

Movie Previews • Tim Robbins on Bob Roberts

Ben Stiller — a no name with his own show • Video Releases

By MATT LABASH
Daily Lobo, U. of New Mexico

Thank the Lord for small favors — like changes of season. By the time the trees have shed their leaves, the studios usually have exhausted their tired inventory of mind-numbing summer sequels, mega-million dollar marketing vehicles and action flicks starring muscle-laden, accented martial arts experts who couldn't breathe life into a line of dialogue if Lee Strasberg beat them to death with an acting stick. Even if the autumn offerings aren't as highbrow as, say, *Buffy the Vampire Slayer*, the majority should offer some sort of mental stimulation to patrons who don't have to be accompanied by an adult to an R-rated picture.

Of Mice and Men (Metro Goldwyn Mayer)

Adding a distinct literary touch to the offerings this fall is this adaptation of John Steinbeck's tragic novel. . . . Malkovich plays the feeble-minded Lennie, and Gary Sinise, who also directs, plays his more competent companion, George. For those of you who haven't made it to the library and don't plan on picking up the Cliffs Notes, George is to Lennie what Charlie is to *Rain Man*. Two-time Academy Award winner Horton Foote adapted the screenplay. Having done *Tender Mercies* and *To Kill a Mockingbird*, Foote's no slouch in the rewrite department.

Glengarry Glen Ross (New Line Cinema)

Playwright David Mamet, who brought us the brilliant *House of Games* — a sordid slice of life on the grift — has adapted his Pulitzer Prize-winning masterpiece for the screen and delves into an equally seamy world with a different kind of hustler: the real estate salesman.

Mamet writes rhythmically perfect staccato prose, the thinking man's gutter talk with profanity in all the right places.

He has one of the best ears in the biz, especially when portraying a recession-affected real estate office, where the salesmen are desperate enough to put their wives on the auction block for the sales leads that'll win them an El Dorado. The heavy-hitting cast includes Al Pacino, Jack Lemmon, Alec Baldwin and Alan Arkin.

Night and the City (Twentieth Century Fox)

This is a down-and-dirty, gritty portrait of the uphill struggle for a few inhabitants of New York's underbelly to realize their dreams. Crawling out from urban filth isn't exactly new



In *Glengarry Glen Ross*, Jack Lemmon plays a salesman who would sell his sister for a buck.

territory for Robert De Niro, who has made a career out of playing degenerates in a New York state of mind. He reunites with director Irwin Winkler (*Guilty by Suspicion*) and co-star Jessica Lange (*Cape Fear*), making a promising trifecta from Tribeca Productions, with enough Academy Awards among them to make for some fairly heady decorative statements on the mantle.

The Public Eye (Universal)

Film noir and Joe Pesci — not exactly flashcard fodder in a game of free association. A spit-fire time bomb like Pesci doesn't seem like an obvious choice for a genre characterized by reluctant, slightly in-the-dark protagonists. But true Pesci fans, from his Scorsese origins, will give thanks to the powers up high that he decided to take a break from squandering his talents as the light-hearted foil opposite that pasty-faced Cullkin kid or in the endless saga of *Lethal Weapon*.

Here he plays the eccentric tabloid photographer Leon "The Great Bernzini" Bernstein in 1942 New York, with a lust for the dark side and for Barbara Hershey, who plays an unattainable nightclub owner.

Consenting Adults (Hollywood Pictures)

Here's a new spin for swingers who feel like getting out of the house and going across the yard.

Kevin Kline and Mary Elizabeth Mastrantonio are the cover couple for suburban bourgeois until they get sucked into the fast lane by their new neighbors, played by Kevin Spacey and Rebecca Miller. Kline develops a taste for thy neighbor's wife and later is accused of having an affair and killing her, putting his own precious family in jeopardy. That's when we're strapped in for an explosive ride through the Tunnel of Cliché. But there is some hope here — Kline rarely is in anything without some semblance of wit, so this may beat the thriller's Law of Averageness.

The Bodyguard (Warner Bros.)

She's won two Grammys, 11 American Music Awards, has been humpin' around in matrimonial bliss with some up-and-comer named Bobby Brown and now Whitney Houston makes her film debut in a Lawrence Kasdan picture. Talk about a charmed life. Kevin Costner co-stars as a former Secret Service agent who now guards beautiful people. Houston plays a flamboyant singer who receives threatening fan letters and needs Costner's services.

Gee, I wonder if they can't stand each other at first; I wonder if there's any romance on this date; I wonder if this doesn't sound a lot like *Someone to Watch Over Me*.

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From the publishers of U. The National College Magazine

in

the

books

on the set

Ben Stiller's got to overcome an almost impossible challenge to make a name for himself in show biz. In September, the 26-year-old's comedic production *The Ben Stiller Show* was scheduled to premier in the same time slot as long-standing ratings behemoth *60 Minutes*. But Stiller, whose weekly show is on the Fox network, has no qualms about the competition and says he knows what he's up against. "Some nights I'll fantasize about 'Oh wow, *The Ben Stiller Show*. My career's made. I'll be a star,'" he says. "And other nights I think, '*60 Minutes*, let's face it.'" But while the Sunday prime time slot is tough, Stiller says it shows Fox is targeting a young audience.



"I think that college-age people will see it as an alternative to what's on at that hour," he says. "It's definitely a new type of show. It's very different."

On the program, Stiller plays everyone from himself to Eddie Munster and Bruce Springsteen. "It's a show within a show," Stiller says. "The idea is that I host the show from my apartment, and every week I'm trying to get these skits and short films on the air."

Many of the comedy bits are parodies of films and other TV programs. Imagine, for instance, Eddie Munster as the antagonist of the cinematic thriller *Cape Fear* or an episode of *Cops*, set in Salem, Mass., in 1640. The show also features Stiller's original characters, including a marriage counselor who always sides with the husband and a Hollywood agent who advises Roseanne and Tom Arnold to quit now while their careers are hot. ■ Dan Nissila, *Daily Barometer*, Oregon State U.

video calendar

A brief look at October releases

Criss Cross, MGM, Sept. 30; **Falling From Grace**, Columbia, Sept. 30; **My Cousin Vinny**, Fox, Oct. 1; **Gladiator**, Columbia, Oct. 7; **Children of the Night**, Columbia, Oct. 7; **Straight Talk**, Disney, Oct. 7; **Snake Eater 3**, Paramount, Oct. 8; **Desert Kickboxer**, HBO, Oct. 14; **Basic Instinct**, Live, Oct. 14; **Thunderheart**, Columbia, Oct. 14; **Critters 4**, Columbia, Oct. 14; **Newsies**, Disney, Oct. 14; **Cutting Edge**, MGM, Oct. 21, **K2 — The Ultimate High**, Paramount, Oct. 21; **The Babe**, MCA, Oct. 21; **Tales From the Darkside IV**, Worldvision, Oct. 21; **Auntie Lee's Meat Pies**, Columbia, Oct. 21; **Folks**, Fox, Oct. 22; **Beauty and the Beast**, Disney, Oct. 28; **Sleepwalkers**, Columbia, Oct. 28.

quotable

"Yea. Well, when you have money, a pay cut doesn't matter that much."

—Al Pacino, on the hubbub surrounding the pay cut he took to do *Glengarry*.