



Tom Cruise is Lt. Pete "Maverick" Mitchell, an F-14 jet fighter pilot who falls in love with a U.S. Navy instructor, Charlotte "Charlie" Blackwood, played by Kelly McGillis, in "Top Gun."



the movies
Dan Greenberg

'Top Gun' proves girls get in way of action drama

No one has matched the incredulity which greeted Betty Ackerman when she slunk into Dr. Kildare's operating room and asked sensuously, "Did someone call for an anesthesiologist?"

No one, at least, until Kelly McGillis, in "Top Gun" (PG), switched her hips to the front of the U.S. Navy Weapons School, as Ph.D. Astrophysicist and Fighter Pilot Instructor Charlotte "Charlie" Blackwood.

Director George Roy Hill ("Butch Cassidy," "The Sting") noted some time ago that girls slow up action movies. Neither Producer Don Simpson and Jerry Bruckheimer nor Director Tony Scott have learned that simple lesson and "Top Gun" regularly grinds to a dead stop.

"Top Gun" gets you going right at the start with some pretty stunning footage of carrier-based F-14 maneuvers. But once Lt. Pete "Maverick" Mitchell (Tom Cruise) and his Radar Intercept Officer, Lt. Nick "Goose" Branshaw (Anthony Edwards), get transferred to Miramar Naval Air Station for advanced training, the entire film is grounded.

Project" (opens Friday June 13) solve the world's nuclear dilemma. All those connected with "Top Gun" and these other simple-minded movies claim they are presenting great love stories, worthwhile character studies and action films that people want. People may want them — and I imagine "Top Gun" will sell tickets — but it's skating on thin ice to believe the world works when rock music blares.

ALTHOUGH IT gets boring at the end, where our guys are shooting MIG's out of the sky in an improbably structured sequence, "Top Gun" does have some pretty good aerial footage.

That's a lot more than can be said for "Desert Hearts" (R), which has no action and little appeal. "Desert Hearts" will probably be billed as a sensitive story of forbidden love. Don't you believe it. Just take all the traditional boy-meets-girl clichés and set them up like tentacles in a girl-meets-girl story. That's the tale of Producer-Director Donna Deitch's low-budget (\$1.5 million) film.

While she is to be lauded for a professionally polished and good-looking film with credible acting, the script by Natalie Cooper and Deitch's directions are slow, self-consciously feminine (not feminist) and flounder in every imaginable cliché.

Vivian Bell (Helen Shaver) turns up (in 1959) at the Reno Dude, Director-to-be Hanch run by Frances Parker (Audra Lindley). Dr. Bell, a Ph.D. in literature at Columbia University, is amicably ending her 12-year-old marriage, to search for fulfillment.

FRANCES is a pretty neat lady. After all, not everyone can deliver lines like, "I've put a string of lights around my heart," without retching. Her son Walter (Alex McArthur) takes a shine to Vivian and so does his half-sister, Cay Rivers (Patricia Charbonneau).

In spite of Vivian's reservations and the community's disapproval, she and Cay live happily ever after as the Santa Fe Chinatown — that's a train, guys — pulls off into the sunset.

"Desert Hearts" probably is intended as a paean to feminine liberty, the search for self and the righteous beauty of lesbianism. In fact, it is slow, boring and over-utilizes repetitive, clichéd fades and horizontal wipes.

Wine drinkers, get out of that rut

Pity the poor wine drinker who is in a rut.

If, or she, usually purchases only Martini Zinfandel, White Sauvignon Blanc or else drinks only a single grape or else a wine from only a single winery. While all of these are, of course, dependable and predictable, it is such a boring way to operate when choices are so abundant.

Think of the joy of discovery, the pleasure of exploration and, yes, the sadness of disappointment when one plays the field, sampling unusual grapes from previously unknown wineries. There are today so many choices and such great diversity of styles it is truly a shame to stay all ways with the known, the sure thing.

To encourage the adventures among us, here are some releases from some California wineries new to our state, all offering selections of some merit, worthy of discovery. All are producing inexpensive wines that do not leave us impotent.

For those who drink kosher wines, the news is good indeed. The selection, heretofore sparse, has been dramatically expanded. There is now an alternative to Carmel wines in the form of Weinsteck Cellars of Headlands in Sonoma County. It has released four 1985 wines into our market: a rather fat White Zinfandel, a most decent Chardonnay (for

only \$9), a light, almost elegant Sauvignon Blanc and a Riesling. They are well-priced and well-made wines.

OF SOMEWHAT greater vinicultural interest is another winery, the Piccini Winery Ltd. of Temecula. Founded in 1981, it is located between San Diego and Ontario in Riverside County, neighbor to the Callaway estate. It is a family operation, making a frightening number of flavors (10), about half of them available locally now. There are a couple of Cabernets. A 1981 "House" release is described in the winery's literature somewhat immodestly as "probably the best wine for your money in California." It is light and pleasant, very drinkable and at under \$8 a decent value if not the "best." The 1982, about a dollar more, is more complex, tannic and fuller and will improve with age.

The 1982 Petite Sirah, a too infrequently issued varietal, is a gruff, assertive thing, full of rich, tough flavors, best used with highly spiced food. The 1983 Chardonnay has a nice hint of oak and some fruit. The 1984 Chenin Blanc, I enjoyed very much — very dry with hints of citrus, but at \$8 a bit steep. I have not yet tried the Riesling. To come later this summer are a Merlot and a Fume Blanc.



wine
Richard Watson

Most impressive overall of these newer wineries is Tepusquet Vineyards (the land of Ronald Reagan's Western White House), a lovely setting. The winery is currently showing a modestly priced line of everyday wines. I especially liked the Reserve Chardonnay (about \$9). There is a standard version as well, a bit cheaper.

Tepusquet Vineyards produces a fine 1983 Vin Blanc and a decent, full 1983 Claret, both sold in magnums at about \$6. The 1982 Vineyard Reserve is a Cabernet-Merlot blend at a 2 to 1 ratio. Most enjoyable.

And there is a White Cabernet, of course, because the winemaker presumably lacks Zinfandel to so denote, and a 1984 Cabernet of modest price and comparable quality. All in all, a winery to watch. Most attractive label concept as well.

A RECENT COLUMN commented most favorably on the 1984 Domaine

St. George Chardonnay, available locally at about \$5, but not noting the true producers of this success story. It is the Cambios Vineyards of Sonoma County, longtime producers of undistinguished Italian-styled wines (whatever that means). Now the 1985 is available, as good value as its predecessor. Its companion, a 1983 Cabernet Sauvignon, is less successful but a decent value at the same price.

Finally, another fine line also has come to our area. It is River Oaks, made as an everyday wine by prestigious Clos du Bois. Locally available only at Beverage Warehouse (Greenfield and 13 Mile roads in Beverly Hills) and Ann Arbor's Big Ten, the line consists of an excellent \$5 Chardonnay (1985), a decent 1983 Cabernet, a 1983 Riesling and a 1980 Zinfandel. In addition there is a Premium Red and a Premium White that is one of the best values around these days.

upcoming things to do

CONCERT BAND

"The Indomitable Teddy Roosevelt," a TV documentary on the life and times of the national leader, will be televised as a two-hour special 7-9 p.m. Sunday, June 1, on ABC-TV. The entire musical score is performed by Leonard B. Smith conducting the Detroit Concert Band.

BAKER'S LOUNGE

The Detroit/Munich Jazz Connection plays Monday-Wednesday, May 26-28, at Baker's Keyboard Lounge in Detroit. The Teddy Harris Jr. Quartet is booked for Thursday-Sunday, May 29 to June 1. For more information, call 864-1201.

SPRING SERIES

The biweekly spring series presented by the Motor City Theatre Organ Society continues at the Redford Theatre in Detroit with "Around the World in 80 Days" Friday-Saturday, May 30-31. Guest organist for the over-the-top and intermission is Norm Keating. Tickets are available at the box office.

'THE CITY'

The Afro-American Studio The-

atre's production, "The City," has returned for performances through Sunday, June 15, at the Detroit Waldorf School Auditorium in Indian Village. "The City," a proclamation of song and dance, has had two previous runs in Detroit. Tickets are \$6, or \$7 at the door. For more information, call 527-0277.

'CAROUSEL' OPENING

The historical Marquis Theatre of Northville has opened its first subscription season with "Carousel," musical by Rodgers and Hammerstein, through Sunday, June 15. Ticket prices range from \$8-\$12. For more information, call 349-8110 or 349-0888.

CASTING CALL

Actors for the musical "Gypsy" will be 5-7 p.m. Monday, May 26, and 7-8 p.m. Wednesday, May 28, for children ages 8-15, and 7-10 p.m. Monday, May 26, and 8-10 p.m. Wednesday, May 28, for adults. All are paid positions. For more information, call the theater at 349-8110 from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. Mondays-Fridays.

ELECTRONIC MUSIC

The Edward Weiss Ensemble will present "Sonic/Light," a multimedia performance with electronic music, at 8 p.m. Friday-Saturday, May 30-31, at the Detroit Artists Market. Tickets are \$4.50. For more information, call 952-0337.

CONCERT SERIES

The Clear Weather Concert Series will be held Monday, June 2, through Labor Day, Monday, Sept. 1, at the Backpocket in Detroit. Folk singer and songwriters will perform under the stars. For concert information, call 868-1084.

DETROIT REPERTORY

"A Touch of the Poet" by Eugene O'Neill continues through Sunday, June 22, at the Detroit Repertory Theatre. Performances are at 8:30 p.m. Thursdays-Saturdays and 7:30 p.m. Sundays. All tickets are \$7. For more information, call 868-1347.

FOLK FESTIVAL

Howard Armstrong, Ted Bogan and Tom Armstrong — the oldest traditional black stringband in America — will lead the lineup of more than two dozen performers at the eighth annual Ann Arbor Festival of Folk Song and Dance on Sunday, June 8, at Cobblestone Farm in Ann Arbor. Tickets at the gate are \$7 for the festival, \$4 for dance; \$9 for both children free. For more information, call 768-1052 or 668-0558.

'ODD COUPLE'

Nell Simon's "The Odd Couple" will be presented by Schoolcraft College's Theatre Department through Friday-Sunday, May 30-31 and June 1, in the Liberal Arts Theatre on campus in Livonia. Special prices are available for students and/or citizens groups of 10 or more for show-only performances May 30-31 and June 1. Tickets are on sale at the college bookstore. For further information, call 591-6400, Ext. 265.

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Helen Shaver (left) is Vivian Bell, who comes to Reno for a divorce and ends up being romantically attracted to a woman, Cay Rivers, portrayed by Patricia Charbonneau, in "Desert Hearts."