

Film

MR WRONG

Director: Gaylene Preston

Anyone who is familiar with Gaylene Preston's excellent work in the area of short films over the past few years, will be only too aware of the lady's considerable cinematic flair. Even when she doesn't build the film around a social or political issue, as in last year's production with the Neighbours, Preston's instinctive sense of style is not to be faulted.

Mr Wrong confirms the promise of the earlier work and stands as one of the premier New Zealand releases of the year. It also happens to be the most successful feature to come from one of our women directors, realising its aims much more succinctly than, say, Melanie Reid's *Trial Run*.



Emilio Estevez, Anthony Michael Hall and Ally Sheedy in 'The Breakfast Club'.

The origins of *Mr Wrong* are indubitably classy, taken from a short story by Elizabeth Jane Howard, but Preston manages to focus the film on the wider issues of woman's problems in our society. The director has been quoted as saying that "Women need to explore paths other than those which lead to Mr Right — they

need to take control of their lives" and this is precisely what Heather Bolton's Meg sets out to do in *Mr Wrong*.

Using the genre of the thriller, *Mr Wrong* is transformed into an allegorical tale of a pursued and persecuted heroine, even if Bolton is a refreshingly atypical heroine with her delightfully matter-of-fact

performance. A thriller has its special demands in terms of pacing, and Preston meets these with considerable ease, the film culminating in a suspenseful final sequence worthy of Hitchcock.

Mr Wrong was a huge success with festival audiences in July and I should imagine it will prove popular with wider audiences on general release.

THE BREAKFAST CLUB

Director: John Hughes

The Breakfast Club must be one of the most contrived movies to come my way for some time, built on the premise of five young teenagers thrown together for a Saturday detention and, within a few hours, realising what life is all about. The advertising doesn't help either, with lines like "They only met once, but it changed their lives forever."

The central premise of Hughes' film is a very theatrical one — and when this theatrical aspect is too much to the fore, the movie creaks a little: the lachrimose soul-baring session after the obligatory reefer-sharing is a case in point, as is Paul Gleason's unremittingly heavy teacher-supervisor.

However, balancing this is Hughes' highly articulate script, with some of its best lines going

to the splendid Emilio Estevez, who has already made such an impact in *Repo Man* and *St Elmo's Fire*.

So fine is the ensemble playing it's difficult to pick a favourite, but Molly Ringwald, looking like a young Sandy Dennis, catches the vulnerability of an uptight prom queen to a tee, and Anthony Michael Hall's introverted Brian is another finely-drawn character. And up there with the teenage stars is ace editor, Dede Allen, the lady who won an Oscar for her innovative work in Arthur Penn's *Bonnie and Clyde* in 1967.

CRAZY FOR YOU

Director: Harold Becker

On the surface it's only too easy to relegate *Crazy For You* into the category of the teen market film and it's certainly that, with its tale of a young high school lad (nicely played by Matthew Modine) struggling to make it as a wrestler and coping with the onslaughts of burgeoning manhood. Here is a film that deals with hokum (and very moralistic hokum at that) laced with some raunchy dialogue that seems to almost come from another movie.

From the Madonna theme song up, *Crazy For You* is clearly aimed at a young market; yet, if the undeniably erotic quality of the many wrestling scenes are anything to go by, this is not by any means the only audience in the producer's sights.

EATING RAUOL

Director: Paul Bartel

Director Paul Bartel has commented on all the ideas that lie behind *Eating Raoul*, from being a commentary on the perversion of middle-class values through to a study of Latin machismo versus WASP fastidiousness. What has resulted is an uproarious black comedy which declares open season on everything from the Hollywood swinger set to cannibalism, all serving to illustrate Bartel's theory of how financial considerations ultimately overpower emotional ones.

Paul and Mary Bland (Bartel and

Mary Woronov in two delicious performances) slaughter their way into owning the restaurant of their dreams, their meteoric path to success being shown in a series of brilliant and bizarre cameos. Some years ago Phyllis Diller was on television explaining how her humour consists of jokes cumulatively built on top of each other — Bartel does this in *Eating Raoul*, most notably when he wreaks vengeance on a hot tub full of "swingers."

Earlier this year, some may have been coaxed to see *Not For Publication*, the film he made after this one: it was a disappointingly flat affair, both in wit and style. I can't wait to see his latest, *Lust In the Dust*, which, with Tab Hunter and Divine heading the cast, promises to be a pretty outrageous view of the Wild West.

ELECTRIC DREAMS

Director: Steve Barron

It's difficult to dislike *Electric Dreams*, a sweet little cloud-cuckoo-land movie which has at least the enviable ability not to take itself too seriously. Billed as a "fairy-tale for computers," it offers a modern-day triangle of boy (Lenny van Dohlen), girl (Virginia Madsen) and computer (voice supplied by Bud Cort) and, just for a twist, the girl's the odd person out.

For those who lost their hearts to Amy Irving in *The Competition*, the heroine is a cellist in a symphony orchestra and a girl who, in her own words, was brought up on "Bach, Beethoven and Bing Crosby." The orchestral repertoire is limited — Tchaikovsky's 'Waltz of the Flowers' and a Bach Minuet — whilst the various songs by Culture Club, Heaven 17 and other groups on the soundtrack provide the excuse for some fairly loose visual sequences when the script wants a wee rest.

When Rusty Lemorande's script is on form, it provides the much-needed edge to the proceedings and the many confrontations between man and machine would even do the late Frank Tashlin proud.

William Dart

Pink Chardon

Who needs
French champagne
when there's
Chardon



SS1187

GOLD MEDAL SPARKLING WINE

Letters

Post to 'RIU' Letters,
PO Box 5689, Auckland 1.

The Backlash Backlash Backlash

Dear Gary: re your reply, August *RIU*. Not another one of those "What a load of shit" letters. You're boring.

Charles Allison, Simon Bendall, Tim Robinson (and a lot of other self-opinionated bastards who think the same way)

Auckland
• Gary McCalman's letter in defense of the Chills might not have been a literary masterpiece but it made rather more sense than the nice-sounding but nebulous and unsubstantiated charges of "vanity" in your previous letter. On the other hand, you and people like you have probably firmed in the Chills an almost over-scrupulous integrity that will probably serve them well in the wilds of England. It's an ill wind ... but go and see them live before they leave, okay? By the way, folks, the letters above and below were posted at the same place, same time. Hope y'all only get one *RIU* between you lads ... RB

A Subjectivist

With regard to your letters (August), who the hell does does Gary McCalman think he is? Why does he have the right to criticise other peoples' personal viewpoints? And anyway, why support NZ bands if they're shit? Music is surely a subjective art. If NZ bands are, as I and a lot of other people in NZ who think the same way believe, world class, why treat or criticise them in a different way to any other band from the UK or US or wherever? This is the big wide world ...

As for the 'Fickled Pinkers' (Letters, July) being self-opinionated, Jesus! If you don't have the courage of your convictions to state your opinion, believe it and stand up for it, then you must be a bland one-dimensional piece of shit. Though I may not necessarily agree with Charles, Simon and Tim, I salute them! At least they made you *think*! Maybe you'll do it again sometime ...

Billy Grey Lynn

Colin Comment

I found Colin Hay pathetic and insulting in his recent *RIU* interview. His comment about Men At Work not being fashionable with

the press was sheer sour grapes. Does he really think Nick Kent or, dare I say it, George Kay, would give a good review to his teenybop tripe? His racist generalisations were equally sick. When Australia produces something worthy of consideration then we'll listen to it. Piss off you Aussie hack!

Max Anderson Wellington
PS: Bryan Ferry was great after Plant's tedious arrogance towards anything outside his thick skull. Keep up the good work *RIU*, you're only just pipped at the post by the *NME* in the Anderson best rock journal awards.

• Ta Max, but let's not get carried away with "racist generalisations" and forget the Saints, Radio Birdman, the Birthday Party, the Go-Betweens, the Easybeats, etc. RB

A Napier-Like Wit! (Urggh ...)

Yahoo! I've just put down the best *RIU* I've read in ages. While in a second-hand bookshop I stumbled across a collection of old *RIUs*. This one, No.17, Nov 1978, (which boldly proclaims 20,000 monthly on the cover) has got something worth reading on every page. A considerable contrast to No.96, 1985! This old issue is brilliant. Simple language and simple layout, but above all it captures the feeling of the times. Remember the Scavengers, the Clean, Suburban Reptiles and Citizen Band? People were excited about these bands and it was reflected in the 'Letters' column. Interesting reviews of Devo and Blondie by Duncan Campbell and information on bands in the form of a Band File. (Why have you guys strayed away from this important piece of coverage? People need to know who and what are good up and coming acts.)

Admittedly things were happening pretty fast overseas, especially in the UK, but I fear we have lost a lot of that initial excitement and thanks to the likes of Phillipa Dann and Phillip Schofield we're being fed acres of bland and boring local acts. However, I'm pleased to announce that Naiper has got a rapidly growing collection of exciting and energetic bands. It's a shame very few will ever be heard on vinyl. It's high time some of the independent record labels took a look into this neck o' the woods. They may find a goldmine or may just stop becoming incestuous and self-indulgent like Flying Nun. Though fair dues, the Chills are definitely NZ's best band.

Keep It Up *Rip It Up*,
Mysterex Napier