Entertainment

Movie Review

Landlords and tenants battle

By DAWN WOOD Herald Special

The Super is director Rod Daniel's comedy about the redemption of Louis Kritski Jr. (Joe Pesci) a second generation slumlord in New York City. The movie begins on rent collection day (Sunday) with Louis Sr. (Vincent Gardenia) and little Louis running (literally) after tenants who have not paid their rent.

The tenement is without heat or hydro, and is infested with rats. However, the slumlord philosophy to "do nothing" is repeatedly put forth by Louis Sr. His supportive wife takes the position that the tenements are affordable housing for the under-privileged.

We then fast forward forty years into the future. Louis Jr. is now the owner of one of his dad's slums, and aggressively follows his father's philosophy when it comes to collecting rent and side-stepping repairs. The trouble begins when the housing authority charges Louis Jr. for failing to meet housing standards. He is sentenced by a judge to live in his own building until all of the units are brought up to standards. If he doesn't do the necessary repairs he will be thrown in jail.

Despite his stalwart attempts to brave the cold and dismal surroundings, Louis Jr. slowly begins to break down and undertakes some of the renovations. He is spurred along when he encounters a rat that roars like thunder in a semi-dream sequence. And when Louis is unable to listen to his music due to faulty wiring in the building, an electrician is hired.

Louis befriends a young boy (Kenny Blank) who lives in the building and who serves as Louis' conscience. A sort of street-wise Tiny Tim. When the boy sees Louis with a space heater after hearing all of the other tenants complain about the cold and one alleged frozen budgie bird, Louis feels guilty and purchases heaters for all of his tenants. This act pushes Louis Sr. off the deep end.

Louis Jr's. emerging social conscience conflicts with the reasoning of his hard-nosed, capitalist father, who is unable to recognize the mostly Black and Hispanic tenants as completely human. On the other hand, Louis Jr. has no problems integrating into the community of his neighbors. Their economic differences add to the film's humour.

There are many comic scenes in the interactions between Louis Jr. and his new found friends. He is clearly seen as the new rich kid on the block who falls victim to

every con in the book, and never catches on to any of the pranks played on him.

Likewise, humor is created in the stereotyped caricatures of the slumlord and his tenants. None lose their superimposed identities. Instead they modify their behaviours to best suit the way that life is in their individual, present circumstances.

The movie ends with Louis Jr. returning to the comforts of his uptown home. But of course not before he is foiled once more. This time his tenants mislead

him to believe that they have restored his red Corvette. It turns out to be owned by the local pimp.

The casting of the lead in this movie was flawed. Joe Pesci is designed to be a Danny DeVito clone: short, wise-cracking, and hard-nosed. However, the fit is not so. In fact, casting DeVito as Louis Jr. would have removed the charge of anti-Semitism in the portrayal of the Kritski's.

All in all the movie was a good laugh and an interesting review of the ongoing battle between landlords and tenants.

Special GLT visitor

By IAN WATSON GLT Publicity

GLT was pleased to have a very special visitor for the open house some weeks ago. The Exclusive picture shows GLT member Frank McKie attending to her every whim, on the rehearsal set for 'Steel Magnolias'. Never before in the history of GLT has their open house been attended by such an important figure (or reasonable facsimile thereof) - and this is an example of the excitement surrounding the forthcoming production.

GLT is Georgetown's community theatre group, and the involvement of the community of Georgetown in this production is almost unprecedented. The play is set in a beauty salon in Louisiana, and there could have been problems locating the necessary set furnishings. However, three companies in Georgetown - Christiane's, Carol's, and Shoppers Drug Mart - have all agreed to loan equipment to the theatre group.

The group makes a contribution to the community through its benefit performances. The night before opening night there is a special show in aid of a local charity, where all the proceeds from ticket sales (less theatre rental and royalty) go to the charity's funds. In the case of 'Steel Magnolias', the performance on oct. 24 is in aid of the Rotary Club.

'Steel Magnolias' by Robert Harling will be presented at the John Elliott Theatre, Church St., Georgetown, on Oct. 25, 26, 30, 31 and Nov. I and 2. Tickets are \$8 and \$10 and are available through the box office, 877-3700 or at the box office in the Georgetown Cultural Centre, Tues. and Thurs., 4 p.m. to 8 p.m.



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