

Movie Review

Ghost enthralls even cynical reviewer

By DIAHANN NADEAU
Herald Special

Before even seeing it, Ghost had two strikes against it as far as I was concerned - Patrick Swayze, and the very disappointing Always, another ghostly romance from early this year.

However, Ghost manages to succeed in a way that Always could not, and Swayze turns in a lovely and tender performance, erasing the memory of his last two outings, Roadhouse and Next of Kin.

Ghost tells the story of two Manhattan yuppies, Sam (Swayze) and Molly (Demi Moore), and make you care about them, an achievement in itself. Sam is a banker, Molly is an artist,

specializing in pottery. They have recently moved in together into a fabulous loft apartment and are talking about marriage. Things couldn't be better, which worries Sam, a pessimist at heart.

He is right, life is too good, and on the way home from the theatre, he is murdered by a thief. He rises from his body and watches himself die, in a scene that conveys the enormous fear and confusion that such an event would cause.

He follows Molly around, helpless to contact her, and soon discovers that his murder was not an accident, and that Molly is also in danger. He stumbles across a con artist medium who for some reason actually hears him - much

to their mutual surprise. Oda Mae Brown (Whoopi Goldberg) would like to ignore Sam, but he harasses her until she gives up and goes to see Molly. Sam slowly learns the mechanics of being a ghost, picking up some pretty neat tricks from a pretty weird subway ghost (Vincent Schiavelli in a memorable role).

The reasons for the murder are unveiled, and although there are no surprises here, the mystery about the murder is not all that important. What gives Ghost its wonderful spirit is the love and longing that Sam feels for Molly, and the way that director Jerry Zucker and screenwriter Bruce Rubin have made the other world so real - plausible, possible,

believable.

Swayze is really good as Sam, using his dancer's training to convey the terrible problem of being a ghost - without any physical presence, where once he was so able, so real, so athletic. His love for Molly is on his face every second of the movie, and he shows it without ever seeming overly sentimental or corny.

Demi Moore is beautiful and tender as Molly, her love for Sam and her loss reaching into the audience, her pain so real you can

almost feel it.

Whoopi Goldberg is hilarious as Oda Mae, her face a delightful map of mischief, her eyes an endless source of amusement. Screen newcomer Tony Goldwyn plays best friend Carl, and holds his own with the other three.

Ghost is an utterly, utterly romantic film, and quite beautiful in its open and naked commitment to love. Even this cynical movie reviewer found herself believing in ghosts, and maybe even more importantly, love.

'Dark Man' deserves dark place

By GARRY J. MURDOCK
the Herald

"Crime may have a new enemy and Justice may have a new face" but that doesn't mean the makers in Hollywood have a better movie for the matter.

In fact, Sam Raimi, director of the just-released movie "Dark Man" is probably crawling into a dark place right about now, just to avoid criticism of this over-publicized film.

Believe it or not, the movie is a cross between "The Phantom of the Opera" and "Hard to Kill".

Raimi, who also wrote the film script, kept the premise fairly easy and unoriginal: One brilliant scientist on the verge of a major breakthrough is horribly disfigured in an

explosion made by a bunch of real bad guys.

Well, after somehow living through the explosion (which went off right in front of him) he is blown through a glass window and blown 100 feet through the air and crash-lands into a lake where he is somehow saved.

After waking up days later totally covered in bandages, he runs out of the hospital, dons a hat and cloak, and takes after the dumb-founded bad guys.

Liam Neeson, in his first major starring role as the scientist (an upgrade from his role in Suspect where he played a deaf-mute) does what he can with the role, which is severely limited because half the time it requires him to pretend to be someone else. This is all part of his plan to get back at the bad guys. Too bad.

Of course, the movie is pretty predictable because the audience knows he will eventually extract his revenge, killing off the lowest of the gang responsible for his disfigurement right up to the head honcho in the end.

The real question is whether or not he will get his girlfriend back, who will or will not accept him the

way he is. Unfortunately, by the end of the movie, one is so concerned with beating the crowd out of the theatre that one doesn't really give a damn whether they get back together or not.

For such an over-publicized film and for all the hype, it plays basically like a 'B' film. Although there are interesting affects, some shots look so fake (while yet others look so good) that the audience can't help but wonder if Raimi ran out of money half-way during filming, or if this is the way he intended his film to look in the final cut.

As in most recent films, no sense of realism can be applied here although it shouldn't be expected from movie-goers in the first place. One finds himself saying "Do you believe this?!" or "Give me a break!" more times than necessary. Added to this are a couple of gruesome scenes not really necessary to complete the film.

Lets just say if one wants to go see a film, one should only consider this if they get to the front of the line and the guy with the yellow bow-tie says their first choice is sold out.

Then again, perhaps one should just go home.

Arts Council receives \$3 million

KINGSTON - Ontario Culture and Communications Minister Hugh P. O'Neil recently announced two grants totalling \$3 million for the Ontario Arts Council (OAC).

The \$3 million package has two components: a \$1 million grant for allocation to small and medium-sized arts organizations and individual artists across the province; and a \$2 million grant to match an endowment by the Chalmers Family to the OAC earlier this year.

The ministry's \$2 million grant will establish a new Venture Fund. With the recent Chalmers endowment they will together generate nearly a half-million dollars per annum to support new artistic ventures.

"We are taking exciting first steps today in support of the innovative and pioneering work of experimental artists in Ontario," said O'Neil. "The Venture Fund is designed to help these artists develop and produce their projects."

"The Venture Fund represents an ideal partnership between the private and public sectors," said O'Neil.

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