

Hoffman saves 'Hero'

by Daniel W. Duffy

I know the first thing you're going to say is, "Why are these yahoos running a movie review of a film that's nearly two weeks old?" Well sit your fanny perpendicular down because I'm gonna tell you.

Through the chemistry of the cast and marketing of the film, *Hero* appears to the average viewer as a bland and average film. Dustin Hoffman hasn't done much since *Rain Man*, Geena Davis proved with *A League of Their Own* that she can't carry an entire film and Andy Garcia seldomly takes more than supporting roles. The advertising makes *Hero* look like a real Rip Van Winkle yawner. Critics have also panned the film as being too sappy. All I can say is, don't believe the hype.

Hero is the story of a two-bit hood, Bernie LaPlante (Dustin Hoffman), who on a rainy night, stumbles upon an airplane wreck and saves the passengers and crew from certain death.

LaPlante is a reluctant hero—reluctant to help anyone but himself, so he's none too jazzed about having to go out in a torrential downpour and rescue a bunch of saps he doesn't even know. After taking a dive into a puddle, LaPlante comes out looking like a Tropicana mud wrestler so no one knows what he really looks like. Against his better judgement, he slams into the plane's door and helps free the passengers from the burning wreckage. LaPlante's motto throughout the film is "keep a low profile," so following his courageous efforts, he boogies without even so much as a pat on the back.

TV newswomen Gall



'Hero's' heros, Andy Garcia and Dustin Hoffman, vie for love and money in the new Stephen Frears film.

Gayley (Geena Davis) happens to be on the flight so she wants to find the civilian who saved her life, the "Angel of Flight 104," and do a story on him. Her network offers an obscene amount of money for the "Angel" to come forward for an exclusive interview and the story continues from there.

The film has some major flaws (an overdose of patriotic fanfare, cheap laughs at the expense of plausibility and consistent character portrayals), but is saved by the excellent performances across the board—especially Hoffman.

Unlike the decrepit hustler Rizzo in *Midnight Cowboy*, LaPlante is a sympathetic character despite being a swank. I mean a scumbag on the surface, but underneath the mud mask lies a hero. Everyone tries to hold him back and treat him like a second-class citizen, yet he always battles back.

Director Stephen Frears

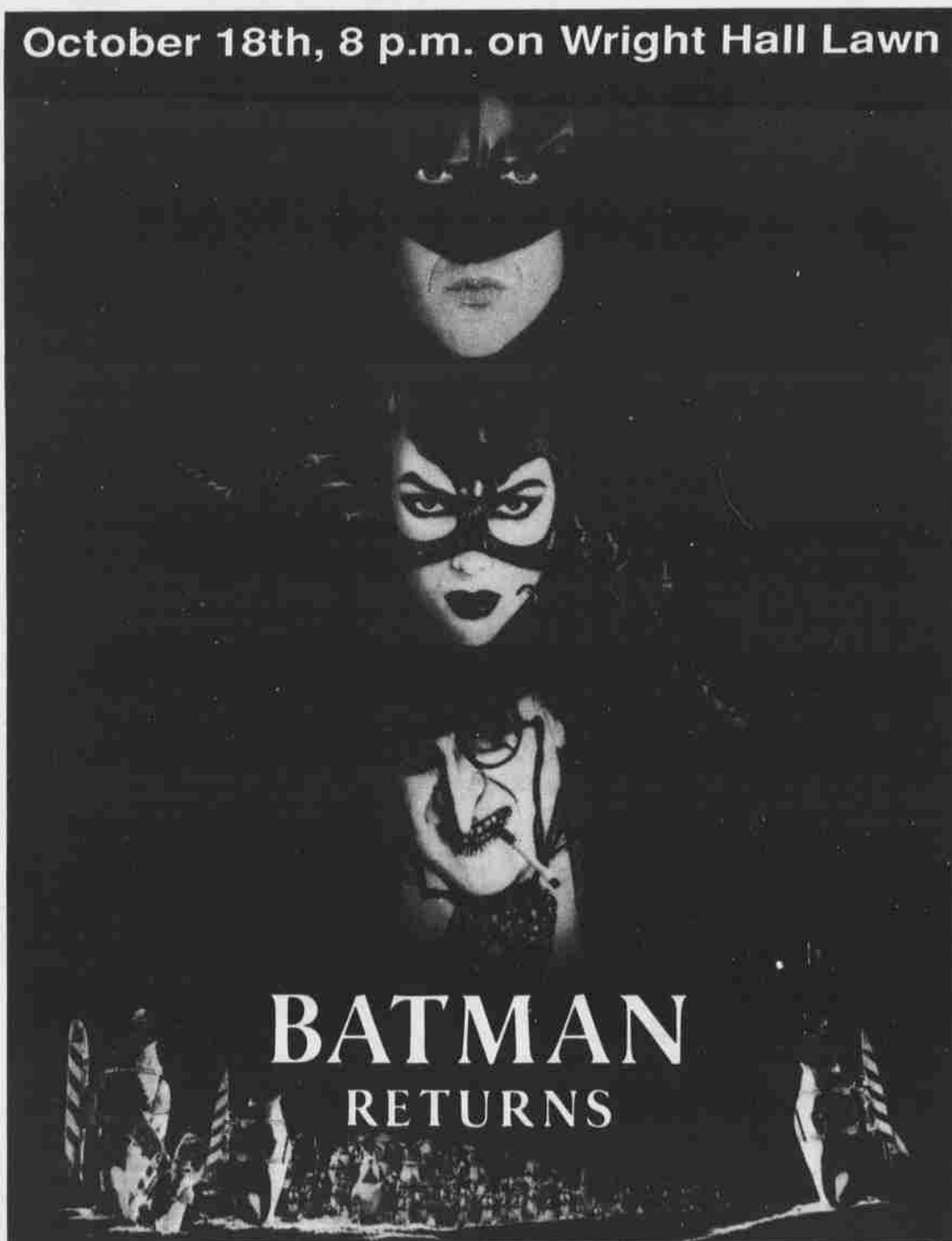
(*Dangerous Liaisons*) must have realized that sympathy for characters was the missing element from his last film, *The Grifters*, and made sure that although the characters in *Hero* are grey, they have some admirable motivation behind their actions.



Hero

Starring Dustin Hoffman, Geena Davis and Andy Garcia.
Directed by Stephen Frears.

October 18th, 8 p.m. on Wright Hall Lawn



Ratings Scale

8

The Goods
The Creme of the Crop

Solid Flick



Flawed, but worth watching

Doesn't cut the mustard



Mr. Potty say there's a strong wind blowin' in from Mesquite