



Isabelle Pascoe and Mark Rylance star in Peter Greenaway's "Prospero's Books," which is a reworking of Shakespeare's "The Tempest."

SCREEN SCENE

HENRY FORD CENTENNIAL LIBRARY, 16301 Michigan Ave., Dearborn. Call 945-3037 for more information. (Free)

"The 39 Steps" (England - 1935), 7 p.m. Dec. 2. In this early Hitchcock classic, Robert Donat plays a man falsely accused of murder, who gets handcuffed to an unwilling accomplice (Madeleine Carroll).

MAGIC BAG THEATRE CAFE, 22918 Woodward, Ferndale. Call 544-3030 for information. (\$4)
"Imagine: John Lennon" (USA - 1988), 8 p.m. Dec. 3. The ex-Beatle is revisited in an unusually honest documentary, culled from almost 240 hours of film footage. While glorifying his brilliance as a musician, it also shows Lennon's human side and often violent temper.

MAPLE THEATRE, 4135 W. Maple, Bloomfield. Call 555-0900 for showtimes. (\$6; \$3.50 tw-light)
"Prospero's Books" (USA - 1991). Peter Greenaway, the controversial director of "The Cook, The Thief, His Wife, and Her Lover," reworks Shakespeare's "The Tempest" with John Gielgud interpreting most of the parts. Visually, it's supposed to be a stunner, with its marriage of high-definition television images and the Quantel Paintbox on 35mm film.

"Black Robe" (USA - 1991). A true story based on the adventures of Father LaFarge and his ap-

prentice as they struggle for survival in the first clash between Europeans 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 sisters is severely tested when they fall in love with the same boy. Starring Sam Waterston and Tess Harper. Directed by Robert Mulligan.

SOUTHWEST PUBLIC LIBRARY, in the Marcotte Room, 26000 Evergreen Rd., Southfield. Call 948-0460 for information. (\$5 adult membership; \$2.50 students enroll)
"Moulin Rouge" (USA - 1952), 7:30 p.m. Dec. 5. Jose Ferrer plays French artist Toulouse-Lautrec, whose growth was stunted by a childhood accident. John Huston directed in stunning color, vividly depicting not only the artist's life but also the wild dance hall scene in late 19th-century Paris.

WINDSOR FILM THEATRE, 2155 Wyandale St. West, Windsor. Call (519) 254-FILM for information. (\$4)

"8½" (Italy - 1963), 7, 9:30 p.m. Dec. 2. Federico Fellini's deeply personal study of a film director (played by Marcello Mastroianni) in a quandary over launching his latest project.

— John Monaghan

Addams Family' recycles old jokes

Same old characters. Same old gags. Is "The Addams Family" feature really an update or has Ted Turner simply gotten hold of the vintage series and colorized it for rerelease?

Not that anyone was expecting something radically different. After all, part of the charm of the bizarre series was its good-natured rehash of the same material week after week. More than a cutesie monster comedy like "The Munsters," however, this was one of the few successful examples of truly dark comedy ever to succeed on TV.

For what it's worth, the new film does capture physically the creepy atmosphere of the old Charles Addams' drawings, which for years graced the pages of "The New Yorker Magazine." Perhaps the most well-known of the cartoons — the Family atop the house unloading a boiling cauldron on an unsuspecting group of Christmas carolers — is acted out in the first few minutes of the film.

For me, what really worked in the old show were the reactions on the faces of "normal" people upon entering the Addams household. It still has bear rugs that can take a bite out of your leg, but the victims here aren't Mr. and Mrs. Middle America.



tickets please

John Monaghan

After all, part of the charm of the bizarre series was its good-natured rehash of the same material week after week.

They're run-of-the-mill villains out to get hold of the Addams family fortune.

TO ACHIEVE this, they call upon a man who has a strong resemblance to Uncle Fester. According to the film, he and brother Gomez Addams had a falling out several years ago. Fester left, but was recently found floating in The Bermuda Triangle. The explanation satisfies — for awhile.

Christopher Lloyd, the whacked-out scientist in the "Back to the Future" movies, plays the regenerated Fester and he's really quite funny. He serves as straight man for the usual assortment of weird goings on.

You've seen the best bits in the movie ads. Pugsley and Wednesday, the Addams children, play with meat cleavers, electric chairs and guillotines. When someone tries to sell them girl scout cookies, they naturally want to know if they're made

from real girl scouts.

One of the best gags occurs at a school pageant, where they shock the parent audience with a graphic swordfight. Blood spurts from severed limbs and covers the first four rows. It's the only scene that works for modern shock value.

Gomez and Morticia, meanwhile, are up to the same old slobbering whenever Tish speaks French. Gomez, in his playroom, sends toy trains roaring toward each other at top speed and engages in dramatic swordfights at the drop of a hat.

And again, the performances are really splendid. Anjelica Huston — long, spidery and oddly attractive — works well with Raul Julia, who was born to play Gomez with wild popping eyes and hot Latin blood.

The disembodied hand called Thing also returns, this time through the aid of modern special effects. He's no longer forced to hang out in a box. Now he scitters across the floor and becomes a more integral part of the dopey plot.

There's little plot getting hyper-critical about The Addams Family. It's not worth the trouble. With "Beauty and the Beast" and "Cape Fear" sharing time on area screens, this shouldn't be high on your list of holiday viewing.

Charm, romance found in 'The Shop'



pass the popcorn

LeAnne Rogers

The couple that banters and bickers their way into a realization of their mutual attraction is a familiar plot in movies. Few have ever handled the developing romance with more charm and style better than writer-director Ernst Lubitsch's 1939 film "The Shop Around the Corner."

Shop manager James Stewart and sales clerk Margaret Sullivan don't get along very well as they go about their duties at Matschek and Company in pre-war Budapest.

Neither knows that Stewart has responded to Sullivan's newspaper advertisement seeking a gentleman to anonymously "correspond on cultural topics" — sort of a singles ad in a slower paced, more genteel era.

It's fun to watch Stewart and Sullivan speak glowingly to their friends at the shop about their high minded and unbelievably perfect correspondents, known only as "Dear Friend." They even use the stellar qualities of their unknown soulmate to insult each other by comparison.

Exchanging missives anonymously at a postal box is a device but a naturally flowing one for looking at how some relationships evolve. Most people can identify with Stewart when he confesses he has put off meeting his pen pal for fear of disappointing her or being disappointed himself.

THERE'S ALSO that fantasy about meeting the one person who is perfect for you and even though looks aren't supposed to matter, it sure would be simpler if you are physically attracted too.

This is one of my favorite films with Stewart and I'm always surprised at how few people have seen it. His character can be earnest and winning, slyly humorous, angry

and hurt when he is unjustly treated.

Stewart is very good in the scene when he meets Sullivan at a restaurant, he knows they are pen pals but she doesn't. With her distinctive voice and face, Sullivan is his match. She doesn't look or act like many of the leading ladies of the era. There is an intelligence in her eyes and witty style that make her unique.

The film creates a living place with the shop, although I don't know that it seems particularly European. The shop owner, well played by Frank Morgan, and all the clerks are like a family. They all have their foibles and idiosyncracies, sometimes they get on each others' nerves. In the end, they have a basic respect

and affection for each other.

Morgan's blustery Mr. Matschek is the kind of guy who always tells his employees "I want your honest opinion" although nothing could be further from the truth.

THERE IS a bittersweet quality about his character, who seems to be having some marital problems and has suddenly lost faith in Stewart, his oldest employee.

Joseph Schildkraut, who began his career in silent films and went on to play Anne Frank's dignified father, is a dandified smarmy sales clerk. William Tracy is very funny as the wisecracking delivery boy looking for an opportunity to move up.

Although the film is a romantic comedy, it has a more realistic foundation than many similar films of the era. The disappointments, hurts and miscommunications between the characters are genuine.

It's a lovely film and a very good alternative for some old holiday viewing stand-bys.

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