

GOING TO THE MOVIES



Angelic face masks evil heart in 'The Good Son'

Henry Evans (Macaulay Culkin) is a boy with secrets in "The Good Son," opening Friday at suburban movie theaters.

On the surface a bright child who is loving to his parents, protective of his sister and loyal to his friends, Henry has a deadly sense of play, which would horrify those around him if they knew the thoughts he keeps hidden behind that angelic face.

But what an adult cannot — or will not — see is often visible to another child. When Mark Evans (Elijah Wood), Henry's cousin, comes to live with his relatives following the death of his mother, Mark quickly comes to learn that evil has many faces. But will anyone believe him?

Twentieth Century Fox presents "The Good Son," a Joseph Ruben film starring Macaulay Culkin and Elijah Wood. The film is directed by Joseph Ruben, produced by Mary Anne Page and Joseph Ruben, and written by Jon McEwan.

"The Good Son" also stars Wendy Crewson, David Morse

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and Jacqueline Brookes. It is rated R (Restricted Under 18 requires accompanying parent or guardian).

"The movie is about two kids — one good, one bad," said director Joseph Ruben, previously responsible for such hit thrillers as "Sleeping With the Enemy" and "The Stepfather."

"But at its core, it's about evil, pure, unexplainable evil. It's about evil in an unexpected place — inside a beautiful, charming 12-year-old boy. I think the story is almost primal in that it's saying there's not necessarily any cause for this evil. Despite having great parents, Henry, at his very core, is truly bad."

In "The Good Son," Mark knows what Henry is up to, but no one will listen because what he's accusing Henry of is impossible to believe.

Susan Evans (Wendy Crewson) portrays Henry's mother and the one person Mark views as a kindred spirit in the Evans house. But Susan silently carries a huge burden of guilt, believing the ac-

cidental drowning of her youngest child was her fault.

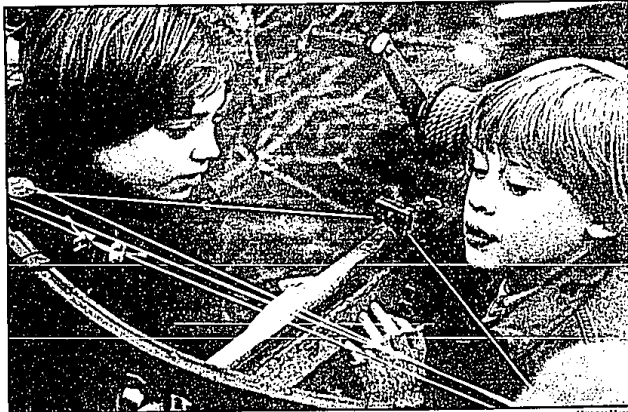
"The Good Son" also stars Daniel Hugh Kelly as Wallace Evans, Henry's father, who struggles to understand and protect his family from Mark's seemingly bizarre behavior.

David Morse portrays Jack Evans, Mark's father, who with great reluctance leaves his only son in the care of his brother's family shortly after the death of his wife.

"Elijah (Mark) has such a wonderful face and such a winning way about him," said director Joseph Ruben.

"I thought this movie was going to be a kind of nightmare, directing two 12-year-olds, but both Mac and Elijah are actors. They concentrate, they stay focused; they're not like kids in that respect."

To let us know what you think of "The Good Son" or any other newly released movie, call Keely Wygonih, Entertainment editor, 953-2105. Fax comments to 591-7279 or write: Observer & Eccentric Newspapers, Inc., 36251 Schoolcraft, Livonia, MI 48150.



Bad Influence: Macaulay Culkin (right) is evil-minded Henry Evans and Elijah Wood his goodhearted cousin, Mark, in "The Good Son."

'Into the West': It's likable though unbelievable



JOHN MONAGHAN

Like wide-eyed kids huddled around the campfire of an old Irish storyteller, we're all suckers for a well-spun yarn.

Take "Into the West," the story of two boys and a mystical horse

that works a rare kind of magic once you're willing to check your disbelief at the door.

On the outskirts of Dublin, a majestic white horse appears out of nowhere and follows home an old gypsy tinker. The animal immediately takes a shine to the man's grandsons, who try to board the horse in their apartment.

When the police impound the horse and sell it to a wealthy businessman, the boys find him and gallop away. Fanciful themselves cowboys from American movies, they head west with a posse in hot pursuit.

The idea that the whole country takes such an interest in a single horse is one of the smaller pills you have to swallow in "Into the West." The movie doesn't work so much on logic as on heart, a specific brand of Irish heart seen most recently in "Hear My Song," "The Playboys" and even "The Commitments."

Jim Sheridan, who wrote "My Left Foot," provides the screenplay, a road movie with some gen-

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uinely charming moments. When the boys, Oastle and Tio, tire of sleeping outdoors, they sneak into a movie theater after hours and gorge themselves on popcorn and fruit punch. So does the horse.

Director Mike Newell pulls in the reins on overly precious moments, something he was unable to do in his goopy and overrated "Enchanted April."

Sometimes, the shaggy horse story does get away from him, especially in relation to Papa Riley (Gabriel Byrne), who loves the kids but has been unable to do right by them since their mother died. We hear what a fearless man he once was but never feel we know him, even when he finds redemption at film's end.

Ellen Barkin co-stars as a red-haired tinker woman, but her brogue is so bad that she only has a handful of lines. When she picks up a hunk of coal at a buried campsite and announces that the boys have been gone for six hours, we can't help but snicker.

The boys, played by Rory Conroy and David Kelly, lack any such Hollywood pretensions. They're cute all right, but in a grimy urchin sort of way. They look truly pathetic when singing for shillings or in the dreary confines of The Tower, the Dublin housing

project where they live instead of the open road.

"Into the West" pays tribute to the romance of tinkers, whose caravans still dot the Irish countryside. "We all have a bit of the traveler in us," Papa Riley announces, "but we never find what we're looking for."

The movie is about that endless search, the child-like faith, that something better lies just around the next bend. For the boys, the horse symbolizes the protective, free-spirited mother that died during Oastle's birth.

Stunning shots of the Irish

landscape contrast with the abandoned cars and burning garbage cans of the city. Waterfalls, ancient ruins on emerald green fields and the cranking coastal waves tempt us all back to a life on the road.

Call it the luck of the Irish that "Into the West" got made at all and a minor miracle that it has received wide distribution. While well-crafted and inherently likable, the offbeat approach and thick Irish accents can't help but disappoint family audiences expecting a four-legged cousin to "Free Willy."

"Into the West" is now playing at these suburban movie theaters: AMC Americana West, AMC Southfield City, Showcase Auburn Hills, Showcase Dearborn, Showcase Westland, Star Winchester, GCC Canton Cinema, Showcase Pontiac, Star John R, United Artists 12 Oaks.

To leave a message for John Monaghan, dial 953-2047, mailbox number 1866, on a touch-tone phone, fax him a note at 591-7279, or write him in care of Entertainment, Observer & Eccentric Newspapers, 36251 Schoolcraft, Livonia 48150.



Family feature: Ciaran Fitzgerald and Ruaidhri Conroy with Tír na nÓg, a beautiful and magical horse they rescue in "Into the West," an adventure film for the whole family.

FILM CLIPS

"INTO THE WEST"

Released by: Miramax Films
Starring: Gabriel Byrne, Ellen Barkin, Ciaran Fitzgerald, Ruaidhri (Rory) Conroy, and Johnny Murphy
Directed by: Mike Newell
Produced by: Jonathan Cavendish and Tim Palmer
Written by: Jim Sheridan
Running time: One hour, eight minutes
Rated: PG (Some material may not be suitable for pre-teenagers)
Rating (out of a possible four)

Key: Don't miss it ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐

Strongly recommended ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐

Worth a look ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐

Wait for video ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐

Studio captures 'The Age of Innocence'

Using scenes from the new Columbia Pictures movie "The Age of Innocence" as its inspiration, Studio 330 has created a window display that depicts a lifestyle of beauty and elegance from a different time.

Studio 330, a gift gallery, is in the Bloomfield Plaza, 6666 Telegraph at Maple, in Bloomfield Township. Owner Randy Forester and window designer Barbara Mandell captured the elegance and style depicted in Columbia Pictures' new film. Hours are 10

a.m. to 6 p.m. Monday through Saturday and 10 a.m. to 8 p.m. Thursday.

"Age of Innocence" now showing on two screens at the AMC Maple in Bloomfield Township, brings to life the elegance of fashionable New York society in the 1870s. The film is based on the Pulitzer Prize-winning novel by Edith Wharton.

As the film opens, Newland Archer (Daniel Day-Lewis) is engaged to May Welland (Winona Ryder) and is urging her to hurry

the date of their wedding. Their match embodies the character of New York with its tyranny of family lineage and social standing.

Ellen Olenska (Michelle Pfeiffer), May's cousin, has just returned from Europe. Newland is captivated by Ellen. Her honest nature and mysterious authority of her beauty point up the constraints of his own society and inexperience of his fiancée. He finds a kindred soul in Ellen, and they fall passionately in love.

Now Newland must choose between May and the world he knows and Ellen the world he dreams of having.

The story takes place among the privileged of old New York, an insular, highly structured world concerned mainly with keeping up appearances and maintaining strict social order.

As Wharton, who grew up in this "privileged" society describes, it was "a hypocritical world where the real thing was never said, or done, or even thought."



PHILIP CARUSO

Love story: May Welland (Winona Ryder) and Newland Archer (Daniel Day-Lewis) are recently engaged in "The Age of Innocence," a Columbia Pictures release based on the Pulitzer Prize-winning novel by Edith Wharton.

Meet movie quiz book author

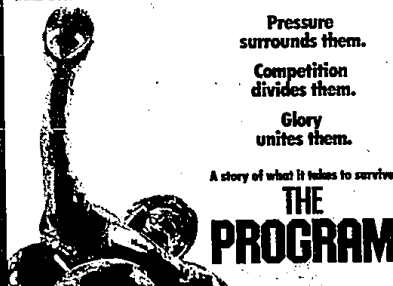
WXYT radio talk show host David Newman will be signing copies of his new book, "David Newman's Movie Quiz Book" (Raptor Press, \$12.50) at 7 p.m. Thursday, Oct. 7, in Borders Book Shop, Beverly Hills.

For nine years, Newman has entertained listeners with his monthly movie quiz. "David Newman's Movie Quiz Book"

contains 1,000 questions taken from these quizzes and provides the answers in the back. There also are lists of Newman's favorite actors and actresses.

Borders is at 31150 Southfield Road, at 13 Mile. For more information, call 644-1615.

JAMES CAAN HALLIE BERRY OMAR EPPS CRAIG SHEFFER KRISTY SWANSON



Pressure surrounds them.
Competition divides them.
Glory unites them.

A story of what it takes to survive

THE PROGRAM

STARTS FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 24TH

AMC ABBEY 8	AMC AMERICANA WEST	AMC DETROIT AIR 10
AMC EASTLAND	AMC LAUREL PARK	AMC NORTHVIEW GLE 10
AMC SOUTHFIELD CITY	AMC WONDERLAND	AMC STURGEON TOWN
SHOWCASE 3000	SHOWCASE 3000	SHOWCASE 3000
SHOWCASE 3000	SHOWCASE 3000	STAR GARDEN 13
STAR LINCOLN PARK 8	STAR ROCHESTER HILLS	STAR TAYLOR
STAR WEST RIVER	STAR WYOMING	STAR WYOMING