

Arts & Entertainment

Chances Are strong cast carries Chances Are

Chances Are ★★
Famous Players Westmall

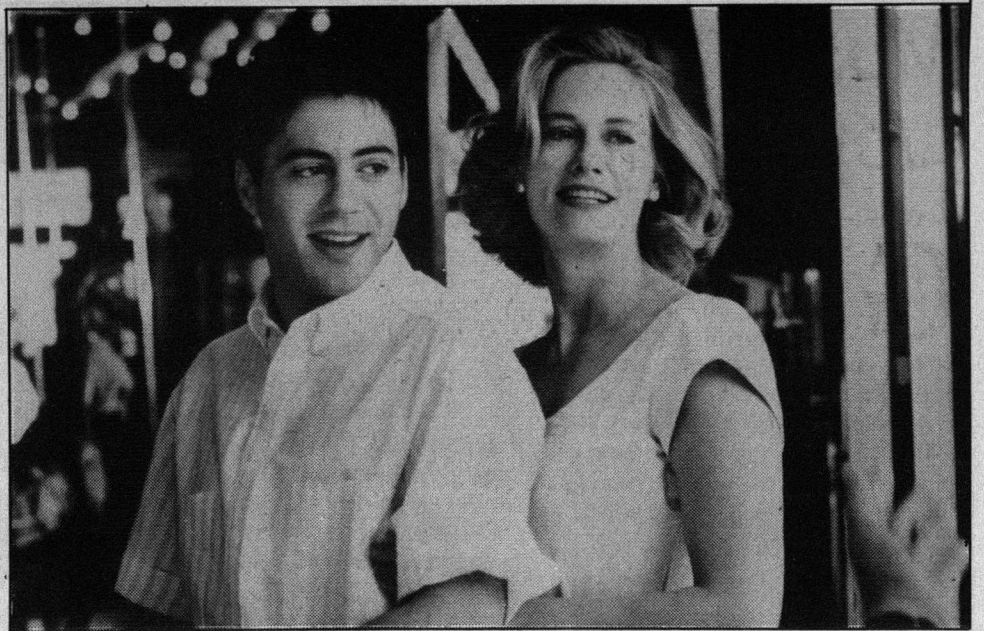
review by Cathy Duong

Chances Are stars a strong cast including Cybill Shepherd as Corinne Jeffries, Ryan O'Neal as Philip Train and Robert Downey Jr. as Corinne's husband Louie and as his reincarnation, Alex Finch.

The movie starts off with the wedding of Louie and Corinne. Louie's best man as well as best friend, Philip, confesses his love for Corinne to the groom. Louie and Corinne lead a happy newlywed couple's life — all huggy and kissy — until the day

Louie dies while Corinne is pregnant with his child. Well, up in the place of white clouds, Louie throws a fit, screaming, yelling and insisting that he be able to get back to his wife. So, to shut him up, his wish is granted by the people in white robes and he is reincarnated as Alex Finch.

Now the movie skips about twenty years ahead. The widow Corinne is now the successful curator of the Smithsonian Institute. She is obsessed with Louie, and she has surrounded herself with pictures of him; they are even in the fridge. Meanwhile, Philip takes care of Corinne and her daughter, Miranda, in the way he imagines Louie would have, but secretly he hopes his relationship with Corinne could be more than platonic.



Cybill Shepherd and Robert Downey Jr. light up the screen in *Chances Are*, a movie with many good and bad points.

One day, this family picture is shattered when Alex Finch, now a Yale graduate, is invited to dinner. Alex, who is gaga over Miranda, suddenly becomes bug-eyed at the sight of her mother. Bizarrely, memories of his previous life flood back and Alex realizes Miranda is really his daughter and starts fighting off her advances while running after Corinne, who sends him to the cold shower more than once.

Amidst all the confusion, Corinne and Alex rediscover each other. Corinne tells her psychiatrist that she has overcome her obsession with her dead husband because he is now twenty years old (but she has known him for twenty-three years) while Alex tries to convince Philip he is his long dead buddy.

Chances Are is the first movie I have seen in a long time that does not use "F" words or other expletives to be funny or to have an impact on the audience. It tries to convey a variety of feelings: those of a widow obsessed with her beloved husband and those of a young man suddenly discovering the strangers he has just met are an important part of his life.

The movie has a light-hearted, ethereal feeling and walks a fine line between being romantic and corny. Because it is a comedy, sentimental scenes are kept to a minimum.

Cybill Shepherd's character is softer and not as authoritative as Maddie Hayes on *Moonlighting*. However, the humour she possesses on the show carries over well to the film. Ryan O'Neal portrays the noble and galant Philip in a very convincing way, although at times his friendly smile seems to be a cardboard cut-out.

Robert Downey Jr. is extremely funny and manages to be so in virtually every

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frame of the movie. His character is multi-dimensional; he succeeds in being both funny and sensitive. From his panicky tantrums when he discovers his past life to his touching realization that his best friend, Philip, has and will always be in love with Corinne, Downey's portrayal of Alex Finch is both sensitive and convincing.

Add to all of this a great musical score by Maurice Jarre and chances are you'll like this.



Clive Oshry

The Lion, The Witch and the Wardrobe

The stage adaptation of C.S. Lewis's classic tale is playing in the Citadel Maclab Family Theatre until March 25.

Collegium Musicum features ancient and unusual

by Mona-Lynn Courteau

The U of A Music Department is endlessly organizing performances and lectures for anyone to enjoy. The latest is a unique event that is sure to delight anyone who gives it a chance: the Collegium Musicum class is holding their second performance of the year.

The point of this class is to learn about and perform, music from the 12th to 17th centuries — that is, from the Medieval and Renaissance periods. As a rule, this type of music is not very well known. One reason for its buried-treasure status is that 20th-century audiences are used to the modern scale system in music, and the old Medieval modes are quite foreign to them. This does not make the music any less interesting to listen to. Says Matthew Welsh, anthropology student and member of the group, "It just hasn't gotten the same kind of press as, say, Bach, or Mozart, or Beethoven." He adds that it has, nevertheless, been enjoying a revival in these parts.

The group's other performance earlier this year was a roaring success. With Early music being so little-known, the group was not expecting the music to receive the cordial reception that it did. Says Collegium director Marnie Giesbrecht: "One of the things that the group does is to dispel the myth that this stuff isn't interesting. It's really very exciting. I have people tell me that this was their favorite concert they had ever been to. I was just absolutely amazed. In one sense, we're almost like missionaries."

Many people are not aware of the degree of variety in Early music. Friday night's audience will get to hear Medieval English carols, the world's first known canon ("Sumer is Icumen In"), sacred Renaissance music, and a work by J.S. Bach, which is the latest piece of music that will be treated. As well, the group is doing instrumental music, including a dance which they have choreographed.

There will also be several tunes "by and for English Royalty." Says Giesbrecht: "Few people realize that there were Royal composers." The program includes music by Henry VIII ("Pass Time With Good Company") and William Cornysyth. Also

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showcased will be a composition by Richard the Lionhearted, one the famous 12th century "trouweres" (travelling French musicians employed by the French courts), written, like many of his works, while he was in jail.

The evening's grand finale, called "Country Cries," will be an onomatopoeic description of the sounds that one might have heard while walking through the 17th-century English countryside. "This is a really-truly nonsense song... (a) yibbble-yabble-yibble-yabble," says Giesbrecht. Adds Welsh: "Very vernacular stuff. Not

pretty words at all. (It's) the language of the country folk... we've got the whole ensemble together; recorders and voices."

Musical instruments used in those times were drastically different from those that are used today. The Collegium group prides itself in the fact that it uses these ancient instruments. They have, for instance, put together a recorder consort, which was seen at their last performance; there are four or five of them, ranging in size from a few inches to a few feet long. This consort has a very sweet, mellow, calm feel to it and is just the thing if you have a splitting headache.

Welsh also says that there will be an instrument featured called the crumhorn, which "looks like an upside-down cane." It is a double-reeded instrument, like the bagpipe, but resembles the recorder, and has a sharp, shrill sound that reminds one of a duck quacking: "People in the group like to call them 'buzzies'."

Other instruments used will include the gamba (an ancient viol), the harpsichord and the clavichord (ancestors of the piano "which not many people have heard"), and diverse percussion instruments.

Being a group specializing in Early music, the class has the chance to be very liberal with their choice of instruments, rhythms, tempi, and so on. Early music performance involves a lot of guesswork because ancient composers had not yet developed an accurate system to refer to when setting music down on paper. Much of it is quite cryptic and incomplete, and

full of signs that modern theorists simply do not understand. Therefore, performance groups are able to adapt the music to their liking. Says Giesbrecht, "There are many different options that can be explored, and we try to use a variety of them."

The members of the group are a diverse bunch. Besides Music students, there are Drama and general Arts students, as well as people from even more foreign faculties; there is even a Dentistry student. Various

Also showcased with a composition by Richard the Lionhearted

members of the off-campus musical community also contribute to the group. Giesbrecht says, "Very often, they are the ones who are bringing in some of the more exotic instruments — for instance, the crumhorns." The group considers this a wonderful opportunity to experience instruments that would otherwise have remained in textbooks for them.

This final performance of the year will be held this Friday evening at 8 p.m. at Convocation Hall. If you're looking for a totally different experience that is interesting, enjoyable, relaxing, and inexpensive (\$3 students, \$5 adults), then this is your night out.