

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

"The Killer" (Hong Kong - 1990). 7, 9:30 p.m. Nov. 21-23. From Hong Kong action director John Woo, a high-octane thriller in which a professional hitman decides to go straight after a beautiful singer gets in his line of fire. Full of campy, colorful shootouts where they never run out of bullets. Highly recommended.

"Opening Night" (USA - 1978). 3, 6 p.m. Nov. 24. Completed in 1976, John Cassavetes' slice of backstage life didn't premiere until a decade later at the New York Film Festival. Gena Rowlands stars as an actress facing midlife crisis, devastated by the death of an adoring fan on the opening night of her new play. Joan Blondell co-stars. Concluding a five-film tribute to the maverick moviemaker.

HENRY FORD CENTENNIAL LIBRARY, 16301 Michigan Ave., Dearborn. Call 943-2037 for more information. (Free)

"Mine Own Executioner" (Britain - 1947). 7 p.m. Nov. 18. A brilliant psychiatrist in London attempts to help a disturbed war veteran while trying to sort out his own problems. Starring Burgess Meredith and Kieron Moore.

MAGIC BAG THEATRE CAFE, 22018 Woodward, Ferndale. Call 544-3030 for information. (\$4)

"A Woman is a Woman" (France - 1960). 8 p.m. Nov. 19-20. In Godard's third feature, stripper Anna Karina wants to have a baby. When her boyfriend hems and haws, she approaches best friend Jean-Paul Belmondo with the offer. Godard's free-wheeling comedy, in Technicolor and CinemaScope, finally arrives in Detroit.

MAIN THEATRE, 118 N. Main, Royal Oak. Call 542-0180 for showtimes. (\$8)

"My Own Private Idaho" (USA - 1991). The latest from Gus Van Sant, the director of "Drugstore Cowboy." Here Keanu Reeves and River Phoenix play a pair of street hustlers who make their way from Washington state to Idaho on their way to Rome, where they hope to come to grips with their past. Slow-paced and inventive, though it bogs down when the director decides to borrow from Shakespeare's "Henry IV."

MAPLE THEATRE, 4135 W. Maple, Bloomfield. Call 855-9090 for showtimes. (\$6; \$3.50 twi-light). **"Twenty-One"** (USA - 1991). Patty Kneiss plays a 21-year-old English woman who confides her amorous adventures to the camera.

"Black Robe" (USA - 1991). A true story based on the adventures of Father LaFourque and his apprentice as they struggle for survival in the first clash between Indians and Native Americans in 1634. From Bruce Beresford, the director of "Driving Miss Daisy" and "Breaker Morant."

"The Man in the Moon" (USA - 1991). The relationship between two lovers is severely tested when they fall in love with the same boy. Starring Sam Waterston and Tess Harper. Directed by Robert Mulligan.

MICHIGAN THEATRE, 603 E. Liberty, Ann Arbor. Call 668-8397 for information. (\$5; \$4 students enlors).

"The Commitments" (USA - 1991). Through Nov. 22 (call for showtimes). Alan Parker's exuberant musical about a group of young Dubliners whose mission is to bring soul to Ireland. Most of the performers never acted before, and bring reality to their roles. Most amazing, the lead singer played by Andrew Strong (who bears more than a passing resemblance to Van Morrison) is only 16 years old.

"Hush" (USA - 1985). 7 p.m. Nov. 19-20. More from Terry Gilliam, the director of "The Fisher King." This dazzling reworking of Orwell's "1984" finds a young bureaucrat (Jonathan Pryce) trying to escape from totalitarian rule — and all those heating ducts. Robert DeNiro co-stars as the technological terrorist who befriends him.

"Delusion" (USA - 1991). Nov. 21-30 (call for showtimes). In a tribute to both film noir and westerns, a young computer executive embezzles \$450,000 in an effort to keep his research team together in the error of corporate take-overs and layoffs. When he stops to help a couple in distress, they turn a gun on him, commander his Volvo, and the plot thickens.

STAR JOHN R. 32289 John R. (at 14 Mile Road), Madison Heights. Call 585-2070 for showtimes. (\$6; \$3.50 before 6 p.m.).

"The Miracle" (Ireland - 1991). When a beautiful blond American (Beverly D'Angelo) arrives in an Irish seaside town, a teenager's fascination with her grows into an obsession. This very personal film from Neil Jordan ("Mona Lisa") walks a thin line between fantasy and reality. Just don't take its melodramatic storyline too seriously.

"Rambling Rose" (USA - 1991). Laura Dern plays an alluring young woman who has a profound effect on the Southern family she comes to live with.

— John Monaghan

Cape Fear' visually runs amuck

By John Monaghan
staff writer

The camera never stands still. It careens wildly around rooms, zooms in dramatically on characters' faces during key scenes, even tips upside down on occasion. Psychotic-colored yellow, orange, and purple storm clouds gather over the homes of potential victims.

It's no surprise that "Cape Fear" looks more like a Ken Russell movie than the work of Martin Scorsese. The director of "Taxi Driver" and "Goodfellas" wasn't originally taken with the idea of remaking the 1962 thriller but decided to have some fun and not treat too seriously the revenge tale he inherited.

The result is a visually inspired but still nasty little nail-biter that adds an even greater psycho-sexual slant to an already sicko story.

The credits lead off with bizarre widescreen images, shot in black and white negative, of wild staring eyes, storm clouds, and birds of prey sweeping down for the kill. "The only thing to fear on those enchanted nights," remembers the young girl whose narration opens and closes the



tickets please
John Monaghan

film, "is that reality would come crashing in."

That reality arrives in the cigar-puffing form of parolee Max Cady (Robert DeNiro), recently released from a 14-year stretch for rape. He has a score to settle with attorney Jack Bowden (Nick Nolte), who defended his case but withheld evidence that may have resulted in a lighter sentence.

Cady, illiterate upon entering prison, not only learned to read but devoured countless law books and the Bible. Craving emotional compensation from Bowden, he threatens to rape and torture both the lawyer's wife (Jessica Lange) and his 15-year-old daughter (Juliette Lewis).

THIS PSYCHIC is smart. He knows how to manipulate the law, staying just this side of breaking any rules. Among other things, "Cape Fear" is

about the injustice of the legal system and how past sins, even for the sanest of reasons, can return to haunt you.

DeNiro is brilliant, as usual. Here he's covered from head to toe with tattoos, primitively executed symbols of Truth and Justice and a broken heart bearing the name Loretta. He tries desperately to manipulate the frazzled emotions of the Bowden women, and has some success with the daughter Danielle.

By posing as a drama teacher in an loud sweater, Cady lures the high schooler to a secluded auditorium, where the set recalls a cottage scene from Little Red Riding Hood. Cady wins her confidences by "connecting with" her like an adult, offering her marijuana and coaxing a nervous kiss.

He tries to get at Bowden's wife,

who suspects that her husband is having another affair. As played by the talented Lange, she's vulnerable but not stupid. Scorsese has enough sense to not have her fall for Cady's Big Bad Wolf (see page 27).

The 1962 "Cape Fear," which the film follows in most respects, was pretty nasty stuff for the time. It's not much prettier today, as Scorsese adds trademark pools of blood and a graphic torture scene. *

Scorsese offers original stars Robert Mitchum and Gregory Peck minor roles, but really pays homage to film history with the soundtrack and camera. He actually resurrects the full 1962 Bernard Herrmann score (conducted here by Elmer Bernstein). He also employs veteran cinematographer Freddie Francis, a master of unnatural colors and moving cameras.

IF "CAPE FEAR" isn't a major Scorsese film, it's fascinating from a purely visual angle. The man called "America's best director" may finally get the box office recognition he deserves. Too bad he has to finally achieve it with such crass subject matter.

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