

Film

CAME A HOT FRIDAY

Director: Ian Mune
It is curious how two Ronald Hugh Morrieson novels, *The Scarecrow* and *Came A Hot Friday*, have been made into a couple of the most successful local films of the last few years. While not under- rating the directorial flair of Sam

Pillsbury and Ian Mune, it must owe something to the nature of the novels themselves and the way in which they reflect the very idiosyncratic character of our island nation.
Immaculately set within its period, Mune's new film offers a zesty portrait of post-War rural New

Zealand — a world, to quote the press release, of "horse-racing, gambling, fast cars and loose women."
Alun Bollinger's camera-work must be his most virtuosic to date and Ken Zemke's editing snaps like the top of a cool DB, but what Mune offers especially is some of

the best character acting yet seen on a New Zealand screen.
Those most amiable of com- men, Peter Bland and Philip Gor- don, lead the bunch, but the act- ing alongside them ranges from the perceptively observed playing of Marise Wipani and Erna Larsen to the more flamboyant theatrics of Don Selwyn and Billy T. James. James's Tainuia Kid, best described as a comic Zapata in Taranaki, is a particularly energetic performance.
Came A Hot Friday might well be the success that Mirage Films want: it certainly deserves to be. Not only is it a good piece of cinema but it has all the virtues of racy entertainment, a worthy companion piece to Pillsbury's earlier film and such recent successes as Gaylene Preston's *Mr Wrong*.

sional moments such as Stallone's impassioned speech of patriotism at the end are a little harder to take in this vein, particularly when *Rambo* does touch upon the social problems of the many victims of the Vietnam conflict in Ameri- ca today.

STEAMING

Director: Joseph Losey
The combination of Nell Dunn's popular feminist-influenced play, *Steaming*, and the cool, objective cinematic style of Joseph Losey would seem to be one of the most intriguing one could imagine.

Losey's films, from 1963's *The Servant*, deal with the world in claustrophobic terms, their characters trapped as much by their own personal problems as by the society that engulfs them. Within the confined world of the women's steam baths, the various characters one by one free them- selves of the shackles of their social manipulation. The male op- pressors are never seen and, when they do threaten to impinge on the women's world with the Council trying to close down their Victorian sanctum, they are triumphantly vanquished by the so- cialistic eloquence of Patti Love.

Losey has proved before, in his 1969 film *Boom!*, that, when presented with essentially theatri- cal material, he takes pains to preserve the stylisation from the original stage play. So it is in *Steaming*, with a good deal of the film's punch coming from the brilliant ensemble playing of Sarah Miles, Vanessa Redgrave and the feisty Patti Love. Other characters, from Felicity Dean's simple- minded, mother-dominated Dawn to the statuesque Diana Dors as Violet, manageress and mother confessor, ring less true. It is strange, and significant, I think, that so many of Violet's lines are delivered straight at the camera, giving her a distinct feeling of separation from the other characters.

Apart from an eminently forget- table theme song that tends to hammer home a theme that the film itself makes quite adequately, this is a worthy envoi from Losey, who died soon after com- pleting the movie. It is also Diana Dors's final film and, as such, many of the scenes gain a special poignancy.
William Dart



One might expect a plot which demands that the lead character spent \$30m in 30 days and not have any assets to show for it to be somewhat, um, open- ended . . . that's the assignment given to RICHARD PRYOR as a minor-league baseballer who suddenly has to spend the money as a condition of inheriting \$300m from a distant relative. And he can't tell anyone why. Starts September 13.



TINA TURNER wears enough metal to construct a Honda City in her role as Auntie, the boss of Bartertown, in *MAD MAX — BEYOND THUNDERDOME*, which opens August 23. She's joined by, of course, MEL GIBSON and Rose Tattoo singer ANGRY ANDERSON. Angry has to be happy with scowling and growling all the way through, but Tina's done a single for the soundtrack, 'We Don't Need Another Hero'.



Would you trust this man to steer your spaceship? MEL SMITH and GRIFF RHYS JONES take their comic partnership into the realm of cinema, with *MORONS FROM OUTER SPACE*, the story of a quartet of aliens who find themselves stranded on Earth. Exhaustive tests on the visitors by terrestrial scientists lead to the conclusion that they are utterly moronic and stupid . . . Starts September.



A bunch of America's young acting talent gets teamed up in *ST ELMO'S FIRE*, the story of a bunch of college friends making the jump into their own versions of the Real World. Pictured from left are Ally Sheedy, Judd Nelson, Emilio Estevez, Demi Moore, Rob Lowe, Marie Winingham and Andrew McCarthy. Starts September 13.

RAMBO

Director: George Cosmatos
Within the rather limited genre that Sylvester Stallone has circumscribed for himself, *Rambo* is an effective movie — not exactly a likeable one, but undeniably effective. Its production values are unimpeachable, from Jack Cardiff's spectacular cinematog- raphy to the bristling score of Jerry Goldsmith.

This saga of Hollywood's most celebrated Hunk single-handedly rescuing a group of American POWs from present-day Vietnam has obviously been geared to a very targeted American audience. As if the often gratuitous lashings of violence which run through the film aren't enough, one can't help but read *Rambo* as a piece of dis- turbing right wing propaganda.
Although *Rambo* does show both sides of the political coin, with Charles Napier's military com- mander being just as devious as anything the KGB could dream up, the main premise of the film is fiercely anti-Russian. To reinforce such prejudices in America, espe- cially considering the present state of the world's nuclear polit- ics, seems incredibly foolish.

It's altogether less disturbing if one reads *Rambo* as a 70mm comic book and the film certainly deals in the exaggeration and hyperbole of the comic book. From Stallone casually kung fu-ing an inquisitive snake to Steven Ber- koff's rasping Soviet villainy, it's not difficult to see the whole affair as a latter-day *Grand Guignol*: occa-



A NEW
DIMENSION
IN SOUND,

smiths
Sound
Mid City
xpo

290 QUEEN ST, MID CITY COMPLEX. PHONE 30-299.