couldn't be done — and if it were it would have to be shorter than Costner planned and, even then, it wouldn't make any money.

But Costner stuck to his principles and made a gripping, entertaining western whose sensitive treatment of native Americans engages everyone's sensibilities. The 12 Oscar nominations — and the six or so he'll probably win — testify not only to his class act but to the fact that he made a terrific movie.

WITH A lot less class but considerable attraction for the kids, some animatronic characters created by Jim Henson's Creature Shop — "Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles II: The Secret of the Ooze" (PG, 88 minutes) obviously is trading on the title characters' wide appeal and well-established market with the younger set. Interestingly enough, apparently this episode intentionally was structured with lots of action and very little violence to which parents might object.

In fact, the film isn't all that boring for adults with occasional flashes of humor as counterpoint to the endless acrobatic combat of the turtles. There's also brief flashes of thoughtful commentary from the turtles' mentor, Splinter, a four-foot, philosophic rat. It may not be an accident that Splinter reminds us of Yoda and the turtles' nemesis, Shredder, looks an awful lot like Darth Vader.

In any event, parents will enjoy "Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles II" — not as much as their children — but it won't be a painful parental duty to accompany the kids to see this one.

The time was 1955, the place Montgomery, Ala., and the event was the successful bus boycott, the spark which drew African-Americans together in their struggle for human and constitutional rights so long denied.

"The Long Walk Home" (A-, PG, 95 minutes) tells the story through the eyes of young Miriam Thompson (Sissy Spacek) as, years later, she narrates the story of her family maid, Odessa Cotter (Whoopi Goldberg).



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

Opening on a typical weekday morning, the film depicts blacks waiting for the buses which most of them relied on to get to work. Few questioned seating restrictions or having to give up seats to whites. Odessa rode the bus to her job in the wealthier, white section where the Thompsons lived. But, through rain and cold, Odessa supported the boycott even though it meant long walks to work every day.

On the other side of the social coin, Miriam, was always aware that, no matter how exceptional Odessa might be, she was black and there was a terrible social gulf. Miriam's husband, Norman (Dwight Schultz), along with many other whites, feared blacks and their struggle for freedom. His anger stimulates Miriam to reevaluate her own treatment of blacks and she finds courage in Odessa's strength.

The excellent performances (and characters) of Whoopi Goldberg and Sissy Spacek are central to this powerful and captivating film which brings history to life. "The Long Walk Home" teaches an inspirational lesson about human courage that must not be forgotten because there is still a long journey to travel in human relations. (Reviewed by Brian Dunn)

STILL PLAYING:

"Awakenings" (B, PG-13, 121 minutes)

Robin Williams and Robert De Niro as doctor and catatonic patient call to mind too many other films. The doctor's special care and sensitivity lead to temporary recovery but film lacks spark expected from these talented actors.

"Book of Love" (B, PG-13, 90 minutes)

Nostalgic look at high school in the '50s and the problems of adolescence in those "good old days."

"Cadence" (C+, PG-13, 95 minutes)

Unrealistic, cliché story about unruly soldier (Charlie Sheen) in the stockpiles.

"Class Action" (C/R, 100 minutes)

Father-daughter attorneys, Gene Hackman and Mary Elizabeth Mastrantonio, are not a team.

"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.

Oliver Stone's overly long, repetitious story of Jim Morrison and rock musical group, The Doors. Excessive attention to Morrison's drug, booze and sex problems are neither attractive nor entertaining. Doubtful, as well, that it will serve as a cautionary lesson.

"Edward Scissorhands" (C, PG-13, 100 minutes)

Unusual young man with scissors instead of hands shakes up the suburbs after moving in with the Avon lady and her family.

"Ghost" (A, PG-13, 105 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 returns after receiving half-dozen Oscar nominations. Despite good acting and fine technical values, the film is to be condemned for glorifying vicious and violent gangsters.

"Gullity by Suspicion" (A, PG-13, 100 minutes)

Robert De Niro's superb performance energizes this blend of fact and fiction describing the terrible pain anti-communist hysteria inflicted on Hollywood in the '50s.

"The Hard Way" (B, R, 105 minutes)

James Wood as tough cop doing comedy doesn't match Michael J. Fox's excellent spoof of movies and movie people in this entertaining, unusual buddy film.

"He Said, She Said" (B, PG, 110 minutes)

Entertaining story about squabbling TV team (Elizabeth Perkins and Kevin Bacon) with confusing structure detracting from viewing experience.

"Home Alone" (B, PG, 100 minutes)

Engaging comedy about young boy (Macaulay Culkin) left at home by accident.

"If Looks Could Kill" (C PG-13)

High school student flunks French but winds up living the life of James Bond.

"Kindergarten Cop" (B, PG-13, 105 minutes)

Schwarzenegger is macho and the kids are cute but the plot isn't.



Richard Grieco is a high school student mistaken for a top undercover agent who winds up in an outrageous European adventure with Gabrielle Anwar in "If Looks Could Kill."

ALTERNATIVE VIEWING

Harris brilliant in 'Field'

By John Monaghan
special writer

"It's a field worth fighting for," says Bill McCabe, a gray-bearded Irishman with deep trenches over his eyebrows.

A grizzled survivor of the potato famine, McCabe has tended this lush field as long as he can remember. He's hauled baskets of scrawled over hills to fertilize it, turning it from barren rock into three of the lushest acres in the country.

In Jim Sheridan's "The Field," currently playing at the Maple Theatre, Richard Harris gives the performance of a lifetime as McCabe. The film's deceptively simple story

shows the value of land and what lengths some men will go to keep it.

McCabe learns his lesson when the land his family has rented for generations finally goes up for sale. While no man in the county would dare bid against "The Bull," a brash young American (Tom Berenger) arrives in the village and makes it known that he's prepared to top any offer.

"HE WANTS to cover God's green grass over with concrete and it's a mortal sin," McCabe tells the village priest. "I won't let him bury my sweat and blood in concrete."

"The Field" is full of such quotable lines, most delivered by McCabe. Harris plays him as a large-

er-than-life tragic hero whose many flaws include stubbornness, extreme pride and an unwillingness to break with the often painful past.

McCabe hasn't talked to his wife in some 18 years, probably around the time their oldest son died. He places too much hope on his remaining son, Thyge, (Sean Bean) who, unfortunately, doesn't share his father's love of the land.

John Hurt, best known for his amazing physical transformations in "The Elephant Man" and "1984," plays a devilish little man who both worships and betrays McCabe. Hurt, several teeth blackened out and car-

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SCREEN SCENE

DETROIT FILM THEATRE, 5200 Woodward, Detroit. Call 832-2730 for information. (\$5)

"Larks on a String" (Czechoslovakia — 1965), 7 and 9:30 p.m. March 29-30 and 7 p.m. March 31. Jiri Menzel's satire of life under Soviet domination was banned upon original release. It took 21 years for the film — from the director of "Closely Watched Trains" — to make it to the United States. (\$5/auditorium)

"Moon Over Harlem" (USA — 1939) and "Lying Lips" (USA — 1939), 1 p.m. March 28-31. Two more films in the DFT's ambitious tribute to African American independent films. "Harlem" was directed by low-budget wizard Edgar Ulmer

"The Black Cat." "Detour" and follows a protection racket led by evil white gangsters. "Lying Lips," from pioneering black director Oscar Micheaux, stars Edna May Harris as an attractive nightclub singer framed for murder. With Earl Jones, father of James Earl Jones. (\$3.50/recital hall)

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

"The Twinkle in God's Eye" (USA, 1955), 7 p.m. March 25. Mickey Rooney plays a clergyman who tries to give some of that old-time religion to a raucous Western town.

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VIDEO VIEWING

By Dan Greenberg
special writer

"Take two videos and call me in the morning."

If anyone does so regularly, there would still be a ton of video cassettes left over and catching up on last week's releases would take quite some doing.

Something out of the video-ordinary, Luciano Pavarotti's "The Event" (1990, color, not rated, 88 minutes) appeared March 21. Pavarotti is well-known to opera fans even though his killing as "the world's favorite tenor" may stimulate a few arguments.

Released coincidentally with the PBS telecast of his famous concert with Placido Domingo and Jose Car-

eras, this tape was recorded live at Italy's Palatrussardi Concert Hall. The concert, before 10,000 enthusiastic fans, celebrated World Cup heroes and includes well-known operatic arias as well as Neapolitan songs.

But that's the exception with the overwhelming portion of video cassette rentals drawn from recent theatrical hits.

Noteworthy recent releases in that category include "Pacific Heights," "Narrow Margin," "King of New York" and "Diving In." And, during this week, look for Gene Wilder in "Fanny About Love," Don Johnson in "The Hot Spot" and Susan Sarandon's much-acclaimed performance in "White Palace."

LIVONIA MALL, Seven Mile and Middlebelt roads, Livonia. Call 476-1166 for information. (free)

"The Night of the Iguana" (USA — 1964), 10 a.m. March 26. Richard Burton, Ava Gardner and Deborah Kerr are among the potent losers down on their luck in Mexico. John Huston directed this fascinating character study. Concluding a month-long tribute to Ava Gardner.

MAPLE THEATRE, 4135 W. Maple, Birmingham. Call 855-9090 for information. (\$6, \$3.50 twilight)

"Mr. and Mrs. Bridge" (USA — 1990) Paul Newman and Joanne Woodward

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