



the movies

Dan Greenberg

'Tightrope' keeps fans in suspense

"Tightrope" is tightly drawn although it loosens up from time to time and those slack moments detract from what is generally a pretty slick, tense cop-versus-psychopath story.

The film is well-done and exciting for those who like this genre, but viewers should have no illusions about what they're in for — two hours of explicit violence, nudity, obscenity and a wide variety of fairly explicit sexuality.

Clint Eastwood, worldwide box office champ and cynical hero of spaghetti westerns, returns with a "Dirty Harry" variation, the hard-boiled, tough detective with family problems, his professional problems, and the film's quality, also shift, from fast-paced action to psychological tension.

Eastwood is Detective Wes Block, homicide inspector in charge of the New Orleans PD task force searching for a psychopathic sex-stranger who is terrorizing the French Quarter, its sleazy inhabitants and most of the rest of the town.

THE USUAL blast-through-to-victory Dirty Harry character is tempered by Detective Block's family problems. His wife left him with two daughters, Amanda (Alison Eastwood, Clint's 12-year-old daughter) and Penny (Jennifer Beck).

Further complicating the situation, Block becomes involved with the New Orleans Rape Center director, Beryl Thibodeaux (Genevieve Bujo), and entangled in his unusual sexual preferences that have developed since his wife left.

To complete the cast, ever-faithful at his side, Detective Molinari (Dan Hedaya), Block's assistant, follows up on all the unpleasant details of their homicide investigations.

While the sex and violence in "Tightrope" is quite graphic, the character and situation development isn't. That murky quality dilutes the impact "Tightrope" might otherwise have had.

Although Detective Molinari begins to doubt his boss, those doubts are never explicit nor do he and Block have personal conversations. Molinari's lines never allow him to develop character beyond the flat, "Yes, sir, No, sir" level.

EASTWOOD'S tight-lipped acting style is overdue to the detriment of his characterization. If he would stop trying to deliver every line as if it had been written by Ernest Hemingway for Humphrey Bogart, he might appear more human. But then the fans pay for heroes not humanity.

The girls in his life do a bit better in character development (excluding the sleazy ones), particularly his daughter Alison whose naturalistic portrayal of a young girl forced by circumstances to cook and care for her father and younger sister is well drawn.

Her younger sister, Penny, is cute, in the best screen tradition, and Genevieve Bujoid brings considerable sensibility as the Rape Center director who becomes personally involved.

Feminists might rightly complain that the delicate question of rape and training women to protect themselves is handled somewhat lightly and in an indifferent manner not commensurate with the gravity of the issue.



Clint Eastwood is Detective Wes Block, who is hunting down a psychopathic killer in New Orleans in "Tightrope."

"Tightrope" generally looks and sounds like psychological detective thrillers ought to, having been filmed entirely on location in New Orleans, often after dark. Thus the mood and atmosphere match the murky, psychologically distorted character of subject and principals.

The soundtrack, with music by Lennie Niehaus, features a pleasant combination of New Orleans Dixieland and the old-time, soulful, dirty, barroom-saxophone sound. This completes the atmospheric quality that makes "Tightrope" a successful but violent detective thriller.

correction

The phone number for the Birmingham Theatre box office was incorrectly given in Thursday's Upcoming calendar in the Entertainment pages. The correct number is 644-3533.

Tickets go on sale Sunday for the 1984 Pulitzer Prize drama "Night, Mother," which opens the theater's fifth subscription season on Tuesday, Sept. 25. Academy Award-winning actress Mercedes McCambridge stars in the production, which will run through Sunday, Oct. 21.

The play by Martha Norman examines contemporary life and what gives it meaning, and relationships and communication.

Ticket prices range from \$18 to \$20. Low-priced previews will be offered Friday-Sunday, Sept. 21-23.

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Early releases are sold at winery

Oakland County is the home of Michigan's newest winery, the Seven Lakes Vineyards. Only a hefty stone's throw from Genesee County, the Holly winery opened this summer and is now beginning to market wines in suburban Detroit.

Winemaker and co-owner Chris Guest is also chief grape grower. It is with understanding pride that he walks his vineyard, showing off several acres of vignoles, seyval, aurora and de chaunc grapes that are in their third leaf.

"We wanted no part of the native American grape here, and we know we can't grow vinifera," Guest said, "though some neighbors have small plots of riesling and chardonnay." He has settled on growing well those hybrid grapes that tolerate North Oakland's bitter winters and frosty springs.

The early releases have all been whites and roses, of course. An excellent '83 vignoles has been sold out, but there are some small quantities of a fine white wine (aurora and vignoles) still available, as well as some of his early rose and apple wine efforts. The wines are chiefly sold at the winery, but if these places from the '84 crush hold, there will be enough to send some to market next year.

SOON TO BE released is a most promising de chaunce, a red of some character that Guest (and I) prefer to baco and foch, the more traditional reds from the hybrid grapes. Tasted recently before final blending, the components were most promising.

Here, without flying off to the Loire or Napa Valley, is a chance to see vine made. The size of the operation is part of its charm; it is small and self-contained. Visitors can see every operation in season, from grapes grown through harvest, crush, fermentation, storage, bottling and finishing. The winery is all under one roof adjacent to a pleasant tasting room.

Visitors are welcome 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. during the week and on Sunday afternoon with advance notice. A call ahead at any time would be appreciated and would assure the presence of someone to conduct a mini-tour and a tasting or two. Get directions when you

wine



Richard Watson

call (619-5886). The area north of Holly is not a well-marked tourist area.

A LATE JULY announcement was that the Bronie wine operation in southeastern Michigan has closed its doors. Long rumored, the event is significant in that it reflects our changing tastes in wine.

The 55-year-old winery has persisted in continuing to market wines made from native grapes. This practice is increasingly in jeopardy as tastes in wine develop.

Bronie and others from the southwestern part of the state have been forced to compete with inexpensive Bordeaux at \$4 a bottle and California jugs at \$6. As tastes develop in our population, and they assuredly have, the choice of a pink catawba vs a white xinfandel is no contest.

Michigan's newer wineries, Mawby and Good Harbor, both in Leelanau County, have realized this and focus exclusively on hybrids which are very attractive when made well. Tabor Hill is even more diverse in its offerings, but it too eschews the native grapes.

The case is paralleled even clearer in New York and Ohio where, especially in New York, great strides are being made with vinifera whites.

It is also encouraging that bottles from the better Michigan hybrid-oriented wineries are increasingly available on wine shelves in southeastern Michigan.

what's at the movies

ANOTHER COUNTRY (Unrated). Adapted from British stage hit about politics and homosexuality in an English boys school.

BOLEHO (Unrated). Adults only. What else would you expect from Bo Derek in the altogether?

CAREFUL, HE MIGHT HEAR YOU (PG). Australian film exploring the bitter struggle between two men to gain possession of young boy whose mother died in childbirth.

C.H.U.D. (R). That's an acronym for Canaballistic Humanoid Underground Dwellers. Need we say more?

DREAMSCAPE (PG-13). Top secret project targeting the President with a nightmare for a weapon, starring Max Von Sydow, Christopher Plummer, Eddie Albert and Kate Capshaw.

FLASHPOINT (R). Two Texas border patrolmen find buried Jeep with acetone, money and links to Kennedy assassination. Stars Kris Kristofferson, Treat Williams, Tess Harper and Jean Smart.

GHOSTBUSTERS (PG). Bill Murray, Dan Aykroyd and Harold Ramis as parapsychology research students trying to rid New York of menacing ghosts.

GREMLINS (PG). Technically well-done story of exotic pet whose offspring turn mean. Hoyt Axton, Zach Galligan and Phoebe

Cates in a Spielberg film too gross for the under-12 set.

INDIANA JONES AND THE TEMPLE OF DOOM (PG). Harrison Ford is back in another Spielberg epic adventure echoing "Raiders." Probably violent enough for an R rating.

THE MUPPETS TAKE MANHATTAN (G). Gazzo, Fozzie, Animal and Scooter star in Kermit's Broadway musical, and Miss Piggy finds romance.

PURPLE RAIN (R). Another rock music film with family problems mixed in. Features Prince and Apollonia Kotero.

RED DAWN (PG-13). Eight high school students resist armed invasion of the United States.

REVENGE OF THE NERDS (R). Tasteless, colorless collage comedy.

TIGHTROPE (R). Clint Eastwood as homicide inspector searching for psychotic killer. Good but dirty detective thriller with Genevieve Bujo and Clint's daughter Alison.

THE WOMAN IN RED (PG-13). A pleasant summer comedy about a middle-aged man and his sexual fantasies. Gene Wilder, Glenda Fadyen, Joseph Bologna star in film written and directed by Wilder.

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Fridays at 12:30 in the Twelve Mail Community Room
Sept. 7 Fashion Forecast, Fall '84
Fashion Consultants Barbara Carey and Barbara Mazer offer options and choices for your fall wardrobe.
Sept. 14 How to Handle Stress in Your Life
Psychologist Keith Lovick will discuss the negative and positive aspects of stress.
Sept. 21 Looking Good at Any Age
Shirley Eyer runner-up for Mrs. Michigan of 1983 will share her format on nutrition, exercise and beauty.
Sept. 28 Accessories Make the Difference
Barbara Carey and Barbara Mazer will demonstrate how the creative use of accessories can complete your fashion look.

A mini-series will be offered for the convenience of those who prefer evenings.
Thursdays at 7:00 p.m. in the Twelve Mail Community Room
Sept. 13 Fashion Forecast, Fall '84
Barbara Carey and Barbara Mazer
Sept. 20 Accessories Make the Difference
Barbara Carey and Barbara Mazer

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