



Janelle Buchanan, Steve Swartz and Katherine Catmull star in *Never Leave Nevada*. In the tradition of such well known cineastes as Jim Jarmusch and Wim Wenders, Swartz' first film explores pop culture and the American psyche.

Never Leave Nevada is more than a road movie, but less than perfect

by Pedram Fouladianpour

Never Leave Nevada might look like a Wenders/Jarmusch-inspired road movie to an impatient viewer. It concentrates on Luis and Sean, two salesmen who travel around the United States selling tube socks and anti-nuclear t-shirts at demonstrations outside nuclear test sites.

The pair, played by Rodney Rincon and Steve Swartz, arrive in Beatty, Nevada, a town on the edge of just such a site. There they meet Betty, the head of a medical clinic which draws most of its patients from the local bordello, and her roommate Lou Ann, who works in the town's casino.

The rest of *Never Leave Nevada* is a "living room movie" studying the relationship of these four human beings.

Despite the fact that it lacks originality or innovation, *Never Leave Nevada* has many aspects which can win an audience over. It is a simple character study that benefits from a witty screenplay. The characters are introduced separately, meeting circumstantially.

The spontaneity of the characters' behaviour and

film
Never Leave Nevada
directed by Steve Swartz
starring Steve Swartz and Rodney Rincon
produced by Cabriolet Films

speeches, which sometimes seem improvised, brings them close to reality.

Writer/director/actor Swartz, a Moroccan-born Jew who emigrated to America in the early sixties, started his career as a playwright, which is more or less reflected in his directorial style. Action is subordinated to dialogue in many scenes, with a static camera that gives the actors the chance to work in a longer time segment.

Although the images suffer from a more than obvious grain (the film was shot on 16mm and blown up to 35mm for theatrical release), *Never Leave Nevada* offers some visual subtlety. Cinematographer Lee Daniel has composed the shots in a way that makes up for the grain.

Never Leave Nevada makes one curious about Swartz, wondering what his next move in the aesthetic game of filmmaking will be.

Bathgate is not kitsch

by Anthony Pizzari

As much as I am reluctant to admit it, *Billy Bathgate* is a well-made, entertaining commercial film.

Billy Bathgate is set in 1935 New York. Based on the book by E. L. Doctorow, it tells the story of 16-year-old Billy Bathgate (Loren Dean) as he moves from rags to riches via the mob. He discovers how to survive in the racket and life from his mentor/boss Dutch Schultz (Dustin Hoffman) and Drew Preston (Nicole Kidman). The film also stars Bruce Willis as Bo Weinberg, who betrays Schultz, and Steve Hillman as Otto Berman, Schultz' head accountant.

To the credit of both director Robert Benton and his actors, the performances are very convincing, especially Hoffman's. It's hard to believe that this is the same person who played an autistic adult in *Rainman*.

The story is littered with dualisms like trust/mistrust, love/hate, riches/poverty. Part of the reason the film works so well is the way screenwriter Tom Stoppard (*Rosencrantz and Guildenstern are Dead*) has woven

film
Billy Bathgate
directed by Robert Benton
starring Dustin Hoffman and Loren Dean
produced by Touchstone Pictures

them into the fabric of the story. Under our very noses, the script moves from a straight mob story to one about human relationships and love.

The cinematography is impeccable, a kind of chiaroscuro in the same vein as *Miller's Crossing* (which some have said was an overlit film noir). The film was shot by Nestor Almendros, who has worked with New Wave directors Francois Truffaut and Eric Rohmer. His camera movements make you forget you're watching a film while you're in the theatre, but stick in your memory after you leave.

Even though it's obvious the film was made to earn mega-bucks for Walt Disney Studios, it would be unfair to say that *Billy Bathgate* is just another kitsch film excused by postmodernism. It's the kind of film that demands to be taken at face value. Like any film noir, its cynicism, craft and high production values make it worth seeing.



Dustin Hoffman, Otto Berman and Loren Dean star in Robert Benton's film adaptation of E. L. Doctorow's *Billy Bathgate*. The film isn't as bad as it could have been.

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FM102
TORONTO

1991 CASBY MUSIC AWARDS

(CANADIAN ARTISTS SELECTED BY YOU)

FAVOURITE ALBUM

- CASINO • Blue Rodeo
- THE GHOSTS THAT HAUNT ME • Crash Test Dummies
- MELVILLE • Rheostatics
- GO FIGURE • Spirit Of The West
- ROAD APPLES • The Tragically Hip
- OTHER _____

FAVOURITE JAZZ/FUSION RECORDING

- LIVE AT SWEET BASIL • Jane Bunnett
- GIRL TALK • Holly Cole Trio
- EXTRA EXTRA • Manteca
- LIVE AT THE BLUE NOTE • Oscar Peterson
- WHAT DO YOU WANT • Shuffle Demons
- OTHER _____

FAVOURITE (CANADIAN BASED) WORLDBEAT GROUP

- FLYING BULGAR KLEZMER BAND
- KASHTIN
- MANTECA
- MOTHER TONGUE
- SIYAKA
- OTHER _____

FAVOURITE SONG

- BE MY YOKO ONO • Barenaked Ladies
- 'TIL I AM MYSELF AGAIN • Blue Rodeo
- TRUST YOURSELF • Blue Rodeo
- THE SWEATER • Meryn Cadell
- SUPERMAN'S SONG • Crash Test Dummies
- LITTLE BONES • The Tragically Hip
- OTHER _____

FAVOURITE DEBUT ALBUM

- ANGEL FOOD FOR THOUGHT • Meryn Cadell
- THE GHOSTS THAT HAUNT ME • Crash Test Dummies
- AND NOW THE LEGACY BEGINS • Dream Warriors
- MOON COME UP • Gregory Hoskins And The Stickpeople
- DON'T CRY TOO HARD • The Leslie Spit Treeo
- OTHER _____

FAVOURITE DANCE/RAP GROUP

- BOOTSALUCE
- DREAM WARRIORS
- KISH
- MAESTRO FRESH WES
- MICHIE MEE
- OTHER _____

FAVOURITE INTERNATIONAL ALBUM

- WOODFACE • Crowded House
- SCHUBERT DIP • EMF
- RITUAL DE LO HABITUAL • Jane's Addiction
- DOUBT • Jesus Jones
- OUT OF TIME • R.E.M.
- OTHER _____

FAVOURITE REGGAE/SKA GROUP

- HOPPING PENGUINS
- KING APPARATUS
- ME, MOM & MORGENTALER
- ONE
- SKAFACE
- OTHER _____

FAVOURITE FRENCH CANADIAN GROUP/ARTIST

- MITSOU
- KASHTIN
- DANIEL LANOIS
- JEAN LELOUP
- MEN WITHOUT HATS
- OTHER _____

FAVOURITE ALBUM ART

- CASINO • Blue Rodeo
- THE GHOSTS THAT HAUNT ME • Crash Test Dummies
- AND NOW THE LEGACY BEGINS • The Dream Warriors
- SOLACE • Sarah McLachlan
- MELVILLE • Rheostatics
- OTHER _____

FAVOURITE GROUP/ARTIST

- BARENAKED LADIES
- BLUE RODEO
- CRASH TEST DUMMIES
- SPIRIT OF THE WEST
- THE TRAGICALLY HIP
- OTHER _____

FAVOURITE NEW CENTRAL GROUP/ARTIST

- BARENAKED LADIES
- MERYN CADELL
- INFIDELS
- THE LESLIE SPIT TREEO
- RHEOSTATICS
- OTHER _____

FAVOURITE NEW EASTERN GROUP/ARTIST

- BLACK POOL
- FIGGY DUFF
- RAWLINS CROSS
- BRETT RYAN
- THOMAS TRIO & THE RED ALBINO
- OTHER _____

MOST PROMISING SONGWRITER

- MERYN CADELL
- GREGORY HOSKINS
- PAGE/ROBERTSON (Barenaked Ladies)
- SARAH McLACHLAN
- BRAD ROBERTS (Crash Test Dummies)
- OTHER _____

MOST OUTSTANDING MUSICIAN

- BRUCE COCKBURN
- GREAT BOB SCOTT
- JEFF HEALEY
- HUGH MARSH
- BOBBY WISEMAN
- OTHER _____

NEXT BIG THING (KISS OF DEATH AWARD)

- BOURBON TABERNACLE CHOIR
- SARA CRAIG
- LOST DAKOTAS
- TEKNICOLOR RAINCOATS
- THE WALTONS
- OTHER _____

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