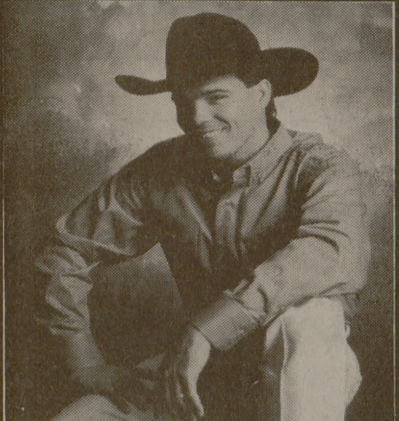


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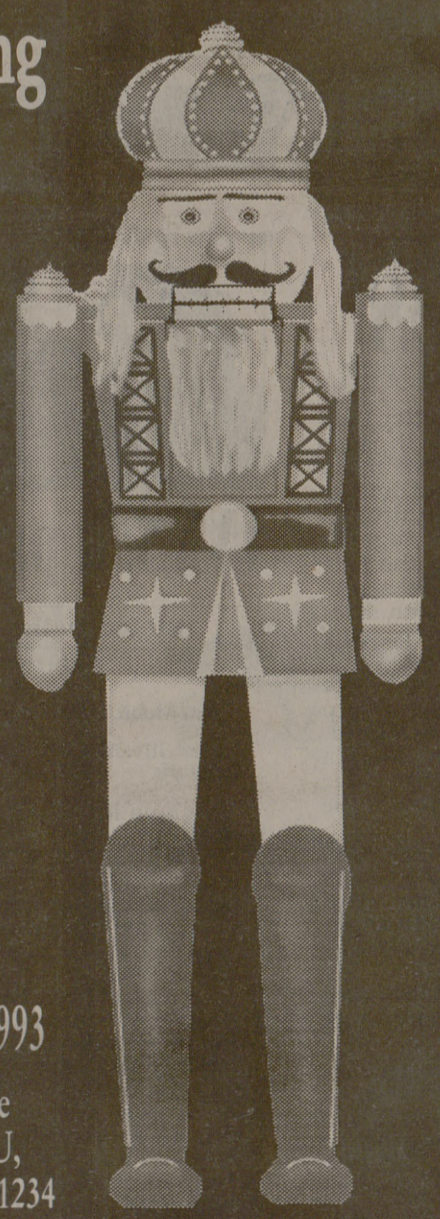
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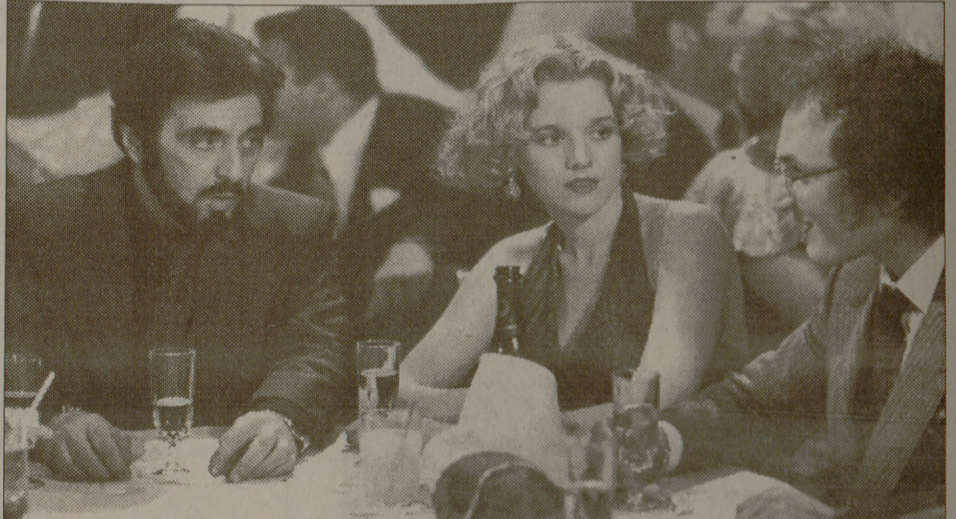
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**FILM REVIEWS**  
**'Carlito's Way ...'**  
**This time, Pacino wants out**

By Joe Leih

"Carlito's Way"  
Starring Al Pacino, Sean Penn and Penelope Ann Miller  
Directed by Brian De Palma  
Rated R  
Playing at Cinema III



Carlito Brigante (Al Pacino), Gail (Penelope Ann Miller) and David Kleinfeld (Sean Penn) exchange a toast to a new life in the action drama "Carlito's Way."

Fresh from his Academy Award winning performance as a jaded, blind colonel in "Scent of a Woman," Al Pacino has slipped back into his comfortable gangster role for the new film "Carlito's Way."

But Pacino, who also starred in "Scarface" and "The Godfather" series, isn't reharsing his previous roles as a ruthless, criminal overlord.

This time he brilliantly plays Carlito Brigante, a Puerto Rican drug runner who wants out of the barrio, out of the United States and out of the dangerous, crime-ridden life of the street.

The story, based on New York State Supreme Justice Edwin Torres' novels "Carlito's Way" and "After Hours," takes place in 1975 when Brigante's slick attorney David Kleinfeld (Sean Penn) legally springs Brigante from prison after a five-year appeal.

Brigante turns to running a disco to make enough money to buy into a Bahamas car renting business. But, the seedy underworld just doesn't want to let him or his girlfriend Gail (Penelope Ann Miller) get away.

Director Brian De Palma skillfully

captures the setting of this fast-paced, urban quagmire. Which is no surprise with such previous works as "Scarface" and "The Untouchables."

Continually showcasing Spanish Harlem's hypnotic bright lights, loud music and loose women, De Palma points out that the criminal life of the street is virtually inescapable.

Plus, Penn's solid portrayal of Kleinfeld, a neurotic attorney who is sucked into the seemingly glamorous career of the racketeer, further shows the

trappings of the lifestyle.

This film, however, does have faults. Pacino's continual narrative occasionally smothers the rising action when it attempts to show his street savvy. And, the characters all turn a tad melodramatic at the finale.

But the glitches are minor and easily overlooked.

"Carlito's Way" is still a fresh, powerful exploration of the captivating qualities of life in the criminal underworld.

**Lack of personality makes for a stale 'Three Musketeers'**

By Lesa Ann King

"The Three Musketeers"  
Starring Kiefer Sutherland, Charlie Sheen, Oliver Platt and Chris O'Donnell  
Directed by Stephen Herek  
Rated PG  
Playing at Post Oak III



Chris O'Donnell and Kiefer Sutherland.

Walt Disney pictures brings another classic folklore tale to the screen in the adventure/comedy "The Three Musketeers." And while Disney succeeds in offering a talented cast and production crew, the film unfortunately comes across as predictable and lacking in its own distinct personality.

From the start, "The Three Musketeers" copies many other action films in its structure. It opens with a 17th century dungeon scene, much like the opening of the blockbuster action adventure film "Robin Hood."

The actual story begins as the young daring adventurer D'Artagnan (Chris O'Donnell) sets out for Paris to follow in his father's footsteps and become one of The Musketeers - the king's special guard.

He finds however, that they have been officially disbanded and only three remain loyal to the

crown: the suave Aramis (Charlie Sheen), the brooding Athos (Kiefer Sutherland) and the lusty Porthos (Oliver Platt). The three remaining musketeers, with the help of D'Artagnan, learn of a plot to overthrow the young king of France.

The brave musketeers become the king's only hope and must undermine the villainous Cardinal Richelieu and his followers, or France will fall.

Sheen and Sutherland's characters are reminiscent of their earlier roles in "Young Guns," with Sheen once again playing the educated and religious man, and Sutherland as the loyal and somewhat troubled musketeer of the trio. Platt's character offers new life to the group with his cocky attitude and dry humor.

O'Donnell's character comes across as a 17th century Luke Skywalker, who is confident of himself and his sword fighting abilities, but lacks the maturity and mileage of the true musketeers. But through his bravery and courage the audience is assured that he will one day become a brave musketeer, (or shall we say 17th century Jedi Knight?)

"The Three Musketeers" is full of action and offers a few surprises. However, the film overall lacks freshness and seems more like "Robin Hood Meets Young Guns" than an original story of its own.

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