



# Family features

## Dreams come true in drama, comedy

Two remarkable films about people overcoming incredible odds to make their dreams come true — "The Joy Luck Club," and "Cool Runnings" — are opening at movie theaters in metro Detroit Friday.

Hollywood Pictures presents "The Joy Luck Club," the story of four remarkable women whose extraordinary lives are filled with love and tragedy, richness and magic, and who are sustained by the hopes and dreams they have for their daughters.

Based upon the best-selling novel by Amy Tan, the story begins when Juno (Ming-Na Wen) is invited to join the Joy Luck Club — the weekly mah-jongg group of her recently deceased mother Suyuan (Kieu Chinh). As a portrait of the club's three "Aunties" — unfolds, it reveals a mosaic of the startling events and conditions that have shaped their lives, and the lives of their precious daughters.

The mothers impart their wisdom and pain, experience and love to their daughters who in turn come to better understand

### PREVIEW

and value their parents. Tsai Chin is Lindo, the self-proclaimed leader of the Aunties.

"She's very bossy and quite opinionated. And her daughter, Waverly, is very much like her," said Chin. "As in real life, these conflicts can be very funny and sometimes quite sad. It's a classic mother-daughter relationship."

"The Joy Luck Club" is rated R (Restricted, requires an accompanying parent or guardian) and opens Friday at these suburban movie theaters: AMC Maple, AMC Woods and AMC Laurel Park.

"Cool Runnings" also is opening Friday, is based on the true story of four Jamaican athletes going to extremes to compete as bobsledders at the Winter Olympics. Walt Disney Pictures presents this comedy about four athletes with few resources, and virtually no clue about winter sports, who are sliding on thin ice as they go for the gold in Calgary, Canada.

It's an uphill course for this troupe from the tropics — including Derice Bannock (Leon), San-

ka Coffie (Doug E. Doug), Yul Brenner (Malik Yoba) and Junior Bovill (Rawle D. Lewis).

Refusing to let anything stand in their way, they enlist the help of a down-and-out, ex-champion American slider named Irv (John Candy). Unavoidably drawn back to a sport he has come to loath, Irv is faced with coaching a team of complete novices. But once committed, he determines to turn them around, and to somehow right the wrongs of his own failed career.

It's a bumpy ride, but with pride, determination and dignity, they make their impossible dreams come true in a live-action comedy for the whole family.

"Cool Runnings" is rated PG (Parental Guidance suggested, some material may be inappropriate for pre-teens) and opens Friday at these suburban movie theaters: AMC Abbey, AMC Laurel Park, AMC Old Orchard, AMC Southfield City, AMC Sterling Center, General Cinema Canton, Showcase Auburn Hills, Showcase Dearborn, Showcase Pontiac, Showcase Sterling Heights, Showcase Westland, Star Rochester, United Artists 12 Oaks.



Elegant setting: Michelle Pfeiffer (right) stars as Countess Ellen Olenska and Daniel Day-Lewis as Newland Archer in "The Age of Innocence." Enter our contest by sending us a color picture of your most elegant table setting.

## Win pass to see 'The Age of Innocence'

Capture the look of "The Age of Innocence" in your own home and win an elegant coffee-table book (valued at \$50) filled with photos and information about Martin Scorsese's film "The Age of Innocence."

To enter, send a color photograph of your most elegant table setting by Monday, Oct. 11, 1993 to: Keely Wygonik, Taste/Entertainment Editor, Observer & Eccentric Newspapers Inc., 36251 Schoolcraft,

Livonia 48150. Be sure to include your address and a daytime telephone number where you can be reached.

The first 25 entries will receive a pass (admits two) to see the film at selected theaters.

The winning entry will receive "The Age of Innocence" book and the winning photograph will be printed in the Oct. 18 issue of the Observer & Eccentric Taste section. For

more information, call Keely Wygonik, 953-2105.

"The Age of Innocence," a Columbia Pictures' release, is based on the Pulitzer Prize-winning novel by Edith Wharton about a man caught between two women and two worlds. The drama is played out against the opulent backdrop of New York in the 1870s, a time of Morgans and Vanderbilts.

# 'The Good Son' — silly but suspenseful

### FILM CLIPS

#### "THE GOOD SON"

Released by: Twentieth Century Fox  
Starring: Macaulay Culkin, Elijah Wood, Wendy Crewson, David Morse, Jacqueline Brookes and Daniel Hugh Kelly  
Directed by: Joseph Ruben  
Produced by: Mary Anne Page and Joseph Ruben  
Written by: Ian McEwan  
Rated: R (Restricted, Under 18 requires an accompanying parent or guardian.)  
Running time: 1 hour, 37 minutes  
Rating (out of a possible four):

Key: Don't miss it

Strongly recommended

Worth a look

Wait for video



JOHN MONAGHAN

I long suspected that something was wrong with Macaulay Culkin. The popular star of the "Home Alone" movies has that inherently evil quality usually reserved for surreal cute characters like Snuggly, the fabric-softening bear.

My suspicions were confirmed with the release of "The Good Son," a dopey but often involving thriller starring wary-lipped Culkin as a pint-sized psychopath. The little rascal has already killed his brother before the opening credits and now starts to come back about the rest of the family.

The story opens with another boy, 12-year-old Mark (Elijah Wood), who watches his mother die in the hospital. She tells him "I'll always be with you," which the hopeful son interprets as a promise of reincarnation.

Mark thinks he recognizes her in his Aunt Susan, whose family he stays with over Christmas break. Conventional wisdom says that hanging around other kids will do Mark good while Dad fixes

### REVIEW

to Tokyo to close a big business deal which will set them for life.

Enter Henry (Culkin), Mark's same-age cousin, whose bad manners are checked up as symptoms of his age. The boys are in constant motion on their first couple of days together, smashing windows in an old warehouse, outrunning the steel jaws of a pit bull and climbing into an obscenely tall tree house.

When Mr. Highway arrives, Mark begins to have second thoughts. Henry constructs a life-sized dummy out of old clothes and cans Mark into trying it out into the country. When they stop to rest Mr. Highway atop a freeway overpass, Henry pushes it into oncoming traffic, causing a massive pileup.

Why the ensuing TV news report doesn't mention anything about the pre-teen perpetrators or even the dummy is unclear, but it could have added another element to stretch out some pretty thin material. Their success only makes Henry bolder as he sets his sights on his little sister, with Mark running defense.

This update of the old "Bad

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Seed" movie would be even hokier if it weren't for director Joseph Ruben, who made his name early on with a clever little thriller called "The Stepfather." He knows how to put the screws to you in the false comfort of family. He makes Henry's home, a Maine island village, first idyllic and then foreboding and shadow-filled when Henry gets involved. He's no Hitchcock, but Ruben does have a flair for suspense, little set pieces that play upon fairly universal fears — heights and pit bulls. One of the best scenes is Henry and Mark's first ascension into the tree house, which requires the climbing skills of Stalлоне in "Cliffhanger."

One of the boards breaks loose and Mark almost falls, saved by

the frighteningly calm Henry, who dangles him over the ground by one hand, asking, "If I let you go, do you think you could fly?"

Culkin mumbles most of his lines in an extremely low-key portrayal. His cryptic comments are supposed to send chills down your spine, but he doesn't sound like a regular 12-year-old so you never see him as intended: as the bratty kid next door whose games take a deadly turn.

As Mark, Wood has the kind of piercing blue eyes that would usually make him the villain of the piece. We do sympathize with him, especially in his vain attempts to make people listen about Henry and in the scenes with his aunt, warmly played by Wendy Crewson.

Audiences ate this stuff up over the weekend, including a matinee at the AMC Old Orchard, where

Marie Stahl of Farmington took her young sons to see it. "I'll never hear the end of it," Stahl said. "The next time they act up they'll say at least they're not bad as Henry."

"The Good Son" is now shown at these suburban movie theaters: AMC Southfield City, Quo Vadis, Showcase Pontiac, United Artists Fairlane, AMC Abbey, AMC Laurel Park, AMC Wonderland, Star Rochester, AMC Old Orchard, Showcase Auburn Hills and United Artists Twelve 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.

### More than 200 calls

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## JAMAICAN BOBSLEDDERS?

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## Cool Runnings

AMC AMERICAN WEST	AMC BEL AIR	AMC EASTLAND
AMC LAUREL PARK	AMC SOUTHWEST CITY	AMC STERLING CTR.
AMC WONDERLAND	AMC SHOWCASE	AMC SHOWCASE
SHOWCASE	SHOWCASE	STAR ROCHESTER
STAR GRATIOT	STAR LINCOLN PARK	STAR WEST RIVER
STAR TAYLOR	STAR 12 OAKS	

STARTS FRIDAY, OCTOBER 1ST

AMC BEL AIR 10	AMC EASTLAND	AMC OLD ORCHARD
AMC SOUTHWEST CITY	AMC SOUTHWEST 4	AMC STERLING CTR. 10
AMC WOODBRIDGE	STAR CANTON	SHOWCASE PONTIAC
SHOWCASE 11/11	SHOWCASE OF SHOWS	SHOWCASE 11/11
SHOWCASE 11/11	STAR GRATIOT AT 11:30	STAR LINCOLN PARK
STAR ROCHESTER 10/11	STAR 12 OAKS	STAR WEST RIVER

FLORIDA CITY Walt Disney World, Disney World

## "OH JOY! WHAT LUCK! SEE THIS FILM."

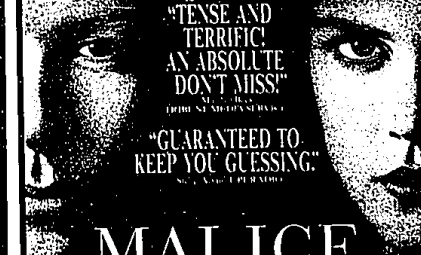
AN EXTRAORDINARY FILM IN EVERY WAY.  
"TWO THUMBS UP, WAY UP!"



THE JOY LUCK CLUB  
STARTS FRIDAY, OCTOBER 1ST

AMC LAUREL PARK	AMC MAPLE 3	AMC WOODS 6
STAR JOHN RAY 14/18	STAR ROCHESTER HILLS	STAR 12 OAKS

## "THE SEXIEST THRILLER OF THE YEAR"



MALICE  
A new thriller from the director of "Sea of Love"

AMC AMERICAN WEST	AMC BEL AIR	AMC EASTLAND
AMC LAUREL PARK	AMC SOUTHWEST CITY	AMC STERLING CTR.
AMC WONDERLAND	AMC SHOWCASE	AMC SHOWCASE
SHOWCASE	SHOWCASE	STAR ROCHESTER
STAR GRATIOT	STAR LINCOLN PARK	STAR WEST RIVER
STAR TAYLOR	STAR 12 OAKS	

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