

# 'The Sixth Sense': A horror movie with a heart

BY JON KATZ  
SPECIAL WRITER

"The Sixth Sense" defies labeling. If you don't like horror movies, if you don't like thrillers, if you don't like the supernatural — don't worry, but do go. It's above the above and all of the above. This is a horror movie with a heart, a film so sensitive and smart you'll want to stand by the box office and stop people from seeing anything else.

You'll also want to go right back in and see it a second time yourself, for reasons we can only hint at.

Bruce Willis is prominent Philadelphia child psychologist Malcolm Crowe. He and his wife

(Olivia Williams) are surprised one evening by an intrusion. Vincent Grey (Donnie Wahlberg in a brief but loud appearance), Vincent had been treated unsuccessfully by Crowe years earlier. Now an adult, he is still terrified by "something" and has returned to exact revenge by putting one bullet in the doctor's belly and another in his own ear. As this sets up events to come, we're not spilling any beans here.

Fading out and in to the following fall, we find that Dr. Crowe is weighted down with guilt to the point of professional impotence. His salvation may come in the form of eight-year-old Cole Sear who, like Vincent,

also lives with an unspoken secret. Cole is a peaceful youngster. His peers ostracize him, his teacher calls him a "freak" and his hardworking divorced mother is running out of patience.

Cole can't or won't communicate his "secret" to anyone. The secret: He sees dead people. Not ghosts, but corporeal beings who died violently and wander South Philly trapped between here and beyond, unaware, in fact, that they are dead.

"I don't wanna be scared anymore," Cole tells his doctor. "Please make them leave." Crowe can't make them leave, but perhaps he can make Cole understand and use his gift. The time

he spends in this quest will jeopardize Crowe's marriage and more.

"The Sixth Sense" sounds like a lot of movies you've either seen or avoided, depending on your taste, like "The Exorcist," "Poltergeist," and "Carrie." Again, we emphasize that while things do go bump in the night, this film is not about monsters. It's about friendship. The friendship between the boy and his doctor, between the boy and his mom, between the boy and — yes — the ghosts.

We should add out of fairness that this isn't cutesy "Boo! Juice" or smart-alecky "Ghost-busters" either. You will jump out of your seat more than once. And you will bite your lip to avoid spilling the wonderfully logical but totally startling ending... as we are doing now.

We can, though, talk freely and gleefully about 11-year-old Haley Joel Oment. You may have seen him as the dying boy on "Ally McBeal" or as Forrest Gump, Jr. He is a wondrous revelation as Cole. It's been written that his audition reduced writer-director M. Night Shyamalan to tears, and having seen the final product, we can't just write that off as studio hype.

As his mom, Australian Toni Collette is every mom who has tried to knock down the walls between herself and her child



RON PHILLIPS

**Drama: Bruce Willis (right) stars as child psychologist Dr. Malcolm Crowe, an emotionally shattered man haunted by his past and the misdiagnosis of a child suffering from visual hallucinations. When he meets Cole (Haley Joel Oment, left) a young man with similar symptoms, client and therapist are awakened to something astonishing in "The Sixth Sense."**

while straining to understand why it exists at all. And what about Bruce? Well, he whispers a lot. But at the same time, he conveys the kind of genuine empathy and warmth not seen since the dad in "Leaves

It to Beaver." Despite his rep as an asteroid-bashing superhero, we're hard-pressed to imagine anyone else in this tender role.

Jon Katz is a freelance writer who lives in Rochester.

## GUIDE TO THE MOVIES

**National Amusements Showcase Cinemas**

**Showcase Ashburn 114**  
2150 N. Open Rd.  
Between University & Waterloo Blvd  
248-372-6669  
Bargain Matinees Daily  
All Shows Until 6 pm  
Continuous Show Daily  
Late Show Wed. Thurs. Fri. & Sat.  
NP DENOTES NO PASS

NP MICKELY BLUE EYES (PG13)  
NP TEACHING MRS. TINGLE (PG13)  
NP UNIVERSAL SOLDIER: THE RETURN (R)  
DETROIT ROCK CITY (R)  
MYSTERY MEN (PG13)  
THE BLAIR WITCH PROJECT (R)  
DEEP BLUE SEA (R)  
INSPECTOR GADGET (PG)

**Showcase Bethesda 114**  
2150 N. Open Rd.  
Bargain Matinees Daily  
All Shows Until 6 pm  
Continuous Show Daily  
Late Show Wed. Thurs. Fri. & Sat.  
NP DENOTES NO PASS

NP MICKELY BLUE EYES (PG13)  
NP TEACHING MRS. TINGLE (PG13)  
NP UNIVERSAL SOLDIER: THE RETURN (R)  
DETROIT ROCK CITY (R)  
MYSTERY MEN (PG13)  
THE BLAIR WITCH PROJECT (R)  
DEEP BLUE SEA (R)  
INSPECTOR GADGET (PG)

**Showcase Dearborn 114**  
Michigan & Telegraph  
313-561-3449  
Bargain Matinees Daily  
All Shows Until 6 pm  
Continuous Show Daily  
Late Show Fri. & Sat. & Sun.  
NP DENOTES NO PASS

NP MICKELY BLUE EYES (PG13)  
NP TEACHING MRS. TINGLE (PG13)  
NP UNIVERSAL SOLDIER: THE RETURN (R)  
DETROIT ROCK CITY (R)  
MYSTERY MEN (PG13)  
NP SIXTH SENSE (PG13)  
THE IRON GIANT (PG)  
NP THE BLAIR WITCH PROJECT (R)  
DEEP BLUE SEA (R)  
INSPECTOR GADGET (PG)

**Showcase Dearborn 1.8**  
Michigan & Telegraph  
313-561-3449  
Bargain Matinees Daily  
All Shows Until 6 pm  
Continuous Show Daily  
Late Show Fri. & Sat. & Sun.  
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THE IRON GIANT (PG)  
NP THE BLAIR WITCH PROJECT (R)  
DEEP BLUE SEA (R)  
INSPECTOR GADGET (PG)

**Showcase Pontiac 1.5**  
Telegraph Sq. Lake Rd. W. Side of  
Cochran  
810-335-0241  
Bargain Matinees Daily  
All Shows Until 6 pm  
Continuous Show Daily  
NP DENOTES NO PASS

NP MICKELY BLUE EYES (PG13)  
NP TEACHING MRS. TINGLE (PG13)  
NP UNIVERSAL SOLDIER: THE RETURN (R)  
DETROIT ROCK CITY (R)  
MYSTERY MEN (PG13)  
NP SIXTH SENSE (PG13)  
THE IRON GIANT (PG)  
NP THE BLAIR WITCH PROJECT (R)  
DEEP BLUE SEA (R)  
INSPECTOR GADGET (PG)

**Showcase Pontiac 512**  
2405 Telegraph Rd. East side of  
Telegraph  
810-334-0777  
Bargain Matinees Daily  
All Shows Until 6 pm  
Continuous Show Daily  
Late Show Fri. & Sat.  
NP DENOTES NO PASS

NP MICKELY BLUE EYES (PG13)  
NP TEACHING MRS. TINGLE (PG13)  
NP UNIVERSAL SOLDIER: THE RETURN (R)  
DETROIT ROCK CITY (R)  
MYSTERY MEN (PG13)  
NP SIXTH SENSE (PG13)  
INSPECTOR GADGET (PG)  
THE IRON GIANT (PG)  
DEEP BLUE SEA (R)

**Showcase Pontiac 612**  
2405 Telegraph Rd. East side of  
Telegraph  
810-334-0777  
Bargain Matinees Daily  
All Shows Until 6 pm  
Continuous Show Daily  
Late Show Fri. & Sat.  
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INSPECTOR GADGET (PG)  
THE IRON GIANT (PG)  
DEEP BLUE SEA (R)

**Star John B. 11.4 Miles**  
3229 John R. Road  
248-583-2878  
No one under 6 admitted for PG13 & R rated films after 6 pm.

NP UNIVERSAL SOLDIER: THE RETURN (R)  
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THOMAS CROWN AFFAIR (R)  
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MYSTERY MEN (PG13)  
BLAIR WITCH PROJECT (PG)  
INSPECTOR GADGET (PG)  
EYES WIDE SHUT (R)  
AMERICAN PIE (R)  
BIG DADDY (PG13)  
STAR WARS: EPISODE I (PG)  
TARZAN (G)

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## COMING ATTRACTIONS

- Scheduled to open Friday, Aug. 27**
- "A DOG OF Flanders" Powerful and touching family film about a young boy's passionate pursuit of a dream. Based on the timeless children's book, Starg Jack Warden, Jon Voight and Cheryl Ladd.
  - "SUNSHINE TALK" Exclusively at the Detroit Institute of Arts. Romantic comedy about a middle-aged woman whose best friend and son's girlfriend are determined to find her a companion.
  - "ASTRONAUT'S WIFE" Thriller centers on a woman whose husband batters her after a freak accident in space that has left him altered. These changes spark a spiraling chain of chilling events leading up to the birth of their twins. Stars Jon Depp.
  - "THE SIXTH WARRIOR" Thrilling adventure about an important emissary who is abducted by a band of warriors and forced to join their quest to battle mysterious creatures legendary for consuming every living thing in their path. Stars Antonio Banderas and Omar Sharif.
  - "DUDLEY DOORNY" Family comedy based on the classic cartoon character about a dedicated young Mountie who must save the local citizens, reunite with his love and restore peace in the valley without messing it up. Stars Brendan Fraser, Sarah Jessica Parker.
  - "THE MUSE" Comedy about a screenwriter willing to
- Scheduled to open Friday, Sept. 1**
- "OUTSIDE PROVIDENCE" Story about a young man's coming of age when he's packed off to prep school crashing into a parked police car. Stars Alec Baldwin.
  - "CHILL FACTOR" Two men accidentally came into possession of a volatile and highly explosive substance that will cause widespread havoc if it is allowed to become warmer than 50 degrees. They are also being chased by several groups who would like to have the substance for their own purposes. Stars Cuba Gooding Jr., Skeet Ulrich.
- Scheduled to open Friday, Sept. 3**
- "BETTER THAN CHOCOLATE" Lively romp of love and lust with some very surprising results. Stars Wendy Crump.
- Scheduled to open Friday, Sept. 10**
- "WHITE BOYS" A funny, honest and searing look at

**STARTS FRIDAY, AUGUST 27TH**

AMC LIVONIA 20	AMC SOUTHFIELD CITY	MUR SOUTHGATE 20	AMC EASTLAND QUO VADIS
SHOWCASE ANN ARBOR	SHOWCASE PONTIAC	SHOWCASE TROY	STAR GRAND AT 15 AM
STAR GRAND LEWIS CROSSING	STAR ROCKY HILLS	STAR SOUTHFIELD	WORTH COMMERCE TWP 14
WORTH AMERICA 12 OAKS	WORTH WEST RIVER	FORD WYOMING 10	NO PASSES OR COUPONS ACCEPTED

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