Rafferty and the Gold Dust Twins

Likable film survives boring script, direction

By IAN BALFOUR

Dick Richards' new film, Rafferty and the Gold Dust Twins, is a moderate success despite uninspired directing.

The excellent cast, which featurs Alan Arkin, Sally Kellerman and Mackenzie Phillips, does an admirable job with a mediocre script by John Kaye.

Gunny Rafferty (Arkin), an exmarine, leaves Los Angeles and his job as a test driver at the gunpoint invitation of Mac (Kellerman) and

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Frisbee (Phillips), who have recently been released from prison. Mac is an alluring woman in her mid-20s who soon becomes romantically attached to Rafferty, much to the dismay of Frisbee, a tough but cute 15-yearold, whose proverbial heart of gold lurks benetah her cold, heartless ex-

Having no money, the trio is forced to swindle their way across the southwestern United States. Their humorous escapades include encounters with a variety of rednecks, a Jesus freak and a naive and horny gas station attendant. All prove easy prey, and after a mildly interesting carchase scene, the trio arrives in Tucson, footloose and fancy-free.

Frisbee, punk turned seductress, catches a green Marine (Charlie Martin Smith, who played Terry the Toad in American Graffiti) with his pants down — literally — and makes off with \$20 to pay for a Stetson hat which Rafferty admired but could not afford

She joins Rafferty and Mac, who is back in her own southwest environment, at Sparky's, a country and western club where necks are red and the audience thrills to the strains of You Are My Sunshine.

Mac fulfills a life-long ambition to sing when she is spotlighted in front of a band of country hicks led by a blond-haired, blue-eyed beauty with whom she falls in love. Eventually she runs off with the band, leaving Rafferty, who has learned, hopefully once and for all, that women are

The film reaches one of its new dramatic moments as the Marine appears at Sparky's with a policeman, and the episode almost results in the shooting of Frisbee. She is taken into custody and returned to St. Mary's Orphanage in New Orleans where society feels she belongs.

The film's strength lies in the acting abilities of the main characters. Arkin is a master of understatement, and convincing in his portrayal of a man who has the courage to set out on his own and abandon his tedious life. Sally Kellerman is engaging and very natural as a hedonistic but compassionate woman. And Mackenzie Phillips (who played the flat-chested brat in American Graffiti) is remarkably mature in her performance as Frisbee.

Aside from a few humorous juxtapositions of incongruities, such as Rafferty's dilapidated car in front of the august and austere St. Mary's Orphanage, the film is visually uninteresting. Director Dick Richards



Alan Arkin and Sally Kellerman in Gold Dust.

is primarily noted for his work in field of expertise. television commercials, and perhaps he should not have strayed from his as replete with clichés as this review.

And as for the script, it is almost

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