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**SOVIET CINEMA REVISED
AYN RAND RECONSTRUCTED
JONATHAN DEMME'S POETIC FLIGHTS
ROBERT ALTMAN'S CAINE MUTINY**



Getting no reply, he enters the apartment and finds the barely breathing Eva lying next to the snake. He kills the latter with a sharpened golf club, then delivers a lecture to the dying Eva about how she lacks will power. Bending down to replace the remains of the snake in the tube, he finds it is made of plasticine. The real snake springs from the tube and bites him. Eva gets up and walks out of the apartment into the darkness.

Fair Game manifests an admirable simplicity in showing what you can do with a serpent and a suitably named heroine trapped in the same space for eighty-one minutes. Trudie Styler manages a passable imitation of Jamie Lee Curtis as seen through the steadicam eyes of the malevolent mamba, although surely the days of the determinedly kooky heroine (as indicated by her mismatched socks) must be numbered. The rest of the cast (both of them) are less impressive: the opening encounter with Frank, the snake breeder, is both uninspired and redundant, and Gregg Henry's performance as Gene calls for only a limited range of steely impassivity. But once the film, like the snake, is confined within Eva's apartment, it takes on a certain hypnotic fascination. There are some good moments of 'it's-behind-you' horror, as well as humour (both intentional and otherwise): for instance, when the snake becomes entangled with Eva's discarded underwear. The only jarring note throughout is sounded by the most well-known participant, Giorgio Moroder, whose thudding soundtrack intrudes at every moment of terror or tenderness.

The sub-text is an intriguing life-style war. Like most couples, Eva and Gene argue most about housework: "I always hated your mess!" yells control-freak Gene. Eva fights the reptilian intruder with all the skills of an independent woman: first identifying it, then attacking it with domestic objects, and finally overcoming it by making a sculpture out of plasticine—a triumph of female artistic ingenuity over male scientific illusions (Gene, with his computer monitor, is a master of gadgetry). While it would be a mistake to identify *Fair Game* with a knowing

feminist thriller like *Call Me*, it is still another example of recent female ascendancy in the horror film. This though, is gradually eclipsed by Eva's resemblance to more traditional heroines: "Your head was never your best part", proclaims Gene, un-

kindly though not entirely unfairly. Once Eva has repeatedly failed to take such elementary counter-measures as putting on some trousers, one begins increasingly to side with the snake.

ADAM BARKER

Married to the Mob

U.S.A., 1988

Director: Jonathan Demme

Cert—15. *dist.*—Rank. *p.c.*—Mysterious Arts/Demme Production. For Orion. *exec. p.*—Joel Simon, Bill Todman Jnr. *p.*—Kenneth Utt, Edward Saxon. *assoc. p.*—Ron Bozman. *p. assoc.*—Loretta Farb, (Florida) Gus Holzer. *p. office co-ordinator*—Shelley Hovis. *unit p. manager*—Kenneth Utt. *p. consultant*—Bill Miller. *casting*—Howard Feuer, (addit.) Louis D. Giaimo. *asst. d.*—Ron Bozman, Jane Paul, Parnes Cartwright, (locations) Steve Rose. *sc.*—Barry Strugatz, Mark R. Burns. *ph.*—Tak Fujimoto. *col.*—DuArt; prints by DeLuxe. *2nd Unit ph.*—Dyanna Taylor. *camera op.*—Craig Haagensen. *opticals*—Cinema Research Corp. *ed.*—Craig McKay. *assoc. ed.*—Bill Johnson. *p. designer*—Kristi Zea. *a.d.*—Maher Ahmad. *set dec.*—Nina Ramsey, (Florida) Don Ivey. *set dresser*—Wally Adee. *storyboard artist/visual consultant*—John Dahl. *scenic artists*—(master) Caryl Loeb, (Florida) José Duarte. *sp. effects*—Efex Specialists, Inc. *Valer-Matic and Cat-O-Matic designed by*—Nancy Howard, Joe Smith. *m.*—David Byrne. *addit. m.*—Capitol Production/Ole Georg. *m. sup.*—Gary Goetzman, Sharon Boyle. *m. ed.*—Suzana Peric. *songs*—"Mambo Italiano" by Robert Merrill, performed by Rosemary Clooney; "Queen of Voodoo" by William Barg, Stuart Abridge, Steve Breck, performed by The Voodooists Corporation; "Jump in the River" by Sinead O'Connor, Marco Pirroni, performed by Sinead O'Connor; "Bizarre Love Triangle" by and performed by New Order; "Ghost in a Bikini" by David Bean, performed by The Judy's; "I Don't Like Mondays" by Bob Geldof; "The Same Melody", "Burger World Town", "Tony the Tiger", "Uncle Ron's Country Cars" by Gary Goetzman; "Suspicion of Love" by and performed by Chris Isaak; "Welcome to the Real World", "Don't Let It Get to Ya" by and performed by Jane Child; "Work It" by Willie Lemon, Shelly Lemon, Reggie Stewart, Geraldine Berry, performed by Lemon Lime; "Gummy Duppy" by and performed by Nina Ramsey; "Time Bums" by Ziggy Marley, performed by Ziggy Marley and the Melody Makers; "Too Far Gone" by Glenn Mercer, Bill Million, performed by The Feelies; "Zazueira" by Jorge Ben, performed by Pe De Boi; "She's Got Everything" by David Bean, performed by David Bean, Dickie Malone; "Happy Birthday to You" by Mildred J. Hill, Patty S. Hill; "Travelling Stranger" by A. Gouridine, E. Wright, performed by True Image; "Isla de Encanta" by Black Francis, performed by The Pixies; "Golden Hen" by and performed by Tenor Saw; "Devil Does Your Dog Bite?" by Chris Frantz, performed by Tom Tom Club; "Yahoo Eee!" by Lawrence Grennan, performed by Wazmo; "Goodbye Horses" by William Garvey, performed by Q. Lazzarus; "You Don't Miss Your Water (Til the Well Runs Dry)" by William Bell, performed by Brian Eno; "Liar Liar" by James Donna, performed by Debbie Harry; "Chemin Victoire", "Veye-Yo" by Jean Jacques, Clark Parent, performed by Les Frères Parent; "Kramtorn Avenues the Puttbundles" by Lawrence Grennan, "Bring Out That Really Big Umbrella" by Lawrence Grennan, Jeff Boynton, performed by Wazmo. *cost. design*—Colleen Atwood. *wardrobe sup.*—Rita B. Harkins, Jennifer Bryan, Mark Burchard, Michael Forcade. *make-up created by*—Bernadette Mazur. *titles*—Kristi Zea. *sup. sd. ed.*—Dan Sable. *sd. ed.*—Hastings Sound Editorial, Inc., Bitty O'Sullivan Smith, Laura Civiello. *ADR ed.*—Harriet Fidlow Winn, Deborah Wallach. *sd. rec.*—Michael Tromer, Arthur Bloom, Sound One Corp., (m.) Andy Waterman, Mark Wolfson, Glenn Rosenstein, Entourage Studios, Sigma Sound Studios. *ADR rec.*—Michael Barry, Reilly Steele. *Dolby stereo. sd. re-rec.*—Christopher Newman, Tom Fleischman. *sd. transfer technician*—David Grossack. *vocal effects*—David Sharp's "Totally Looped" Group. *foley artist*—Marko Costanzo. *p. consultant*—Bill Miller. *p. assistants*—Renee Blake, Ethan Goldstone, Deborah Lewis, Richard Murray Jr., John Walsh. *stunt co-ordinators*—Frank Ferrara, John Robotham. *stunts*—Doug Coleman, Lenny Divergillio, Donald Picard, Michael Russo. *animal trainer*—Steve McAuliffe, Animal Actors. *l.p.*—Michelle Pfeiffer (*Angela De Marco*), Matthew Modine (*Mike Downey*), Dean Stockwell (*Tony "The Tiger" Russo*), Mercedes Ruehl (*Connie Russo*), Alec Baldwin (*"Cucumber" Frank De Marco*), Trey Wilson (*Regional Director Franklin*), Joan Cusack (*Rose*), Oliver Platt (*Ed Benitez*), Paul Lazar (*Tommy*), "Sister" Carol East (*Rita "Hello Gorgeous" Harcourt*), Ellen Foley (*Theresa*), Chris Isaak (*"The Clown"*), O-Lan Jones (*Phyllis*), Nancy Travis (*Karen Lutnick*), Frank Gio (*Nick "The Snake"*), Gary Klar (*Al "The Worm"*), Warren Miller (*Johmy "King's Roost" King*), Anthony J. Nici (*Foey De Marco*), Steve Vignari (*"Stevvarino"*), Obba Babatundé (*The Face of Justice*), Maria Karnilova (*Frank's Mom*), Charles Napier (*Angela's Hairdresser*), Tracey Walter (*Mr. Chicken Lickin'*), Captain Haggerty (*"The Fat Man"*), Marlene Willoughby (*Mrs. "Fat Man"*), Frank Aquilino (*Conductor*), Jason Allen (*Tony Russo Jnr.*), Diane Puccherella and Suzanne Puccherella (*Three-card Monte Victims*), Tara Duckworth (*Tara*), Frank Ferrara (*Vinnie "The Slug"*), Gary Goetzman (*Guy at the Piano*), Carlos Giovanni (*Carlo Whispers*), James Reno Pelliccio (*"Butch"*), Daniel Dassin (*Maitre d'*), Colin Quim (*Homicide Detective*), David Johansen (*"The Priest"*), Joe Spinell (*Leonard "Tip-toes" Mazzilli*), Dodie Demme (*Pigs Knuckles Shopper*), Gene Borkan (*Goodwill Executive*), Wilma Dore (*Uptown Saleslady*), True Image (*A Cappella Singers*), Joseph L. "Mr. Spoons" Jones (*Mr. Spoons*), Lezli Jae (*Chicken Lickin' Server*), Alison Gordy (*Chicken Lickin' Feminist*), Pe de Boi (*Samba Band*), Buzz Kilman (*Ruthless Sniper*), Kenneth Utt (*Sourpuss FBI Man*), Tony Fitzpatrick (*Sourpuss Immigration Man*), Tim O'Connell (*Abused Ticket Agent*), Dee Dee Friedman (*Bikini-clad FBI Agent*), D. Stanton Miranda (*Gal at the Piano*), Luis Garcia (*Honeymoon Suite Bellboy*), Janet Howard (*Abused Stewardess*), Ralph Corssel (*Fimmy "Fisheggs" Roe*), Bill Carter (*"The Ambassador"*), George "Red" Schwartz (*Shotgun Marshal*), Ellie Cornell (*Pushy Reporter*), Todd Solondz (*Zany Reporter*), Roma Maffia (*Angie's 1st Customer*), Patrick Phipps (*Goodwill Hunk*), Carlos Anthony Ocasio (*Foey's New Pal*), Max the Dog (*"Lucky" De Marco*). 9,331 ft. 104 mins.



Almost Jamie Lee—Trudie Styler.

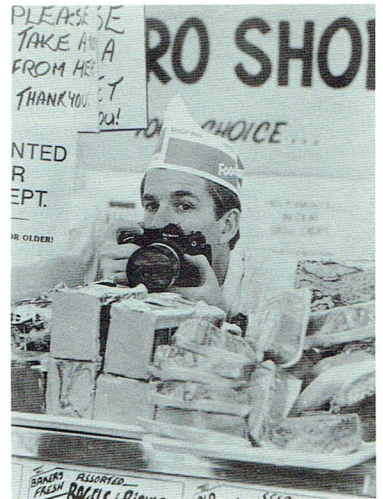
On a New York commuter train, gangster Frank De Marco successfully murders another hood, but at home his wife Angela, dissatisfied with her life as a Mafia wife, tells him that she wants a divorce. At the King's Roost restaurant, Frank is congratulated by his boss, Tony "The Tiger" Russo, but is later killed when Tony finds him with his mistress, waitress Karen Lutnick. After Frank's funeral, and observed by FBI agents Mike Downey and Ed Benitez, Tony makes advances to Angela and showers her with expensive stolen gifts; but, determined to change her life, she leaves home with her young son Joey and moves into a rundown apartment on the Lower East Side. She is followed by Mike and Ed, who believe they can use her to trap Tony, and is also tracked down by Tony's men. Angela gets a job at Rita Harcourt's beauty shop and, unaware of his identity, meets Mike, who has bugged her apartment. While Tony narrowly survives an attempt on his life by rival gangsters, Angela and Mike go out on a date. After being interrupted by Tony's possessive wife Connie, who has seen her husband go to Angela's apartment, they spend the night together and she tells him about her past. Mike realises he has misjudged her, but the next day she is picked up by the FBI, who threaten her with jail, and Rita with deportation, unless she works with them. Angela joins Tony, who is about to leave for Miami to settle his differences with rival Mob boss Jimmy "Fisheggs" Roe. At the airport, she tells Mike, who she now knows is an agent, to leave her alone. Connie, unaware of Tony's travelling companion, arrives at the airport to see him off and arouses his suspicions about Angela when she describes finding her with Mike. Discovering that Tony has booked a honeymoon suite, a furious Connie then follows her husband to Miami. At the hotel, Tony recognises Mike, whom he has seen in Angela's building, and has his men pick him up. He also finds a bugging device in a ring given him by Angela, but she puts him on the spot by telling the assembled hoods that he murdered Frank. Connie arrives and tries to kill Tony; Mike shoots it out with the gangsters; and the FBI arrive to arrest Tony. In jail, Tony has nightmares about Connie, while Mike is told by Angela, now happily working for Rita, that even he deserves a second chance.

The most immediately striking aspect of *Married to the Mob* is the degree to which it parallels and inverts the central premise of Jonathan Demme's previous feature, *Something Wild*. There a terminally respectable male protagonist discovered the pleasure, pain and violence lurking just the other side of the life-style tracks; here Angela De Marco, a reluctant female member of the suburban Mafia community, where everything in her well-appointed home "has blood on it", tries for a respectable new life in the depths of New York's Lower East Side. The result is in many ways a more conventional comedy-thriller, lacking the disorienting shifts in tone which characterised the earlier film. The violence associated with the Mob is generally and successfully played for humour, as in the neatly observed opening murder on a train, with the two hit men leaving their victim as just one of many sleep-

ing passengers and wondering how the commuters put up with the strain of their squashed daily journey. Similarly, and very typically of Demme, what one remembers from a later attempt on Tony Russo's life is not the shoot-out but the preamble, with Tony literally singing the praises of Burger World while one of his henchmen remarks that "charred rotting flesh" is not his idea of a good meal.

The difference between the two films, however, has as much to do with structure as character or tone. Unlike *Something Wild*, and untypically for Demme, *Married to the Mob* is in no sense a variation on the road movie, as have been films as diverse as *Crazy Mama*, *Citizens Band* and *Melvin and Howard*. Although the main characters eventually take a flight to Miami, this particular journey is wrapped tightly in plot. Previously Demme has used journeys to open up his narratives, allowing characters and events to be freed to an extent from the demands and restrictions of plot. Here the focus is much more on the shifts in the relationships between Tony, Connie, Angela and Mike, resulting in the final farcical mix-up in Miami. And in the film's central section, the concentration on the pairing of Angela and Mike, as he realises he has misread her character, virtually forces everything else out of frame. The problem here is that Angela's motivation is so unambiguous from the start that when she reveals her 'true self' to Mike the spectator is already several steps ahead of him, resulting in a feeling that the narrative has reached a kind of dead end (exactly as it did in *Something Wild* during the home-town dance sequence, just before the irruption of the violently unpredictable Ray Liotta).

In addition, Matthew Modine's performance involves a fair degree of cute awkwardness, which sits rather oddly alongside Michelle Pfeiffer's convincing evocation of frustration and desire for radical change. What is perhaps lacking is any development of the relationship between Angela and her new employer Rita Harcourt, whose beauty shop window slogan asks "Are you ready for a brand new you?", but whose effect on Angela is reduced to providing a new hair style. (It is worth noting that the end credits are run over a series of sequences which failed to make the finished film, including at least one scene between Angela and Rita.) But if the plotting actually works against the exploration of Angela's dilemma, it has to be stressed that Demme's ability to



Wrapped in plot—Matthew Modine.

make other elements transcend their narrative role remains unmatched. In particular, he treats the world of the Mafia wives with a kind of unpatronising relish—the camera circling the overdressed and bejewelled women as they talk; Angela's home filled with unwrapped stolen goods—which ensures that it registers vividly and positively in its own right despite Angela's desire to abandon it.

The lack of taste embodied in Tony's gifts to Angela after Frank's death, including a costume for their dog, or the extraordinary Miami honeymoon suite, with its oceanic theme, ultimately seem to appeal to Demme as much as their Lower East Side counterparts—the glitzy costumes sported by the samba band on Angela and Mike's date, or the wonderfully tacky décor of Rita's salon. And this kind of openness extends to character, especially the figure of Connie who, played to the hilt by Mercedes Ruehl, gives the stereotype of the vengeful, jealous wife a foul-mouthed presence all her own ("Whose husband are you, dogface?") she asks of Mike after discovering him with Angela). Occasional appearances by a *cappella* groups and street performers such as Mr. Spoons now seem merely par for Demme's course, as does another outstanding music soundtrack, but the pleasure he finds in the incidental remains as vital as ever.

STEVE JENKINS

The Mighty Quinn

U.S.A., 1989

Director: Carl Schenkel

Cert—15. dist—UIP. p.c—MGM. In association with Star Partners II. An A & M Films production. *exec. p—Dale Pollock, Gil Friesen. p—Sandy Lieberston, Marion Hunt, Ed Elbert. assoc. p—Jack Cummins. p. co-ordinators—Teresa M. Yarbrough, (London) Lizzie Bryant, (2nd Unit) Bonnie Arnold. p. manager—Matthew Binns. Jamaican crew—Max Earle, Seaton Richards, Leon Virgo, Bubbles Edwards, Franz Marzouca, Dominic Ghisays, Jennifer Chang, Tighe Barry, Ivanhoe Dixon, Sprinter Levy, Rabbit Roye, Stacy Himmel, Mignon Lowe, Trenton Allen, Katherine Haley, Keith Wheeler, Toye Phillips, Oscar Lawson. casting—Wallis Nicita, (assoc.) Joanne Zaluksi. asst. d—J. Stephen Buck, Joe Camp III, Michael London. sc—Hampton Fancher. Based on the novel *Finding Maubee* by A. H. Z. Carr. ph—Jacques Steyn. In colour. 2nd Unit ph—Karl Kases. camera op—Paul Birkett. steadicam op—Jim Muro. ed—John Jympson. assoc. ed—William Webb. p. designer—Roger Murray-Leach. a.d—Gregory Keen. set dresser—Brian Reed. sp. effects co-ordinator—Giorgio Ferrari. m—Anne Dudley. m. sup—David Anderle. m. ed—Dina Eaton. reggae m. consultant—*

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Righteous and Outrageous—
Jonathan Demme

Righteous & Outrageous—Jonathan Demme

Born 1944, Baldwin, New York. High school and college in Miami; uncompleted course at University of Florida, Gainesville. In New York: freelance reviewing; publicist with Avco Embassy and United Artists; film salesman for Pathé Contemporary; made first short film. In London: partnered Al Viola in production company; produced several TV commercials. Involvement with Roger Corman commenced with job as unit publicist on *Von Richthofen and Brown/The Red Baron* (1971).

Films as Director

GOOD MORNING, STEVE (1968, also sc. Short).

CAGED HEAT (1974, also sc.). "The most important thing Roger [Corman] did for me was to sit down with me right before I directed *Caged Heat* and run down just how to do a job of movie-making. He hit everything: have something interesting in the foreground of the shot; have something interesting happening in the background of the shot; try to find good motivation to move the camera, because it's more stimulating to the eyes; if you're shooting the scene in a small room where you can't move the camera, try to get different angles, because cuts equal movement; respect the characters and try to like them, and translate that into the audience liking and respecting the characters. To me, those are the fundamentals".

CRAZY MAMA (1975). "Before *Crazy Mama*, I'd worked for four months on the screenplay for *Fighting Mad*, which was supposed to be my second film. Roger wanted a movie in the *Walking Tall* vein and suggested strip-mining as a background. The whole subject was galvanising—I wrote a righteous, kick-ass movie, and we were going to do it for something like \$600,000. But Shirley Clarke, who was going to direct *Crazy Mama*, fell out with Roger ten days before shooting, and Roger said to me, 'The bad news is *Fighting Mad* gets postponed; the good news is you've got *Crazy Mama* to direct'".

FIGHTING MAD (1976, also sc.).

CITIZENS BAND (1977, a.k.a. HANDLE WITH CARE). "Paul Brickman had an etched-in-concrete idea about what the movie should be like. Apparently, that was very different from how the movie turned out. He disliked it very much; even when the picture won a certain amount of notoriety".

LAST EMBRACE (1979).

MELVIN AND HOWARD (1980). "Whether he intended to or not, when Bo [Goldman] wrote *Melvin and Howard* he went on an amazingly poetic flight of imagination. To open a movie with an eighteen-page dialogue scene, two people riding along in a truck at night? Outrageous idea! It breaks every rule known to man, and yet the emotion he poured into that scene makes it wonderful".

SWING SHIFT (1984). "Work with Ron [Nyswaner] on *Swing Shift* was a very pragmatic process of finding scenes from Bo's and Nancy Dowd's drafts that worked and then fitting them into an organic whole. Nancy's drafts were highly political, and the movie isn't. She wrote an exposé of what was done to women working in the defence industries during World War II. This movie is a *salute* to the women, and I think that's a crucial distinction".

"I liked the movie we had already with the theme of solidarity among women during the war; it was an ensemble piece. Goldie [Hawn] felt the emphasis should be on the love affair which would help the film reach a wider audience and that's what it turned into".

STOP MAKING SENSE (1984).

PERFECT KISS (1985, short). Demme's promo film for New Order was released theatrically in the U.K.; he has also made films in this format for UB40 and Chrissie Hynde (*I Got You Babe*), Artists Against Apartheid (*Sun City*), Fine Young Cannibals (*Ever Fallen in Love?*), Susanne Vega (*Solitude Standing*) and Sandra Bernhard, among others.

SOMETHING WILD (1986, also co-p.).

"Normally I'm interested in theme or social comment or whatever, but this one sucked me in with its yarn. Every time you think you know where the story's headed, it changes course, hopefully for something even more interesting than first appeared."

SWIMMING TO CAMBODIA (1987).

MARRIED TO THE MOB (1988).

Films as Screenwriter

ANGELS HARD AS THEY COME (1971, co-sc. also p.; d. Joe Viola).

THE HOT BOX (1972, co-sc. also p.; d. Joe Viola).

BLACK MAMA, WHITE MAMA (1973, a.k.a. HOT, HARD AND MEAN. co-story. d. Eddie Romero).

Television as Director

MURDER UNDER GLASS (1978, *Columbo*).

WHO AM I THIS TIME? (1982, *American Playhouse*).

SURVIVAL GUIDES (1984, a.k.a.

TRYING TIMES. Pilot).

HAITI: DREAMS OF DEMOCRACY (1987, also co-sc., p. co-d. Jo Menell).

Shelved, postponed or abandoned projects include *The Big Mamoo*, a crazy comedy about Los Alamos scripted by Bud Shrake; an adaptation of Herman Melville's *Typee* for producer Jeremy Thomas; and a film from Russell Banks' novel, *Continental Drift*. Demme has also had small roles in the films *The Incredible Melting Man* (1978, William Sachs) and *Into the Night* (1985, d. John Landis).

Paul Taylor

(Quotations taken from *American Film*, Jan/Feb, 1984; *Films and Filming*, July 1987; *Time Out*, July 1, 1987).