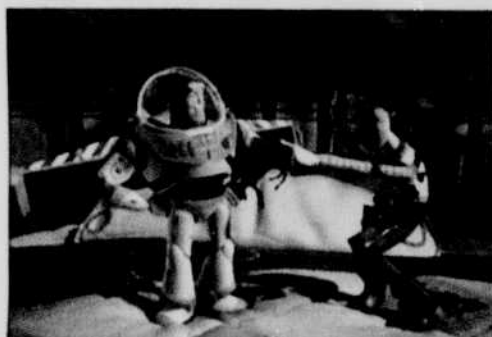


Reel

BY BONNIE DATT

THIS MONTH'S MOVIE SELECTION shows a striking lack of film-noir fare. What's going on? Where's the gratuitous violence? Where are the likable bad guys with oddball fetishes and even more oddball nicknames? Oh, that's right: It's a Disney sort of month. Buck up, though. Maybe at the end of *Toy Story*, Woody will pump Buzz with semiautomatic fire (Closing remark: "That's all I have to say about that.").



Toy Story

Disney

Life is like a box of toys. Tom Hanks is the voice of Woody, a cowboy doll who maintains order in his owner Andy's room — until Buzz Lightyear, a high-fallutin' space action figure (voice by Tim Allen, TV's *Home Improvement*), moves in. Word is that the animation is anamazing.

Goldeneye

United Artists

Never say never. Remington Steele's lucky number — 007 — finally came up. This time, Pierce Brosnan is Bond. James Bond. He goes to Russia. Former Soviet Union Russia. And there are girls. Sexy girls. (Famke Janssen and Izabella Scorupco play the latest Bond chicks.)



Nick of Time

Paramount

Wait a second, Johnny Depp — a.k.a. Don Juan — a daddy? Yup. He plays a mild-mannered accountant whose daughter is kidnapped. He's forced to assassinate California's governor (Look out, Pete!) or his daughter will die. Christopher Walken (*The Prophecy*) plays one of the kidnappers.



The American President

Castle Rock

What if the president were hooking up at the White House? Legitimately, that is. Michael Douglas plays a widowed president who starts dating an environmental lobbyist (Annette Bening, *Love Affair*). Pretty bad when your lovers' tiffs are the top story on the 6 o'clock news.



Ace Ventura: When Nature Calls

Warner Bros.

Riddle me this: How do they churn the sequels out so fast? The dumb gets still dumber as Jim Carrey returns as that friend to the furry, feathered and flippered. This time he's needed in Africa, where he has to track down the sacred Shikaka (we don't know what it is, either) to prevent tribal war.

Home for the Holidays

Paramount

Ah, Thanksgiving. Time to count our blessings. Claudia Larson (Holly Hunter, *The Piano*) feels particularly blessed: She just got fired; she's sick; she's flying to see her weird family; and her daughter (Claire Danes, TV's *My So-Called Life*) is planning to lose her virginity while she's gone. Pass the stuffing.



The Journey of August King

Miramax

August King, a handsome white mountain man played by Jason Patric (*Rush*), goes to the market for supplies and comes back with a beautiful black girl. Sounds like mountain fever. Except it's pre-Civil War North Carolina, she's a runaway slave and hunters are now looking to checkmate them both.

Money Train

Columbia

It's been awhile since we've seen a good old-fashioned train robbery. What? White men can't rob trains? How about re-pairing that wacky duo, Woody Harrelson and Wesley Snipes? They play brothers (foster) and New York transit cops who go underground to rob the subway.



Casino

Universal Studios

Before the Disney-ization of the casinos, Las Vegas was down and dirty — a place where men were men, Elvis was King, the bars were seedy and the dancers were sleazy. Robert De Niro plays Ace, a greedy gambler. Joe Pesci plays his partner. Sharon Stone plays Ginger, the sexpot and Ace's love interest.



Waiting to Exhale

20th Century Fox

You can stop holding your breath. Another women's movie — just what you've been waiting for — is out. These four women aren't shooting

men and taking off on a cross-country jaunt. But maybe they should be. Whitney Houston, Angela Bassett and Gregory Hines star. Breathtaking.

Carrington

Gramercy

Androgyny, ménage à trois, marrying your love's lover then bagging your husband's best friend? Sounds like a modern romantic comedy, but this takes place in the early 1900s and is based on a true story. Emma Thompson (*Junior*) stars as painter Dora Carrington.



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Screen Saver

Harlem Diary: Nine Voices of Resilience

"Who's your friend, with the camera?" may become as standard a greeting as "What's up?" in this post-Hoop Dreams, *Real World*, everyone-has-a-documentary-in-him/her fervor. *Harlem Diary* is one of undoubtedly many more to come, but this is a good thing.

In *Harlem Diary*, interviews with nine people, ages 12 to 26, are juxtaposed with black-and-white clips from the video diaries the young people kept. Terry Williams, who wrote *The Uptown Kids: Struggle and Hope in the Projects*, introduces and comments on the stories.

"These are stories of resilience, strength and endurance [within] a population that we consider disposable and expendable," Williams says.

The voices are of people who have been inside prison cells, shelters, TV studios and brokerage firms; seen drug deals and shooting deaths of friends; carried responsibilities as single mother, father figure and role model.

"Where I'm from, most of my friends are either dead or locked up in jail from being misled," says one of the subjects, Rasheem Swindell, 16, an aspiring boxer.

The film, directed by documentary filmmaker Jonathan Stack, opened in New York and Los Angeles at the end of October and is expected to go wider. Seek it out for a glimpse of the real *Real World*.

The Reel Deal

The Kids in the Hall Movie

You'd be forgiven for thinking you were at a taping of the Canadian comedy troupe's hit HBO series. Scott Thompson and Bruce McCulloch are wearing dresses; Mark McKinney is decked in a psychedelic shirt with a Hot Wheel hanging from his neck; Kevin McDonald, sporting glasses the size of Coke bottles, begs us not to say that the Kids seem serious.

The Kids created a bevy of memorable characters — but don't expect to see many in the Kids in the Hall movie, like in those bad SNL-spawned movies.

"We could have just taken our big hit characters and forced them in, but we set a higher goal," explains Thompson.

Something else will probably surprise Kids fans. When the Kids quit series TV, rumors flew that they hated the sight of each other, but you wouldn't know that from the relaxed atmosphere on the set.

"We fight ritualistically almost," explains McKinney. "When we stop fighting, we're dead."

Despite a yearlong hiatus, the Kids begin feeling comfortable after a couple of takes.

"We're nervous creatures," McDonald says. "The more you make us feel at home — the more you cuddle us, put slippers on us and give us a paper to read, the funnier we'll be."

Steve Gravestock, U. of Toronto

