

'Kisses' revives tried and true formula

PASS THE POPCORN



LeAnne Rogers

A tried and true formula goes back to the beginning of movies and probably stories around a fire in the cave. That in a nutshell is the plot of the 1992 film "I Don't Buy Kisses Anymore."

Jason Alexander, a familiar face as Seinfeld's television pal

Rather anxious about impressing this woman, he orders and consumes two full dinners. Friendly though not overly encouraging, Nia Peoples tries to help him out and brings him along to her gym where he starts losing weight and gaining confidence.

George, plays the shoe salesman who consoles and abuses himself with food, in particular a pound of chocolate kisses from the candy store after work each night. We see him as a young boy helping his father in the family shoe store, a precocious boy fussed over by the old ladies and popping chocolate candies.

The woman he meets, played by Nia Peoples, is a graduate student. She sings and plays piano at her uncle's Italian restaurant, where her new admirer becomes a regular customer. He can certainly be a boon to a restaurant.

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Peoples goes out with him as a casual basis, then starts showing a lot of interest in getting to know him better. She naturally has an ulterior motive — she is writing her master's thesis on compulsive eating and finds him an ideal subject.

This movie is nothing if not predictable as Alexander is devastated when he finds out he was a human lab rat and about a false

although well-intentioned statement from Peoples.

Will they work it out in the end? Not a lot of suspension in that question.

This isn't a bad film although a puzzling one. The puzzle, naturally, is why anyone would want to remake a film without doing it better or in this case even as well.

Alexander is fine as the unhappy shoe salesman who needs to stop living with his loud Jewish mother, naturally played by Lainie Kazan, who always has him on a diet then tries to sabotage him when he starts getting out more.

There is sort of a red herring issue about religious differences. Peoples plays an Italian Catholic, but its never looked at seriously.

There is one really annoying aspect to this picture. Peoples is supposed to be leading sing-alongs of Italian songs at a family-owned restaurant. Her voice is so wispy and overdone she sounds like Shelley Fabares gone Chef Boyardee.

"I Don't Buy Kisses Anymore" is available on cassette at your local video store. If you have a question or comment for LeAnne Rogers, send it to Street Scene, Observer & Economist Newspaper, 36251 Schoolcraft, Livonia 48150. You also can leave a message by calling her at 953-2103.



True Love: Nia Peoples plays a graduate student who finds true love in spite of herself in "I Don't Buy Kisses Anymore."

SCREEN SCENE

DETROIT FILM SOCIETY
Detroit Public Library, 6201 Woodward Ave., Detroit. Call 833-4048 for information. \$25 series membership; \$4 individual admission.

"The Razor's Edge" (USA — 1946) and "42nd Street" (USA — 1933) share a double bill beginning at 7 p.m. Dec. 11-12. The first (and best) adaptation of the Somerset Maugham novel stars Tyrone Power as a World War I veteran (Tyrone Power) facing a crossroads. He must decide between the comfort and wealth of marriage to a beautiful woman (Gene Tierney) or an endless search for truth. "42nd Street" is the granddaddy of backstage musicals, starring Warner Baxter as an

overworked director trying to juggle a quirky ensemble including Ruby Keeler and Ginger Rogers.

HENRY FORD CENTENNIAL LIBRARY
13650 Michigan Ave., Dearborn. Call 943-2330 for information. (Free)

"Tony Draws a Horse" (Britain — 1951), 7 p.m. Dec. 7. When Tony, the son of a doctor and a psychiatrist, draws a naughty picture on his father's office wall, he sets off a chain of comical events. Cecil Parker and Derek Bond star.

MAPLE THEATRE
4135 Maple Road, Bloomfield Hills. Call 855-9090 for show

times. (\$5.75 evenings; \$2.95 twilight)

"Flirting" (Australia — 1991). A coming-of-age film in which an outsider at a boarding school in the '60s falls for a fellow outcast at a nearby girl's school.

MICHIGAN THEATRE
603 E. Liberty, Ann Arbor. Call 668-8397 for information. (\$5; \$4 students and senior citizens)

"Being There" (USA — 1979), 7 p.m. Dec. 8. Peter Sellers plays Chance, a simple-minded gardener who views the world as he does television, watching and reacting. Director Hal Ashby injects the same comic quirkiness he did in "Harold and Maude" years before.

"Howard's End" (Britain — 1992), 7 p.m. Dec. 9-10. Another great E.M. Forster adaptation, this time about an enchanted English summer home and the lure it has for longtime owner Vanessa Redgrave and the woman she wants to inherit it (Emma Thompson).

"1991: The Year Punk Broke" (USA — 1992), Dec. 10-26 (call for show times). Director Dave Markey's offbeat document of Sonic Youth's 1991 European tour, including footage of their then-unknown warm-up band Nirvana. Also tunes from Dinosaur Jr., The Ramones, Gumball and Babes in Toyland.

— John Monaghan

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