

Have you seen any good movies lately?

It used to be that if I missed seeing a movie when it played at the neighborhood movie theaters I felt badly because there was no guarantee it could ever be seen again. I remember using that persuasive argument with my parents to convince them that I really needed to see a movie that just might be considered, in some future day, a very important film.

Now I am more philosophical and most of the time I just wait for it to come out in video tape. I do have a short list of what I would call important films that I'll share with you, and, yes, if you missed them in cinemas you are still not too late to see them on the VCR.

FIRST, TWO FILMS for mature audiences that I believe are very significant:

The Joy Luck Club is a sensitive portrayal of relationships between mothers and daughters, and it has a cross-cultural appeal to it that goes beyond its Chinese generational setting. Like the book, the film prods us to really listen to the people in our lives and discover the richness that they have stored in their hearts but cannot easily or quickly explain.

A River Runs Through It is a father and sons' story; about feelings, communication, aloneness and fly fishing. It is a film that quietly sneaks up on you and leaves an indelible mark. There is a sadness in this true story because one son cannot find his way to peace. Love is here too, but the story



From Your Minister

Earl F. Palmer

shows both the strength and the weakness of human love.

Strictly Ballroom is one of those totally whimsical films that will also take you by surprise. **I think it is a classic; it is a movie about life in** which dancing and a ballroom dancing contest is the parable for the story. The story is romantic, funny and tender at the same moment.

Remains of the Day is a serious and quite sad story of the dangers of one man's captivity to a small idea, causing him to sidestep and leave behind the larger gifts and more enduring obligations of the day. The film also becomes a kind of parable about the true source of significance. It raises questions and it does not try to answer them.

Shadowlands tells the late-in-life romance of Joy Davidman and C. S. Lewis. The film brilliantly and quietly portrays their Christian faith, the discovery of each other, the growing

relationship and the romantic love of these two people. I liked the unfinished nature of the story in that it draws the viewer into the life and thought of C.S. Lewis and his wife Joy so that we want to better know these two remarkable people and their faith in Jesus Christ. One of Joy Davidman's two sons, Douglas, is portrayed in the film and in many ways he becomes the lens through which we see the unfolding of both his mother and C.S. Lewis

WHY GOTO the movies? One reason, I think, is because they offer to us a way of looking at life, its motives and yearnings. They can help us to understand each other and also ourselves. They sometimes play a part in showing us our need for the grace of God and every once in a while we see in a film that grace of God at work in some character and we then are the richer for it. Also if a film is truly noteworthy it is an experience of art and beauty. And such an experience is not a small thing either.

Someone asked me what I thought were the finest films I have seen in my years of movie watching. Here is my list of the 12 best films I've seen: *Casablanca*, *Gone With The Wind*, *Citizen Kane*, *The Wizard of Oz*, *Snow White*, *Singing in the Rain*, *Fiddler on the Roof*, *Chariots of Fire*, *Good Morning Viet Nam*, *Star Wars*, *Man From Snowy River*, *Shadowlands*.