

The APPLAUSE Top Ten*

(from the reviews of MICHAEL GILTZ and STEPHEN NIX)

1

Do The Right Thing — Spike Lee's extremely funny and entertaining look at a New York City neighborhood on the hottest day of the year. Sadly prophetic about racial tensions, the power of this movie is that people of every race can leave the theater with a better understanding of how the other person feels. A truly great film and easily Lee's best to date.



Spike Lee

2

sex, lies, and videotape — As unconventional as its title, this intriguing look at intercourse between four young adults offers both a singular view of troubled lives and brilliant glimpses at our own behavior. Consisting entirely of conversations and confrontations set against the simplest of set pieces, the film uses remarkably lean but provocative dialogue to reveal an exercise in economy that's simply profound.

3

Born on the Fourth of July — Oliver Stone's return to Vietnam takes place mainly in North America, following 12 years in the life of an American marine. Like no film before it, this exhaustive character study confronts the issue of troubled veterans and their place in post-war America, and boasts an outstanding production, stunning visuals and genuine acting from its star, Tom Cruise.

4

Heathers — Perhaps the only high school black comedy, this wicked look at cliques and politics grows as increasingly dark as it does hilarious. Fronted by Christian Slater's impression of a young Jack Nicholson, the film offers great work from a nearly unknown cast and a stunning new look for co-lead Winona Ryder. Inventive, intriguing and far off-beat, this is by far the year's best comedy.

5

Crimes and Misdemeanors — Woody Allen may well be the only talent that can take a light look at love laced with great comic moments and balance it perfectly against a completely unrelated, tightly focused tale of blackmail, guilt and murder. His result is unique, and is highlighted by gripping visuals, terrific performances and a brief but hilarious film-within-a-film.

6 7 8 9 10

The Fabulous Baker Boys — This story of two down-on-their-luck brothers who hire a singer to spice up their lounge act is downbeat, jazzy and, above all, mature. Jeff and Beau Bridges are marvelous as the brothers and Michelle Pfeiffer is being properly lauded for her star-making turn as the call-girl turned singer. Writer/director Steve Kloves is a very promising talent.

Drugstore Cowboy — Gus Van Sant's lyrical, poetic depiction of drug addicts who cruise from drugstore to drugstore to pilfer pills is strangely hypnotic. The period details of the '70s are right on target and Matt Dillon is marvelous as an addict who "likes the life-style" but decides living on the lam isn't worth it.

Scandal — Based on the true story of a political sex scandal in the '60s, this British drama carefully dissects the class system in England and the people who try to break through it. John Hurt is painful and precise as the socially climbing doctor who becomes a scape-goat for the government.

The Little Mermaid — Disney dismantles the age barrier with its latest full-length animated feature — a phenomenal achievement in sight, sound and story. Though its fantasy premise is a bit far-fetched, *Mermaid* creates an undersea world that mirrors our own, and throws in breathtaking animation, superb vocal work and unprecedented musical numbers.

Parenthood — Nothing Ron Howard has ever done is nearly as good as this movie. He captures the triumphs and travails of large families by harnessing a great ensemble cast headed by Steve Martin and Diane Weist. There are sentimental, touching moments to be sure. But they are invariably followed by a caustic remark or a biting funny situation — just like life.

*This list cannot include highly acclaimed, late-year releases such as *Roger & Me*, *Driving Miss Daisy*, *Henry V*, *My Left Foot* or *Glory* since they have yet to be released in Gainesville.