

GOING TO THE MOVIES



Michigan writer's 'Wolf' stars Jack Nicholson

The seed for "Wolf," opening Friday at metro Detroit movie theaters, was planted over 15 years ago when screenwriter Michigan native Jim Harrison dreamed he turned into a wolf.

As "Wolf" the movie opens, Will Randall, a Manhattan book editor haunted by fears of losing his job, drives absentmindedly along a remote country road one snowy Sunday night. Suddenly, he's forced to slam on his brakes and a dark figure looms for an instant ahead. There is a jolt, and his car skids off to the side of the road. He emerges, cautiously, and follows a thin trail of blood which leads through the snow to a great dark wolf.

Will can't see it at first, but the beast is alive. As it rises to escape into the night, it bites him on the wrist. From this moment on, Will's life begins to change. The transformation is subtle at first, as his senses become more acute and his perceptions of those around him sharpen. With each passing day he is drawn deeper into the mystical feral spirit of the wolf.

For Will Randall, nothing — not his job, not his marriage, not any part of his life — will ever be the same again.

Jack Nicholson stars as Will Randall in Mike Nichols' "Wolf," a romantic thriller which also stars Michelle Pfeiffer (as the one woman who gets close to Will), James Spader (as his colleague), Kate Nelligan (as his wife) and Christopher Plummer (as his unyielding employer).

PREVIEW

The screenplay is written by Harrison and Wesley Strick. Douglas Wick is producer, with Neil Machlis and Robert Greenblatt as executive producers. "Wolf" is released by Columbia Pictures.

Producer Douglas Wick seized on the idea of "Wolf" when Jim Harrison first mentioned it to him. At that time, Harrison was merely considering the concept. He and Wick spent a year shaping the impulse into a story.

Harrison, one of America's best-known contemporary novelists, was born in Grayling, Mich.

In 1960 he graduated from Michigan State University with a degree in comparative literature, and that year he also married his high school sweetheart. They still live in Michigan where they have raised two daughters.

It was the Kafka-esque aspect of "Wolf" that first appealed to director Mike Nichols. "Like 'Metamorphosis,' this is a poetic expression of an inner state," Nichols says. "It's a metaphor for the experience of becoming different from everyone else and leaving humanity behind, which is kind of a nightmare that happens to people in the middle of their lives. There's also the idea that, on the other side of such horror, there is something that isn't necessarily only dark, the endings aren't necessarily endings, and metamorphoses and changes aren't necessarily bad."

Nichols stresses that Will's transformation into a wolf is not necessarily something to be en-

vied. "Becoming a wolf is not preferable to remaining a human being. How can it be? It's dark, frightening."

"After Will begins changing, the things he sees have a heightened quality — his apartment becomes even more claustrophobic and cluttered, the ceiling becomes lower, the bar and grid motifs are more apparent, the walls close in. MacLeish House, the publishing company where Will works, is extremely cluttered with books and paper. Will's own office is tiny and the colors are flat, brown and depressing," said Bo Welch, production designer.

In sharp contrast to this is Alden Manor, set on rambling grounds and surrounded by deep woods. It is here that Will feels most alive, and where he finds Laura, who becomes his salvation.

Nicholson has always been intrigued by the idea of playing a werewolf. "I had an idea that I wanted to do it for years," he says. "This was back before the new special effects revolution. I wanted to call it 'Wolfman, No Makeup.'"

It is Laura Alden (played by Michelle Pfeiffer) who understands Will, and who offers him her love regardless of the consequences. She is the daughter of Will's unscrupulous publishing magnate boss, Alden (played by Christopher Plummer).

"I think that Laura is somebody who, all her life, has had all the things that other people are supposed to want," said Nichols. "But in reality she is so unhappy. She's never been able to make anything work to her satisfaction."



FRANCOIS DUMAILLÉ

So she's drawn to powerful experiences. Beneath the surface of her princess' life are tragedy and despair. She also has a sense, as Will does, that in some way the world is ending. And she's deeply pained by the cruelty of the world and the suffering of its victims. When she meets Will, she's very touched by his pain and openness, and also by his sense of defeat, because she also feels defeated. As he begins to feel empowered, revitalized as a new creature, she's more and more drawn to him."

"Wolf" marks a reunion for Mike Nichols and Jack Nicholson, who have worked together on three films previously — "Carnal Knowledge" (1971), "The Fortune" (1975) and "Heartburn" (1986).

Wild side: Will Randall (Jack Nicholson) discovers his wild side in "Wolf," a Columbia Pictures Re-



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Rebellious daughter: Michelle Pfeiffer stars as Laura Alden in "Wolf."

UPCOMING MOVIES

There's something for everyone at the movies. Here's a list of what's in the wings:

Opening Friday, June 17
■ "Fear Of A Black Hat" — Main Art exclusive. Hilarious comedy that lampoons the world of hip

hop music, sort of a "Spinal Rap," the film follows the group N.W.H. through its rise, fall and comeback. Stars Rusty Cundieff, Larry B. Scott, and Mark Christopher Lawrence. Directed by Ruy Cundieff.

■ "Getting Even With Dad" — Comedy about a young boy who finds the perfect way to turn his father into the dad he never had — a little love, a little kindness, and a little blackmail. Stars Macaulay Culkin, Ted Danson, Glenn Close, and Hector Elizondo. Directed by Howard Deutch.

Opening Friday, June 24
■ "Wyatt Earp" — An epic of the American West from the 1860s to the turn of the century seen through the exciting and tumultuous life of Wyatt Earp from

youth to middle age. Stars Kevin Costner.

■ "The Lion King" — An animated musical comedy-adventure follows the heroic journey of Simba, a lion cub, forced into exile by his evil uncle following the death of his father.

Opening Wednesday, June 29

■ "Little Big League" — A 12 year old ardent baseball fan inherits the slumping Minnesota Twins and becomes the youngest owner-manager in baseball history.

See 'Rolling Stones' at Science Center

What do rocks, bones and Rolling Stones have in common? You'll find them all at the Detroit Science Center where fossils, rocks and dinosaurs of the Mesozoic era are on display along with the well-preserved legends of the Rock Era — that's the Rock 'N' Roll Era, and those legends are Mick Jagger and the Rolling Stones.

Audiences are surrounded by the sights and sounds of the Rolling Stones, 7:30 p.m. Fri-

days and Saturdays, and 4:30 p.m. Saturdays and Sundays. Tickets are \$10.

The Detroit Science Center, 5020 John R., is open 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. Monday through Friday, 11 a.m. to 5 p.m. Saturdays, and noon to 5 p.m. Sundays. Call 577-8400 for show times. Admission is \$5.50 for adults, \$4.50 for children ages 4 to 12 and senior citizens. Children three and under are free.

Star Theatres offer two kinds of popcorn

Movie goes at Star Theatres can choose between two types of popcorn — "Healthier Choice" popcorn, popped in canola oil, and "Classic Corn," prepared in the traditional oil.

In light of the recent report concerning fat content in movie theater popcorn, Star Theatres conducted comparison taste tests with their customers choosing between the two types of popcorn oils. Results showed a strong demand for both types of popcorn.

One third of those participating in the taste tests said they could not taste the difference between the canola oil-popped popcorn and the coconut oil-popped corn. One third said they would clearly select the canola oil-popped corn due to health considerations. One third of the testers said they liked the taste of the traditional popped popcorn.

Both types of popcorn will be priced the same, and customers will have the option of adding butter topping.

SPECIAL SNEAK PREVIEWS
SATURDAY 5:00 PM AND SUNDAY 1:00 PM

THINK BINK!
TAXI

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NICHOLSON PFEIFFER

THE UNUSUAL SUSPECT

WOLF

STARTS FRIDAY, JUNE 17TH

AMC LAUREL PARK	AMC MAPLE	AMC BEL AIR
AMC SOUTHLAND	AMC STERLING CTR.	AMC WOODS
GCC CANTON CINEMA	NORWIST	SHOWCASE 12 OAKS
SHOWCASE 12 OAKS	SHOWCASE 12 OAKS	STAR GRATIOT
STAR JOHN R. ARTS CENTER	STAR LINCOLN PARK	STAR ROCHESTER
STAR 12 OAKS	STAR WEST RIVER	FORD WYOMING