

Weekender Entertainment



Movie Scene

The good, the bad and the ugly

By IAN BAILEY

1985: Good Grief! Nineteen-eighty-six is already underway and I've overlooked the one matter that movie reviewers associate with the end of any year — a look back at the movies of the previous 365 days.

So, before the business of what's playing at local cinemas, let me offer my best and worst for the movies I saw last year.

But first, let's consider the movie of 1985 in terms of impact. It wasn't a particularly good film, but it demonstrated the connection between pop culture and the society that consumes it.

Its protagonist was admirably referred to by American President Ronald Reagan and became synonymous with his get-tough approach to foreign policy. But the movie was also attacked by veterans from the war it glorified. The movie, of course, was **RAMBO: FIRST BLOOD PART II**, Sylvester Stallone's calculated sequel to **FIRST BLOOD**.

MOVIES THAT WERE A PLEASURE TO SIT THROUGH (i.e., The best movies I saw this year):

- 1) **After Hours** - Martin Scorsese's inventive comedy about an amusing urban nightmare.
- 2) **Back to the Future** - Bizarre sci-fi premise rendered engaging and amusing by director Robert Zemeckis.
- 3) **Blood Simple** - Riveting, unpredictable thriller about love and murder in Texas.
- 4) **The Color Purple** - Not a weak performance in sight in this Steven Spielberg film about a black woman surviving 40 years of oppression in Georgia.
- 5) **Mad Max Beyond Thunderdome** - Mad Max becomes a messiah in this engrossing and surprisingly good sci-fi action epic.
- 6) **Mask** - Striking true story about a boy's attempts to cope with adolescence and his own facial disfigurement. Good performances from Cher and Eric Stoltz.
- 7) **The Official Story** - Poignant examination of the consequences of Argentinian repression through the situation of an upper class couple, whose adopted daughter is the child of a murdered dissident. It's more striking due to the recent trials of the generals behind the events chronicled here.
- 8) **Out of Africa** - Well-made, moving, romantic epic set in Africa at the turn of the century.
- 9) **Prizzi's Honor** - Macabre film about professionalism, honor and family ties among hitmen. Excellent performance by Jack Nicholson.
- 10) **Witness** - Peter Weir's subtle thriller involving a clash of cultures. Harrison Ford proves he can act.

NOT THE BEST, BUT STILL PRETTY GOOD: American Flyers, The Breakfast Club, Cocoon, D.A.R.Y.L., Fletch, Fright Night, George Stevens: A Filmmakers Journey, The Journey of Natty Gann, Ladyhawke, 1984, Plenty, Return to Oz, To Live and Die in L.A.

MOVIES SO: a) DULL b) OFFENSIVE c) PLAIN STUPID d) ALL THREE THAT THEY ALLOWED TIME TO CONSIDER THE INTERIOR DECORATION OF TORONTO'S MOVIE THEATRES OR CHECK THE

EFFICIENCY OF ONE'S WATCH (i.e., The worst movies I saw this year.): American Ninja, Invasion U.S.A., Lifeforce, Missing in Action, My Science Project, Pale Rider, Pee Wee's Big Adventure, Rustler's Rhapsody, St. Elmo's Fire, The Slugger's Wife, Weird Science.

MARKVILLE

THE JEWEL OF THE NILE: It's hard to believe a sequel to the perky 1984 adventure, *Romancing the Stone*, could be so flat. It's even harder to believe the usually superb Kathleen Turner could appear in something so junky.

And where is the touch for quirky suspense that the director Lewis Teague revealed in *Cujo* and *Cat's Eye*? It's certainly not in this tedious follow-up to *Stone*, which featured Turner as a romance novelist who became embroiled in a stirring adventure in South America and here becomes involved in silly antics in the Middle East. Only the charisma of stars Turner and Michael Douglas make this unbearable film slightly bearable. (PG: Swearing) **

101 DALMATIANS: A re-release of Walt Disney's 1961 animated film about two dalmatians who try to save their pups from certain death. With a Mickey Mouse short entitled, *Once Upon A Mouse*. (F)

ROCKY IV: Contrived trash. The fourth Rocky film has Rocky Balboa (Sylvester Stallone), the Italian Stallion fighting the Siberian Express, a Soviet boxer (Dolph Lundgren) who kills Rocky's pal Apollo Creed (Carl Weathers) in an exhibition match. (PG: Violence) *½

SPIES LIKE US: Chevy Chase and Dan Aykroyd ham it up as spies in this dull, pointless dud. It's all been done before, only much better. *½

THORNHILL SQUARE

A CHORUS LINE: An adaptation of Broadway's longest-running musical, the story of several dancers trying out for a few roles in a musical. Directed by Sir Richard Attenborough. (PG)

OUT OF AFRICA: Robert Redford plays Denys Finch Hatton, a British hunter in Kenya in 1914, who fell in love with Karen Blixen (Meryl Streep), a Danish woman who managed a coffee plantation for 20 years and later wrote about Africa under the pseudonym of Isak Dinesen. This majestic epic from director Sydney (Tootsie) Pollack moves slowly at times but it's an intriguing drama where length means depth instead of tedium. (PG) ****

WHITE NIGHTS: Only Mikhail Baryshnikov and Gregory Hines could have brought life to this thriller about a Soviet defector's worst nightmare. In an inspired bit of casting, ballet star and Soviet defector Baryshnikov virtually plays out part of his biography as a dancing defector who makes an abrupt return to the USSR when his jet crash-lands in Siberia.

He's nabbed by the KGB and turned over to a tap dancing American defector played by dancer Gregory Hines. They dance; they debate; and the funny thing about this contrived film is that it works. ***



Marty McFly (Michael J. Fox) and inventor Doctor Emmett Brown (Christopher Lloyd) have just witnessed the first test of the Doc's time machine in a shopping mall parking lot in *Back to the Future*. The movie was one of the most enjoyable for reviewer Ian Bailey.

Craft registrations begin

A new season of courses at the Markham Guild of Village Crafts is about to begin.

Registration takes place Jan. 9 from 7 to 9 p.m. and Jan. 10, 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. and 7 to 9 p.m. at the Guild's 98 Church St. location in Markham.

Courses are three to 10 weeks in length and classes are paid for by the hour. Rates are \$2.50 per hour for members and children and \$2.75 per hour for non-members.

Membership fees at the guild are \$15 annually or there is a special family rate of \$20 a year. The courses available and instructors are as follows:

Adult courses

Bargello/nordic-Corrie van Poecke; bunka embroidery-Ann Bell (beginners and intermediates); calligraphy-Gayle Fehr (three levels); crochet-Lukie de Waard; drawing and painting-Irene Emig; fabric and stitches-Corrie van Poecke; knitting-Ann Bell; cut and pierce lampshades-Karen Grimes; miniature furniture-Tom Rimmer; quilting sampler-Fern Keith; large quick quilts-Madelene McKinnon; quilt design-Bonnie Crow; machine quilting-Els Fontyn; paper tole-Kathy McLeod; porcelain dolls-Ingrid Folkers; pottery-Sally Shearman; punchneedle

embroidery-Betty Rigsby; rug hooking-Lesley Wootton; sewing-Els Fontyn; soft sculpture-Betty Rigsby; spinning-Wilma Petch; stained glass-Wendy Priesnitz; tatting-Dorothy Wicks; tole painting-Veronica Cluett; weaving-Gwen Rimmer; wheat weaving-Andrea Lee.

Teen courses

Sewing-Els Fontyn; Mr. T doll-Betty Rigsby.

Children's courses

Pottery-Sally Shearman; cartooning-John Rigsby; model airplanes-Ken Groves; calligraphy-Gayle Fehr; drawing and painting-Irene Emig.