

MOVIES

'Michael' a far-from-heavenly comedy



Angel: John Travolta stars in the Turner Pictures' comedy, 'Michael.'

TICKETS PLEASE



JOHN MONAGHAN

In "Michael," John Travolta's earthy angel has a simple philosophy: (1) you should ingest as much sugar as you can and (2) there is no such thing as a bad joke.

Wonderful Life's Frank Capra. And when she's good, like in "Sleepless in Seattle," she can bring a smile to even the most crudemugony critic.

"Enquirer"-style supermarket tabloid. I have had an angel staying at my motel for the last several months, it says, and I'm writing about him. His name is Michael.

white-robed, halo-wearing angel. A substantial beer gut hangs over his boxers as he shuffled to the refrigerator for breakfast, which includes a can of beer and a bowl of Frosted Flakes literally buried in sugar.

"Murphy Brown" and cast in increasingly substantial roles, wouldn't be bad if Ephron had any sense of pacing. Even a movie this light needs some speed to get it off the ground, but it drags when Travolta's off the screen.

John Monaghan welcomes your calls and comments. You can listen to him on Dave Dixon's Radio Show AM 1270, 8 p.m. to midnight Saturdays. To leave John a voice mail message, dial (313) 953-2047 on a touch-tone phone, mailbox 1866.

GUIDE TO THE MOVIES

A large grid of movie listings for various theaters including AMC Theatres, General Cinemas, Showcase Theatres, and United Artists Theatres. Each listing includes the movie title, showtimes, and contact information.

The real miracle in "Michael" is that Travolta manages to carry some of this silliness off, in the two or three years since his comeback in "Pulp Fiction," he's tackled a half dozen eclectic roles, from villain in "Broken Arrow" to scientific oddity in "Phenomenon," which, like this, mines the star's real-life spiritual side.

SCREEN SCENE

A sampling of what's playing at alternative movie theaters across metro Detroit as reviewed by John Monaghan.

The hit at last year's Toronto Film Festival focuses on David Helfgott, a real-life concert pianist plagued by an overbearing father and mental illness.

Under. "The Crucible" (USA - 1996). Arthur Miller adapted his own play for the screen, the story of the Salem Witch Trials in which an pitiful girl (Winona Ryder) holds the fate of the man she had an affair with, Daniel Day-Lewis and Winona Ryder star.

Advertisement for the movie 'Beavis and Butt-Head Do America' featuring the two main characters and the title.

Advertisement for 'NOW PLAYING' featuring a grid of movie listings for various theaters.

Advertisement for 'SHINE IS A GREAT FILM!' featuring a large image of a man and the text '5 GOLDEN GLOBE NOMINATIONS'.

Magic Bag Theatre 22920 Woodward, Ferndale, Call (810) 544-3030 for information.

AMERICAN WEST, BEL AIR 10, EASTLAND 5, SOUTHWEST CITY, CANTON, QUO VADIS, SHOWCASE AIRTEL, SHOWCASE 4, SHOWCASE 5, STAR GRANOT AT 15 MILE, STAR LINCOLN PARK 8, STAR TAYLOR, STAR WINCHESTER 8, UNITED OAKLAND, WEST RIVER.

FINE LINE FEATURES PRESENTS 5 GOLDEN GLOBE NOMINATIONS BEST ACTOR - GEOFFREY RUSH "A GLORIOUS FILM!" "SHINE IS A GREAT FILM!" GOOD MORNING AMERICA

"Shine" (USA - 1996). In the court of Louis XVI, a man from the country realizes that he must use his wit if he is going to carry out his mission: to save the people of his village from his epidemic. He does everything he can to extract royal favor until he nearly botches it by falling in love. A French export from director Patrice Leconte, starring Charles Berling and Fanny Ardant.