

MOVING PICTURES



Kevin Kline stars as Joey, a womanizing pizza parlor owner, and Tracey Ullman as his wife, Rosalie, in the comic love story, "I Love You to Death."

Kevin Kline is bright spot in 'I Love You to Death'

The first third of "I Love You to Death" (C-, R, 95 minutes) shows great promise.

Pizzeria owner Joey Boca (Kevin Kline) is rendered with masterful strokes. Kline's portrayal exudes joy of life and living as this incredible and very happy man makes pizza, fixes plumbing in the apartment building he owns and makes love to half dozen or so women every week — all the while maintaining a respectable family life.

He has two slightly overweight and undistinguished but generally acceptable children, Carla (Alissa Porter) and Dominic (Jon Kasdan), and a very funny Yugoslavian mother-in-law, Nadja (Joan Plowright).

A nephew-like relationship is maintained with the pizzeria's husband, Devo (River Phoenix), a slightly vacant and out-of-place hippie-type spiritualist.

But most of all, Joey has a wife, Rosalie (Tracey Ullman), who loves Joey so much that screenwriter John Kostmayer and director Lawrence Kasdan would have us believe she doesn't notice Joey's numerous infidelities. Even when Devo tells her what her eyes have seen, she passes it off as "all men look at girls."

Ullman's slightly ditsy, old-world woman living in and adapting to America is more than one could (or should) expect given the writing and directing. Rosalie's character, however, as written, is so unbelievable that NOW and other feminist groups ought to protest the insulting stereotype.

When Rosalie finally confronts irrefutable evidence of Joey's infidelity, her bumbling, confused and indecisive attempts at revenge wipe out any hope for an entertaining film.

The last two-thirds are muddled and murky and the impossible plot complications are solved by a patriarchal morality as unpleasant and offensive as the macho-masculinity with which the film begins.

To make matters worse, the pacing falters so badly that even the promise, however male-oriented, of the film's first third is never fulfilled. It's a shame to waste so many fine performances on a weak script interpreted by such poor direction.

Another disappointment this week is the mediocre "Crazy People" (C-, R, 90 minutes) which opens Wednesday, April 11. Emory Leeason (Dudley Moore) goes round the bend while working in the Drucker Ad Agency.

He is struck with a novel idea, advertisements should tell the truth. Naturally he is rapidly committed to a mental institution, Bennington Sanitarium, where he quickly gains the confidence of a number of disturbed individuals.

Not unexpectedly, in this murky fable about who is crazy and who isn't — and how nuts advertising is — Emory's honesty campaign catches fire and the nasty ad agency boss, Charles Drucker (T.T. Wadell), must depend on Emory and all the mental patients up at Bennington Sanitarium.

None of the relationships or situations are clearly developed as Charles Drucker's instant appeal to the Bennington inmates goes unexplained while his romance with Kathy Burgess (Daryl Hannah) is similarly under-developed. As with so much of "Crazy People," audiences



the movies

Dan Greenberg

Grading the movies

A+	Top marks - sure to please
A	Close behind - excellent
A-	Still in running for top honors
B+	Pretty good stuff, not perfect
B	Good
B-	Good but notable deficiencies
C+	Just a cut above average
C	Mediocre
C-	Not so hot and slipping fast
D+	The very best of the poor stuff
D	Poor
D-	It doesn't get much worse
F	Truly awful
Z	Reserved for the colossally bad
	No advanced screening

are forced to take it or leave it. I suggest the latter. This clever idea falls flat as a one-joke film with a great deal missing. There is, and should be, much more to a story about life and love and people and advertising.

"The First Power" (D, R, 95 minutes) is an unpleasantly violent story of a serial killer, Patrick Channing (Jeff Kober), who is executed for his crimes but his spirit returns and possesses other bodies in a quest for revenge against the detective, Russell Logan (Lou Diamond Phillips), who put him away in the first place.

In his mission to rid the world of Channing's evil spirit, Logan enlists the aid of a psychic, Tess Seaton (Tracy Griffith), who conveniently enough is the film's romantic involvement. Sound trite? Right.

After the first 30 minutes, the tension evaporates and "The First Power" is bloody and inconsistent as it muddles through a variety of repulsive fights between Logan and the various bodies Channing's spirit inhabits.

Ever listen to a fairly bright kid make up a story to explain why he missed curfew — the kind where the facts and events fit neatly on the surface but the whole story collapses with one or two timely questions?

"Impulse" (D+, 120 minutes) is a lot like that. Theresa Russell's emotionally complex character and performance trip over bulky, unbelievable plot devices. This thriller about a female undercover cop who gets caught on the wrong side of murder by being in the wrong place at the wrong time is overlong and unrelentingly dark.

So dark in fact that director Sandra Locke rarely shows any character's full face unless the situation absolutely demands it. The technique is interesting at first, frustrating for a while and irritating in the end. Kind of like the film as a whole. There are some entertaining and suspenseful

moments but Russell and Jeff Fahey can't save enough of "Impulse" to make it worth while.

Reviewed by Susan Fincham
When "Cry-Baby" (B-, PG-13) Johnny Depp steps into focus the female audience swoons, as in any heart-throb, teen-age movie. After the first few minutes, however, viewers soon discover that with its spirit of the '50s, "Cry-Baby" has potential as a cult classic.

The plot is altogether common but director John Waters is determined to make everything else fantasy in this world of teenage juvenile delinquents who call themselves "drapes" who are juxtaposed to school-minded, clean-cut "squares."

Johnny Depp, in the title role, is a draper who falls in love with Allison (Amy Locane), a square. His challenge is to win her love and keep it. As the plot develops, wild and bizarre characters reflecting and satirizing the '50s are introduced.

The movie relies heavily on '50s music with an Elvis style voice dubbed in for Johnny. Exaggerated costumes and make-up along with unusual personalities and simple dialog quite likely will make a success of this teen-age trip down nostalgia lane.

Reviewed by Debbie Domm
"Ernest Goes to Jail" (P) (PG) because someone stole his identity. Well, I'm sure he'll work it out. Knowwhatmean, Vern?

STILL PLAYING:

"Bad Influence" (B) (R). Slow start speeds up after a while and becomes an effective thriller as Rob Lowe corrupts James Spader.

"Blue Steel" (C+) (R) 102 minutes. Fine but trite and bloody psychological thriller with Jamie Lee Curtis as city cop with a vengeance.

"Born on the Fourth of July" (A) (R) 144 minutes. Touching, graphically disturbing, poignant, frightening autobiography of Ron Kovic (Tom Cruise), a paraplegic Viet Vet.

"Cinema Paradiso" (A-, 120 minutes). Excellent story of Alfredo (Philippe Noiret), the projectionist in a small Sicilian town just after World War II.

"Coupe de Ville" (A-, PG-13, 100 minutes).

Touching story of brotherly hate, fatherly love and the importance of family bonds.

"Driving Miss Daisy" (A) (PG) 100 minutes.

Fine acting highlights personal drama of Jewish widow (Jessica Tandy) chauffeured by a black man (摩根·弗里曼) set against southern changes from 1948-1972.

"Etemities: A Love Story" (R). Man emotionally involved with second wife and mistress is distressed when his first wife — presumed dead in the Holocaust — turns up.

"The Fourth War" (C+, R, 90 minutes). An American colonel and his Russian counterpart, two cold-war warriors without a war, square off and start their own. "Glory" (A) (R) 110 minutes.

The glory of the first black infantry regiment during the Civil War is captured in this outstanding film.

"The Headmaster's Tale" (B) (R) 109 minutes. Compelling but structurally flawed futuristic tale of American gone wrong with permissiveness, pollution and radiation.

"Hard to Kill" (G) (R). Martial arts film.

"Henry V" (unrated). Kenneth Branagh's superb new adaptation of Shakespeare's play. The director stars in the title role.

ALTERNATIVE VIEWING

'Cinema' deserves honor

By John Monaghan
special writer

A beam of light shoots from the sculpted lion's mouth that frames the projection booth window. Look at it long enough and the lion comes to life, breathing fire.

For Toto, the 7-year-old hero of "Cinema Paradiso," the movies have this powerful, mesmerizing effect. Director Giuseppe Tornatore's reflections on a lifelong love affair with the movies was quickly booked into the Maple Theatre after winning the Academy Award for best foreign film. It's a touching tearjerker, full of memorable characters.

In a tiny Italian village shortly after World War II, young Toto falls asleep as an altar boy but absolutely adores the movies. He watches curiously as his puritanical church pastor screens upcoming movies privately, signaling the projectionist with a bell for the scenes that must be cut.

As the film unfolds for an audience the following weekend, a lover's embrace leads to an awkward cut and an entirely different scene. The villagers don't see a screen kiss until the mid 1950s.

Toto's interest in movies grows into an obsession. When the projectionist (wonderfully played by Philippe Noiret) almost perishes in a fire caused by the films' flammable silver nitrate, Toto gets his chance

to run the machine. The relationship that develops between the boy and the old man, now blind, becomes the most powerful part of the film.

Three actors play Toto at various stages of his life. Salvatore Cascio fares best as the young boy. Later, the film dwells on the teenage Toto's quest for a beautiful young woman only to be separated from her by the military conscription.

Most fascinating, "Cinema Paradiso" paints a vivid picture of the power of movies. The rowdy audience at the Cinema Paradiso sets

the same enjoyment out of the movies as the balcony denizens of "Children of Paradise" did from the theater. Glimpses of films from Ford, Visconti, Renoir and Chaplin also appear on the screen.

Director Tornatore isn't the first filmmaker to compose a love letter to the movies. In many ways, however, he has written an obituary for the local moviehouse, showing it in the halcyon days when it was a village's sole and very popular entertainment to decay and demolition in the impersonal age of videotape.



Philippe Noiret plays the projectionist and Salvatore Cascio the young Toto in Giuseppe Tornatore's Academy Award-winning "Cinema Paradiso."

SCREEN SCENE

DETROIT FILM THEATRE, Detroit Institute of Arts, 5200 Woodward Ave., Detroit. Call 833-2323 for information. (\$4)

"Too Beautiful for You" (France — 1959). April 13-15 (call for show times). Gerard Depardieu stars as a successful businessman, married to an exquisite young woman, who finds himself hopelessly infatuated with a plump new secretary. Cynical satire from French director Bertrand Blier ("Get Out Your Handkerchiefs").

DETROIT PUBLIC LIBRARY, 5201 Woodward Ave., Detroit. Call 833-4048 for information. (\$20-25 season membership). WWII — "From Here to Eternity" (USA — 1953) and "Crash Dive" (USA — 1943) beginning at 7 p.m. April 13-14. Two views of World War II shown in two Academy Award-winning films. "Eternity" stars Burt Lancaster, Frank Sinatra and Montgomery Clift in a melodramatic tale

of the days right after the bombing of Pearl Harbor. "Crash Dive" offers a love story set aboard a submarine. With Tyrone Power, Dana Andrews and Anne Baxter.

DETROIT SCIENCE CENTER, 5020 John R, Detroit. Call 577-8400 for information. (\$2-5)

"Seasons," through April 30. William Shatner narrates this study of the seasons, with music by Vivaldi and images that will take your breath away. Shown on the giant domed Omnimax.

HENRY FORD CENTENNIAL LIBRARY, 16301 Michigan Ave., Dearborn. Call 943-2330 for information. (Free.)

"Martin Luther," 7 p.m. April 9. The dramatized life of the famed 16th century theologian, who, separated from his mother church, establishes his own sect of Christianity.

LIVONIA MALL, Seven Mile at

Middlebelt, Livonia. Call 476-1166 for information. (Free.)

"Thunder Road" (USA — 1953). 10 a.m. April 10. Robert Mitchum cowrote and starred in this cult classic about a stubborn Tennessee moonshiner who refuses to get mixed up with the Mob. Full of fast cars and memorable dialogue. As part of the mall's monthlong tribute to Mitchum.

MICHIGAN THEATRE, 603 E. Liberty, Ann Arbor. Call 668-8397 for information. (\$4, \$3.25 students and senior citizens)

"Weekend" (France — 1968). 7 p.m. April 15. Often considered Jean Luc-Godard's masterpiece, an apocalyptic vision of the collapse of Western civilization, about a young couple and their in-laws embarking on a weekend vacation, only to find themselves trapped in a traffic jam. They encounter everything from crash victims to cannibals.

— John Monaghan



April 20, 1990
9 a.m. — 3 p.m.

Independence Oaks Nature Center
Independence Oaks County Park
9501 Sashabaw Road
2 1/2 miles north of I-75
Clarkston, MI 48016
625-6473

Celebrate the 20th anniversary of Earth Day.

More than 20 groups involved with the environment will be on hand to provide information on topics such as:
recycling • groundwater • habitat conservation
energy conservation • environmental education
bird feeding • tree planting • and much more

JIMMY LAUNCE
WJR RADIO BROADCAST
10 A.M. — NOON

Observer & Eccentric
NEWSPAPERS



OAKLAND COUNTY PARKS

The Earth Fair is another program made possible through Oakland County Parks and Recreation Commission millage funds, supported by Oakland County residents.

VIDEOS
A ROBOT
SING-A-LONG
MAGIC SHOWS
NATURE HIKES
LIVE BIRDS OF PREY
FREE TREE SAPLINGS
LOTS OF ACTIVITIES FOR KIDS
CHARACTERIZATION STAGE SHIT

