

*Review: Waterwalker, Dragoncastle*  
**Film by painter has stunning cinematography**

by Lois Wadsworth

*Waterwalker* is a 90-minute voyage by one man in a canoe around Lake Superior and the rivers that feed into it, but it is neither a travelogue nor just another nature film about a rare and remote wilderness. Canadian painter and filmmaker Bill Mason, who wrote, directed, and narrated the picture, is an extraordinary individual, and the film reflects his thoughtful spiritual orientation (the title refers to the apostle Peter who could walk on water).

By seeing ourselves as a part of the natural order, Mason thinks we can all walk on the water. He particularly likes the way of the native people, and he honors the original inhabitants of the land. The voice of Wilfred Pelletier reads the words of Native American leaders and Mason shows us where they camped along the shores of the lake and left their pictographs on inaccessible canyon walls.

Mason's other nature pictures (there are 17, including *Paddle to the Sea* and *Cry of the Wild*) set the highest standards for the live-action nature genre. The haunting music of Bruce Cockburn and Hugh Marsh underlies *Waterwalker's* moments of dramatic action as well as its sequences of quiet beauty. Ken Buck's cinematography is stunning—I cannot figure how he got some of these shots, especially the white water sequences where the camera seems to be in a calm central place about three feet above the maelstrom.

Bill Mason not only shares the gorgeous places where he finds his inspiration to paint, but he includes us in the creative process. He talks about the British painter J. M. W. Turner, whose seascapes he greatly admires, and we can compare the actual, photographed landscape and Turner's paintings with the emerging work from his



A scene from *Waterwalker*, a canoe odyssey.

palette. Fascinating stuff! Mason is now devoting himself exclusively to painting, and *Waterwalker* is his last film.

Preceding *Waterwalker* is a 13-minute short companion piece that I can recommend very highly. Paul and Becky Mason (the filmmaker's children) began their clay-animated fairytale, *Dragoncastle*, when they were 12 and 10 years old. It took them about

four years to complete, and even though they grew up during the making of the film, it is still fair to say it is a film by children for children (of all ages).

Original fairytales that work are harder to come by than you might think. The stories we pass down from generation to generation of children are basically products of the collective unconscious that conform to archetypal patterns, as

dreams do. They are authentic in some important symbolic sense. Bogus fairytales that have something to prove (especially some "adult" morality) or some hidden motive never quite work—they don't feel right. So it is a delight to discover *Dragoncastle*, a fairytale that not only feels right but is charmingly produced.

Both films start Friday for a two-week run at Cinema 7.

**now showing**

**NEW TO TOWN**

**Big Shots:** Ricky Busker as a street smart kid and Darius McCrary, from the other side of the tracks, solve a mystery. With Paul Winfield, PG-13. Movieland (342-4142) and Springfield Quad (726-9073).

**Jean de Florette:** Yves Montand gives the performance of a lifetime in this half-serious, half-comic film which took 10 years to make—and the most money for a film ever in France. Filmed lushly against a southern France backdrop, circa 1920, Gerard Depardieu also stars. Bijou (686-2458).

**Like Father, Like Son:** Teen-age live wire (Kirk Cameron of TV's *Growing Pains*) and his straight-faced dad (Dudley Moore) accidentally trade brain parts connected to intelligence and personality, but not memory. Confusion reigns. Comedy. Movieland (342-4142) and Springfield Quad (726-9073).

**Matewan:** Re-creates an ugly incident in the 1920's in coal country, at Matewan (pronounced mate-one), West Virginia. Striking coal miners clash with their bosses through immigrant and Black scabs. Chris Cooper plays a union organizer, John Sayles (*The Brother From Another Planet*) directs. Valley River Twin (686-8633).

**Rolling Vengeance:** Stars Don Michael Paul, Ned Beatty. Behind the wheel of a heavy-duty, four-wheel drive truck, a teacher gets back at the thugs who killed his family. Springfield Quad (726-9073).

**Waterwalker:** Director Bill Mason is also a painter, whose admiration for J.M.W. Turner's seascapes transfers into capturing the beauty of Canadian lakes. Music by Bruce Cockburn, narration by Native Americans—and transportation by canoe. Shows with 13-minute short, *Dragoncastle*, at Cinema 7 (687-0733).

**CONTINUING/RETURNING**

**Adventures in Babysitting:** Elisabeth Shue finds more than a calm evening of childcare. Returns to town as double feature with *Tough Guys* at Springfield Fine Arts (747-2201).

**La Bamba:** Lou Diamond Phillips and Esai Morales star in this re-creation of the life of Richie Valens, a late-'50s rock star who died in a plane crash at the peak of his career. Los Lobos provides many of the musical numbers. Double feature with *Innerspace* at Cinema World (342-6536).

**The Big Town:** In 1957, country kid J.C. Cullen (Matt Dillon) comes to Chicago to challenge the illegal crapshooting scene. Stripper Diane Lane tempts him with another game, and Tommy Lee Jones steals scenes as a wicked gangster. Movieland (342-4142). (Sneak preview of *Someone to Watch Over Me* Saturday night is double feature with *The Big Town*.)

**Dead End Drive-In:** One of two late-night features at the Bijou (686-2458).

**Dirty Dancing:** Being compared to *Saturday Night Fever* and *Flashdance*, this musical/romance takes place in 1963 in upstate New York. Jennifer Grey plays a young woman who falls for older man Patrick Swayze. Movieland (342-4142).

**Fatal Attraction:** A one-night stand turns into a nightmare for a lawyer (Michael Douglas) and his family. Glenn Close plays the obsessed woman who pursues him. Thriller. Cinema World (342-6536).

**Hell Raiser:** Horror genre novelist Clive Barker directed this grisly tale of a man tortured by fiendish, visually arresting creatures. Springfield Quad (726-9073) and Movieland (342-4142).

**Innerspace:** In this sci-fi comedy about a secret government project, Dennis Quaid plays a macho brute reduced to miniature, then injected into grocery clerk Martin Short. Double feature with *La Bamba* at Cinema World (342-6536).

**Lethal Weapon:** Mel Gibson of Australia's *Road Warrior* fame and Danny Glover star in this fast-paced thriller. Returns as late-night feature at the Bijou (686-2458).

**The Living Daylights:** Two firsts are in this new James Bond flick: Timothy Dalton now plays Agent 007, and he is involved with a new intrigue—monogamy. Fantasy/adventure. Double feature with *Superman IV* at Movieland (342-4142).

**My Life as a Dog:** One of her all-time favorites, says *What's Happening* film critic Lois Wadsworth. A charming story about a boy's coming of age in a village full of eccentric characters. Bijou (686-2458).

**No Way Out:** Navy lieutenant Kevin Costner goes from shipboard duty to involvement with the CIA. With Gene Hackman and some steamy scenes. Valley River Twin (686-8633).

**The Pick-Up Artist:** Molly Ringwald and Robert Downey play lovers' games in this teen flick. With Dennis Hopper. Cinema World (342-6536).

**The Principal:** A very tough principal cracks down on a very nasty school. With James Belushi, Louis Gossett, Jr., and Rae Dawn Chong. McDonald (344-4343).

**Snow White and The Seven Dwarfs:** Heigh-ho! Now in its golden year, this Disney movie is in re-release, and still in vivid technicolor. Weekend matinees at Cinema World (342-6536).

**Stakeout:** Emilio Estevez and Richard Dreyfuss are two undercover detectives. Comedy-adventure. Cinema World (342-6536).

**Superman IV: The Quest for Peace:** Christopher Reeve again plays the Man of Steel, up against Nuclear Man. Gene Hackman plays a villain, with Margot Kidder as Lois Lane, and Mariel Hemingway. Double feature with *The Living Daylights* at Movieland (342-4142).

**Tough Guys:** Burt Lancaster and Kirk Douglas desert the retirement scene and turn to train robbery. Comedy, action. Returns to town as double feature with *Adventures in Babysitting* at Springfield Fine Arts (747-2201).

Thursday, October 1 is the last showing for: *Law of Desire* at Cinema 7, *Hamburger Hill* at Valley River Twin, *Lost Boys* and *Full Metal Jacket* double feature, and *The Big Easy* at Springfield Quad. Note: Movie bookings change quickly—call numbers listed to confirm.

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