

The Oscar race gets off to a star-strangled start

Okay, you can stop laughing now. Hollywood's made enough money from the summer (\$2 billion) for it to get serious. Sure, *Lethal Weapon 2* was fun. Granted, *Indiana Jones 3* was great escapism. But the well has dried up — between Labor Day and New Year's, Hollywood's schedule includes only one nod to sequel-making (it's a big nod called *Back to the Future Part II* and it's due around Thanksgiving). Instead, it's every Oscar-contender for itself.

So there's no time to be wasted. Promised this month is *Sea of Love*, featuring Al Pacino in his first screen role in almost five years. He plays a down-on-his-luck New York detective on the trail of a serial killer. Ellen Barkin, who earned great notices from *The Big Easy*, is the love-

RICHARD SMITH film

interest who may also be the murderer. Sound like a play on *Jagged Edge*? Rumours are it's not that good. Harold Becker directs.

Black Rain may be the thriller we've all been waiting for. It comes from the production team of Jaffe-Lansing (the folks behind *Fatal Attraction*), is directed by Ridley Scott (*Aliens*, *Blade Runner*), and stars Michael Douglas. Douglas, like Pacino, plays a New York detective, but the action makes a quick shift to Osaka where he's teamed up with Japanese star Ken Takakura. Paramount invested a lot of money in this one, so expect a big

opening.

It isn't all going to be blood, guts and kitchen knives. *Erik the Viking* is the story of a Viking who's decided that life means more than raping and pillaging. Tim Robbins, who was hysterical as the untamed pitcher in *Bull Durham*, stars, with appearances by Eartha Kitt, Mickey Rooney and John Cleese. Terry Jones (*Personal Services*) directs with material from his own children's books. Let's hope it's better than Terry Gilliam's last fantastical effort, *The Baron of Munchausen*.

An operation gives ex-convict Mickey Rourke a new face (long overdue, if you ask me) in *Johnny Handsome*, in which he is faced with the choice between revenge or a new life with Elizabeth McGovern. A tough decision. Ellen Barkin (busy,

isn't she?) returns to New Orleans for this Walter Hill (*48 Hours*) film.

A *Dry White Season* features the return of Marlon Brando, in the role of a black rights lawyer, after an absence of 10 years. Expect far too much fuss — he's only in two scenes, but that's probably enough for a Supporting Actor Award and a standing ovation next spring. The film's real star is the excellent Donald Sutherland, who plays a white schoolteacher awakened to the horrors of apartheid when a pupil dies in police custody. Susan Sarandon plays a reporter, also on the case.

Norman Jewison, who last brought us *Moonstruck*, directs *In Country*, the story of a Southern family torn apart by events in the Vietnam War. Emily Lloyd (the bright young star of *Wish You Were Here*) must come to terms

with the loss of her father. Bruce Willis plays her uncle.

There are plenty more potential award winning films opening between now and Christmas. The list of upcoming stars includes previous Oscar winners Meryl Streep, Robert DeNiro, Dustin Hoffman, Shirley Maclaine, Sean Connery, Jack Lemmon and Paul Newman. Gregory Peck returns from a lengthy absence.

Jack Nicholson, Eddie Murphy and Danny DeVito are all directing themselves in their own movies. Returning award-winning directors include Roland Joffe (*The Killing Fields*), Oliver Stone (*Platoon*), and Milos Forman (*Amadeus*).

It's enough to make your head spin, but never fear — Omnibus will be there to hold your hand. Expect another preview next month.

This week at the movies

Chapel Hill

- Carolina Blue and White, East Franklin Street 942-3061
- Plaza I-III, Eliot Road Ext. 967-4737
- Ram Triple, NNCB Plaza 967-8284
- Varsity Theatres, East Franklin Street 967-8665

Durham

- South Square Mall Cinemas, South Square Mall 493-3502
- Willowdale Cinemas, Willowdale Shopping Center 477-4681
- Yorktowne Twin, Durham-Chapel Hill Blvd. 489-2327

EDDIE AND THE CRUISERS II not yet reviewed

Michael Pare returns as rock star Eddie Wilson who's spent the last 18 years, not dead as we all stupidly thought, but living the life of a recluse in Montreal, Quebec. *Plaza* SEA OF LOVE not yet reviewed Murder mystery starring Al Pacino and Ellen Barkin — see above. *Carolina Blue and White*, South Square MILLENIUM not yet reviewed

Just when you thought they didn't make them anymore, a science-fiction-time-travel-airplane-crash-adventure movie. Starring Kris Kristoferson and Cheryl Ladd. Directed by Michael Anderson. *Ram Triple* PARENTHOOD ●●●●

Ron Howard's comedy-drama about the joys and woes of family life is truly an ensemble affair, focusing on three very different families. It's hardly surprising that the movie eventually gives two thumbs up to procreation, but it's a close-run thing, and provides much food for thought as it roller coasters to its conclusion. Featuring an excellent cast, including Steve Martin, Rick Moranis, Mary Steenburgen, Tom Hulce, Dianne Wiest, Jason Robards and Keanu Reeves. *Varsity Theatre*, Willowdale DEAD POET'S SOCIETY ●●●●

The wonderful story of an unorthodox schoolteacher who inspires

his young students with the passion and spirit of poetry is one of the year's finest films. It is joyful, tragic, and totally inspiring. Robin Williams gives his finest, most controlled performance to date. Directed by Peter Weir (*Witness*). *Ram Triple*, Willowdale

THE ABYSS ●●●

James Cameron's underwater special effects extravaganza has come under some criticism, as if people expected him to make the movie on land or something. Cameron didn't make *The Terminator* and *Aliens* in order to change tack now. *The Abyss* has the tension and drama you expect from one so well-versed in the medium of suspense, even though he should have ditched all the E.T. stuff in the first draft. *Carolina Blue and White*, South Square

TURNER AND HOOC ●●● 1/2

Tom Hanks proved that he could still star in total drivel with the abysmal *The 'Burbs*, but here, even though another cop-and-his-dog movie seems dubious entertainment, he comes out on top. In any case, it's not his dog; the hound's owner has been murdered and Hanks is assigned to look after it. There's something to be said for comedy. *Plaza*, Willowdale

WHEN HARRY MET SALLY ●●●● 1/2

Rob Reiner doesn't believe that men and women can be friends without sexual tension cropping up. Moreover, he suspects that men and women cannot sleep together and still be friends the following morning. And

that's what this delightfully-adult comedy is all about. Billy Crystal gives the performance we have come to expect from such a genius, and Meg Ryan is growing up nicely. With Carrie Fisher. *Ram Triple*, South Square

sex, lies and videotape ●●●●●

Steven Soderbergh won the top prize at the Cannes Film Festival with this exploration of, well... sex, lies and videotape. See it quick, because it's the one everyone is talking about. It's sensual, erotic, and painful, but don't believe people who tell you it's a comedy. This one will be around for a while — a real coup for intelligent, low-budget independent filmmaking. With stunning acting from James Spader, Andie MacDowell, Peter Gallagher and Laura San Giacomo. *Varsity Theatre* HEART OF DIXIE ●●

Ally Sheedy stars as a University of Alabama sorority girl who decides the civil rights movement is more deserving of her attention than the frivolities of her sorority. It's undynamic, obvious and fairly unrealistic, but at least it acknowledges that real civil rights work was done by others elsewhere. Also starring Virginia Madsen and Phoebe Cates. *Yorktowne* CASUALTIES OF WAR ●●●●●

A tight, dense Vietnam drama from Brian dePalma, the man behind *The Untouchables* and *Carrie*. Michael J. Fox is in conflict with his sergeant, Sean Penn, about his decision to take "portable R&R" — a kidnapped Vietnamese girl — on a reconnaissance mission. The characters are knowingly complex, and Fox looks suitably out of place in the jungle. It succeeds in a way other Vietnam films don't, since its story is simple and strong. *Yorktowne* UNCLE BUCK not yet reviewed

John Candy plays an obnoxious uncle who babysits his nieces and nephews. John Hughes directs the unfunny fat man once again. *Plaza*, South Square A NIGHTMARE ON ELM

STREET 5 not yet reviewed

Freddy is back to do it all over again one more time. Finger-flickin' good. Willowdale

BATMAN ●●●●

Holy \$240 million! Some loved it, some hated it, some wondered what all the fuss was about. But let's face it, we all went and saw it. Fat checks on their way to Michael Keaton as the hooded one, and Joker Jack. Directed by Tim "Beetlejuice" Burton. Willowdale

LETHAL WEAPON 2 ●●●●

Mel Gibson and Danny Glover are back in buddy-land. Richard Donner once again directs. The only sequel of the summer that deserved to make more money than its predecessor. Willowdale

FIELD OF DREAMS ●●●●●

Kevin Costner stars as an Iowa farmer who fulfills his dream to build a baseball diamond over his cornfield, and thus reacquaints himself with the past. One of the year's best, it touches on all our dreams, encouraging us to do what we feel we should. A warm film, witty and beautifully unsentimental. Also stars Ray Liotta. Willowdale

At the Union

WORKING GIRL

Melanie Griffith stars as a secretary striving to make her way into Wall Street's upper echelons. Sigourney Weaver is the bitch who tries to stop her. Harrison Ford, looking horribly middle aged, is the guy who dates them both. It's funnier than most of last year's comedies, but the ending doesn't bear thinking about. Mike Nichols (*The Graduate*, *Silkwood*) directs. Friday at 7, 9:30 and Midnight. Admission \$1.50.

THE GODFATHER

Nothing need be said about this film, acknowledged to be one of Hollywood's greatest. A great chance to see the two classics back-to-back. Francis Ford Coppola directs Al Pacino, James Caan, Diane Keaton, Talia

See FLICKS page 11



Saturdays 7 am-12 noon
Roberson St., Carrboro
Tuesdays 7-11 am
Cedar Falls Park, Weaver Dairy Rd., Chapel Hill

On sale will be corn, blueberries, blackberries, tomatoes, summer squash, garden rocket arugula, organic vegetables, fresh baked goods, gourmet food, goat cheese, eggs, herb vinegars, honey, jams, jellies, pickles, bedding plants, garden art, and other crafts. As always all products are locally grown and made by participating vendors. So visit the Farmers' Market to buy or browse. Bring a friend or meet a new one. RAIN OR SHINE Open 'til December Some items not available on Tuesday.

CAROLINA
CINEPLEX ODEON THEATRES
East Franklin Street
942-3061

Casualties of War R 7:15, 9:30

The Abyss PG-13 7:00, 9:45