

Wining film critics wallop whiny Winger

Excerpts from the cable television program *At The Concession Stand*:

Tom: Testing . . . one, two, three. Testing . . . one, two, three.

Glenn: Hey, the camera's rolling. This is *At The Concession Stand*, the movie review program. And across the aisle from me is Tom Mockler, film critic for the *Times of London*.

Tom: And across the aisle from me is Glenn M. Stuva, of the *Los Angeles Times*. And sitting before

Tom Mockler & Glenn Stuva

me is a bottle of Sebastiana Gamay Beaujolais wine, bottled in November 1983 — a truly fine wine. The films of 1983, like fine wine, should be savored.

Glenn: Which brings us to our topic this week: The Films of 1983. It's true that fine wine should be savored, but unfortunately last year's crop was more like a bottle of cheap ripple: It'll get you drunk but it doesn't taste very good.

Tom: Actually, I didn't even find them very intoxicating. I probably should have saved my money for cheap ripple. Well, at least the popcorn was filling. Some people thought 1983 was an exceptionally good year, but I can't agree. I was supposed to think of 10 of the best films, but I can't even think of 10 especially good ones.

Glenn: I can't think of 10, either. So I came up with a best six of the year. Here they are:

1. *The State of Things*
2. *Zelig*
3. *Silkwood*
4. *The Hunger*
5. *Strange Brew*
6. *Merry Christmas, Mr. Lawrence*

Honorable Mentions include *Risky Business*, *Sudden Impact*, and *Breathless*.

Movies I wish I had seen: *King of Comedy*, *Tender Mercies* and lots of foreign films that never play in this part of the country.

The most overrated films of the year are easily *Terms of Endearment* and *Fanny and Alexander*. Yes, I'm criticizing Bergman.

Tom: You're a cruel man, Glenn, although I can't really disagree for the most part. For me, this year consisted of a lot of movies that had good critical reputations, but that I missed. Foremost in this category was *The Big Chill*. I couldn't seem to get anybody to go with me. Maybe I should switch toothpaste.

Another film that I'm sorry I missed was *Betrayal*, with Ben Kingsley and Jeremy Irons. It never made it here, and never may. Others included *Reuben, The*

Right Stuff (I couldn't get anybody to go with me to that, either), *Tender Mercies* starring Robert Duvall (I don't like stories about country singers), and *The King of Comedy* (I can't stand Jerry Lewis, even if he is playing a straight role). Glenn seems to have stepped out for a moment, so I'll ramble on some more.

I agree with Glenn's selection of *The State of Things* as the best film. Wim Wenders is perhaps the best director in the world today.

Zelig was a good film, but certainly not Allen's best.

Meryl Streep deserves the Academy Award for Best Actress, by all rights, for *Silkwood* (even though she won the award last year).

David Bowie deserves the Academy Award for Best Actor in both *Merry Christmas, Mr. Lawrence* and *The Hunger*, although neither film was outstanding in its entirety. He's pretty sharp in his MTV videos too, although he can't dance as well as Michael Jackson. The Silliest Film Award goes to *Return of the Jedi*, for the triumph of special effects over story line.

And yes, the Most Overrated Film citation goes to Lincoln/Hollywood's own *Terms of Endearment*.

Glenn: What were you talking about while I was gone?

Tom: What difference does it make? I covered for you while you were in the liquor store. Some job this is.

Glenn: I wasn't at the liquor store. If you must know, I was using the restroom. But that's neither here nor there. What in the hell were you talking about?

Tom: The endearing film about endearing people, the one that makes you laugh and cry and comes to terms . . .

Glenn: *Terms of Endearment*, eh? Yeah, that was a pretty dumb movie. The only two things that I enjoyed about the movie were Jack Nicholson's performance and the scene where Debra Winger dies.

Nicholson's always good, and it was such a relief after nearly two hours of her whiny voice for Winger to be silenced by death.

Tom: And even that was contrived. I love ya, Bob but I'm not sure about your taste in women. Troy Bishop can't act, either.

Glenn: Troy Bishop is a twit, as are the director and writer of this overly sentimental trash heap of celluloid. I don't want to forget Jeff Daniels, either.

His performance had all the force and dynamism of a boiled carrot.

Tom: "Flap" Horton? Who ever heard of somebody named "Flap"?

Glenn: Good point, Tom. Well, the guy by the camera is waving his arms. I guess that means we're out of time.

Tom: This has been another edition of *At The Concession Stand*. Until next time, remember to vote for the candidate of your choice and obey most traffic laws — they're there for your protection. This has been Tom Mockler . . .

Glenn: And Glenn Stuva. See you next time.

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Correction

Because of a problem with the printing, two of the poems in Monday's "Serendipity" column by Mary C. Reilly were illegible. The poems are reprinted here to avoid any further eyestrain.

Walking a Tightrope

There is a fine straight line pulled tight
Stitched and clamped on either end
Between the wondrous and unique you
that dares to precariously tiptoe forward
And the strong force of society, family
and friends, supporting, pulling, prodding,
and nudging
Both encourage you to strike a balance
in developing and realizing
your special potential
in the art of personhood

Cocktail Waitress

Would you care for anything to drink
(smile and wink, smile and wink)
May I take those empty glasses?
(shrug off passes, shrug off passes)
Would you let me light your smoke?
(gasp and choke, gasp and choke)
Oh yes, I have some change I think —
(clink-clink-clink-clink)
May I get you another pitcher?
(Coors Light, Miller, or Budweiser)
Here's your change — \$6, \$7, \$8
(what a cheapskate, what a cheapskate)
Go home with you or to a party?
(someone save me, someone save me)
I won't be your date, girlfriend, or mistress!
(I confess I'm in distress)
Can't you see it's just a job?
(go home and sob, go home and sob)

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