

Just Movies

Check theaters for specific times. Movies are subject to change without notice. All listings are current (effective Friday) through press time.

MSC Grove

Lord of the Rings:

Tonight. Animator Ralph Bakshi ("Fritz the Cat" and "American Pop") created this well-made animated version of J.R.R. Tolkien's classic trilogy about life in the mythical Middle Earth. Rated PG.

Poltergeist:

Friday and Saturday. Steven Spielberg did a wonderful job of capturing and recreating all those things that scared you when you were a child. Rated PG.

The Way We Were:

Sunday. Robert Redford and Barbra Streisand star in this nostalgic love story about a conservative writer and his liberal political activist wife. Rated PG.

Nightshift:

Tuesday. Ron Howard directed this small comedy about a night club operated out of a morgue. Rated R.

Thunderball:

Wednesday. Sean Connery stars in one of his best performances as the man with a license to kill, James Bond. Full of all the usual Bond trademarks. Rated PG.

Fast Times at Ridgemont High:

Wednesday. Sean Penn stars in this humorous look at today's high school students. A lot above the usual high school movies, but not a big one. Rated R.

Plitt Cinema III

Breathless: Richard Gere and French newcomer Valerie Kaprisky star in this well-done remake of the Jean-Luc Godard 1959 minor classic. Rated R.

The Sword and the Sorcerer:

Double feature with "The Beastmaster." A pair of light-hearted cinematic dwarfs about swords and mythical swashbucklers. Both rated R.

Chained Heat:

Linda Blair stars in this sleazy exploitation film about the inmates in an all-women prison. Rated R.

Rocky Horror Picture Show:

Midnight. The original cult film is still here. The music is great; the plot is campy at its finest; and the audience is usually rowdy. Rated R.

Manor East

Return of the Jedi:

Grab your tub of popcorn and your raisinettes: this is one of the best Saturday matinee movies ever made. Although "Jedi" is not as good as "Star Wars" because of its lack of novelty and its massive pre-release publicity, it compensates with special effects, bizarre aliens and a fast pace. Rated PG.



Man From Snowy River:

See this one before it leaves. Even if you don't like Westerns or the usual "boy grows to manhood" stories, this is still an entertaining movie. Rated PG.

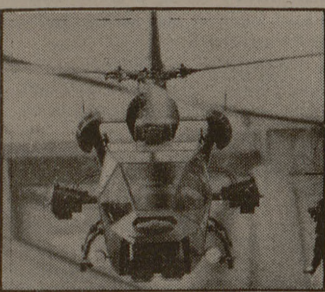
The Toy:

Richard Pryor and Jackie Gleason star in this mediocre movie, released last Christmas, about a millionaire who buys his son a unique toy (Pryor). Rated PG.

Post Oak

Blue Thunder: Roy Scheider stars as a police helicopter pilot assigned to test an ultra-sophisticated surveillance and attack helicopter in this fast-paced adventure. The question is: will the good guys get the copter or will the bad guys get it? Also stars Candy Clark, Malcom McDowell and Warren Oates. Directed by John Badham. Rated R.

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Flashdance:

Being hailed as the next "Saturday Night Fever," this movie has lots of flash, lots of hot music, lots of hot dancing, but not much plot. Sort of like MTV on the silver screen. Jennifer Beals stars as the welder-by-day, dancer-by-night. Rated R.

Savannah Smiles:

Something about a young girl who makes a lot of people happy. Rated PG.

Schulman Six WarGames:

Matthew Broderick stars as a teenage computer whiz who stumbles into the Pentagon's defense computer and almost starts World War III in this clever, high-tech film. Director John Badham ("Blue Thunder") wonderfully plays on our fears of technology and nuclear war. See review this page. Rated PG.

Octopussy:

The usual James Bond stuff. Roger Moore (not the real thing) stars as 007 and Maud Adams has the title (Can you believe it?) role. From the previews, this movie looks like it will be the typical Roger Moore Bond film, nothing more, nothing less. Rated PG.

Trading Places:

Dan Aykroyd and Eddie Murphy star in this update of the old "Prince and the Pauper" story. Aykroyd stars as a wealthy, preppy commodity broker and Murphy stars as a street hustler who gets to trade places with Aykroyd on a bet. Initial reviews of this movie have said that it is one of the funniest of the summer season. Directed by John Landis. Rated PG.

Psycho II:

Anthony Perkins returns as Hitchcock's classic schizo, Norman Bates. Twenty-two years later he returns to Bates Motel. Norman is not happy when he finds that the old Bates Motel has been turned into an "adult motel." Also stars Vera Miles. Rated R.

The Man With Two Brains:

A Steve Martin/Carl Reiner collaboration about a surgeon who falls in love with Kathleen Turner's ("Body Heat") body, but has another brain in mind, a disembodied one with whom he talks telepathically. I haven't seen it, but I've been told that it's almost as bad as the last Martin/Reiner bomb, "Dead Men Don't Wear Plaid." Rated R.

'WarGames' hits target

by Gary Barker

Battalion Staff
When I first saw the ads for "WarGames," I thought it was just another summer movie about teenagers and video games — a guaranteed hit for the makers, but not much more.

But I was wrong. "WarGames" is not just another video-games-and-teenagers film. Instead it's a wonderful, high-tech adventure film that cleverly plays on our knowledge — and sometimes fear — of computers and nuclear weapons.

The premise of "WarGames" is relatively simple. Matthew Broderick plays a computer-wise high school student: he changes his biology grade with his home computer (sounds similar to an event that happened in Aggiedom about a year ago) and hunts for new computer games by perusing the phone lines.

One day he inadvertently taps into a U.S. defense department system — called WOPR (pronounced 'whopper') for War Operations Plan Response — that is programmed to play war games. What David (Broderick) doesn't know is that the computer was given the power to launch nuclear missiles after a defense department study showed that us mere humans aren't reliable enough to push the button when and if the time comes.

Gulp. David tries to terminate the game, but the computer does

not cooperate. Once the game is going, there is no stopping.

Gulp. David is nabbed by the feds and taken to NORAD (the North American Air Defense headquarters buried deep in the side of a Colorado mountain), where he is interrogated by Pentagon heavies who think he is a subversive (pronounced 'commie').

Gulp. Complicating all these events is the computer's maker, the classic mad scientist with a death wish who refuses to help NORAD in their plight. He mumbles something about mankind going the way of the dinosaurs.

All these events come together in the main command



Movie Review

room of NORAD. Director John Badham (whose most recent work is "Blue Thunder") creates breath-stopping suspense as the NORAD crew watches the incoming Soviet missiles on the big screen and waits to find out: are they live or are they WOPR?

The principal players — Broderick and Ally Sheedy, who

plays David's girlfriend — help make the suspense as good as it is. Both are believable, warm, sometimes shy, sometimes troublemakers — not the typical rip-off-their-clothes-at-the-first-chance teenagers portrayed in many of today's teen movies.

Complementing Broderick and Sheedy is Dabney Coleman as the Pentagon heavy in charge of computer operations at NORAD. The other characters are equally well-played.

The main, and only, stinker in the cast is a tobacco-chewing four-star general who runs NORAD and rattles off lines like: "I'd piss on a spark plug if I thought it would do any good." His character was a little too much like the hawkish generals who wanted to bomb Vietnam back to the Stone Age: not exactly a likely candidate to head the nation's nuclear defense systems.

Although some of the plot twists and computer details stretch the imagination, and the limits of computers, the movie remains plausible. It also remains paranoid. The movie is full of the current nuclear paranoia and screenwriters Lawrence Lasker and Walter F. Parkes brilliantly play on our fears.

The movie's final lesson on the futility of war is childishly simple and perhaps oversimplified, but it is still refreshing to see in a summer movie about video games and teenagers.

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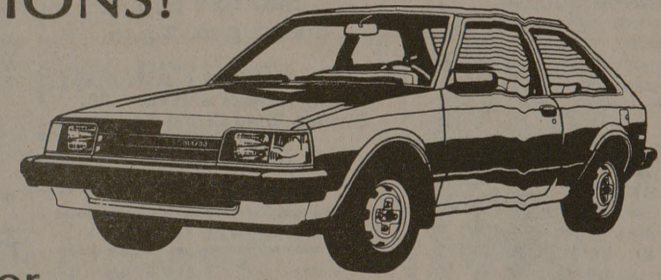
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