

# Entertainment Outlook

## 'Blue Steel' is tense, but improbable

### FILMETER



ROBERT DIMATTEO

**BLUE STEEL (R)** Sometimes it seems like every other movie is about cops. Few, however, seem to be about flesh-and-blood people. Early on in director Kathryn Bigelow's new thriller, there's a pivotal scene in which rookie cop Jamie Lee Curtis interrupts a supermarket holdup, aiming her gun at the robber who is pointing his weapon at a terrified clerk. Bigelow draws this moment out so that we feel the rookie cop's fear as she tries to apply what she's learned at the police academy. It's a powerful scene that viscerally communicates the life-and-death realities of police work.



JAMIE LEE CURTIS plays a rookie cop who discovers that the man she has been seeing is responsible for a series of brutal murders in "Blue Steel."

Curtis is an increasingly skillful actress. In the neglected 1983 movie "Love Letters," Curtis had a distinctively tense presence. In "A Fish Called Wanda," she was a new-style sexpot with a flair for farce. Here Curtis blossoms as a New York cop whose Mr. Right — a handsome, well-heeled commodities broker (Ron Silver) — turns out to be Mr. Wrong. And we do mean wrong.

Bigelow won a cult following for her vampire comedy "Near Dark." Here she gives us the kind of charged psychological thriller that can make

you jittery. In the second half, though, it can also give you the giggles; the plot hinges on some wildly improbable behavior. Still, Bigelow, who co-wrote the script, directs with real conviction. Thus, the film holds your attention even as your mind tells you it's all preposterous.

Special credit must go to Curtis, who exudes a blend of sensitivity and toughness that few other young actresses could bring to the role. Silver ("Enemies, A Love Story") works hard too, though he has the less credible part.

"Blue Steel" isn't a top-notch thriller — not as good, say, as the recent "Bad Influence." But it does offer Curtis and some creepy, atmospheric fun. **GRADE: ★★★**

**PRETTY WOMAN (R)** Cinderella stories change with the era in which they are written. The latest, by screenwriter J.F. Lawton, is set in glitzy L.A., and features a hard-edged hooker (Julia Roberts) whose prince is a good-looking if cold-hearted corporate mogul (Richard Gere).

According to the movie, an exchange occurs: Mogul takes hooker into his bed, and, as it turns out, into his heart; hooker gets a great new Ro-

deo Drive wardrobe and some lessons in ladylike behavior.

Needless to say, this is romantic bunk. But, as shrewdly directed by Garry Marshall ("Beaches," "Nothing in Common"), it smells like a hit. We haven't had such a full-blown contemporary fairy tale since "An Officer and a Gentleman" (though that was a better movie). Romance-hungry viewers may be willing to overlook the manipulative tendencies of the script, even blissing-out during the protracted, schmaltzy final half-hour.

The movie would be nothing without its two lead actors. Doing romantic comedy for the first time, Gere shows a looser, more relaxed side. It's turning out to be a good year for Gere (with his very different work in "Internal Affairs" still in people's minds). And Julia Roberts (Sally Field's terminally ill daughter in "Steel Magnolias") is a knockout as the hooker — making the character a veritable Eliza Doolittle of Hollywood Boulevard. With her long-necked beauty and innate gracefulness, Roberts happily reminds one of that other low-life-turned-Fair Lady, Audrey Hepburn. **GRADE: ★★**

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

### DATE BOOK

April 7, 1990

Today is the 97th day of 1990 and the 19th day of spring.

S	M	T	W	T	F	S

**TODAY'S HISTORY:** On this day in 1949, the Rodgers and Hammerstein musical "South Pacific" premiered in New York City.

**TODAY'S BIRTHDAYS:** Walter Winchell (1897-1972), journalist; Billie Holiday (1915-1959), singer; James Garner (1928-), actor; Wayne Rogers (1933-), actor; David Frost (1939-), entertainer; Francis Ford Coppola (1939-), director; Tony Dorsett (1954-), football player.

**TODAY'S QUOTE:** "Gossip is the art of saying nothing in a way that leaves practically nothing unsaid." — Walter Winchell

**TODAY'S MOON:** Between first quarter (April 2) and full moon (April 10).



**TODAY'S BARBS BY PHIL PASTORET**  
In some companies, it's called the boardroom, because it's where the firm stores all its knotheads.

When someone says "run that idea by me," it means they hope it will jog out of sight and be forgotten.

### Face In The Crowd



Take a close look; you may be a winner. If the face indicated by the arrow is yours, you're the lucky winner of a pair of Georgetown Cinemas courtesy passes. Call us at 877-2201 or 877-8822 or drop in at The Herald, 45 Guelph St., Georgetown to claim your prize. If you're not a winner this week, keep on looking. Next week it may be your turn to win.

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