

Cruise's 'Top Gun' on wheels glosses over weak plotline

Days of Thunder
Directed by Tony Scott
Tom Cruise, Robert Duvall, Nichole Kidman
Plaza, South Square
●●●●

Can you say *Top Gun* on wheels? Yes, *Days of Thunder* is an exact replica of the fighter pilot film that made Tom Cruise famous. At least, it has the three key elements:

First, **The Sage Teaches His Rebellious Disciple How To Drive.** Randy

Randy Basinger Cinema

Quaid brings Harry (Robert Duvall) out of retirement on a farm in North Carolina to build a car racing team. The driver is, of course, Tom Cruise (alias Cole Trickle). Cruise and Duvall banter back and forth until their losing streak forces some real conversation and a friendship is born. Harry wins Trickle's trust and Trickle then begins to win

aces.

Second, **The Friendship.** Cole and racer Rusty Burns are arch-rivals until they crash at the Indianapolis 500 and end up in the hospital. The result is some hilarious scene; they do what everyone old enough to drive has always dreamed of doing: rent a car from one of those car rental places and race it. Thus, friendship becomes one of the central themes of the movie.

Third, **The Love Interest.** The doctor conveniently happens to be female and provides an excuse for the **Tom Cruise-Takes-Off-His-Shirt-In-Bed-**

With-A-Girl-So-Those-In-The-Audience-Can-Play-Out-Their-Fantasies scene. This isn't even a relevant part of the movie except that she does have an Australian accent.

With these three parts, all the ingredients are here for a smash hit movie. This should put NASCAR up there with the Navy flight program as top things guys my age want to become. I mean, already I hear guys out there saying, "Yeah, put me on the race track, I'll pick up some girl with an Australian accent and we'll ride into the winner's circle of life."

Come on guys, get a life. We just aren't Tom Cruise. We have to come to that realization at some point in our lives and say, hey, I like me, I like who I am. I don't need to drive a car and do a love scene with an Australian girl to feel good about myself.

The plotline has holes galore. The other problem is Randy Quaid's character. Just who's side is he on anyway? He switches loyalties more often than Mr. Rogers changes shoes. With Quaid, and Cole becoming friends with a guy he hated that quickly, it just doesn't work. Too many characters change at-

titudes and loyalties. But then who came for a serious drama anyway?

I guess that is what I'm really trying to say about this movie. It all happens too fast, but then in a movie about racing cars, I guess that is the way you want it to happen.

So, to sum up. For a fast-paced, good time with plenty of suspense and tension and laughs, *Days of Thunder* will be the movie hit it has been predicted to be. Besides, you and I both know that a racing movie is good when some guy leaves the theater parking lot peeling out in his VW Bug.

Drama explores effect of AIDS on relationships

Longtime Companion
Directed by Norman René
Stephan Caffrey, Patrick Cassidy, Bruce Davidson, John Dossett, Mark Lamos, Dermot Mulroney, Mary-Louise Parker, Varsity
●●●●

A New York Times article "Rare Cancer Seen in 41 Homosexuals" identified Kaposi's Sarcoma - known today as AIDS - as a disease striking the homosexual community. Prognosticated to be a threat in the metropolitan areas of New York City and San Francisco, the AIDS infection rate was calculated at 2 persons out of 3 million.

Gigi Branch Cinema

The publication of this July 3, 1981 article marks the opening of director Norman René's film *Longtime Companion*. With a cast of 8 actors (7 homosexual males and 1 heterosexual female), René shows how the disease invades and transforms a close group of friends over the course of nine years.

The story is a collage of moments shared individually and collectively by the characters. The screen's images piece together a human portrait of the day-to-day lives of the characters who are affected directly and indirectly by

this disease. The scenes illuminate intimate conversations, walks on the beach, crowded hospitals, the nursing of helpless grown men, final goodbyes, funeral eulogies, and AIDS volunteer centers. The camera captures shots of happiness, sadness, frustration, humor, fear, guilt, shame, anger, hope, friendship and courage.

Far from a documentary portrayal, this film gives a fictional account of a drama that is becoming increasingly representative of reality. We see how the characters handle their own illnesses, how they accept the illnesses and deaths of their friends and lovers and how they face a future with no cure in sight.

This film is one of the few examples of the motion picture industry covering the AIDS epidemic. I had the opportu-

nity to view *Longtime Companion* at a benefit showing on its opening night in Chapel Hill. The concerned audience, who contributed to the cause by their presence and their donations, responded with moments of laughter, silence and a final applause.

The story pulled me completely into its fictional grasp, except for one closing scene where the deceased are reunited during a hallucination of one of the remaining characters. The camera is revealing and the actors give credible performances. The story presented is realistic, informative and touching.

The film limits itself to portraying the effects of the disease in an isolated group in the gay community. Therein lies the very strength of this picture.

Changes in Modern English make 'Lips' sound pidgin

Pillow Lips
Modern English
TVT Records
●●

On *Pillow Lips*, its first album for TVT Records, Modern English makes a stab at some real changes, with mixed results. The band's first three albums, *Mesh and Lace* (1981), *After the Snow* (1982), and *Ricochet Days* (1982), established its distinctive mix of complex drum patterns, slashing guitar, and thin-and-breathy-yet-irresistibly-melodic vocals. With the loss of all but the vocals, ME has been forced to tamper with its sound.

A change in personnel prompted the band's musical changes. Only lead vocalist/guitarist Robbie Grey and bassist Mick Conroy have remained constant. After *Ricochet Days*, drummer extraordinaire Richard Brown and keyboardist Stephen Walker left the band, replaced only by keyboardist/guitarist Aaron Davidson. The resulting album, *Stop Start*, attempted to

Brian Springer Album

recreate the sound of Modern English past and succeeded reasonably well with the help of studio musicians.

With *Pillow Lips*, Modern English attempts to forge ahead on the strengths of Grey, Conroy, and Walker. Though admirable, the band has lost some of the charm that made its early LPs so essential. The shift from the 4AD/Sire label to TVT has perhaps pushed Modern English in its current direction.

Jeers for the lead-off tune, a re-recording of "I Melt With You" that is the biggest disappointment on the album. Almost to the extent of Real Life (how many Real Life albums has "Send Me An Angel" been on, anyway?), Modern English has capitalized on this one song. The current reading sounds much like the original, only faster and with accentuated AOR-isms. The concept behind making progress is not to hold on for dear life to the past. Trash this cut on principle alone. End of sermon.

The other utter flop on *Pillow Lips* is the overly-synthetic "Life's Rich Tapestry." Obviously, Grey and company had soundtrack-on-the-brain syndrome here, with a generic dance beat and keyboard lines. For a band that was once on the cutting edge of the music biz, on this ME sounds like the handle.

So much for the major shortcomings. The sound shift that serves best is the upbeat, bouncy sound *a la* Lloyd Cole of "Beauty" and "You're Too Much." This is a logical progression from the ideas which fired "I Melt With You," and Grey hasn't lost his knack for catchy melodies.

"Care About You" is the cut most like "Melt With You" in structure and sound. But it succeeds because of an irresistible chorus, which allows one to overlook a familiar drum/acoustic guitar sound. It's paint-by-numbers ecstasy for Modern English fans who only know the one song.

"Beautiful People" uses some of the same tools as "Care About You," but gives them a shine by adding in a heavy heartbeat bass and brittle guitarwork. "Let's All Dream" marks another ME innovation, adding violin and various meter changes. The end result comes across rather like the Pogues or early Dexy's Midnight Runners.

While the mid-section of the album is quite strong, the last few cuts fall apart. "Coming Up for Air" is slick slick slick, oozing George Michael from every sebaceous pore. The title track, "Pillow Lips," is an attempt at an aching ballad that comes off like Wang Chung singing Phil Collins. "Take Me Away" fails in spite of an excellent fat drum sound, largely due to a generic melody.

Without a doubt, *Pillow Lips* does have its moments, but the ME still seems to be looking for direction after the crippling departure of Richard Brown. This record may be more accessible to the masses, but much of the band's personality has diminished.

Buy and sell in the DTH Classifieds!!!

Bread that's so good it's a cake.
With every conceivable stuffin'
So which one will you make
My Favorite Muffin!

Bring in this ad for a free bite
Gourmet coffees—by the cup, by the bean




105 N. Columbia St., Chapel Hill, NC • 968-0022 DTH

The Ratings

- — miserable
- — mediocre
- — enjoyable
- — quite good
- — unmissable

HE'S NOT HERE



on the Village Green.
presents

VALENCE

Friday, July 6

Cream of Soul

Saturday, July 7

Join Us for Music Under the Stars beginning at 9 P.M.

And don't forget our Tuesday Specials!
Blue Cups \$1.50 Pitchers \$2.50

DO YOU FEEL ALIENATED BY THE LSAT?

IF SO...




CALL THE PRINCETON REVIEW

FOR THE TEST PREP THAT IS LIGHT YEARS BEYOND.

(919) 967-7209

LSAT • GMAT • GRE

THE PRINCETON REVIEW

Our Italian and Chinese Chefs are arguing... Can you help?

Chef Giovanni from Florence, Italy, insists that his Pollo Alla Sorrentina sauteed with eggplant, prosciutto & spinach in a red sauce then topped with mozzarella cheese is the best Italian dish in the Triangle area!

However, our Chinese Chef Simon Chan thinks his General Tao's Chicken looks, tastes & smells just as good!

Chef Giovanni interrupts to add that his Gamberi Creole, which is created with fresh clams, shrimp, prosciutto, sauteed with onion, green peppers and mushrooms over a bed of rice, is delicious as well as the best value in town at only \$10.95!

Chef Chan disagrees! He favors the Seafood Basket which has lobster meat, large shrimp, scallops & king crab meat. This dish is served with crispy vegetables in a unique potato basket and Chef Chan insists it is the freshest seafood dish ever created!

Whose dish is best is debatable, but the fact that these are the best Italian & Chinese Chefs in town is certain!

At Marco Polo, we are committed to have good food and good service. Ask some of your friends who have been in Marco Polo and they'll tell you we are totally dedicated to good food in our 100 item menu. I guarantee that you'll be pleased with our cuisines from the different countries of the world.

Let us host your next party in our beautiful formal China Room. Beginning with cocktails, appetizers and finish with a sit down dinner.

Please Bring Your Friends for a Lavish International Sunday Buffet

Egg Plant Parmigiana	Beef Broccoli	Shrimp Vegetables
Chicken Picanté	Shrimp Cocktail	Curried Chicken
Spring Rolls	Fresh fruit & dessert	Six fresh & mixed salads

All You Can Eat \$8.45
children under 10 half-price

Lunch: 11:30-2:30 (except Sat.)
Sunday International Luncheon Buffet 11:30-2:30
Dinner: 5:00-9:30 (Sun. - Thurs.)
Weekends: 5:00-11:00

A courtesy van can pick up a small group of guests from the University and nearby hotels/motels.


933-5565 1813 Durham-Chapel Hill Blvd, Chapel Hill
located next to Brendle's

All Major Credit Cards Accepted

Summer Menu Selections

Wilted Salad with Sweetbreads and Chicory	\$5.95
Shrimp with Kerala Salsa	\$6.95
The Best Boudin Blanc	\$9.95
Grilled Game Hen with Tomato and Chèvre	\$11.95
Fresh Mountain Trout	\$12.95
Paella	\$13.95
Angel Hair Pasta with Smoked Salmon	\$7.95
Soft Shelled Crab with Coriander	\$11.95

and more...
Selections Vary Nightly



Light fare and casual dining on the patio or indoors

Evenings from 6 pm
967-2506

The Café at La Résidence

220 W. Rosemary • Chapel Hill