

Patrick Swayze drives them crazy

ASK DICK KLEINER



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Q. We are big fans of the movie "Dirty Dancing," but what is really driving us crazy is this. We think we've seen Patrick Swayze in another movie, only he changed his name. Wasn't he called Lee Montgomery when he did "Girls Just Want to Have Fun"? — H.H. and G.H., Dorr, Mich.

A. No. They are two different people.

Q. Would you please help us with some information? We were wondering about the old Ma and Pa Kettle movies. Are they still around? Can I buy videos of them? — F.V.A., Thermopolis, Wyo.

A. The movies are still around and you may find them, from time to

time, on some very late movie show. To my knowledge, none has been released on a cassette; the Kettles just didn't pan out. The two stars are long gone — Marjorie Main died in '75 and Percy Kilbride in '64.

Q. A year or so ago, I saw a movie about the James-Dalton-Colter gang. It starred real-life brothers who played brothers in the movie. I think it was called "The Long Riders," but I'm not sure about that. Who were the brothers? K.V., Killeen, Texas.

Entertainment Outlook



Patrick Swayze Lisa Hartman

A. You are right about the title. The real-life brothers who starred in it were the Carradine, Keach, Quaid and Guest brothers. The movie is now out on cassette.

Q. Is the girl that played the character C.G. on "Knots Landing" the

same actress who played Mary on "Little House on the Prairie"? — M.M., Rock Hill, S.C.

A. No. Lisa Hartman was Cathy Geary, sometimes known as Ciji, and Melissa Sue Anderson was Mary.

Q. Can you tell me if Buddy Rich, the drummer and band leader, is still living? I thought he passed on several months ago. — M.E.W., Houston, Texas.

A. Yes, he died last April.

Q. I loved the book, "The Thornbirds" and was thrilled by the mini-series. I thought the music in it was beautiful. Who wrote it and can I get a copy of it? — C.T., Fairmont, W.V.

A. That lovely score was by Henry Mancini, and it is available on an RCA record.

Q. My wife and I have been discussing old movies. One was "Ebb Tide." I thought Ray Milland and Frances Dee

were the stars but she thinks Paulette Goddard was the female lead. Also, the film "Ramona." I said I thought it was the first Technicolor movie. Were Loretta Young and Don Ameche the stars? — E.S.H., Erie, Pa.

A. You're both wrong about the female lead in the '37 film, "Ebb Tide" — it was Frances Farmer. But you're right about "Ramona" — Ameche and Young had the leading roles. It was one of the early Technicolor releases, but not the first. "The Trail of the Lonesome Pine" beat it by a few months; both it and "Ramona" came out in 1936.

(Send your questions to: Ask Dick Kleiner, c/o Newspaper Enterprise Association, 200 Park Ave., New York, N.Y. 10166. Due to the volume of mail, personal replies cannot be provided.)

Year in film is an eyeful of fun

FILMETER



ROBERT DIMATTEO

1988 gave us quite a few decent movies and a host of good performances, though there were no flat-out great movies. Some of the following may not have played in your neighborhood, but most are, or will be, available on home video. The best movies of 1988 (in alphabetical order):

A WORLD APART — This directorial debut for cinematographer Chris Menges has a beautiful, bracing simplicity. It's the moving portrait of a dissident journalist (Barbara Hershey) in '60s South Africa, seen through the eyes of her alert, quizzical daughter.

BABETTE'S FEAST (on Orion Home Video in March) — The winner of last year's Oscar for Best Foreign Film is about the meeting of asceticism and aestheticism: a sensual French housekeeper (Stephan Audran) decides to cook a loving gourmet meal for the stern Danish religious community where she lives, and what epicurean magic she works!

BEETLEJUICE — The hippest and wildest comedy of the year, Tim Burton's slapstick ghost farce has lots of laughs and a great production design.

HAIRSPRAY — A deliciously campy musical satire from John Waters, this is the tale of '60s Baltimore teens beset by silly dance crazes, towering hairstyles, bad complexions, parents and racial tensions.

LITTLE DORRIT — This two-part, six-hour version of the teeming Dickens novel dares to tell the same complex story from the perspective of two different characters. The second part flags, but few films take us so deeply into the world of the imagined past.

THE THIN BLUE LINE (on HBO Video in January) — As if one of those tabloid TV shows like "America's Most Wanted" were lifted into the realm of art, this brilliant, high-style documentary by Errol Morris explores the real-life case of a Dallas cop-killing, discovering along the way

that the man actually convicted of the crime is most probably innocent.

THE UNBEARABLE LIGHTNESS OF BEING — This three-hour amatory epic by the risk-taking director Philip Kaufman intertwines love, sex and politics, via novelist Milan Kundera's source material. It's the year's most delicately thoughtful and poetic American film.

WHITE MISCHIEF (Nelson Home Video) — A blend of caustic upper-class satire and silky romantic melodrama, this fact-based drama explores the last days of English colonialism in 1940s Kenya, centering on an infamous murder case that rocked fashionable Nairobi society. Ravishing Greta Scacchi and dashing Charles Dance star.

WHO FRAMED ROGER RABBIT? — The year's best cinematic roller-coaster ride is also a deeply felt entertainment with tantalizing associations.

WOMEN ON THE VERGE OF A NERVOUS BREAKDOWN and **MATADOR** — Two bold and funny films by Spaniard Pedro Almodovar, the first new foreign filmmaker to stand a chance of making it big in this country in several years. "Women" pivots on an actress (luscious Carmen Maura) whose phone machine message reveals that her lover has betrayed her. "Matador" is an erotic murder mystery in tutti-frutti colors.

RUNNERS-UP — "The Accidental Tourist," "High Tide," "Bull Durham," "Dear America: Letters Home From Vietnam." Special mention to independent Portland filmmaker Jim Blashfield's dazzling animated short, "Suspicious Circumstances."

BEST ACTOR — Tom Hanks ("Big"), Alec Guinness ("Little Dorrit"), Dennis Quaid ("Everybody's All-American"), Dustin Hoffman ("Rain Man"), Willem Dafoe ("The Last Temptation of Christ"), Gene Hackman ("Mississippi Burning"), Eric Bogosian ("Talk Radio").

BEST ACTRESS — Bette Midler ("Beaches"), Meryl Streep ("Cry in the Dark"), Sigourney Weaver ("Gorillas in the Mist," "Working Girl"), Jodie Foster ("The Accused"), Barbara Hershey ("World Apart"), Susan Sarandon ("Bull Durham"), Michelle Pfeiffer ("Married to the Mob"), Carmen Maura ("Women on the Verge"), Glenn Close ("Dangerous Liaisons"), Judy Davis ("High Tide"), Shirley Ma-



MICHAEL KEATON played an evil ghost in "Beetlejuice," a comedy that was one of 1988's hottest films.

claine ("Madame Sousatzka"), Gena Rowlands ("Another Woman"), Melanie Griffith ("Working Girl").

BEST SUPPORTING ACTOR — Michael Keaton ("Beetlejuice"), Dean Stockwell ("Married to the Mob," "Tucker"), Divine ("Hairspray").

BEST SUPPORTING ACTRESS — Diane Venora ("Bird"), Miriam Margolyes ("Little Dorrit"), Juliette Binoche and Lena Olin ("Unbearable Lightness of Being"), Mercedes Ruehl ("Married to the Mob").

BEST DIRECTOR — Pedro Almodovar ("Women on the Verge").

BEST CINEMATOGRAPHY — Henri Alekan ("Wings of Desire").

BEST SCREENPLAY — Frank Galati and Lawrence Kasdan ("The Accidental Tourist"), Jean-Claude Carriere and Phil Kaufman ("Unbearable Lightness of Being"), Ron Shelton ("Bull Durham"), Christine Edzard ("Little Dorrit").

(Film grading: ★★★★★ — excellent, ★★★★ — good, ★★★ — fair, ★ — poor)

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