

men don't leave: inconsistent tearjerker

by Tony Cogliano

Men Don't Leave
Warner Bros.
directed by Paul Bickman

Many of today's films tend to be either severe tearjerkers or corny rehashes of glory long gone. Very rarely does one find a film both original and heartwarming, subtle yet meaningful. Take heart, Kleenex fans... such a film has just arrived.

Men Don't Leave blends comedy and pathos into a formula for tears and laughter. The film is honest, appealing and tender. The story revolves around the Macaulay family. John, the loving husband, provides his wife, Beth, and their two sons, Chris and Matt, with a contented country lifestyle. John is killed in a working accident, and here begins the struggle that makes *Men Don't Leave* such a powerful film.

In the aftermath of her husband's death, Beth must learn how to deal with her emotions, her finances and, most importantly, her children. She finds out quickly that keeping her family together is as great a task as anything else in her life.

Jessica Lange, as Beth, delivers a refreshing and powerful performance. Ignore the Lange of past disasters... this movie is no *King Kong*. She is animated and determined, and her performance is brilliant. Arliss Howard (*Full Metal Jacket*) co-stars as Beth's newly found love interest, a charming, eccentric, professional musician. Joan Cusack, fresh from her roles in *Working Girl* and *Broadcast News*, plays the nymphomaniacal neighbour in the Macaulay's apartment building.

She (very) quickly seduces the eldest son Chris (Chris O'Donnell), and becomes an integral part of the film's storyline.



The matriarch of the Macaulay family, Beth (Jessica Lange) and her sons Chris (Chris O'Donnell, left) and Matt (Charkie Korsmo).

However, this film is not without problems. It is choppy, as though the plot skips over something important every now and then, dumping the audience into a new setting without revealing the reason for the jump. Luckily, this becomes nothing more than a slight annoyance.

The other problem is that the

character Matty (Charles Kirsmo), who can't be more than nine years old, occasionally seems to say things that would put a professor to shame. Throughout the movie the child is unbelievably deep-in-thought. It is obvious that a child in these circumstances would be forced to grow up, quickly, yet some of the

things Matty says and does border on the unbelievable.

Perhaps the film's biggest problem, however, is the treatment of Cusack's character. Her importance to the film (she is, in essence, a reflection of Beth; her conscience) is almost overlooked because for three quarters of the film, her character is a pain. She

whines, she's overbearing and utterly irritating. Consequently, this portrayal seriously undermines her later, more serious performance in the film.

Men Don't Leave is a human story of hope, love and perseverance. It is, simply put, a tearjerker. *Men Don't Leave* opens nationwide February 23.

CORRECTION:

Contrary to Tuesday's arts calendar, Roberto D'Amico and Kitty de Hoyos will be performing excerpts from *Historias de Romances Y Corridos* Feb. 10 in the Harry S. Crowe room. The full show is being performed Feb. 9 at the St. Lawrence Centre. Tickets are \$25.00 and can be obtained by calling 736-5172. A reception (included) will follow.

"EERILY ATMOSPHERIC CHILLER... RETURNS TO CLAIM ITS PLACE AS A CLASSIC"
Peter Travers, Rolling Stone

"IMAGINE TOPPER DIRECTED BY INGMAR BERGMAN"
Terrence Rafferty, The New Yorker

"A SUBTERRANEAN CLASSIC... CRUELY POETIC"
J. Hobberman, Village Voice

★★★★ (HIGHEST RATING)
"NOTHING LESS THAN THE BEST GENRE FILM OF 1989!"
New York Daily News

**SHE WAS A STRANGER
AMONG THE LIVING.**

**CAPITAL
OF
SOULS**

a HERK HARVEY film © 1989 HARCOURT Productions
Released by PANORAMA ENTERTAINMENT

ADULT ACCOMPANIMENT

EXCLUSIVE ENGAGEMENT

CUMBERLAND FOUR
1 BLOCK NORTH OF BLOOR
AT AVENUE RD.
964-5970
Daily 1:30-4:15-7:10-9:40

GREAT GRAD PORTRAITS GREAT PRICES



- personalized settings
 - choice of backgrounds
 - convenient appointments
 - free Permanizing™
- Photographed elsewhere and don't look your best. Deduct their sitting fee from your order with us.

Super Saver Special

2 - 8x10's \$46.30 6 - wallet
2 - 5x7's 1 - 4x5
all proofs and negatives

University 283-2525

Photographers Associates

9 St. Joseph St. #314
(Wellesley & Yonge Subway)

Foundation Studies

Art
Experimental Art
Fine Art
New Media
Printmaking
Sculpture/Installation

Media and Materials
Ceramics
Glass
Jewellery
Photovision
Surface Design/Print
Textiles

Design
Communication and Design
Environmental Design
Industrial Design

Take the Challenge!

Develop your creativity!

Participate in our Professional programmes in Art & Design

Apply for Admission for Full-time and Part-time studies

Admission by Personal Interview

100 McCaul Street
Toronto, Ontario, Canada
M5T 1W1

For information
(416) 977-5311

Ontario College of Art