

# 'City of Hope' is a blue-collar soap opera of human drama

by Daniel W. Duffy

*City of Hope* is much along the same lines of director John Sayles' previous films like *Eight Men Out* and *Matewan*, in that it is not overly exciting, it's just a tell-it-like-it-is film with integrity.

This film has a smorgasbord of characters and numerous interconnecting story lines which give it a certain soap feel, but this film isn't dealing with exaggerated playboys and heiresses. It is a realistic portrait of every-day people confronted with the various social problems and ills that come to close quarters with our society today. The topics explored in *City of Hope* range from political corruption to unethical business

## MOVIE REVIEW

Starring Vincent Spano, Joe Morton.  
Directed by John Sayles.

**City of Hope** (xxx)

practices to racial bigotry to the mentally ill homeless people, all in a small town setting that most everyone can identify with. It examines the nature of hate in our society and how hate itself is so unneeded yet at the same time, so inescapable with the prevailing attitudes that run rampant in America in the '90s.

There are too many characters to list, but suffice to say, Vincent Spano (*Baby It's You*) and Joe Morton (*Brother from Another Planet*, TV's "Equal Justice") put in commendable performances as Nick, a drug abusing kid with heart,

and Wynn, a local politician trying stand to up for what's right. Sayles himself even puts in an intriguing cameo as Carl, a car mechanic/wanna-be underworld hoodlum. Not unlike Spike Lee, Sayles has a certain troop of actors that always wind up in his films like the guileful Kevin Tighe, who always seems to get under one's skin with

such ease.

Like Sayle's other films, this one is a little slow-paced, but has a style all its own. It is probably not for the average-golucky movie goer, but if you want to see a film that legitimately addresses social issues and how they directly affect our lives, then *City of Hope* may be for you.

# 'Idaho' is an unending pursuit for a niche in life

by Daniel W. Duffy

*My Own Private Idaho* is a gritty tale of the gypsy-like existence of street hustlers in the Pacific Northwest and elsewhere, and the amaranthine search for inner harmony.

River Phoenix (*Night in the Life of Jimmy Reardon*, *Dogfight*) stars as Mike West, a charismatic hustler who has a penchant for falling asleep at the most inopportune moments. The film also bills Keanu Reeves (*River's Edge*, *Bill & Ted's Excellent Adventure*), who plays rich-boy-gone-astray Scottie Favor, as a co-star, but his character is secondary to Phoenix.

Throughout the film, Mike is on a crusade (to find his mother) that leads him through melancholy Seattle and Portland, desolate Idaho and even Rome, while all along trying to find a place where he fits in. The problem with the film is that its stream-

of-consciousness flow does not contain enough narrative storytelling to keep any kind of linear focus. At times, it is far too artsy or avant-garde for its own good. There are some isolated hilarious scenes, but these instances are too few and far between.

There are some homosexual elements to the picture that director Gus Van Sant has said will make some people very uncomfortable.

This isn't a bad movie, as a matter of fact parts of it are incredibly well done

and thought provoking, but there is just an an overabundance of occurrences with no link to the remnants of what little story there is. This film also seems to get bogged down at too many different points that make it seem never ending. *My Own Private Idaho* is definitely a movie for obscure tastes. Van Sant's *Drugstore Cowboy* may be more appealing to the mainstream masses.

## MOVIE REVIEW

**My Own Private Idaho** (x x 1/2)

Starring River Phoenix and Keanu Reeves. Directed by Gus Van Sant.

# UNLV Choral Ensembles performance scheduled

The UNLV Choral Ensembles will present two events for the Las Vegas community on Nov. 1 and 2, under the direction of David Weiller.

"An Evening with the UNLV Choral Ensembles" at 7:30 p.m. Friday, will feature a wide variety of sacred and secular music through many centuries. The concert, which is free and open to the public, will be presented at Christ Lutheran Church, 111 N. Torrey Pines.

Highlights of the performance will include popular favorites by the Varsity Men's Glee Club, as well as the choral masterworks of Josquin des Prez, Thomas Weelkes and Johannes Brahms performed by the Chamber Chorale. The 85 member University Chorus will sing excerpts from the "Requiem" by Mozart.

On Saturday, the choral ensembles will present the third-annual Sing-A-Thon from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. in the Meadows Mall. More than 100 singers from University Chorus, Chamber Chorale and Varsity Men's Glee Club will secure tax-deductible pledges to support eight hours of continuous musical performance throughout the day. Highlights of the Sing-A-Thon are to include popular favorites, folk songs, spirituals, gospel tunes and Broadway melodies.

The UNLV Choral Ensembles maintain an active schedule of appearances each year and enjoy a growing reputation for excellent performances throughout the Southwest. The choirs involve students, faculty, staff and community members who wish to explore the wonders of the choral art. The choirs present several concerts each year on the university campus, throughout the Las Vegas community and also tour out of state. Weiller is in his eighth year on the UNLV faculty where he is an assistant professor of music and serves as director of choral studies.

For more information about the UNLV Choral Ensembles or the Sing-A-Thon call 739-3008.



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