

# Love, repression return in 'Remains of the Day'

BY JOHN MONAGHAN  
Special Staff Writer

That kiss on the wrist in "The Age of Innocence" is going to seem pretty steamy compared to "The Remains of the Day," where Anthony Hopkins' repressed butler gets little more than a handshake after loving housekeeper Emma Thompson for nearly 30 years.

Not to say that the drama, based on a novel by Kazuo Ishiguro and playing jointly at the Maple and Main theatres, is anything but wonderful. This very genteel, subtle, and literary film is more paragold from the filmmaking team that brought us the popular "Room with a View" and "Howard's End."

Fans of the latter film have been hungry to see Oscar-winners Thompson and Hopkins reunited in roles that put them in the forefront. He plays the meticulous Stevens, a true "gentleman's gen-

tleman" on an English estate in the 1930s, who softens slightly in the presence of the equally competent but also warm, housekeeper Ms. Kenton.

They wrangle at first. She speaks her mind when it comes to Stevens' father, a butler all his life who now works at Darlington Hall. Well before his years of useless service, he makes mistakes that Ms. Kenton doesn't want to see repeated. For the old man's sake as well as the estate's.

After all, Darlington Hall has lately been the sight of major political events, with Lord Darlington urging English diplomats to accept Germany's military buildup. He invites high-ranking Nazis to lavish parties, full of speeches about Hitler's desire for peace, a gesture that will later lead to his execution.

Even years later, the ever-loyal Stevens believes that Darlington was a noble man, a gentleman,

## MOVIES

and only misled by his own desire for peace. The movie backs up this sentiment but also leads you to believe that Stevens, educated solely in the proper placement of a table setting, would have been loyal in the service of Hitler himself.

A wonderful scene toward the end finds Stevens in a country pub, where the locals assume that because of his manners and talk, the butler must be a wealthy gentleman. He doesn't refute it, instead reluctantly offering that he does indeed know Winston Churchill, though he fails to mention in what capacity.

The village doctor, however, sees right through him. He adds to the butler's doubts about what was going on in the house before the war and what his obligation was to stop it -- or at least how

some opinions on the matter. Producer Ishmail Merchant and director James Ivory are well-known for creating sumptuous films on limited budgets and "The Remains of the Day" is no exception. There is exquisite period detail in the houses yet comfortably lived-in Darlington Hall, contrasted by the utilitarian servants' quarters.

Most of the action takes place here, except for Stevens' journey in the late 1950s to meet with Ms. Kenton in the house she'll return to her former position. The symbolic car journey allows him to recall the glory days of Darlington Hall, where he now serves a new

master. Which brings us to Christopher Reeve, the pleasant looking but hopelessly dull actor who plays an American representative in "The Remains of the Day." He makes a jolly speech about the well-meaning amateur politics of the English elite and prophetically suggests that this will drag Europe and America fully into war.

Later, almost as a reward for his wisdom, he will own Darlington Hall, chucking some of the formality by placing a ping pong table in the dining room. Sadly Reeve, even after all the experience he's gained on Broadway since his "Superman" debut, still

hasn't developed into much of an actor.

He looks especially shabby next to the two leads, true professionals and arguably the best and most effortlessly classical film actors working today. More than its sometimes sappy story of loyal service and repressed love, "The Remains of the Day" is a celebration of flawless acting.

If you have a comment for John Monaghan, call him at 953-2047, mailbox number 1866, on a Touch-Tone phone, or write him care of Street Scene, Observer & Eccentric Newspapers, 36251 Schoolcraft, Livonia, MI 48150.

## SCREEN SCENE

A sampling of what's playing at alternative movie theaters across metro Detroit as reviewed by John Monaghan.

**DETROIT FILM THEATRE**  
Detroit Institute of Arts, 5200 Woodward Ave., Detroit, Call 833-2323 for information. (\$5; \$4 students)

"Guelwaar" (Senegal - 1992). 7, 9:30 p.m. Nov. 12 - 13; 4, 7 p.m. Nov. 14. Set in contemporary Africa, the story revolves around the disappearance of a political activist, philanthropist, and pillar of the local Christian community. The latest from director Ousmane Sembene.

**HENRY FORD CENTENNIAL LIBRARY**  
13671 Michigan Ave., Dearborn. Call 943-2330 for information. (Free)

"Stage Door Canteen" (USA - 1947). 7 p.m. Nov. 8. Songs by Richard Rodgers and Lorenz Hart highlight this wartime romance about a soldier and a hostess at New York City's famous service canteen.

**MAIN ART THEATRE**  
118 N. Main Street at 11 Mile,

Royal Oak. Call 542-0180 for showtimes. Titles listed run at least through next Thursday. (\$6.50; \$3 twilight)

"Short Cuts" (USA - 1993). Robe Altman has taken some eight short stories by Raymond Carver and woven them together into an ambitious three-hour film. Too bad these people, played by Tom Waits, Lily Tomlin, and Tim Robbins just to name a few, aren't all that interesting.

"Remains of the Day" (Britain - 1993). Emma Thompson and Anthony Hopkins, the stars of "Howard's End," are reunited in this latest Merchant/Ivory production about a loyal butler and the housekeeper he secretly loves.

"Barker" (USA - 1993). A global journey which swoops and soars across 24 countries, backed by an evocative musical score.

**MAGIC BAG THEATRE**  
22916 Woodward at Nine Mile Road, Royal Oak. Call 544-3030 for more information. (\$3)

"Bullwinkle and Friends: A Tribute to Jay Ward." 8 p.m. Nov. 11. Cartoon crazyman Jay Ward created the moronic moose and squirrel, but he also was responsible for George of the Jungle, Su-

perchicken, Dudley DoRight, Mr. Peabody and Sherman, as well as Fractured Flickers. All will be shown, along with vintage kids' commercials for toys and cereal.

**MAPLE THEATRE**  
4135 W. Maple, Bloomfield Hills. Call 855-9090 for showtimes.

Films play at least through Thursday. (\$5.75; \$2.95 twilight)

"The Remains of the Day." See Main Art Theatre listing above.

"Farewell My Concubine" (China - 1993). Two boys raised to act in the Peking Opera grow to be superstar actors. Through some 40 years together they experience tumultuous changes in China from the Warlord era to the Cultural Revolution. Co-starring Gong Li, the star of "Raise the Red Lantern."

**STATE THEATRE**  
2115 Woodward, Detroit. Call 961-5456 for information. (\$1)

"Repo Man" (USA - 1984). 9 p.m. Nov. 8. Young punk Emilio Estevez is taken under the wing of "King of the Repo Men," Harry Dean Stanton, who shows him all the tricks of the trade when it comes to repossessing vehicles. A cult classic.



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## Jamiroquai from page 8A

States, however, his band's slow to catch on.

Susan Schwedler, manager of Royal Oak's Repeat and Beat record store, had a few reasons why.

"It's not crap, to tell you the truth. Most of the things that get him have a bland bit to them. It sells head over flat. Also, with Jamiroquai, you can't put that anywhere, it has pop, R&B and jazz aspects to it. It's hard to say his name. This CD is actually talent," she said.

Aside from that, the socially-conscious lyrics share Ray's reverence for the earth and the spirit of the tropical Indians — hence the medicine man "shadow" in every available photo of Kay. Kay said that he wasn't about to compromise his beliefs and write about love or something to sell more records.

"A lot of things annoy me. I

find it difficult to write about anything else," he said. "I think it all relates to the loose Native American connection to the medicine man. There's so much crap... it's because we have government running things."

To help promote the album, Repeat The Beat and Columbia Records (Jamiroquai's label) hosted Greenpeace in the store Saturday. In exchange for recyclable materials, participants received a CD single of "When You Gonna Learn." Those who bought the album, received two tickets to Jamiroquai's show this Wednesday at Industry in Pontiac.

The album, "Emergency on Planet Earth," is Jamiroquai's first of eight he signed to do for Sony Music — a contract deal unheard of for a previously unknown act.

"They're smart cookies," Kay

said with a laugh. "Now it's time to renegotiate to three or four. They want how to play the game. I wanted no compromises. They wanted a producer for the album. We wanted to do it ourselves, thank you very much."

For the album, he recruited extras like the Brand New Heavies' Simon Bartholomew and Andrew Levy. Reminiscent of the Heavies, he lays his poignant lyrics on top of horn-flavored jazz/soul base.

"I feel confident with what I do. We're a bunch of white guys doing the stuff we like. People watch that and wonder who the hell we are. We're just doing what we like."

Jamiroquai will perform Wednesday, Nov. 10, at Industry, 15 S. Saginaw, Pontiac. Must be 18 or older to enter. Doors open at 8 p.m. There is no opening band. Tickets are \$8.50 in advance. For more information, call 334-1999.

## MUSIC NOTES

Playing with Tears for Fears every night gives Roger of Jellyfish a chance to see one of his idols every night. "I'm a fan of Roland's (Orzabal) from way back," he said about Tears for Fears' singer. "Even on his worst days I'm pleasantly surprised."

The tour, which recently played the Fox Theatre in Detroit, allowed the band to spread its "new twist on pop music" to unfamiliar audiences. "I think it's important to play for people who haven't seen you."

The band is touring to promote its latest album, "Spit Milk," on Virgin Records.

Tears for Fears, on the other hand, played a mix of new hits from their album "Elemental" and older tunes like "Head Over Heels." The tour was Orzabal's first without cohort Chris Smith, whose new album will soon be released. Not missing a note without Smith, Orzabal showed that his former partner was not elemental in the band's plans.

Crisis Olive, a founding mem-

ber of the band Savatage, was killed in an automobile accident on Sunday, Oct. 17. Olive, who had been attending the Livestock Festival in Tampa, Fla., was involved in a head-on collision while on his way home to Clearwater. His wife, Dawn, was critically injured in the crash. Founded in 1982 in Florida, Savatage has released one independent EP and six records for Atlantic records, including the band's current release "Edge of Thorns." Funeral services were held Wednesday, Oct. 20, at Curlew Hills Memory Garden in Palm Harbor, Fla.

When worldbeat percussionist Vinx visited Detroit's Majestic Theatre on Saturday, Oct. 23, the person to watch was co-percussionist and Detroit native Andrew D'Alia.

"He's the greatest young future percussionist of America," Vinx said from his New Mexico home while packing for the next leg of his U.S. tour. He is touring to promote his new record "The Story-

teller" which features a guest appearance by Steve Wonder, whom he used to train at a health club.

"That was a blast," he said about recording with Wonder. "He played acoustic piano, which I never does. It was a great job for me. He'd play on my album if I'd play for him."

His first two albums featured guest pianists Herbie Hancock and Patrice Rushden. So who will be for his fourth album? "I don't know who I'll be. I should probably start working on that."

Dan Vitale is one busy man. He just came through Detroit with his band Blim Skala Blim to play the State Fair. Recently, he returned to the area with his side project Steady Earnest for a show at the Falcon Club in Hamtramck.

"We're trying to focus more on a pop aka with a soul twist," he said, describing Steady Earnest. "Blim Skala Blim never did that much of that."