

'Cinema' is child's reality

PASS THE POPCORN



LoAnne Rogers

Before the proliferation of television and video made the world smaller, movies were a magical trip to romance and adventure. The wonderful Italian film "Cinema Paradiso" celebrates movies and their importance in a small town.

In post-war Italy, young Toto is a sweet-faced altar boy who dozes off kneeling at the altar while the priest celebrates Mass. The exasperated priest knows what his tax belliger has been up to that's keeping him up late. Toto, an impish wise guy of kid, spends all his time in the Cinema Paradiso.

Phillippe Noiret plays Alfredo, the crusty projectionist, who eventually warms up to the mischievous boy. The childless man and the fatherless boy find a common bond in their love of movies and the Cinema Paradiso. Alfredo covers for the boy when he has to answer to his irate mother after spending the milk money at the movies. Eventually, Toto learns the business and helps Alfredo run the movies. The boy lives for the movies.

The film captures the different era of society, the parish priest screening the movies and ringing a bell for the parts he wants censored. The audiences groan as romantic scenes appear on the screen because they know as the couple moves closer the film will choppy out to the next scene.

The emotional power of movies is everywhere in "Cinema Paradiso." Walking with his weeping mother after a bureaucratic confirms his long-missing father was



Movie buffs: Philippe Noiret is the projectionist and Salvatore Cascio the young child who falls in love with the movies in "Cinema Paradiso."

killed in the war, Toto beams when a poster advertising "Gone With the Wind" catches his eye. Clark Gable is much more real to the child than a father he doesn't remember.

The audiences are vocally enthusiastic about the films they watch, involved with the picture rather than the rude chatter you get in theaters today from people used to talking over television

programs. The Italian villagers view movies as the world saw them in an earlier era, suspending reality and rooting for the good guys. Two men start watching a picture that scrolls a lengthy introduction. Neither can read but it doesn't matter. That's the essence of film's original power.

Noiret gives a wonderful performance as the projectionist, who suffers tragically from the dangers of the old highly flammable film

stock. Over the years, he has become a father to Toto, seeing him through his first romance and the usual dilemmas that come with growing up.

It's Alfredo who senses potential in his young charge and forces him out into the world rather than letting him settle into the sleepy existence at the "Cinema Paradiso." That's certainly a mixed blessing. There are always trade-offs in life.

SCREEN SCENE

■ **CAPITOL CINEMA**
121 University Ave., Windsor, Canada. Call 519-253-8065 for information.

"Myra Breckenridge" (USA — 1970), 7 p.m. Oct. 12 and 9 p.m. Oct. 13. Mae West returned to the screen after a 20-year hiatus to star with Raquel Welch in this still-bizarre story of a Hollywood sex-change operation. Gore Vidal wrote it.

"Beyond the Valley of the Dolls" (USA — 1970), 9 p.m. Oct. 12 and 7 p.m. Oct. 13. In leaner times, film critic Roger Ebert wrote the screenplay for this Russ Meyer epic about an all-girl band trying to make it in Hollywood. Along the way, they experience the requisite drugs, crime and sex.

■ **DETROIT FILM THEATRE**
Detroit Institute of Arts, 5200 Woodward Ave., Detroit. Call 832-2730 for information. (85)

"A Brief History of Time" (USA/Britain — 1992), 7 and 9:30 p.m. Oct. 16-17 and 4 and 7 p.m. Oct. 18. Stephen Hawking, the ALS-stricken physicist, is the subject of this documentary from Errol Morris. The director of "The Thin Blue Line" and "Gates of Heaven" explores the enigma of the author who explores the cosmos from the confines of his wheelchair.

"Feed" (USA — 1992), 2 p.m. Oct. 18. Bill Clinton, George Bush and Ross Perot are captured in telling moments on camera, sometimes when they forget the camera is on. This 76-minute collection of sound-bites give us intimate looks at all three candidates.

■ **HENRY FORD CENTENNIAL LIBRARY**
13650 Michigan Ave., Dearborn. Call 943-2330 for information. (Free)

"Plymouth Adventure" (USA — 1952), 7 p.m. Oct. 12. Spencer Tracy stars as the captain of the Mayflower, who brings settlers from England to New England in the 17th Century. Gene Tierney and Van Johnson also star.

■ **MAPLE THEATRE**
4135 West Maple, Bloomfield

Hills. Call 855-9090 for show times. (\$5.75 evening; \$2.95 twilight)

"Blade Runner" (USA — 1982). The re-released director's cut of Ridley Scott's influential sci-fi film stars Harrison Ford as a futuristic policeman on the trail of runaway robots. The irritating voice-over narration is gone and the ending has been changed to the bleaker one that Scott intended.

■ **STAR JOHN R**
32289 John R, Madison Heights. Call 855-2070. (Tickets \$6; \$3.75 before 9 p.m.)

"Light Sleeper" (USA — 1992). Willem Dafoe and Susan Sarandon play drug dealers forced to re-evaluate their careers and relationships in a hostile modern landscape. The latest from Paul Schrader, the director of "Patl Hearst" and writer of "Taxi Driver." As with most of Schrader's pictures, expect a fascinating mess.

■ **STATE THEATRE**
2115 Woodward Ave., Detroit. Call 961-6450 for information. (\$1.89)

"The Lost Boys" (USA — 1982), 9 p.m. Oct. 12. Kiefer Sutherland and Corey Feldman or two members of a local gang who turn out to be vampires. This stylish horror film has developed a cult following.

■ **STATE WAYNE THEATRE**
35310 Michigan Ave., Wayne. All films play nightly from Wednesday through Sunday. Call 328-4600 for show times. (\$2-\$1 students and senior citizens)

"Days of Wine and Roses" (USA — 1962). Lee Remick and Jack Lemmon hit the bottle in this depressing study of alcoholism and a relationship on the rocks. Realistically rendered, with fabulous performances.

"Monkey Business" (USA — 1952). Cary Grant plays an absent-minded professor whose precious youth serum ends up in the water cooler with predictably wacky results. Ginger Rogers and a very young Marilyn Monroe co-star.

— John Monaghan

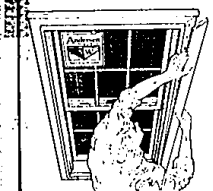
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