

'Magnolia' weaves lives together in chilling tapestry

BY STEPHANIE ANGELYN CASOLA
STAFF WRITER
casola@voc.home.com

It all begins with a weather report — the forecast is partly cloudy with an 82 percent chance of rain.

But the showers pouring through scenes of Paul Thomas Anderson's "Magnolia" wash together the lives of 12 people one random day in California. As the skies grow darker, the plot escalates and the lives of the characters are forever altered. Some are left wounded, some are healed. All are connected in some manner. And it takes place somewhere along a main thoroughfare called Magnolia.

The opening scenes play out in hurried fashion, from one character's life to the next, set off-softly to the tune of "One Is the Loneliest Number."

Loneliness, isolation and insecurity plague the characters in the film, but no one more than the former Quiz Kid Donnie Smith (William H. Macy). Smith comes to the realization in his adult life that knowing all the answers doesn't solve all of life's difficulties. He's struggling to survive and ease his loneliness. He declares: "I really do have love to give; I just don't know where to put it."

Stanley Specter seems to be following the same path as his

predecessor. Stanley is a boy genius, on the verge of setting a record on the quiz show that made Donnie a child star. He has all the answers but can't seem to win the love of his own father, a struggling actor portrayed coldly by Michael Bowen.

While Stanley's father isn't the ideal parent, he's got nothing on the quiz show's celebrity host Jimmy Gator. On screen, Jimmy's the perfect family man. Putting kids against parents to see who's smarter, he's got a quip for the audience after every commercial break. But off camera he's drowning himself in alcohol.

Not until he discovers his fall-

ing health does Jimmy try to make amends with his estranged daughter, Claudia (Maura Waltrip). She's much too busy doing cocaine and shifting through meaningless physical relationships to give him the time of day. When he shows up at her apartment door, she screams and throws him out.

But you can't cause such a disturbance in this town and get away with it. No air. At least not when Officer Jim Kurring's on duty. An honest-to-goodness man of the law (played by John C. Reilly), Jim tries to convince himself he's a good cop. Talking to himself of his own self, he assures himself: "This is my job and I love it. I want to do well and I want to help people."

The dim-witted officer falls quickly in love with Claudia, without noticing any of her habits. It's almost as easy to feel for Officer Jim as it is for Philip Parma (Philip Seymour Hoffman), a nurse caring for the dying Earl Partridge (Jason Robards), who incidentally is the producer of the quiz show and a dead-beat dad himself.

Philip is there to ease Earl's pain while his young, second wife runs frantically about town filling prescriptions for morphine. The unfriendly Linda Partridge (Julianne Moore) can't stand to watch him die.

The only thing she can imagine that would make the situa-



PETER SOREL/ONYX CINEMA

Drama: Linda Partridge (Julianne Moore) and Earl Partridge (Jason Robards) in a scene from "Magnolia."

tion worse in her mind is getting Earl's son involved. Frank T.J. Mackey stopped talking to his father at age 14 when Earl abandoned him and his mother, who later died.

Portrayed with a no-holds-barred approach by Tom Cruise, Frank has grown up to become an ultra-macho expert on female seduction. His company, "Seduce and Destroy," teaches men how to control women, but his own life spins out of control when it comes to his family. This man

who has renounced his past discoveries — as the narrator puts it — "The past isn't done with us."

All the regrets, uncovered lies and desperate pleas culminate in ironic circumstances and something that can only be described as heart-wrenching. Rain cannot wash away the past.

Paul Thomas Anderson and director of photography Robert Elswit weave an unforgettable story of life, death, love, honesty, infidelity and forgiveness which is unlike any other.

GUIDE TO THE MOVIES

National Amusements Showcase Cinema

Presented by AOL

2100 Broadway
Between University & 5th Avenue

248-372-2669

Asian Movies Daily

At Showtimes 6 pm

Continues Show Daily

Lots Shows West Thurs. Fri. Sat.

NP DENOTES NO PASS

NP: COLD INTERVIEWED (R)

NP: HURRICANE (R)

NP: SUPERVIVIA (PC13)

NP: HELL SEDAY (R)

NP: CEDAR HOUSE RULES (PC13)

NP: MAGGIE (R)

NP: SNOW FALLING ON CEDARS (PC13)

THE TALENTED MR. RIPLEY (R)

THE GREEN MILE (R)

TOY STORY 2 (G)

CALL FOR COMPLETE LISTINGS AND TIMES

Metropole Downtown 1-8

Metropole & Telephone

2100 Broadway

248-372-2669

Asian Movies Daily

At Showtimes 6 pm

Continues Show Daily

Lots Shows West Thurs. Fri. Sat.

NP DENOTES NO PASS

NP: HURRICANE (R)

NP: HELL SEDAY (R)

NP: SUPERVIVIA (PC13)

NP: COLD INTERVIEWED (R)

NP: MAGGIE (R)

NP: SNOW FALLING ON CEDARS (PC13)

THE TALENTED MR. RIPLEY (R)

THE GREEN MILE (R)

TOY STORY 2 (G)

NP: INCENTIVEL MAN (PC13)

NP: MAGGIE (R)

NP: SNOW FALLING ON CEDARS (PC13)

THE TALENTED MR. RIPLEY (R)

NP: SUPERVIVIA (PC13)

NP: HELL SEDAY (R)

NP: COLD INTERVIEWED (R)

NP: MAGGIE (R)

NP: SNOW FALLING ON CEDARS (PC13)

THE TALENTED MR. RIPLEY (R)

NP: SUPERVIVIA (PC13)

NP: HELL SEDAY (R)

NP: COLD INTERVIEWED (R)

NP: MAGGIE (R)

NP: SNOW FALLING ON CEDARS (PC13)

THE TALENTED MR. RIPLEY (R)

NP: SUPERVIVIA (PC13)

NP: HELL SEDAY (R)

NP: COLD INTERVIEWED (R)

NP: MAGGIE (R)

NP: SNOW FALLING ON CEDARS (PC13)

THE TALENTED MR. RIPLEY (R)

NP: SUPERVIVIA (PC13)

NP: HELL SEDAY (R)

NP: COLD INTERVIEWED (R)

NP: MAGGIE (R)

NP: SNOW FALLING ON CEDARS (PC13)

THE TALENTED MR. RIPLEY (R)

NP: SUPERVIVIA (PC13)

NP: HELL SEDAY (R)

NP: COLD INTERVIEWED (R)

NP: MAGGIE (R)

NP: SNOW FALLING ON CEDARS (PC13)

THE TALENTED MR. RIPLEY (R)

NP: SUPERVIVIA (PC13)

NP: HELL SEDAY (R)

NP: COLD INTERVIEWED (R)

NP: MAGGIE (R)

NP: SNOW FALLING ON CEDARS (PC13)

THE TALENTED MR. RIPLEY (R)

NP: SUPERVIVIA (PC13)

NP: HELL SEDAY (R)

NP: COLD INTERVIEWED (R)

NP: MAGGIE (R)

NP: SNOW FALLING ON CEDARS (PC13)

THE TALENTED MR. RIPLEY (R)

NP: SUPERVIVIA (PC13)

NP: HELL SEDAY (R)

NP: COLD INTERVIEWED (R)

NP: MAGGIE (R)

NP: SNOW FALLING ON CEDARS (PC13)

THE TALENTED MR. RIPLEY (R)

NP: SUPERVIVIA (PC13)

NP: HELL SEDAY (R)

NP: COLD INTERVIEWED (R)

NP: MAGGIE (R)

NP: SNOW FALLING ON CEDARS (PC13)

THE TALENTED MR. RIPLEY (R)

NP: SUPERVIVIA (PC13)

NP: HELL SEDAY (R)

NP: COLD INTERVIEWED (R)

NP: MAGGIE (R)

NP: SNOW FALLING ON CEDARS (PC13)

THE TALENTED MR. RIPLEY (R)

NP: SUPERVIVIA (PC13)

NP: HELL SEDAY (R)

NP: COLD INTERVIEWED (R)

NP: MAGGIE (R)

NP: SNOW FALLING ON CEDARS (PC13)

THE TALENTED MR. RIPLEY (R)

NP: SUPERVIVIA (PC13)

NP: HELL SEDAY (R)

NP: COLD INTERVIEWED (R)

NP: MAGGIE (R)

NP: SNOW FALLING ON CEDARS (PC13)

THE TALENTED MR. RIPLEY (R)

NP: SUPERVIVIA (PC13)

NP: HELL SEDAY (R)

NP: COLD INTERVIEWED (R)

NP: MAGGIE (R)

NP: SNOW FALLING ON CEDARS (PC13)

THE TALENTED MR. RIPLEY (R)

NP: SUPERVIVIA (PC13)

NP: HELL SEDAY (R)

NP: COLD INTERVIEWED (R)

NP: MAGGIE (R)

NP: SNOW FALLING ON CEDARS (PC13)

THE TALENTED MR. RIPLEY (R)

NP: SUPERVIVIA (PC13)

NP: HELL SEDAY (R)

NP: COLD INTERVIEWED (R)

NP: MAGGIE (R)

NP: SNOW FALLING ON CEDARS (PC13)

THE TALENTED MR. RIPLEY (R)

NP: SUPERVIVIA (PC13)

NP: HELL SEDAY (R)

NP: COLD INTERVIEWED (R)

NP: MAGGIE (R)

NP: SNOW FALLING ON CEDARS (PC13)

THE TALENTED MR. RIPLEY (R)

NP: SUPERVIVIA (PC13)

NP: HELL SEDAY (R)

NP: COLD INTERVIEWED (R)

NP: MAGGIE (R)

NP: SNOW FALLING ON CEDARS (PC13)

THE TALENTED MR. RIPLEY (R)

NP: SUPERVIVIA (PC13)

NP: HELL SEDAY (R)

NP: COLD INTERVIEWED (R)

NP: MAGGIE (R)

NP: SNOW FALLING ON CEDARS (PC13)

THE TALENTED MR. RIPLEY (R)

NP: SUPERVIVIA (PC13)

NP: HELL SEDAY (R)

NP: COLD INTERVIEWED (R)

NP: MAGGIE (R)

NP: SNOW FALLING ON CEDARS (PC13)

THE TALENTED MR. RIPLEY (R)

NP: SUPERVIVIA (PC13)

NP: HELL SEDAY (R)

NP: COLD INTERVIEWED (R)

NP: MAGGIE (R)

NP: SNOW FALLING ON CEDARS (PC13)

THE TALENTED MR. RIPLEY (R)

NP: SUPERVIVIA (PC13)

NP: HELL SEDAY (R)

NP: COLD INTERVIEWED (R)

NP: MAGGIE (R)

NP: SNOW FALLING ON CEDARS (PC13)

THE TALENTED MR. RIPLEY (R)

NP: SUPERVIVIA (PC13)

NP: HELL SEDAY (R)

NP: COLD INTERVIEWED (R)

NP: MAGGIE (R)

NP: SNOW FALLING ON CEDARS (PC13)

THE TALENTED MR. RIPLEY (R)

NP: SUPERVIVIA (PC13)

NP: HELL SEDAY (R)

NP: COLD INTERVIEWED (R)

NP: MAGGIE (R)

NP: SNOW FALLING ON CEDARS (PC13)

THE TALENTED MR. RIPLEY (R)

NP: SUPERVIVIA (PC13)

NP: HELL SEDAY (R)

NP: COLD INTERVIEWED (R)

NP: MAGGIE (R)

NP: SNOW FALLING ON CEDARS (PC13)

THE TALENTED MR. RIPLEY (R)

NP: SUPERVIVIA (PC13)

NP: HELL SEDAY (R)

NP: COLD INTERVIEWED (R)

NP: MAGGIE (R)

NP: SNOW FALLING ON CEDARS (PC13)

THE TALENTED MR. RIPLEY (R)

NP: SUPERVIVIA (PC13)

NP: HELL SEDAY (R)

NP: COLD INTERVIEWED (R)

NP: MAGGIE (R)

NP: SNOW FALLING ON CEDARS (PC13)

THE TALENTED MR. RIPLEY (R)

NP: SUPERVIVIA (PC13)

NP: HELL SEDAY (R)

NP: COLD INTERVIEWED (R)

NP: MAGGIE (R)

NP: SNOW FALLING ON CEDARS (PC13)

THE TALENTED MR. RIPLEY (R)

NP: SUPERVIVIA (PC13)

NP: HELL SEDAY (R)

NP: COLD INTERVIEWED (R)

NP: MAGGIE (R)

NP: SNOW FALLING ON CEDARS (PC13)

THE TALENTED MR. RIPLEY (R)

NP: SUPERVIVIA (PC13)

NP: HELL SEDAY (R)

NP: COLD INTERVIEWED (R)

NP: MAGGIE (R)

NP: SNOW FALLING ON CEDARS (PC13)

THE TALENTED MR. RIPLEY (R)

NP: SUPERVIVIA (PC13)

NP: HELL SEDAY (R)

NP: COLD INTERVIEWED (R)

NP: MAGGIE (R)