

SCREEN
SCENE

DETROIT FILM THEATRE, Detroit
19101st Ave., 5200 Woodward Ave.,
Detroit. Call 832-2730 for more information.
(15)
"Pollock" (USA — 1990, 7 and 9:30 p.m.
Oct. 25-26. This triptych of a life inspired by
Jean Cocteau as well as AIDS, has been
 hailed as the year's most controversial
and significant experimental film. Di-
rected by Todd Haynes.
"A Woman Under the Influence" (USA
— 1976, 3 and 6 p.m. Oct. 27. Kicking off
a rare retrospective of American original
John Cassavetes is his tale of a woman
(Gena Rowlands) and her deadbeat hus-
band (Peter Falk). At almost 2 1/2 hours,
this epic drama has been called self-in-
dulgent and pretentious by some, but it
also copied Oscar nominations for both
its director and female star.

**HENRY FORD CENTENNIAL LI-
BRARY**, 15471 Michigan Ave., Dearborn.
Call 945-2330 for more information.
(Free)
"Little Lord Fauntleroy" (USA —
1936), 7 p.m. Oct. 21. Freddie Bartholomew
plays the Brooklyn boy who be-
comes an English lord in this handsome
production directed by John Cromwell.

LIVONIA MALL, Seven Mile and
Middlebelt roads, Livonia. Call 476-1166
for information. (Free)
"Around the World in 80 Days" (USA
— 1956), 10 a.m. Oct. 22. Michael Todd's
epic adaptation of the Jules Verne story
finds David Niven embarking on the title
journey, encountering an all-star cast.
Shirley Maclaine and Marlene Dietrich
are among the featured performers. Con-
tinuing a monthlong tribute to leading
men.

MAGIC BAG THEATRE CAFE, 22918
Woodward Ave., Ferndale. Call 544-3050
for information. (14)
"This Is Spinal Tap" (USA — 1984), 8
p.m. Oct. 22 and 11:30 p.m. Oct. 29-28.
Rob Reiner conceived this wacky docu-
mentary spoof about a rock band whose
experiences its share of ups and downs
over the decades. At one point, they even
warm up for a puppet show. Kicking off
a new series devoted primarily to comedy,
hosted by WDET radio host Dave Dixon.

MAIN THEATRE, 118 N. Main, Royal
Oak. Call 542-0180 for more information.
(16)
"My Own Private Idaho" (USA —
1990). From Gus Van Sant, the director of
"Drugstore Cowboy," comes this free-
wheeling story about a pair of male hus-
tlers who rough it out in Washington, Ore-
gon, and, yes, Idaho. River Phoenix and
Keanu Reeves star.

MICHIGAN THEATRE, 16301 E. Liv-
ingston, Ann Arbor. Call 963-8690 for infor-
mation. (15, \$5.50 students and senior cit-
izens.)

'Idaho' explores some new territory

Narcosepsy is a condition in which
the afflicted can fall asleep quite un-
expectedly, perhaps in the middle of
an intense or a playful fight.
For Mike, a young street hustler,
it happens at the most conceivable
times, while walking across the high-
way or preparing to make love to a
beautiful woman. He has no idea
where and when (or even if) he'll
wake up.
I found myself traveling similar
territory in "My Own Private Idaho,"
the new film from Gus Van
Sant, the director of the acclaimed

"Drugstore Cowboy." Like Mike, the
plot of the film nods off every once
in a while but can wake up to some
pretty exciting ideas.

Mike (River Phoenix) usually gets
picked up and dusted off by a fellow
hustler named Scott (Keanu Reeves).
Although depicted by two of Holly-
wood's most appealing young actors,
the lives they lead are anything but
glamorous. They turn tricks with the
wealthiest of customers and often
sleep on rooftops in roughly con-
structed shelters.

tickets please
**John
Monaghan**

PHOENIX especially is almost
unrecognizable, with his shaggy side-
burns and the perpetual expression
of someone who has just awoken
from an unsatisfying sleep. Reeves

shines in a role considerably more
mature than he has enjoyed in the
"Bill and Ted" epics. He doesn't say
"Hey, dude" — not even once.
Van Sant's visual style, ever-in-

ventive and quirky, offers memories
of Mike's childhood represented by
what appear to be home movies in
washed out shades of red. One clever
idea finds the subjects on the covers
of porn magazines talking to each
other across the racks.
By design, "Private Idaho" is
firmly rooted in Shakespeare, espe-
cially "Henry IV," where young
Prince Hal spends his formative
years under the tutelage of the
drunken rogue Falstaff.
Scott's Falstaff is named Bob, a
bearded drug addict who lures over a
small band of disciples in an aban-
doned Portland hotel. Together they
rob victims with antique pistols and
spend the money on cocaine and Fal-
staff beer.

AS IN THE play, Scott also knows
that on his 21st birthday, he must
leave Bob to take control of his fam-
ily fortune. Unfortunately, all this
dipping into the Bard doesn't add up
to much.

Those unfamiliar with Shake-
speare will be frustrated and
confused by Scott's frequent forays
into Elizabethan English. Others who
know the original work will likely be
put off.
Fortunately, the talented Van Sant
peppers "Private Idaho" with
enough honesty and inspiration to
make it one of the most challenging
independent films this year. It en-
joys an exclusive run not at The
Maple, but at the Main Theatre in
Royal Oak.

'Tune' squanders its cast's talents

A young man falls in love with his
older aunt by marriage and a
scriptwriter uses their relationship
to fuel his steamy radio soap opera.
That's the premise of "Tune in To-
morrow," a 1990 film, now video,
which squanders the talents of its ac-
tors and squashes any glimmer of
humor in a leaden script and
heavy handed direction.

Set during 1951 in New Orleans,
Keanu Reeves plays an earnest
young newspaper writer working for a
radio station. Not that we actually see
him do much work. He falls into an
off-again, on-again romance with his
Aunt Julia, actually the sister of his
uncle's wife and his aunt by mar-
riage, played by Barbara Hershey.
She supposedly has a past that scan-
dalizes the extended family, though
what it is never becomes clear. She
has been around enough to set her
sights on snagging a wealthy older
man, maybe with a bad heart.
Entering the picture is a soap
opera writer Peter Falk, who has fled
an earlier job at a Detroit radio sta-
tion under rather incendiary circum-
stances. He counsels Reeves on how
to further his relationship with Her-
shey while cavedropping or med-
dling to keep the pot stirred.

THE RATINGS at the radio sta-
tion go through the ceiling with the
steamy and convoluted serial Falk

pass the popcorn
LeAnne Rogers

turns out, often using dialogue lifted
from Reeves and Hershey.

He also draws the wrath of Al-
banyans who for unexplained reasons
bear the brunt of ethnic insults and
stereotyping in the show "King of
the Garden District."

The soap opera cast reads their
lines with sound effects from the stu-
dio, then the film has ensembles of
the show as they might appear in lis-
teners' imaginations. That subplot,
featuring John Larroquette, Dan
Hedaya, Peter Gallagher and Eliza-
beth McGovern, provides the only re-
ally funny moments in the film.

I was around in this era but I sus-
pect a plot involving a brother an-
nouncing his incestuous relationship
with his sister at her wedding, fol-
lowed by her announcement that she
pregnant with her brother's child,
wouldn't have made it on the air.
Even if it all works out in the end.

Reeves and Hershey, usually reli-
able actors, don't connect with their
other and their characters wouldn't

be interested in each other except
for that being required in the script.
Reeves has a southern accent that
seems a *Houdini* in the middle of
scenes.

AS FOR Falk, he isn't terrible, he
just doesn't have much to work with
to create a character. The film

should be a light whimsical film in-
stead of dragging along at a leaden
pace.

This film is particularly disap-
pointing with the fine cast that was
available for this adaptation of an
autobiographical novel by Mario
Vargas Llosa. Much of the fault can
be laid at the feet of writer William
Boyd's unfocused script and director
Jon Amiel's leaden pacing.

Amiel directed the much better
film "Queen of Hearts" which itself
was a trifle muddled. The look of the
picture is pretty and the score by
Wynton Marsalis is better than most.
Unfortunately, Amiel mixed togeth-
er a lot of good ingredients and end-
ed up with a flat pancake.



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