

# entertainment

## 'Ice Pirates' is a poor imitation

BY WILLIAM CLAIRE

*Ice Pirates* a mildly diverting piece of fluff, slavishly adhering to the *Star Wars* format. It is barely more than a poor imitation.

The story is complete with space rebels doing battle with an evil power with a mysterious plan, a search for a mysterious planet not thought to exist and a dominating princess on a mysterious quest.

*Ice Pirates* was intended to have something for everyone; but in trying to please all, satisfies none. It's a hodgepodge of shoot-'em-up space chase and alien critters for the youngsters. It's fiction which is supposed to appeal to everyone.

For comedy lovers, the writers tried to pen a space spoof, a farce, an *Airplane* for the space age. Most attempts to poke fun fail. Some are overdone; others suffer from overuse, lacklustre imagination and a lack of concern for quality.

The most consistent source of humor is the space robots, including a chicken-sh--t model so afraid of battle that he pukes nuts and bolts along with bile. The pest parody is of the first metamorphosis of the creature in *Alien* who turns up as space herpes.

After spending piles of money on production design, sets, costumes and special effects, producer John Foreman could have forked over a few dollars for a competent director and a better quality cast; not so much big names, but something more than TV has-beens, never-weres and never-wills: Stewart Raffill, director; Robert Ulrich, Mary Crosby and Michael D. Roberts, "actors". A three-minute cameo by John Carradine does little to improve the film's appeal.

*Ice Pirates* tells the tale of a time long ago in a galaxy far away when the only water is stored on an isolated planet as blocks of ice. That's where the movie belongs -- in cold storage.

**ACADEMY AWARDS** --You'd think with the Academy Awards just around the corner (April 9 on ABC-TV),

your reel reviewer would be submitting for your scrutiny his list of Oscar winners instead of wasting his time choosing between *Tank*, *Police Academy* and *Ice Palace*. (You'd never believe why he chose the latter).

But why bother choosing winners when he can't see all the movies in Fredericton that have been nominated? Due to no fault of the management of the local theatres, many of the nominated movies haven't played here and probably won't play here unless they win big awards.

The reason, of course, is money. Generally, to merit a showing, the "product" has to guarantee (hopefully) a 'good house'. In Fredericton, that usually means a 'strong commercial appeal'. And strong commercial appeal means lots of slapstick, car chases, violence and feminine exploitation, but very little conceptual intrigue, few thought-provoking ideas and a minimum of social relevance.

For example, Shirley MacLaine will probably win the Best Actress Oscar for her performance in *Terms of Endearment*. (Debra Winger was good, but her acting was a combination of her previous work in *Urban Cowboy* and *Officer and A Gentleman*. Meryl Streep, in another excellent outing as Karen Silkwood, has won twice previously. Julie Walters is British and won stage awards for her portrayal of Rita in *Educating Rita*, a role she created.)

But wouldn't it be nice to see Jane Alexander in *Jestament* before he made his final decision?

For the record, here is a list of films and their nominations that had not played the Fredericton area as of March 29: *The Dresser* -- Best Picture, Best Actor (Albert Finney and Tom Courtney), Best Director (Peter Yates), Best Screenplay (Ronald Harwood);

*Tender Mercies* -- Best Picture, Best Actor (Robert Duvall), Best Director (Bruce Beresford), Best Original Screenplay (Horton Foote);



Shirley MacLaine (left) and Debra Winger are both nominated for Best Actress Oscars for *Terms of Endearment*, but in Fredericton we probably won't see all their competition.

*Reuben, Reuben* --Best Actor (Tom Conti), Best

Screenplay (Julius Epstein, the man who wrote *Casablanca*);

*Fanny and Alexandra*

--Best Director and Best Original Screenplay (Ingmar Bergman), Best Foreign-language Film, plus three

more (six nominations is highly unusual for a foreign film); *Cross Creek* -- Best Supporting Actor (Rip Torn), Best Supporting Actress (Alfre Woodard).

## Theatre Saint Thomas to stage 'Ludlow Fair'

Theatre Saint Thomas will present Lanford Wilson's two-women short *Ludlow Fair* in the Edmund Casey Auditorium April 3rd, 5th and 6th.

*Ludlow Fair* is an ex-

amination of the relationship between two roommates - an investigation of their self-perceptions and aspirations.

In a style akin to James Thurber's *The Secret Life of*

*Walter Mitty*, this light comedy, promises to be a refreshing and entertaining piece.

Curtain time is 12 o'clock. Running time - 35 minutes.