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## 'Grand Canyon' too conversational

★★½  
F.I.L.M. *Grand Canyon* is currently showing at Cinema World. Rated R.

**ADMIT ONE**

Lawrence Kasdan is a terrific screenwriter and has proven himself a fine director. He has written scripts for an eclectic mix of top-notch films such as *The Big Chill*, *Raiders of the Lost Ark* and *Silverado*. The script for *Grand Canyon* is worthy of mention beside those. The film, however, is not.

One of Kasdan's favorite actors, Kevin Kline, plays Mack, an upper-middle class executive who's living a seemingly rich life with his wife in the sun and splendor, just as we imagine Los Angeles life might be like. While driving home from the airport one night, he takes a shortcut into South Central L.A.

His car breaks down, and as he awaits the tow truck, he is confronted by several youths who seem intent on bringing him some kind of harm. This tense scene resolves itself when the tow truck driver, Simon, played by Danny Glover, convinces them to let him go.

Mack feels he has to repay Simon in some way for what might have been a life-saving action. So he goes to Simon's work and invites him for breakfast after having a dream which won't allow him to let the action go unnoticed.

They become friends and their lives and the lives of their respective acquaintances mesh in a complicated but realistic way that seems true to life. However, the film is so full of subplots that it barely seems to have a

story line holding it together. One of the important plots arises when Claire, Mack's wife, finds an abandoned baby on the side of the road. She comes to face a life-altering decision as to whether or not to keep it. And Mack has to come to terms with a night of infidelity — a night he spent with his secretary.



Courtesy Photo  
Steve Martin (Davis) and Kevin Kline (Mack) star in *Grand Canyon*.

Mack sets Simon up with his secretary's best friend, the only black woman he knows. There's a good moment where he wonders if this isn't a symptom of 'the white guy thing.'

The blending of these stories and most of the dialogue that accompanies them is believable and interesting. The problem lies in the whole way the movie is approached.

First of all is the amount of things Kasdan tries to deal with. At 2 hours, there are a lot of subjects ad-

ressed. Kasdan should have been more judicious as to how many things he wanted to say.

As it is, the film is populated with people who don't seem to function in the real world with believable lives. Instead, they have incidents that happen and then they explore them through long, thoughtful discussions.

But real life doesn't work this way, and this film is supposed to reflect a realistic view of modern, urban life. It seems like all the characters have seen every socially relevant movie and have created a belief system based on that.

This is an odd movie in that just about any given scene by itself is scintillating and often insightful and funny. But as a whole, there's a level of reality that the film never lands on.

Steve Martin has a nice extended cameo as a producer of big-budget exploitation films whose life almost changes when he is shot. His scenes almost always have comedic overtones and he is the obvious comic relief in a film that often tends to be preachy and downbeat.

The script by Lawrence and Meg Kasdan boasts excellent dialogue but is mired in its grand intentions to figure out the meaning of life. It's like an "over-ambitious" episode of *thirtysomething*.

It ultimately seems to say that if more people had meaningful dialogue over coffee, we could save the world. It's this wholly simplistic view of the world that keeps the film from being as important as it might have been.

By Lucas J. Gutman  
Emerald Contributor



Courtesy Photo  
Jeremy Sisto (l), Kevin Kline and Mary McDonnell star in this film of urban life and small miracles.

## PRIMUS

Continued from Page 5

he added. "We never see things as so heavy that you can't be a little tongue-in-cheek about them. We tend to be satirical about serious things, and there are some heavy things in our music, but we don't like to be blatant. That's not us."

Love on Ice, however, tells a different story. For its band members, there's nothing worse than knowing what the next verse is going to be.

Love on Ice is not a concept, said the band; they're not searching for a sound but rather they just don't want to be bored.

Theirs is a music born of a passion for hard rock, experiences in rowdy clubs

and in Pacific Northwest dive bars and an education in classical and jazz music.

With such colorful influences, the band can't help but appeal to an equally broad audience. "I overheard at a bar a couple of guys describe it as 'even-girls-like-it' music," said vocalist/guitarist Dan Krueger, alluding to their generally male audiences. "That's the best we've heard yet."

Krueger was a violin prodigy at five before making the switch to the guitar in later years. He met guitarist Dirk Sullivan in 1987 at Portland's Mount Hood Community College, a school well-known for its prestigious jazz department.

Sullivan, who was a nationally ranked BMX bike racer as a teenager, wanted to

be an art major at first, even though he'd dabbled with the classical guitar. But when he received his first electric guitar for his 17th birthday, his plans changed.

**'We were outside of a few categories, but we stuck with the music because it's what we liked.'**

— Dan Krueger  
Love on Ice vocalist/guitarist

Sullivan had heard of drummer Stan Robinson since they lived in the same Oregon town. Robinson started playing

piano when he was seven, but with his drummer father, he soon gravitated toward the kit at home.

Love on Ice didn't start out as a band; they just ended up that way when the four decided to quit school, move to Corvallis and play at OSU fraternity parties.

"It was a weird decision at the time," Sullivan said. "We had no money — just a vision of the band."

A few months later they moved back to Portland. But the going was tough playing alternative originals in a blues-and-pop town like Portland. While all the band members were born and raised in Oregon, they found little artistic solace there.

"People couldn't put a finger on what we were doing," Krueger said. "We were outside of a few categories, but we stuck

with the music because it's what we liked."

Today, with their first album, *Nude*, debuting on Feb. 14, the band still draws its music more from inspiration than contemplation, even when it came down to naming the album.

"We were playing tennis, throwing rackets and hitting balls over the fence, and *Nude* just came up," Robinson said. "But it fits. We're new, unclothed, free and wild and ready to go. It's also a rip on censorship: There's nothing wrong with being nude. It's a beautiful thing."

Primus and Love on Ice will perform on Thursday, Feb. 6, at The Hilton, 66 E. Sixth Ave. The show starts at 8 p.m. and tickets, selling for \$11 students and \$13 general, are available at the EMU Main Desk.

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