



# 'The Secret Garden': tale of spiritual, physical uplifting

**W**A forbidding Gothic house on the English moors, a family with a dark secret and a beautiful, hidden garden with an air of enchantment make up the magical world of "The Secret Garden." Based on the 1908 children's classic by Frances Hodgson Burnett, the movie opens Friday at suburban theaters.

In a story of physical rejuvenation and spiritual renewal, the lives of three lonely children and an embittered adult are changed through their involvement in restoring an old walled garden.

The role of truant, independent Mary Lennox is played by Kate Maberly, who at 10 is already a veteran of British television productions.

While living with her self-involved parents in India, Mary endures their lack of interest. Orphaned when they die of a plague, Mary returns to England as a lonely wild child. Through friendships forged in the garden, she evolves from a spoiled, angry child to a happy, creative young girl.

Mary learns to follow her own instincts and defies her adult guardians when she tries to help another angry, spoiled youngster, Colin Craven, played by newcomer Heydon Prowse. It's Colin's father, Lord Craven (John Lynch), who owns the estate on which the garden is rediscovered by the children.

Drowning in his grief over his young wife's death, Lord Craven

**PREVIEW**

gives over much of the bedridden Colin's care to the housekeeper, Mrs. Medlock, played by Academy Award winner Maggie Smith.

Together, Colin and Mary befriend two local children, Dickon (Andrew Knott) and his sister Martha (Laura Crossley), who works in Craven's house. Knott and Crossley are both young veterans of the BBC soap, "Coronation Street," seen in the Detroit area on CBC Channel 9 from Windsor.

The garden, with its pivotal role in the story, almost qualifies as another cast member. Instead of using an existing garden, production designer Stuart Craig decided to build one. After studying both famous and obscure gardens, Craig and the filmmakers decided to construct their walled paradise around a ruined abbey reminiscent of Yorkshire's historic Fountains Abbey, a popular attraction in northern England.

"We looked into the possibility of building the garden at Fountains, but it's one of the country's most visited places and it made more sense to build a ruin in the gardens at Pinewood Studios and construct our garden there," Craig said.

In addition, Dickon's love of animals required filmmakers to fill the garden with oh-so-cute lambs, goats, squirrels, crows, geese, ducks, rabbits, foxes and "Albert the dog."

Special effects came into play to help the garden bloom.

"From the moment Mary and Dickon put the first tily bulb into the ground together, we wanted to show they were creating something unusual and not completely of this world," said producer Fred Fuchs.

"Their ability to replant and cultivate this enormous garden, their success in helping Colin become strong and healthy—all of these events are metaphors for the internal blossoming of their spirits."

Time-lapse photography was used to lend a fairy-tale quality to the blooming garden.

The film's director, Agnieszka Holland, a native of Poland, won international acclaim for her films, "Europa Europa," and "Olivier Olivier."

A participant in the Prague Spring of 1968 and a survivor of Communist oppression of her work, Holland's films are usually far from lighthearted.

As a child in Poland, "The Secret Garden" was one of her favorite books. She's turned it into perhaps her most optimistic film to date with an unabashedly joyous ending.

"The children in this story experience loss, pain, loneliness and anger and they learn to love, trust and help one another," she said. "These emotions and experiences are central to adults and children; I think they're one reason this story has been so well loved by entire families through the years."

Made under the aegis of executive producer Francis Ford Cop-

pola's American Zoetrope for Warner Bros., "The Secret Garden" is Holland's first big budget Hollywood film.

"The Secret Garden" is rated G.

Share your comments about

"The Secret Garden" and other newly released movies with your friends and neighbors on our movie page. Limit your mini-reviews to 100 words and send them to the Observer & Eccentric Newspapers, Attention: Keely Wygonik, 36251

Schoolcraft, Livonia, 48160. Or fax your review to her at 691-7279. Reviews should include your name, address and a daytime telephone number. If you have any questions call Keely Wygonik, 953-2105.



Family tale: A game of hide-and-go-seek delights Dickon (Andrew Knott), Colin (Heydon Prowse) and Mary (Kate Maberly) in Warner Bros.' new film of the classic family story, "The Secret Garden."

# Kinetic energy keeps viewers caught up in 'The Fugitive'

**JOHN MONAGHAN**

The locate and supporting characters changed weekly but the final image remained the same: Richard Kimble, the title character in "The Fugitive," walking alone toward an uncertain future.

A new film version of the existential and wildly popular 1960s television series crams four seasons of action into just over two hours. And though the movie doesn't know when to quit, it should keep you planted on the edge of your seat.

Harrison Ford now plays Richard Kimble, the prominent Chicago surgeon who arrived home one night to find his wife being assaulted by a one-armed man. When the police arrive, evidence mounts against the innocent

**REVIEW**

Kimble, who is tried and sentenced to death by lethal injection.

A mishap on route to Death Row sends Kimble's prison bus tumbling in front of an oncoming train. The doctor escapes and heads back to Chicago to find the real killer.

Ford, who starts the film with a shaggy professor's beard, brings surprising depth to Kimble. He fills in emotional gaps left untouched by TV's David Janssen, whose stiffness and stoicism defined that oh-so-serious show.

Character actor Tommy Lee Jones ("Lonesome Dove"), meanwhile, brings humor to his part of Sam Gerard, the U.S. marshal determined to get his man.

Early in the chase, the tempo-

rarily trapped Kimble makes it clear once again that he didn't kill his wife. Gerard answers equally honestly, "I don't care."

For the tenacious Gerard, just like the makers of this movie, Kimble is simply an excuse to mount an epic chase. After all, the fugitive is no mad-dog killer on the loose. Time and again, he shows how humane he really is.

The filmmakers give nods to Alfred Hitchcock, from the wrong man theme to the use of familiar locations, here Chicago's St. Patrick's Day parade and a massive dam. The movie also has its own kinetic energy that keeps it run-

ning almost to the final frame.

I say almost because "The Fugitive," like so many Hollywood projects, isn't satisfied with one slam-bang ending. There are no fewer than four climaxes here, giving the audience its money's worth but also dragging the movie out longer than it deserves.

This is nothing compared to the mistakes "The Fugitive" could have made, such as adding romantic interest to Richard's already complicated life. There are also more brains and less bloodshed than in your typical movie of this type.

Cleverly plotted and engagingly

acted, "The Fugitive" is something rare: a trip back to TV's golden age that in many ways improves upon its source.

"The Fugitive" is now showing at these suburban theaters: AMC Old Orchard, GCC Novi Town Center, Showcase Dearborn, Showcase Westland, AMC Southfield City, AMC Wonderland,

Showcase Pontiac, Star Rochester, AMC Laurel Park and Showcase Auburn Hills.

To leave a message for John Monaghan, dial 953-2047, mailbox number 1866, on a Touch-Tone phone, fax him a note at 691-7279, or write him in care of Entertainment, Observer & Eccentric Newspapers, 36251 Schoolcraft, Livonia 48160.

**FILM CLIPS**

**"THE FUGITIVE"**

Released by: Warner Bros.  
Starring: Harrison Ford, Tommy Lee Jones  
Directed by: Andrew Davis  
Produced by: Arnold Kopelson  
Screenplay by: Jeb Stuart and David Twohy  
Rated: PG-13 (Parents are strongly cautioned. Some material may be inappropriate for young children.)  
Running time: 2 hours, 23 minutes  
Rating (out of a possible four):

Key: Don't miss it (●) (●) (●) (●)  
Strongly recommended (●) (●) (●)  
Worth a look (●) (●)  
Walk for video (●)

**STEPHEN VAUGHAN**

Action-drama: Dr. Richard Kimble (Harrison Ford) is an innocent man convicted of his wife's murder and on the run in a desperate attempt to track down the real killer in Warner Bros.' movie version of the television classic, "The Fugitive."

**"DESTINED TO BECOME A CLASSIC. Two Thumbs Up!"**

"A marvelous, magical movie that transcends age and background. A beautifully told tale that's visually stunning and brilliantly directed."  
-Paul Wunder, WRAL RADIO

"Enchanting, deeply moving and exquisitely beautiful, 'The Secret Garden' is one of the year's best films."  
-Jim Sprada, FOX RADIO

"Pure enchantment. Family entertainment hasn't had it this good in a long time."  
-TODD LEVIT

"Beautiful and timeless. A vision of loveliness."  
-LIVE! CREW, STATION 5700, FOX-TV

"A surefire hit!"  
-THEATRE WORLD, SCHLITZ, STORVORKE

"Beautiful. An instant classic."  
-Joan Rubin Buck, VOGUE

"Beautiful, moving and exhilarating. Holland makes a magical connection to the child in every adult and the adult in every child."  
-Hub Campbell, NEWSPAPERS

"Gorgeous and captivating."  
-MAGAZINE, SNAK PREVIEW/SPS

**THE SECRET GARDEN**

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