

Scorcese Triumphs With *Age of Innocence*

By Todd Ritter

Martin Scorcese has always been an adept director, whether filming the mean streets of Manhattan or the brutality of a boxing ring. His work hits hard. It's visceral, violent, maniacally in-your-face. In other words, Scorcese is anything but subtle. That's why it was a shock to learn that he, the director of such volcanic films like *Raging Bull* and *Goodfellas*, would be directing the film version of *The Age of Innocence*, Edith Wharton's very genteel, very refined novel about life in 1870s New York.

Newland Archer (Daniel Day-Lewis) is engaged to wed May Welland (Winona Ryder) the socially acceptable member of a prominent New York family. But heads turn and tongues wag when May's

cousin, the scandalous Ellen Olenska (Michelle Pfeiffer), arrives from Europe, where she has just left her husband. As Newland, a respected lawyer, helps Ellen with her personal affairs, they begin to fall into a passionate, but hopeless, romance. Of course, back in the 1870s high society, as helpful narration by Joanne Woodward points out, no one could dare have such emotions, let alone express them. So Newland and Ellen have a choice—reveal their true feelings and face society's scorn or live under the stifling mores set by that same society.

Over a year and a half was spent on research, making sure that everything, from the paintings in the halls to the cutlery in the kitchens, was expressly right. Scorcese packs

the screen with lush detail. The drawing rooms are cluttered with paintings, the ballrooms bustling with swirling dancers, the bedrooms layered with silk, feathers, ruffles and lace. It seems as if the upper class, oppressed at everything else, can only express themselves through their decor.

Winona Ryder, in a surprisingly unsympathetic role, is in fine form as May. A plethora of character actors (Robert Sean Leonard, Mary Beth Hurt, Miriam Margolyes) fill out their supporting roles well. But it is Pfeiffer and Day-Lewis who excel. Their words are delivered simply, almost in a monotone, but their expressions, a blink of the eyes, a trembling of the hands, reveal a passion aching to break free. (A perfect example of this is the scene where Newland tells Ellen he can't endure being repressed anymore after feeling such happiness. Ellen's reply, "I'm enduring it" perfectly sums up a lifetime of repression and societal scorn.)

The movie definitely belongs to Scorcese. Instead of his usual techniques, agonizing close-ups, quick-as-lightening editing, for a more subtle approach. Instead of reality, he goes for beauty, creating scenes that could pass for the paintings hanging in the Welland's hallway. He obviously enjoyed making the movie, and the audience enjoys watching it.

With *The Age of Innocence*, Scorcese has grown as an artist. He has taken a step into new, breathtaking territory. Hopefully he will continue along this path of movie-making and take the audience along with him.

Are you sleeping with someone to die for?



The person you're sleeping with could have a sexually transmitted disease. Even AIDS. If you're not up to date on how to protect yourself, you could be making a date with death.

It's not our intention to scare you. What we want to do is help. We sincerely care about you. We're sensitive, understanding and professional. We're also very affordable and everything is confidential.

You can talk to us about anything, and get straight answers. Our extensive range of services: safer sex education, testing and treatment of sexually transmitted diseases, plus HIV testing, counseling and referral, and more.

To be honest, abstinence is the only sure protection. But we're not going to tell you how to lead your life. We just want to offer you the best reproductive health care you can get.

Make the smart choice. Come to Planned Parenthood.



For an appointment, call toll-free 1-800-230-PLAN

 Planned Parenthood®



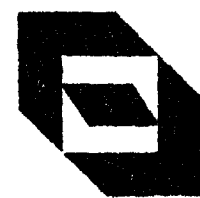
Proud to
serve
Penn State
Highacres

GO

455-1984

LIONS!

*Closest MAC Machine
to campus*



**FIRST
FEDERAL
SAVINGS**

Laurel Mall
459-3748

Member
FDIC

An Equal
Opportunity
Lender