Bruce Willis falls further in lame 'Mercury Rising'



In "Mercury Rising," Bruce Willis plays an undercover FBI agent who takes it upon himself it upon himself to protect a young murder witness. The kid has autism and spends half of the movie kick-ing and scream-ing, saying he's not supposed to rs.

talk to strangers.
You sit through a movie like this with your mind racing. Who thinks up this kind of nonsense? Did they run out of buddy movie nairings? Was it produced by a Citizens with Disabilities organization? And, most importantly, didn't Willis learn after the last time?
Since taking to the big screen, he has been basically a one-note actor, with his smug, too-cool

approach to any and all situations. His lines usually arrive with a taunting scowl or a droopy-eyed smirk.

Mercury Rising begins with a puzzlo book that nine-year-old Simon picks up and unravels-masses, crosewords, and word scarches prove a brezes for the boy. When he stares at a page of random letters and numbers, his mind kicks into high gear and, sure enough, you can hear his computer-like calculations on the soundtrack.

The hidden message says to dial an 800-number which connects him to a top secret government organization. The puzzle was the last safeguard to prove that a super-code could not be cracked and, by doing so, the boy and his family are placed in immediate danger.

Willis, who pops pills and fisshes back to the needless deaths of teenage bank robbers, has various close calls in saving

an uninvited guest at a fancy dinner party — aquare off in the wine cellar. The ever-cecky Willia wrenches the corks off of price-less bottles of wine, takes a sip, makes a wry observation, and then smashes them to the floor. While Willis looks tired but fairly robust, Baldwin is starting to take on the paunchiness of

middle age. This is especially evident in the climax, where the wind from the helicopter blades plaster his usually-perfect hair over his face, making him look even worse.

For awhile there it looked like Willis was gravitating toward roles better than this. But mem-

John Monaghan welcomes your calls and comments. To leave John a voice mail message, dial (734) 953-2047 on a touch-tone phone, mailbox 1866.

SCREEN SCENE

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

Classic Cinema Series—
Southfield Centre for the Arts, 24360 Southfield Road, Southfield Continers at the Continers of the Arts, 14360 Southfield Road, Southfield Call (248) 424-9022 for information, (39)

"The Stranger" (USA - 1947). 7 p.m. Friday, May 16. Orson Welles' most conventional filmmade in the hopes of appeasing the studios who found his films too weird is still acut above the rest. Welles plays a Nazi criminal hiding out in a New England college town, chased by irastible Palward C Rohissan

Detroit Film Theatre—
Detroit Institute of Arts, 5200 Woodward, Detroit. Call (313) 33-2232 for information (55.56); 84.50 students/seniors)

"Lava and Death on Long

\$4.50 students/seniors)

"Love and Death on Long Island" (England - 1997). Fri-

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Melodrama: (Marcy) and Henry (Seth) in Bob Gosse's "Niagara Niagara.

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(PCI3)

TWILLCHT (R)

CREASE (PCI3)

CODO WILL HENTING (R)

TITANIC (PGI3)

U.S. MARSHALL (PCI3)

PRIMARY COLORS (R)

CALLICA COMPLETE L'ENCLAND FAME

CELERA COMPLETA USENCE AND FACE

Showcase Cinemas

(PG13) U.S. MARSHALS (PG13)

TWINKER (B)

GOOD WILL HUMING (B)

LI GOOD AS IT GETS (PG13)

TITANIC (PG13)

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GOOD WILL HOTTING (R)

U.S. MARSHALS (PCI3)

"PRIMARY COLORS (R)

"MIET THE DEEDLES (PC)
S COOD AS IT CETS (PC) MERCURY RISING (R) BAINEY (G)
NEWTON BOYS (PG13)
MEET THE DEEDLES (PG) PRIMARY COLORS (R)
MAN IN THE IRON MASK
(PG13)
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GOOD WILL HUNTING (R) WEDDING SINGER (PG13)

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MERCURY RESIDE (B)
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COL INCOLLICATION IN THE



day-Sunday, April 10-12 (call for showtimes). When a reclusive writer is persuaded to attend a stuffy movie premiere, he ends up instead at a screening of 'Hotpants College II' and becomes obsessed with its hankly star (Jason Priestley).

"My Sex Life ... Or How I Got Into an Argument" (France - 1996) 7:30 p.m. Monday, April 13. In this classically French story, a young Parisian's

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obsession with women lands him in hopolessly intertwined relationships.

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"South Theream" (USA 1007).

9:30 p.m. Thursday, April 9, and Wednesday, April 16. Most were impressed by the performances (Robert Dehiro, Samuel Jackson, Bridget Fonda, Pam Grier and Robert Forster) but unmoved by the story, which went on forever and nowhere at the same time. Ultimately, the only thing you can say for director Quentin Tarantino is that he's not predictable.

Main (at 11 Mile Road, Royal Oak, Call (248) 542-0180 for information. (\$6.50; \$4 students/seniors and matiness; \$3 twillight)

"The Real Blonde" (USA -

Onk. Cali (248) 642-0180 for information. (\$6.50; \$4 students/seniors and matinees; \$3 willight)
"The Real Blonde" (USA 1998). From Tom Dicillo, director of "Living in Oblivion," comes this romantic comedy set in New York City about a group of characters whose lives intertwine in the superficial world of fashion and entertainment. Matthew Modine and Daryl Hannah star. "Niagara Niagara" (USA 1998). Two misfits meet while shoplifting in this contemporary melodrama set in upstate New York.

"The Apostlo" (USA - 1997). Robert Duville tour de force as a preacher who has a crisis of faith and thus tries to get his life back in order. Farrah Fawcett co-stars. Star Southfield. 2555 West 12 Mile Road (near Northwestern and Telegraph). Southfield (\$7.50 \$5 adults; \$4.75 children/seniors before 6 p.m.)

"Mrs. Dalloway" (Britain - 1997). When a woman (Vanessa Redgrave) encounters a man she thew some 30 years earlier, it causes her to reevaluate the path her life has taken. Based on a novel by Virginia Woolf.

Window Film Theatre - 2136 Wyandotte Street, Window, Cannada. Call (59) 254-Fill M for information. (\$5.25 Canadian; \$4 US.)

information. (\$5.25 Canadian; \$4 U.S.)

"Underground" (Franco/Germony - 1995). 7 p.m. through Sunday, April 12. This Cannes prize winner reaches into the last 50 years of Tugoslaviár history as a man who goes underground during World War II and only surfaces in 1992.

"Succubus" (West Germany - 1967). 10 p.m. Friday-Saturday, April 10-11. Porhaps the best from Jess Franco, director of European trash in the 1960s who takes an entertainingly Mod look at depravity.





