Eight Millimeter: a dark study on the nature of evil

by Jon Stubbs features editor

If your idea of an intense film are flicks like Scream and Scream 2, don't go see Eight Millimeter. You'll have a heart attack.

Eight Millimeter follows the undertakings of Harrisburg, PA based private investigator and family man, Tom Welles (Nicolas Cage). When a local widow of an extremely wealthy entrepreneur finds an 8 mm film of a girl who appears to be murdered in her husband's collection, she hires Welles to find out if the tape is real.

In his search for the girl, Welles finds himself at all ends of the country, from Cleveland to Fayetteville, North Carolina to the pornography underground of L.A. Welles believes that movie is a "snuff" film, an S & M film where a rape victim is eventually murdered. Tom teams up with Max (Joaquin Phoenix), an adult bookstore clerk who reassures the investigator that such films do not really exist; the ones that do exist are fakes. Regardless, Welles digs deeper into the case, putting a strain on his relationship with his family and put-

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15 In the past

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14 Nice good-bye?

16 Actress Taylor

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34 Loos and Louise

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41 And so forth.

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44 US border lake

48 Cowardly dogs 50 Explosive letters

51 Rampaged

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53 Get the point 54 Grounded bird

55 Muscle spasm

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"All My Children"

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Life Is It,

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ting himself in some of the most undesirable places in the city.

The first half of the film keeps one's attention, like any good film would; the second half is literally paralyzing As Welles becomes more and more infatuated with the case, he is transformed into a vengeance-seeking machine, becoming much more wrathful than the Tom Welles at the beginning of the film.

Andrew Kevin Walker, screenwriter of Eight Millimeter, also wrote the eerie thriller Seven. Walker's writing must be so dark that the director has no choice but to film it so. Even though Seven was directed by David Fincher and Eight Millimeter was directed by Joel Schumacher, both films are filled with murky gloom. However, Schumacher and director of photography Robert Elswit do wonders with lighting in the shadowy world of Eight Millimeter.

Even more stirring than the lighting effects is the sound. In a time when all action/thriller films seem to have the same music, the music score to Eight Millimeter is very unique: blending all sorts of instruments, from synthesizers to bagpipes. The sound

effects in this movie will send chills through the audience's spines. Sprockets of a Super 8 projector click inside Tom Welles' mind as he thinks about the girl; records skip loudly during moments of tension. Words won't do it justice, but the sound score to this film maybe the most chilling part of it.

Joel Schumacher has called Nicolas Cage one of the best actors of his generation. That may be debatable, but Cage does a damn fine job in this film.

Joaquin Phoenix is believable in character, and is mildly humorous at times. James Gandolfini, who some may know as Tony Soprano from the HBO series *The Sopranos*, also stars in the movie.

Eight Millimeter is a provocative journey into madness and revenge, exploring the limits of what one person can take. The film explores the contagious nature of evil. This film is not for the faint-hearted. It is not a statement of exaggeration or melodrama to say that this movie will leave the audience shaking on the way out the door.



A crudely shot reel of eight millimeter film transforms private investigator Tom Welles (Nicolas Cage) from a mild-mannered family man into a man driven by obsession searching through L.A. and New York's seediest subcultures in the Columbia Pictures presentation, Eight Millimeter.

Rushmore is a hilarious screwball comedy flick

by Michael Coursey staff writer

Being a huge Bill Murray fan, I have been impatiently waiting for his next movie, titled Rushmore, to come out. It had its national release date about three weeks ago, but just reached Eric last weekend.

I rushed to Tinsletown on Friday afternoon to see the movie, finally! Not only was the movie arriving late, but they stuck it in one of their smaller theaters. Nevertheless, I sat down and enjoyed an incredible movie.

Rushmore stars Jason Schwartzman as Max Fischer and Bill Murray as Mr. Blume. Max Fischer is a nerdy, slickhaired, pasty, skinny boy of fifteen. He attends a prestigious prep school called Rushmore. His father is a humble barber. However, Max hides this from his friends, wanting to fit in with the rich, elite class at school.

The movie starts out showing how Max (Jason Schwarzman) joins or leads every club on campus. Plus he's on the wrestling team. This has a ad-

verse affect on his grades at school. The story develops when Mr. Blume (Bill Murray), who is a wealthy alumni and benefactor to the school, sees Max in action and is really impressed.

They strike up a friendship and Mr. Blume helps Max out in some of his projects, one being the director and producer of the school's plays (which are far more extravagant than usual).

This is when Max comes across the first grade teacher, Miss Cross, played by Olivia Williams. She is from France and is very attractive and sophisticated, especially to a 10th

Max is really smitten with her and starts to come to her class every afternoon to chat with her. He notices that she has a number of aquariums and loves to collect different fish. So the next day Max brings a bag of goldfish to her as a gift.

Miss Cross is flattered by the attention, and she really likes him for his intelligence and witty personality, but she being in her late twenties and

Max only being 15 poses a problem. Max talks to Mr. Blume about the dilemma and feels that he can trust him when Mr. Blume turns the table on him and decides to start dating Miss Cross. This creates an incredible amount of havoc in Max's life.

All three central characters, played by Bill Murray, Jason Schwartzman and Olivia Williams are compelling, interesting and enjoyable to watch. Bill Murray is back to the smirky wisecracking best (i.e. Stripes and Groundhog Day), but with a more

tempered zeal. The movie is a laugh a minute and totally kept me glued to the screen for its entirety. Bill Murray does an incredible job in his supporting role and it's a crime that he wasn't nominated for a Oscar.

I believe that this will be considered one of Bill Murray's best works and that Jason Schwartzman should have a fine career ahead of him.

I give this movie an extra enthusiastic four plus stars.

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4 Woods' first stroke

5 Sound recording 6 Widow of a

knight 7 Meetings' plans

8 Romeo's last name

9 Circle segments 10 Overwhelming

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11 Single 12 Garden vegetable

13 Hemi-score? 21 Cakes, pies,

et al. 25 Sets of teeth 27 Medicinal

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40 Evergreen seedcase

45 Interminably long 47 Somewhat tangy

49 Adheres

56 Example 58 Sorry 'bout that 59 Not fooled by 60 Summertime drinks

61 Desperate 62 Concluding episode

63 Caviar base

Website of the week

by David Young staff writer

How do you get your news for the day? Broadcast news can be tough to watch with those hectic schedules, and the newspaper may not always be the most interesting thing to read everyday. For an alternative to the norm, go online to The Onion at <www.theonion.com>. Although their self-label, "America's finest news source" might not be totally accurate, it's a safe bet that a trip to The Onion will deliver at least a few laughs. You might not always find the most important news, but you will definitely find the

most interesting news. How about these titles for attention grabbers: "New Yongtze Dam to provide enough Hydroelectricity to shock 1.2 Billion Chinese Genitals," or there's the story about "Doctors no closer to cure for old-person smell."

Besides the feature news stories, maybe the best part of this publication is its editorials. The writing is clever and the cartoons are hilarious. President of MTV Judy McGrath proclaims, "...cutting edge, with much attitude." Also found on this website are interviews with some of the most provocative people in Hollywood. Featured in

a recent issue was the creator of the movie Kids, Larry Clark, and former Saturday Night Live mainstay, Julia Sweeney. The Onion is published once a week. Although it is also available in print, it may be difficult to find. Barnes and Noble is a possibility. One thing is for sure: for fresh journalism, The Onion is where it's at.

The Beacon will feature a different website each week.

