

MOVIES

BY LEANNE ROGERS
Alma and Mortimer

During a recent trip to my local video store, I was pleased to find that "Exotica" one of my favorite films during 1995 had been re-released on video. I was, however, horrified when I saw the box and read the description of the film, which makes it sound like some sort of sleazy exploitation film. Nothing could be further from the truth. This engrossing film wasn't accurately promoted during it's brief theatrical release and the video package is even worse.

I probably would have played up that fact that "Exotica" won the International Critics Prize at the Cannes Film Festival but what do I know about marketing. If you are looking for a film with a lot of nudity and sex, this isn't the movie for you. If you want to see a fascinating and well-acted drama about the obsessive ways people cope with their emotional injuries, then this will be the movie for you.

The title comes from an elaborate adult entertainment club where Revenue Canada auditor Francis, played by Bruce Greenwood, comes regularly to visit an exotic dancer, played by Mia Kirshner. Francis is a sad man, emotionally devastated by the murder of his young daughter. His visits to the club don't bring

Dramatic: Mia Kirshner and Bruce Greenwood in Atom Egoyan's "Exotica."

VIDEO

him pleasure. His obsession with the young dancer, who performs dressed as a school girl, aren't for the obvious or expected reasons.

Francis regularly picks up his teenaged niece, ostensibly so she can come to his house to use his piano. His niece knows the real reason Francis wants her to come over while he is out for the evening — he's pretending his daughter is still alive and needs a babysitter. It's telling that only this young girl will confront that situation and tell him it has to

The disc jockey at the club, Ellis Kotens, is the dancer's former boyfriend. He's jealous of her at

tentions to Francis but there is more there than appears at first glance.

Francis is auditing the books of an exotic pet store and finds the man has a lucrative smuggling operation. When the boyfriend manages to get Francis banned from the club, Francis coerces the bird smuggler into helping him get his revenge.

I hesitate to reveal much more about the plot because the way the characters are revealed is part of what makes "Exotica" such an effective film. Written and directed by Atom Egoyan, the relationships between the all characters doesn't really become clear until the final scenes. Don't let the misleading packaging but you of a fascinating and wonderful film.

COMING ATTRACTIONS

SCHEDULED TO OPEN FRIDAY, March 8

"BOTTLE ROCKET"
The story of three who would be thieves who learn the importance of friendship, honor and duty as they ineptly pursue a life of crime.

"ANGELS AND INSECTS"
Exclusively at the AMC Maple, Mark Ryland, Kristin Scott-Thomson and Patsy Kensit star in a story about a penniless biologist who gets trapped in an erotic web of deceit.

"HEAVY METAL"
The milestone animated science fiction fantasy classic returns with re-mastered SDDS sound track featuring Black Sabbath, Blue Öyster Cult, Cheap Trick and others.

Lucy and Joe are looking for love and they've made a pact. If they don't find it by their 30th birthday they've vowed to jump off the Brooklyn Bridge together. With the clock ticking and their date of with the bridge looming they just might find true love after all. Romantic comedy stars Jean-Luc Godard

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