



# Tracker, anthropologist try to solve Indian mystery

High up in the Montana wilderness and deep in the recesses of the forest lies a secret. For more than 130 years, it has been hidden behind a natural fortress of treacherous terrain, impassable peaks and improbable odds. It is a place lost in time. When three convicts escape into the secluded Oxbow region of the Rockies, top tracker and bounty hunter Lewis Gates (Tom Berenger) is hired to find them and bring them back. He sets out with his dog, Zip, and follows their trail further and further into the mountains, until he comes upon something he cannot explain — a Cheyenne Indian arrow in "Last of the Dogmen" opening Friday, Sept. 8 at metro Detroit movie theaters. Although he concludes that the convicts are dead, he senses something extraordi-

Adventure: Tom Berenger (Lewis Gates), a rugged bounty hunter who journeys with Barbra Hershey (Dr. Lillian Sloan), a feisty female anthropologist, discover a place lost in time deep in the Montana wilderness in "Last of the Dogmen," a contemporary romantic-adventure film.

## REVIEW

nary up there is very much alive. Gates returns to town and tells Sheriff Deegan (Kurtwood Smith) that he believes the convicts were killed. Deegan, his adversarial former father-in-law, is not satisfied with Gates' explanation. Gates, still mystified by arrow, begins researching his find and decides to contact anthropologist Lillian Sloan (Barbra Hershey). Intrigued, the two set out together, their mutual curiosity overcoming their differences as they travel deeper and deeper into the mysterious and remote outback. As the days pass, doubt sets in and Gates and Lillian begin to wonder if their search is nothing more than an elaborate case of wishful thinking. What they ultimately discover threatens to force back the hand of time with a revelation so shocking it will change their lives forever.

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Tab Murphy director

With the terrible terrain and weather conditions, these Dogmen have always been presumed dead.

Murphy takes the story from reality into fantasy with the idea that this group survived the harsh winter and surroundings to establish themselves deep in a hidden valley where they preserved their culture in isolation well into 20th century. As Murphy tells the story, after the massacre, the Cheyenne were warned by a mystical wolf to avoid the white man at all costs and for all time and thus, never ventured into the nearby civilization.

"The resulting story created both an homage to a vanishing culture and a focal point for the relationship between Berenger's and Hershey's characters — two sparring individuals caught up in extraordinary circumstances. "What's interesting and special about this film is that it defies categorization," said producer Joel B. Michael. "It's not about any one thing and yet it's about many things. It's not a period film, but a story of that element. It's not about Cheyenne, yet it explores their culture. It's not western, yet it has that feel to it."

Perhaps, this film is best understood as a fantasy journey which transforms an ugly chapter about America's Dog Soldiers into a story about hope, pride and enduring traditions.

It was filmed over a 13-week period on location in Lagunas de Zempoala, Mexico and locations throughout the Canadian Rocky Mountains. The film is a Savoy Pictures release.

"I always wanted to do a story about Native Americans because I was fascinated by them as I was growing up," said Murphy, who also wrote stories about them as a child. "This film is a combination of all of my interests dovetailing into one story. The wilderness, Indians, animals, adventure, it's all here. I enjoyed creating the place, a pristine environment in which this tribe of Indians existed with their culture untouched by the white man and modern civilization."

In "Last of the Dogmen" Murphy took an historical event — the Sand Creek Massacre of the Cheyenne Indians in 1864 — and posed the question: "What if a group of Cheyenne Dog Soldiers (warriors known as 'Dogmen'), escaped the massacre, fled into the wilderness and actually survived?"

The premise for Murphy's story has its roots in historical reports about a group of Dog Soldiers who did escape into the mountainous Oxbow region after the massacre.

# GUIDE TO THE MOVIES

A large grid of movie listings for various theaters, including titles like 'Last of the Dogmen', 'The Sandlot', and 'The Hot Chick'. Each entry includes the movie title, a brief synopsis, and the theater name.

# Compelling 'Rangoon' often hard to watch

By BOB THOMAS

## REVIEW

From the beginning of his 30-year career, John Boorman has proved an uncompromising director. Forget his own misstep, the abysmal "Exorcist II: The Heretic." The rest of his work has been marked by a gravity of purpose and visual brilliance.

Boorman's gifted visual sense contrasts the intense beauty of the country with the brutality of the soldiers. Some of the action is hard to watch, especially the massacre of civilians in Rangoon. But the overall effect is compelling.

Boorman confronts another challenging project in "Beyond Rangoon." It is his most accomplished and fully realized work.

An American doctor, Patricia Arquette, is touring Asia with her sister, Frances McDormand, who has agreed to travel following a terrible family tragedy. They land in 1988 Burma, following the officious tour leader, Spalding Gray.

Arquette remains traumatized by the loss of her husband and son. She is rescued when she leaves the tour to follow the sounds of a nighttime political rally. She finds a crowd held in awe by the charismatic leader, Aung San Suu Kyi, who defies the guns of the military dictatorship and addresses her followers.

"Beyond Rangoon" rates Patricia Arquette's stock tenfold. Heretofore known as an accomplished actress in lesser films, she displays an intensity of feeling that could place her alongside Jessica Lange and Meryl Streep.

Having lost her passport, Arquette must stay behind while the tour moves on. She encounters a tour guide, U Aung Ko, a former professor who has been banned from teaching because of his democratic views. With grave misgivings about her safety, he leads her to his former students, who are zealots in opposition to the repressive government.

Arquette becomes committed to their cause. She and U Aung Ko and the young rebel embark on an escape to Thailand. Danger is everywhere as the army troops follow them through the lush Burmese countryside. It is a heroic trek, full of tension and excitement.