

That's Entertainment

The Reel Thing

Movie Reviews

By Casper Jetson

"Glory" (R) **** 4 stars

This panoramic profile and account of the first black union regiment in the Civil War has everything going for it: right-mindedness, gripping battle scenes, powerfully stunning acting performances and magnificent directing by Edward Zwick (TV's "Thirtysomething").

Matthew Broderick portrays the 23-year-old white colonel, Robert Shaw, the regiment's leader, and Denzel Washington (who looks like Michael Jordan) is the hot-tempered self-serving soldier who fights his own private war, and Morgan Freeman adds a touch of genuine leadership as a dignified older recruit. (All of these performances exceed expectations).

The novelty of this subject and fascinating details of the era make the film consistently interesting. This film has already been nominated for several Academy Awards and rightly deserves those nominations...and with any justice, this picture will be remembered as one of the best of 1990.

"Stella" (PG-13) **** 4 stars

"Stella Dallas" was one of the great weepies of the 1930's with Barbara Stanwyck as a disreputable mother who steps out of her daughter's life to avoid spoiling her chance of a good marriage. This time, Bette Midler plays Stella, a single mother who has a child out of wedlock with a handsome doctor (Stephen Collins). She forms a strong bond with her daughter (Trini Alvarado). The sacrifice involves giving her up so the girl can live with a better wage-earner. John Goodman does a wonderful job of playing Stella's long-time semi-suitor, and Bette Midler brings Stella's character to life and our emotions as well.

"Always" (PG) **** 4 stars

This is a tribute to the soft-hearted, soft-focus movies of the '40's and it's a remake of "A Guy Named Joe" (a 1943 Spencer Tracy vehicle). Richard Dreyfuss plays a daredevil pilot who dies fighting a forest fire in the northwest but comes back as the Guardian Angel to a younger pilot (Brad Johnson). Holly Hunter is Dreyfuss' grieving girlfriend, who's attracted to the younger man.

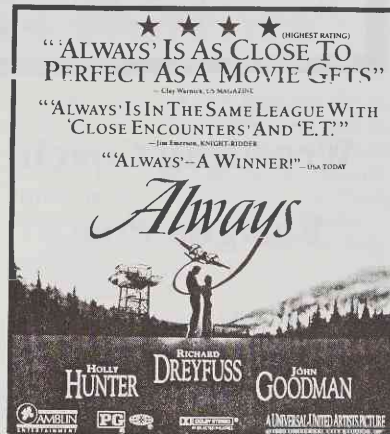
Which director would be the most logical choice for this combination of high adventure, honor, fantasy and romance? Steven Spielberg of course! This is one of the best "feel good" movies since "Field of Dreams".

"Internal Affairs" (R) 2 1/2 stars

Mike Figgis, who directed the ominously atmospheric "Stormy Monday", is at the controls again with a more stereotypical script. A detective of the Internal Affairs Department of the L.A. County Police (Andy Garcia) investigates Dennis Peck (Richard Gere), a respected street cop involved in myriad criminal activities. Peck retaliates by drawing the detective's wife (Nancy Travis) into the struggle between the two. Gere is well cast for his creepiness; Garcia wears a mask of solid hate through most of the movie. Since Peck's motives are never explained, and we know he's a psycho from the start, the movie provides only a few surprises...and the few surprises do the job as well as Figgis' more than exceptional visual work.

"Tremors" 2 1/2 stars

A fun, elemental battle between the 14 residents of Perfection, Nevada, and giant worms that crash through the earth to kill them. Nobody explains the presence of the worms, so the movie doesn't make sense. But the characters talk and act realistically—reliable Kevin Bacon and Fred Ward are the leads—and humor is interspersed among the shocks. This is also one horror movie in which nobody gets killed for being romantic (or thinking about it), and we don't have to watch people being ripped apart bloodily. "Tremors" is a low-budget, fun picture that earns 2 1/2 out of 4.



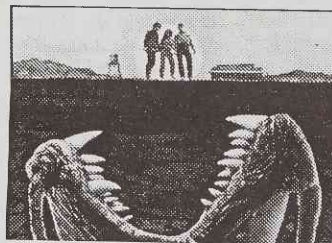
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INTERNAL AFFAIRS

A PARAMOUNT PICTURE



TREMORS

A UNIVERSAL RELEASE

PG-13

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