

Entertainment

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Sommersby a matrix of romance, drama

By Dawn Wood and Lawson Oates

Focal points of human stress and challenge are a mainstay of the movie industry. Some examples are the Vietnam War, urban violence (cop stories), and spy/terrorist mysteries. Another focal point is the period of transition immediately after a major conflict, where social, political, and economic structures are challenged, overturned and reborn. Sommersby, directed by Jon Amiel, is set in the U.S. Post-Civil War period and falls into the latter category.

Sommersby, starring Richard Gere as Jack Sommersby, and Jodie Foster as his wife Laurel, is a remake of the 1982 French production *The Return of Martin Guerre*.

In the film's main plot a Confederate soldier returns home to his dilapidated estate and family. His wife grudgingly welcomes him, recalling his drunken bouts and uncaring ways before the Civil War. Others in the town, however,

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suspect he is an impostor. Lumped together with a mix of Reagan self-help economics and Clinton-style group therapy and caring, the main plot is weaved into a matrix of romance, economic struggle, and the American Dream reborn.

The story climaxes in a dramatic court house trial where the issue of identity, slave emancipation, and the underpinnings of romance are brought to a head. James Earl Jones puts in a predictably powerful performance as the black trial judge who is quick to bring home the new social order to those who defy the court's authority.

Jodie Foster typically adds a credible performance as the strong southern woman trying to maintain her dignity in the face of economic and social disorder. Richard Gere cannot escape from his earlier beefcake roles (*American Gigolo*, *Pretty Woman*) and spends several

long pauses posing bare-chested in front of the camera before pouncing onto the matrimonial bed.

The years have not been unkind to Gere, but they haven't been forgiving either. The bedroom scenes are not explicit but neatly add to the story's growing romance theme.

The cinematography of the Appalachian foothills and period towns is dramatic and breath-taking and brings a stature to the film.

If you are in the mood for a good romantic drama with a twist, then this is the movie for you. Gere and Foster fans will not be disappointed in the mellower and more romantic light in which they are cast.

Globe presents The Mikado

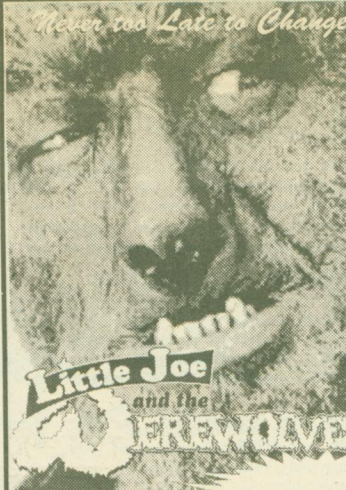
The Mikado, Georgetown Globe Production's spring show, will open at John Elliott Theatre on May 6, with a gala evening to benefit the North Halton Distress and Information Centre.

A reception is planned in the Art Gallery immediately following the performance.

Tickets are \$12 each and can be obtained from Royal LePage Real Estate, 170 Guelph Street, Georgetown.



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