

# Pacino, Barkin sizzle in 'Sea of Love'

## FILMETER



ROBERT DIMATTEO

### In Movie Theaters

**SEA OF LOVE (R)** The past decade has seen so many moody, portentous film noir thrillers that even those of us who love the genre may have had our fill. Just when noir seemed in need of a nap, along comes this first-rate example of the form.

Al Pacino here reasserts his place as one of the premier film actors of his generation. He looks worn and haggard, but since he's playing a hard-drinking, slightly over-the-hill cop, the actor's appearance works. And his performance is superb. His

Richard Price's punchy, hard-boiled script is so New York that you can almost smell it, and he really knows how to construct a movie: Here, he spins a haunting web of passion and deceit.

There's a hole in the plot involving the 45 r.p.m. record that gives the movie its title. And the final wrap-up scene is a bit weak. After it's over, you may find yourself thinking that the movie could have gone even further with its sense of romantic obsession. But Harold Becker has directed crisply, and the actors, including wonderful, burly John Goodman ("Roseanne") as Pacino's partner, bring it vividly — and creepily — to life. **GRADE: ★★½**

**BLACK RAIN (R)** When English director Ridley Scott's name comes on the screen during the opening credits of this dark-toned, explosive thriller, you're likely to hear applause from film buffs in the audience. With movies like "Alien" and "Blade Runner" to his credit, Scott has acquired a cult reputation for unsettling, high-tech

The role — what little of it there is — allows Douglas to strut his macho stuff. He's a little nasty and grim in this one, and more than a little boring.

What minimal appeal there is comes from Andy Garcia as Douglas' partner, who spends much of his time explaining American obscenities to the Japanese authorities. Meanwhile, Kate Capshaw tries a change of pace part as a slinky American broad who runs a Japanese nightclub; she's slinky all right.

All Ridley Scott movies look good; this one is no exception. But, for all its stylized visual sophistication, it's a noisy, bloody affair — with a racist tinge to it: Almost all the Japanese characters are either exotic killing machines or giggling geishas. **GRADE: ★½**

### New Home Video

**TAP (PG-13)** RCA/Columbia. The story of the great black hoofers of Harlem and Broadway is a fresh one for a major dramatic movie to tackle — even when it only serves as the backdrop for a throwback melodrama like this.

Starring as an ex-con who returns to tap dancing after squandering his talents as a burglar, Gregory Hines gives what may be his most enjoyable movie performance to date — one that fully blends his gift for physicality with his jazz-man's charm. Some great old tappers like Sandman Sims, Bunny Briggs and Harold Nicholas appear in supporting roles. **GRADE: ★★½**

**TEQUILA SUNRISE (R)** Warner. This romantic thriller harks back to old Hollywood, to the era when you went to see a picture because it had a hot cast. The film features three of the most attractive actors in movies today (all with gorgeous blue eyes) — Mel Gibson, Kurt Russell and Michelle Pfeiffer. Would that it were a less murky and desultory movie. **GRADE: ★★½**

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



FRANK KELLER (Al Pacino), a veteran policeman, finds himself drawn to the prime suspect in a murder case (Ellen Barkin) in "Sea of Love."

cop is a man with an edge of desperation — a trying-to-be-tough guy who falls apart when the right woman comes along.

Or is she the wrong woman? Enter Ellen Barkin as an enigmatic blonde Pacino meets while investigating a series of murders tied to personal ads. Wearing skin-tight outfits that show off perhaps the best young female body in movies, Barkin creates one of the most tantalizing film noir heroines since Barbara Stanwyck in "Double Indemnity." Pacino flips for this new-style sultry dame, and so do we. But why does the woman seem so evasive about certain things? And why is she carrying a gun?

moviemaking.

Alas, his newest effort deserves more boos than applause — unless you're a hard-core action junkie who is willing to ignore credibility, character development, pace and any subtlety whatsoever.

Michael Douglas stars as a motorcycle-fetishist of a cop who is drawn into a Japanese counterfeiting ring that involves the murderous rivalry between two top Tokyo ganglords.



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