MOVIES

in the second Despite detractors, 'Tibet' epic succeeds

"Seven Years in Tibet" is the first of two high-profile films to focus on the Dalai Lama. And while it may fall short of its David Lean-like oretangiang TICKETS PLEASE 5) **E** its David Lean-like pretensions, this nearly two-and-a-half-hour epic remains one of the better films this year. 3 AP JOHN MONAGHAN

films this year. Us not surprising that a movie as politically motivated as this one should meet with controver-sy. No less than three distinct camps are protesting in front of it for three very different rea-

sons. Jewish groups question the appropriateness of lionizing Heinrich Harrer. The Austrian mountain climber who experi-ences a spiritual awakening in

An elicowinster

He does retain his Nietzschean He does retain his Nietzschoan superiority early in the film, when he refuses to follow the orders of his fellow climbers, who will display German superiority by climbing where no man has climbed before. Harrer makes it clear that his only interest lies in the personal challenge. When war breaks out with England, Harrer's team is cap-tured and sent to an Indian prison camp. Harrer's many escape attempts finally succeed, and he infiltrates Tibet's holy

GUIDE TO THE MOVIES

think his presence hurts the film at all. Mountain man Harror is the kind of part that Pitt loves and oven thrives at. It's easy to lose your protty boy looks when sporting five-month's worth of beard, acraggly hair, and eating the steaming liver out of your recently dead horse. Then, whon he arrives in this rud-life Shangri-La, Pitt gets to take his shirt off while being measured by a protty seam-stress. Ho turns on a diserming smile when he warms in the

the early 1940s was reportedly far more enamored with the Nazi party than either his post-war autobiography or this movie lead us to believe. In the movie, Harrer reluctant-German sponsora. He refors goose step with a band of Tibetans. He does retain his Nietzschen presence of the young Dalai Land. At first Harror must lower his they's tenned a private tentoriteasly played by Jamyang Wangchuk. Soon the two are your about everything. "You wangchuk. Soon the two are your about everything." You wangchuk. Soon the two are your about everything. "You they have a selection of the two the wey to construct a sentence besides a question?" The senter the senter of the two the presence of allow climber (British actor David thewlis) who embraces Tibet immer (British actor David thewlis), who embraces Tibet immer (British actor David thewlis), who embraces Tibet immer (British actor David thewlis), who embraces the private two interest. Bitter John Jacques Annud is no stranger to the great out door (he made "The Bear" in yosh o the ancient with studing shots of the Himalayas, bespite some obvious computer-ority Annud recalls the avecome "Lawrence of Arabia" is still the price.

high water mark for this type of

epic. Harrer's seven years in Tibet are that country's most tumul-tuous, as the newly formed Com-



Drama: The Dalai Lama (Jamyang Wangchuk) meets ... Heinrich Harrer (Brad Pitt) for the first time and is fascinated by his yellow hair in "Seven Years in Tibet."

munist govornment wants to unify its holdings. Tibet, with its respect for the individual and policy of anti-violence, docsn't fit in with the plans, and China comes off as stoic and heartless invaders.

This is where the third group of protesters comes in. They are protesting not the film, but the Chinese government, which the deposed Dalai Lama has been trying to negotiate with ever-since his ouster several years

ago. Like it or not, "Seven Yara in, Tibet" has opened the eyes of American moviegoers (myself included) to Tibet's struggles. And Harrer and Pitt have suc-cessfully prepared us for Martin-Scoreses's trip across similar. ground later this year.

John Monaghan welcomes your calls and comments. To leave John a voice mail message, dial (313) 953-2047 on a touch-tone phone, mailbox 1866.

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

aross micro leriod as reviewed by John Monaghan. Baldwin Theatre 415 South Laffyette, Royal Oak. Call (246) 541-6440 for information. (\$10) "Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde" (USA - 1920). 8 p.m. Oct. 18; 2 p.m. Oct. 19, John Barrymore Jlays the dual role in this silent version of the Robert Louis Stevenson horror tale. Theater organist John Lauter will per-form live along with this silent classic, still best known for evok-ing horror without elaborate spe-cial effects, only the acting and makeup employed by the great Barrymore. Behoit Film Theater Detroit Institute of Arts, 5200 Wood-ward, Detroit. Call (313) 833-2323 for information. (\$6.50; \$4.50 students/seniors)

"La Promesso" (Bolgium -1996). Oct. 17 - 19 (call for show times). In a district near Antwerp, a 15-year-old boy helps his lying, swindling falther run a network of illegal immigrant labor. *Main Stret Theatre* 118 N. Main Stret at 11 Mile, Royal Oak, Films play through at least Information. (85.05; 34 students, seniors and matines; 33 twilight) "Washington Square" (USA - 1997). Jonnifer Jason-Leigh and Albert Finney star: in this adaptation of a Henry James nevel about an awkward rich woman who is caught between her over-protective father and a penniless suitor. (Starts Friday) Metropolitan Film Festival Various locations in Metro Datroit. Spnanord by the Various locations in Metro Detroit. Sponsored by the

Detroit Filmmakers Coalition. Call (313) 255-0098 for information and prices. Independent films and videos

Independent hims and viaces, from across the country are, showcased in this sixth annual, event. Oct. 16 at 7 and 9:30 p.m. at the Majestic Theatre in Detroit. Oct. 17 - 18 at the Sev-enth House in Pontisc.

information. (S3) "Gentlemen's Agreemen" (USA - 1947). 7 p.m. Oct. 17. This pioneering Hollywood treatment of anti-Semitism stars Gregory Peck as a writer pretending to be build and discussion of the second Jewish and discovering rampant discrimination. John Garfield oo-stars. Preceded by a lecture from Southfield Judge Stephen Coop-

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