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Ladyhawke fuses magic, romance and adventure and stars Rutger Hauer, Matthew Broderick (top) and Michelle Pfeiffer (inset).

BY MICHAEL GILTZ

## Ladyhawke

Old-fashioned is a term used quite freely these days. However, most movies billed as such tend to accommodate modern tastes for fear of losing the 13 to 18-year-old crowd. As my mother pointed out when I took her to see the rather explicit *An Officer and a Gentleman*, old-fashioned movies stop the love scenes long before the ubiquitous cigarette.

Well, *Ladyhawke* is the genuine article and it will be a shame if it gets overlooked, for it is an endearing and mature romance.

It stars with Matthew Broderick (*Wargames*) as Felippe the Mouse, a wily pickpocket who begins the film by becoming the first man to escape from the dungeons of the bishop. He is trapped at an inn by the bishop's guards and about to be sliced in half when a

dashing stranger comes to his rescue.

As played by Rutger Hauer, Navare is the classic leading man: he is handsome, steely eyed and has courage to spare. *Ladyhawke* is his story. Slowly, we learn Navare's tragic tale: he is in love with the beautiful Isabeau (Michelle Pfeiffer of *Into the Night* and *Scarface*), who returns his affections and whose graces are sought by the vengeful bishop. He casts a terrible spell on the two that leaves them "always together, eternally apart."

Navare vows to take revenge and enlists Felippe's aid in smuggling himself and Isabeau into the city from which they fled. Their adventures team them with a priest who betrayed the two lovers and who now hopes to make amends by helping them to break the curse.

This movie's only fault is a certain lack of tension during the first hour. Director Richard Donner (*Superman*) handles the action scenes well, but seems more comfortable with the quiet and tender moments.

Ultimately, *Ladyhawke* succeeds because of the fine performances by the leading characters. Hauer is quite believable as the reserved but passionate knight, and Pfeiffer gives substance to Isabeau, the object of his affections.

But it's Broderick who carries the film with his understated portrayal of the wise-cracking Felippe. With his wonderfully comic lines, including a running commentary with God, Broderick keeps the fantasy elements firmly rooted in reality.

Through Felippe's eyes, we see the beauty of Isabeau, we admire the courage of Navare and we empathize with the tragic plight of the doomed lovers.

## Stop Making Sense

As a rule, concert films are incredibly boring, even if one happens to be a fan of the performer. Most tend to employ boring backstage chitchat and a dull, unimaginative style of quick-cut editing that usually leaves one with a case of visual whiplash.

Two notable exceptions are *Purple Rain*



David Byrne and the Talking Heads smoke up the screen in the much touted Stop Making Sense.

(which cheated by framing the music with a storyline) and The Band's *The Last Waltz*, (which benefited from several superstar guest appearances by the likes of Eric Clapton and Bob Dylan).

Now, there is a third exception: the Talking Heads' film, *Stop Making Sense*, is the new high standard by which all future concert movies will be judged.

For years, critics and loyal fans have been touting the Talking Heads as one of the best live bands in the country and now they have the evidence to prove it. However, *Stop Making Sense* is much more than a great concert. It's also a great movie.

The opening shot is of David Byrne as he ambles onto the stage carrying an acoustic guitar and a boom box. After a perfunctory remark, he launches into the chilling "Psycho Killer," accompanied only by a taped rhythm track and his playing.

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Before the second tune, Byrne is joined by bass player Tina Weymouth. Each new song brings additional musicians and equipment until the stage is filled with nine players and the air is filled with full-bodied, thunderous music.

The unique approach is perfectly suited to the Talking Heads' rhythmic, African-based music and dark, compelling lyrics. As layers of sound are added, the tension and energy level mounts until the screen is exploding with vitality.

The climax is reached with the powerful "Once in a Lifetime," a scathing indictment of middle class values, during which Byrne performs a strange, hypnotic dance.

The editing by Lisa Day is impeccable and director Johnathan Demme has done a wonderful job of setting up long, well-chosen shots while giving each band member his share of the spotlight.

Still, while Byrne can be forbidding and the songs usually deal with the darker side of our psyche, the show the Talking Heads

offer is fun-filled and lively. It's also quite visual — Byrne designed a slide show of words and pictures that range from humorous to thought provoking to accompany the performance. Along with various lighting effects, these images combine with the music to become an integral part of the show and are frequently striking.

*Stop Making Sense* is only here for a limited engagement and it shouldn't be missed. Clap your hands and sing along with the band. Dance in the aisles. Just be sure not to attempt to jump on the stage.

### Cat's Eye

Stephen King's name is a powerful drawing card when it comes to movies. But don't be fooled because *Cat's Eye* is a tepid, very poor movie.

King wrote the screenplay and he's usually quite dependable, but either the director truncated his script or King just didn't try very hard.

Whatever the reason, this "anthology" film, which dramatizes three short stories by King, is lifeless. Besides such minor flaws

as the direction and acting, every segment finishes with a dull thud because of incredibly bad endings that are, in order, pointless, predictable and very stupid.

The first section tells of a man who gets involved with an organization called Quitters, Inc., a company that helps men to stop smoking by torturing their wives and children if they light up. Not a bad idea, but it's botched completely for there is no suspense, and the few mild jokes included are halfhearted at best.

In the second unimaginative tale, a gangster forces a man to step out on the outside ledge of his penthouse and climb around his building. Robert Hays of *Airplane* portrays the ledge-walker, but is unconvincing and brings little to a situation that could have been tension-filled.

The third story tells of a troll in Drew Barrymore's bedroom that wants to kill her. Her parents are unbelievably stupid and the ending is incompetent.

Unfortunately, nothing here is even memorably bad, just very, very boring. Any half-hour repeat of a 20-year-old *Twilight Zone* episode has more imagination and flair than *Cat's Eye*. ■