

Lee captures interracial trysts

★★★ 1/2
 Jungle Fever is now showing at the Gateway Mall. Rated R.

ADMIT ONE

Spike Lee's latest endeavor, *Jungle Fever*, offers a look at an interracial relationship between a black architect from Harlem, Flipper Purify (Wesley Snipes) and his temporary secretary, Angie. (Annabella Sciorra) from Bensonhurst. Their affair takes place amid a backdrop of drugs, racism, and white corporate America that eats both characters alive.

The film focuses on the destruction of three families as they deal with the problems they encounter. Flipper's family falls apart when his wife learns of his extra-marital affair with Angie. Angie's father beats her up. Flipper's parents, the Good Reverend Doctor (Ossie Davis) and his wife, deal with the horrors of drug addiction and interracial adultery.

Because Lee's *Do the Right Thing* was criticized for the absence of drugs and the clean appearance of the city streets, he attempts to expose the violence of the streets in *Jungle Fever* with the problem of crack addiction.

Gator (Samuel L. Jackson), Flipper's older brother, is the crack addict who disrupts family life as he tries to sing and dance his way into his mother's heart so she will give him money against his father's best wishes.

Unfortunately, Gator comes off as more of a public service message against crack use than he does as a real crack addict. His articulate explanations as to how he will steal from innocent people if his family members do not give him the money seem too insightful coming from a strung-out junkie.

As drug use destroys the family, so too does the interracial affair. Flipper and his wife, Drew, (Lonette McKee) split up, their little girl, Ming, remaining with the mother.

Because Angie is only a temporary secretary, it is also hinted that her relationship with Flipper is also temporary. Lee takes a pessimistic stance in depicting the relationship between Angie and Flipper as doomed. In one scene, they lie on the floor kissing in an empty apartment, indicative of the emptiness of the relationship. It is important to note that it is

not entirely because it is an interracial one. Their affair is based on sex and curiosity rather than love.

The developing relationship between Paulie (John Turturro) and a young black woman who frequents his candy store is more promising, for it is based on the characters' sincere feelings for each other.

Turturro does an excellent job of bringing out the sensitive

from *Do the Right Thing* return again as ignorant enforcers of the law.

Lee's beginning credit sequence is also noticeable. Street signs bearing the names of actors, actresses, and film crew also carry messages of separatism. Annabella Sciorra's sign is attached to a Bensonhurst sign. Lee's sign is attached to a Malcolm X Avenue sign.

While it appears that Lee is merely discouraging all interracial relationships, an even stronger message arises. The film is dedicated to Yusuf Hawkins, the black youth who was killed in Bensonhurst because it was believed he was dating a white girl. As in *Do the Right Thing*, propaganda again sprouts up on T-shirts and in dialogue references to Central Park and Al Sharpton.

All of these things serve as a warning and reminder that interracial relations are still dangerous while people continue to hang onto their racist beliefs.

Lee's artistic sets coupled with Ernest Dickerson's stylish camera work keep this film entertaining without obscuring its politics. The performances by Sciorra and Snipes also add depth which enable us to suffer with them.

This successful balance of the intense subject matter and realism with elements of visualize style create a film that teaches and entertains, rendering it suitable for a variety of viewers.

Christina Komeshian
 Emerald

All of these things serve as a warning and reminder that interracial relations are still dangerous while people continue to hang onto their racist beliefs.

and thoughtful demeanor of Paulie, whose liberal views on interracial relationships make him the target of hostility by the neighborhood guys who hang out at the store.

Lee is completely pessimistic when it comes to depicting white authority figures. In the white corporate America that refuses to allow blacks upward mobility, Tim Robbins adds humor as an inept partner at the firm where Flipper is employed until he resigns because of unfair treatment. The white cops

"27 years of Quality Service"

GERMAN AUTO SERVICE, INC.
 Mercedes • BMW • Volkswagon
 Audi • Datsun • Toyota

2025 Franklin Blvd.
 Eugene, Oregon 97403

342-2912

Discover Birkenstock

Step into Birkenstock footwear, and find a remarkable blend of comfort and style. Contoured footbeds provide cushioning and support, while your feet remain free to move naturally. You'll find colors that range from basic to brilliant.



Birkenstock

Footwise

The Birkenstock Store
 Eugene • 5th Street Public Market • 342-6107 • Daily 10-6

Oregon Daily Emerald

Recycle This Paper

Oregon Daily Emerald

THIS SUMMER TERM, TURN OVER A NEW LEAF.

Have you checked out the recycled products at the UO Bookstore lately? At your request we now carry a good selection of eco-wise school and office products. Come downstairs in our store, see the selection, and turn over a new leaf in your school supply buying!

RECYCLED, UNBLEACHED, POST-CONSUMER WASTE PAPER PRODUCTS AVAILABLE

- Bond Paper
- Notebook paper
- Lined pads
- Post-it notes
- Envelopes
- Computer Paper

UNIVERSITY OF OREGON BOOKSTORE

13th & Kincaid 346-4331 M-F 8:15-5:15

