

Film explores a social taboo



Lili Monori in Keszi-Kovacs' *Forbidden Relations*.

Forbidden Relations
Directed by Zsolt Keszi-Kovacs
Carlton Cineplex

By LORRAINE WHELAN

"Can any time, place, moral, law, or power be stronger than the love between two people?" Hungarian director Zsolt Keszi-Kovacs asks this question, and, though he does not give a specific answer, explores the possibilities in his new film *Forbidden Relations*.

A chance meeting results in an 'incestuous' relationship between a half-brother and sister. The two find an unusual love for each other and refuse to willingly separate or put an end to their taboo affair. Instead, they face the consequences, trying to deal with the often incongruous laws and mores of traditional Hungary. Their attempts to raise a family and live as "life-companions" in a normal setting are constantly foiled by their mother, who believes they are sinners, and the law which continually charges and sentences them for the same offence.

The imagery within the film is

both simple and alluring—traditional symbols of birds and water are expressed with clarity and subtlety throughout. There are also some beautiful images of cleansing as the mother tries to wash away the shame of sin. In one scene she's like Lady Macbeth, washing her hair in the middle of the night. The contact between her head and hands is as poignant as the scene in *Apocalypse Now* in which Marlon Brando washes his head.

In documentary style, naturalism and simplicity are the key elements to Keszi-Kovacs' film. Many of the events are understated (such as the mother's breakdown), and the fact that no motives are given for other incidents which occur (such as the suicide that begins the movie) add to the realism. The audience finds it understandably difficult to read the minds of the characters.

There are many layers to *Forbidden Relations*, but Keszi-Kovacs deliberately reveals only the surface. He is an objective observer presenting the issues and gives the viewers credit for the intelligence and ability to draw their own conclusions.



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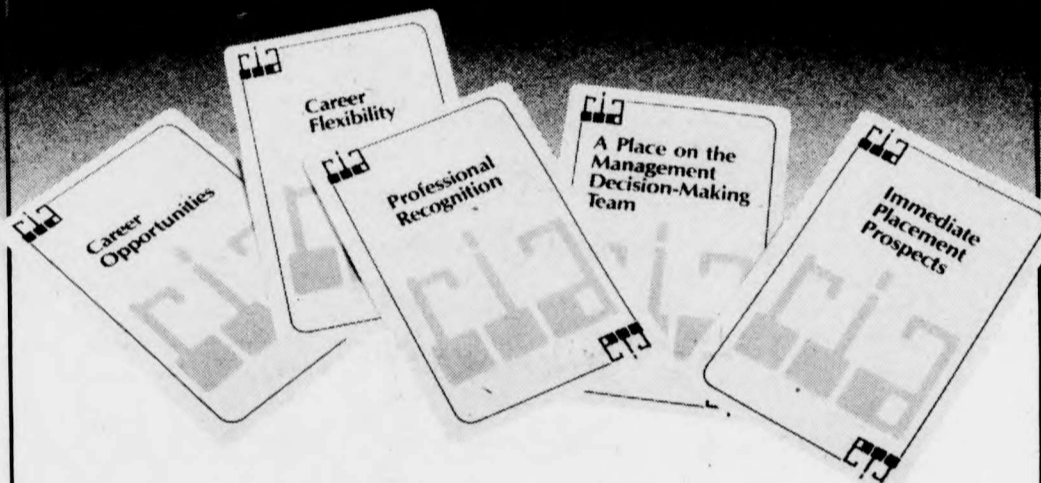
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* also *

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