



Josef Sommer plays George Bynam, an antiques expert for a prestigious auction gallery who turns up as a murder victim in "Still of the Night." Assistant Meryl Streep is the chief suspect in the movie which is rife with references to its spiritual master, Alfred Hitchcock.

the movies
Louise Snider

'Still of the Night' copies Hitchcock without arty story

"Still of the Night" (PG) is a white-knuckle movie from the start, opening to the tension-filled ending. It is also something of a miracle because it bristles with suspense even though the story deals with two dull and foolish characters.

Robert Benton directed it from his own screenplay, and took more than a page or two from the notebook of the master, Alfred Hitchcock. The movie is awash with references to, or quotes from, Hitchcock movies, including "Spellbound," (a dream sequence), "Rear Window" (a peeping-Tom view into an apartment) and "Vertigo" (a narrative description of a fall from a bell tower). Even one of the principal settings, an auction gallery, calls to mind a key scene from "North by Northwest."

In addition to such distinguished precedent, Benton has the advantage of Nestor Almendros' shadowy, mood-filled photography and the high-powered presence of Meryl Streep and Roy Scheider.

This should add up to the "psychological thriller" the publicity leads us to expect. Instead we get a movie in which the psychology has little to do with the suspense — created by superb use of sound, lighting, photography and editing. The story is disappointing.

SCHEIDER PLAYS a psychiatrist whose patient (Josef Sommer) has been found murdered. When the victim's lover (Meryl Streep) shows up at the psychiatrist's office, the recently divorced doctor finds himself attracted to her. His interest is ungaunt, or maybe even excited, by police suspicions that the murderer is the victim's son.

For what the psychiatrist learns as he reviews tapes of his sessions with the murdered man and from what the police theorize, everything points toward Streep. Is the doctor in love with a killer? Why is he attracted to her? Is it all that nervous twitching and the kinky behavior?

Scheider's character would put off anyone except a mental-health professional. However, Scheider's interest seems more than professional. I say "seems" because both these characters are so cold, when they kiss it's like two icebergs sliding against each other. There is warmth there. They don't click as a couple, and they don't fare much better as individuals.

Scheider is so edgy and jittery that we can't believe she actually is employed in a fine-arts auction gallery where she handles precious and delicate objects. And Scheider's character does nothing to dispel the notion that says certificates and diplomas have nothing to do with her.

Every time he makes a move, he puts himself in jeopardy. You can't expect an audience to sympathize with characters who are just plain dumb, and that's the way the psychiatrist is in "Still of the Night." If there is a dark, dangerous and isolated place, trust him to find it.

THIS POOLHARDNESS extends to walking through Central Park at night. Now that's stretching things beyond all credibility. Even foreign tourists know enough to avoid the park at night.

The only minimally interesting aspect of the character is his relationship with his mother (Jessica Tandy), also a psychiatrist. They get together and chat about dreams. He gives her one interpretation, she another.

The only really part of the film is the inside look. It gives us of the operations of a major auction house, probably modeled after Sotheby-Park-Bernard. Now if these characters were of some interest, I'd make a bid for this movie. As it is, I can only admire Benton's expertise in creating suspense out of such thin stuff.



Roy Scheider plays the victim's psychiatrist, a man singularly lacking in common sense. He seems to take every opportunity to needlessly expose himself to danger — such as taking a midnight stroll through some of New York City's more dimly lit streets.



MAKE YOUR
NEXT PARTY
UNIQUE
AT THE DETROIT SCIENCE CENTER
BUSINESS MEETINGS AND PARTIES
FASHION SHOWS
BAR AND BAT MITZVAHS
SWEET SIXTEENS
SPACE THEATRE AVAILABLE
ATTENDED PARKING
DETROIT SCIENCE CENTER
AT THE CULTURAL CENTER
833-1894 FOR INFORMATION AND
RESERVATIONS

CELEBRATE!
Celebrate the many good tastes of the
Mon Jin Lau on New Year's Eve

Our regular menu at regular prices.
Nosemakers, balloons, favors for Midnight Celebration.
Share our good taste with a friend.

MON JIN LAU
Mandarin • Szechwan • Hunan • Cantonese
Exotic Spirits
Maple Rd. at Stephenson Hwy. • Troy
689-2322

GENERAL CINEMA THEATRES
\$2.00
FOR ALL SHOWINGS THAT
START BEFORE 8 pm.

SOMERSET INN	STERLING HTS.
DOUBLE FEATURE	STILL OF THE NIGHT
Roy Scheider, Meryl Streep	Richard Gere
STILL OF THE NIGHT	AN OFFICER AND A GENTLEMAN
1:10 - 5:15 - 9:20 MON - SA	(PG)
6:30 - 9:30 SUN	1:45 - 4:30 - 7:00 - 9:30
10:30 - 11:30 MON - TUE	3:10 - 7:15

Season's Greetings
from Somerset Cinema

KISS ME GOODBYE

1:30 - 4:30 - 7:30 - 9:30
SALLY FIELD JAMES CAAN

SHOWCASE CINEMAS

STERLING HTS.	2500 VAN DYKE RD.
Clin Eastwood	BARBARA MATHIES CARRY-FRESH
Honkytonk Man	OPEN DAILY 11 AM - 11 PM
AIRPLANE II	48 HRS.
KISS ME GOODBYE	Trail of the Pink Panther
THE VERDICT	TOOTSIE

PONTIAC 1-2-3-4-5
2400 SO. TELEGRAPH RD. PONTIAC 322-0241

TOOTSIE	E.T.
48 HRS.	BURT REYNOLDS
THE VERDICT	Best Friends

PONTIAC 6-7-8-9-10
2405 SO. TELEGRAPH RD. PONTIAC 334-0811

TOOTSIE	Best Friends
48 HRS.	E.T.
THE VERDICT	BURT REYNOLDS

CALL THEATRE FOR SCREEN TIMES

She's a he

Dustin Hoffman (right) stars as Michael Dorsey, a dedicated actor with a reputation for being difficult who finally lands a steady job on a soap opera by masquerading as a woman in "Tootsie." Sidney Pollack, the film's producer, plays George Fields (left), Dorsey's high-powered New York agent.

ON THE TOWN
DINING AND ENTERTAINMENT GUIDE

SEA SHELL SURF & TURF RESTAURANT

Choice Steaks & Chops • Daily Fresh Seafood

HAPPY NEW YEAR!

MAKE YOUR DINNER RESERVATIONS

FOR NEW YEAR'S EVE

Serving from 4 pm - 12

1890 JOHN R. JUST N. of 13 Mile

CLOSED SUN. 689-1258

• • • • •

• • • • •

• • • • •

• • • • •

• • • • •

• • • • •

• • • • •

• • • • •

• • • • •

• • • • •

• • • • •

• • • • •

• • • • •

• • • • •

• • • • •

• • • • •

• • • • •

• • • • •

• • • • •

• • • • •

• • • • •

• • • • •

• • • • •

• • • • •

• • • • •

• • • • •

• • • • •

• • • • •

• • • • •

• • • • •

• • • • •

• • • • •

• • • • •

• • • • •

• • • • •

• • • • •

• • • • •

• • • • •

• • • • •

• • • • •

• • • • •

• • • • •

• • • • •

• • • • •

• • • • •

• • • • •

• • • • •

• • • • •

• • • • •

• • • • •

• • • • •

• • • • •

• • • • •

• • • • •

• • • • •

• • • • •

• • • • •

• • • • •

• • • • •

• • • • •

• • • • •

• • • • •

• • • • •

• • • • •

• • • • •

• • • • •

• • • • •

• • • • •

• • • • •

• • • • •

• • • • •

• • • • •

• • • • •

• • • • •

• • • • •

• • • • •

• • • • •

• • • • •

• • • • •

• • • • •

• • • • •

• • • • •

• • • • •

• • • • •

• • • • •

• • • • •

• • • • •

• • • • •

• • • • •

• • • • •

• • • • •

• • • • •

• • • • •

• • • • •

• • • • •

• • • • •

• • • • •

• • • • •

• • • • •

• • • • •

• • • • •

• • • • •

• • • • •

• • • • •

• • • • •

• • • • •

• • • • •

• • • • •

• • • • •

• • • • •

• • • • •

• • • • •

• • • • •

• • • • •

• • • • •

• • • • •

• • • • •

• • • • •

• • • • •

• • • • •

• • • • •

• • • • •

• • • • •

• • • • •

• • • • •

• • • • •

• • • • •

• • • • •

• • • • •

• • • • •

• • • • •

• • • • •

• • • • •

• • • • •

• • • • •

• • • • •

• • • • •

• • • • •

• • • • •

• • • • •

• • • • •

• • • • •

• • • • •

• • • • •

• • • • •

• • • • •

• • • • •

• • • • •

• • • • •

• • • • •

• • • • •

• • • • •

• • • • •

• • • • •

• • • • •

• • • • •

• • • • •

• • • • •

• • • • •

• • • • •

• • • • •

• • • • •

• • • • •

• • • • •

• • • • •

• • • • •

• • • • •

• • • • •

• • • • •

• • • • •

• • • • •

• • • • •

• • • • •

• • • • •

• • • • •

• • • • •

• • • • •

• • • • •

• • • • •

• • • • •

• • • • •

• • • • •

• • • • •

• • • • •

• • • • •

• • • • •

• • • • •

• • • • •

• • • • •

• • • • •

• • • • •

•