

# Visitor stirs up trouble in film at Sheldon

By Tracy Mueller  
Staff Reporter

Many people welcome old friends into their homes and treat them like family. But a visit can quickly sour and life can become frustrating and confusing, depending on the old friend.

In "To Sleep With Anger," the Sheldon Film Theater's latest offering, the old friend is Harry Mention (Danny Glover). When Harry shows up on the doorstep of his old friends, Gideon and Suzie (Paul Butler and Mary Alice), he is welcomed and told to make himself at home.

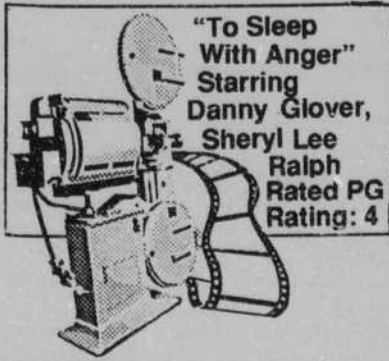
He does, and life for Gideon and Suzie and their family takes a nasty twist.

Gideon and Suzie, sharecroppers from the South now retired in south-central Los Angeles, have tried to instill their Southern values and life-style in their two sons. Gideon keeps chickens and a garden in the backyard, Suzie is a midwife, and both stick to the religion, values and superstitions of their heritage.

Their oldest son, Junior (Carl Lumbly), embraces the family values. He and his wife, Rhonda (Reina King) work hard and volunteer their time at a local soup kitchen. But the younger son, Babe Brother (Richard Brooks), has adopted the yuppie life-style — complete with a loan officer career, a realtor wife and a Mercedes.

His efforts are scorned by his parents and brother, however. They view Babe Brother as lazy and uncaring because he and his wife Linda (Sheryl Lee Ralph) are obsessed with money and materialism, not family.

Babe Brother and Linda avoid the



rest of the family as much as possible, although they don't hesitate to leave their young son, Sunny (Devaughn Walter Nixon), with his grandparents for most of every day.

The resulting tensions have been held for years, buried beneath a surface of strained family civility.

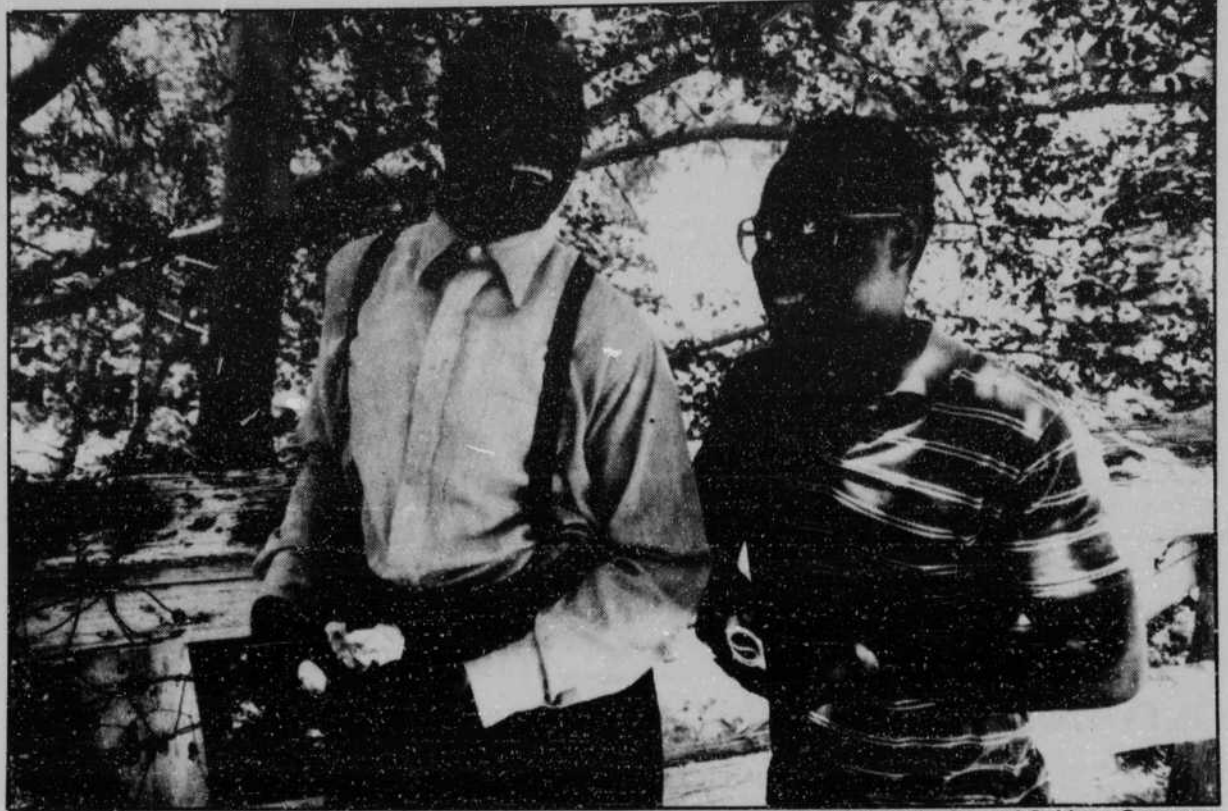
Harry's arrival, after a 30-year absence, uncannily coincides with a series of family crises.

Harry is a deeply superstitious old Southern gentleman with a dark side. He takes great pleasure in stirring up the family factions, attempting to set husbands against wives, mothers against fathers and brothers against brothers.

But the ensuing crises are resolved, and the family is reunited after Harry's influence is finally and irrevocably removed.

A major question arises in the film: Is Harry truly evil with a deliberate plan to destroy this family, or would the family eventually have resolved its conflicts without outside influence?

Only the viewer can decide.



Courtesy of the Samuel Goldwyn Company

Charles Burnett directs Danny Glover in "To Sleep With Anger," a powerful drama about a mysterious visitor and the conflicts he conjures in a south-central Los Angeles family.

Writer-director Charles Burnett does a fine job of telling the story of this contemporary black family. He receives wonderful support from Glover and the rest of the cast.

Each of the major characters gets a

well-rounded story line, and the characters pull together to form a believable family torn by misunderstandings and suspicion.

Glover's portrayal of the wily but superstitious trickster Harry is chill-

ing, and the rest of the cast is equally good in its portrayals of each character's idiosyncrasies.

"To Sleep With Anger" is playing at the Sheldon Film theater, 12th and R streets.

## Album

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The lyrics are fitting: "Sometimes I

got the blackest spirit/ Wants to hold you down/ but the diamonds in my heart/ don't worry, won't let you down."

This album is too clinical and

sanitary for Ash's voice, mostly because of the digital effects and digital instruments. Ash has a good voice that can express emotion fairly well,

but too often he buries the sound under mountains of effects.

This album is hard to listen to in one sitting. Each song is unrelated to

any other. Although there is something to be said for variety, Ash needs to define his own sound first — then he can vary it.

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