

Movies

CC CRITIC'S CHOICE

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R RECOMMENDED

N NEW

Arriaga (*Amores Perros*) concerns the accidental and unpunished shooting of the title character, a Mexican ranch hand (Julio Cesar Cedillo) working in west Texas. Jones plays the ranch hand's foreman and friend, who kidnaps the border patrolman responsible (Barry Pepper) and drags him and Estrada's corpse across the border, determined to fulfill his friend's wish to be buried in his remote hometown. A very capable piece of storytelling, clearly showing the influence of Sam Peckinpah and beautifully shot in 'Scope by Chris Menges, this recaptures some of the grandeur of the classic western while adding modernist and absurdist ironies. With Dwight Yoakam, January Jones, and Melissa Leo. R, 121 min. (JR) ▶ Sun 7/23, 8 PM, Morseland, 1218 W. Morse, 773-764-8900. DVD projection. **Free**

Tommy Ken Russell projects the religious frenzy of *The Devils* and the aesthetic paroxysms of *The Music Lovers* onto the Who's rock opera, and the results are somewhere between the apocalypse and Andy Warhol. This 1975 film's inventiveness begins to flag about halfway through, but by then it's a relief. If only Wagner could have lived to see this. With Ann-Margret, Oliver Reed, Elton John, and Eric Clapton. PG, 111 min. (DK) ▶ Tue 7/25, 7 PM, Delilah's, 2771 N. Lincoln, 773-472-2771. TV monitor. **Free**

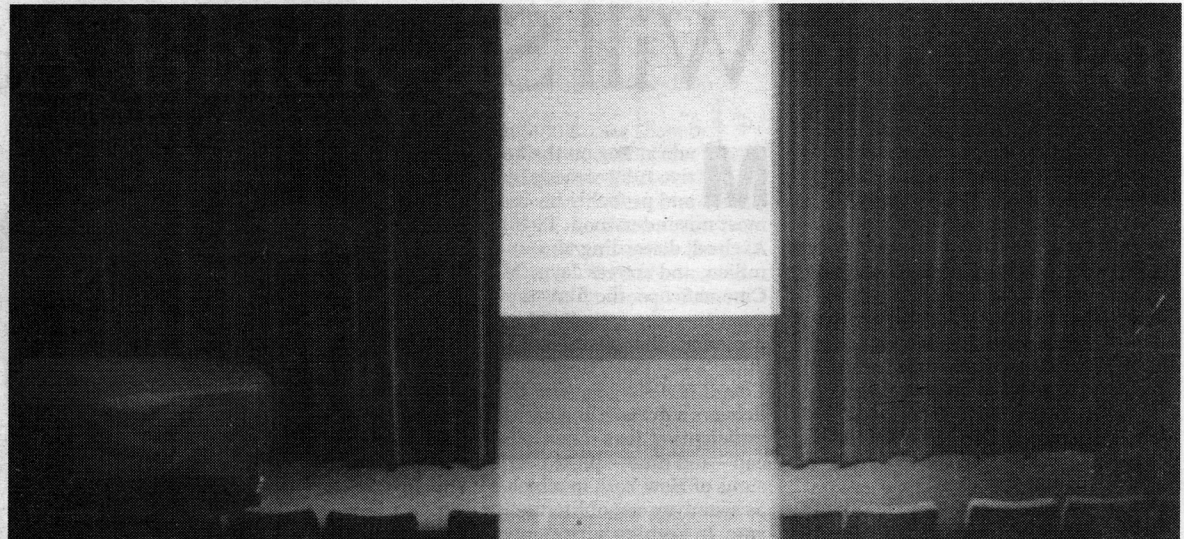
Tramp, Tramp, Tramp Nearly forgotten today, Harry Langdon was considered a serious rival to Chaplin and Keaton in the late 20s. An ex-vaudeville comedian, discovered and equipped with a new screen personality by Frank Capra, Langdon rocketed to popularity with a series of shorts made for Mack Sennett. With Capra on staff, Langdon made this first feature, directed by Harry Edwards, about a cross-country walking race, in 1926, and followed its success with two more films before canning Capra and striking out on his own.

the sexual and the spectral. Ana Cristina de Oliveira plays the title character, a roller-skating price checker at a supermarket who breaks up with her boyfriend because he doesn't want children. In her despair she's drawn into an uneasy friendship with a young gay man (Nuno Gil) who recently lost his lover in a car accident, and before long the neurotic woman begins to develop a morbid fascination with the deceased. In Portuguese with subtitles. 101 min. (AG) ▶ Landmark's Century Centre.

N Valdez Is Coming After Marlon Brando dropped out because of scheduling delays, producer Burt Lancaster took over as the lead in this stark 1971 adaptation of Elmore Leonard's western, which was shot in Spain. Set up by a brutal Arizona rancher (Jon Cypher) and a gun-crazy cowboy (Richard Jordan), the title character, a Mexican constable, kills an innocent black soldier. Left for dead by the landowner's henchmen, Valdez rallies, taking the villain's not-so-innocent lover (Susan Clark) hostage and picking off the bad guys one by one. Making his feature debut after his Broadway smash *The Great White Hope*, Edwin Sherin directed Lancaster to a performance that is sturdy and at times subtle—though the actor's makeup and accent certainly are not. With Frank Silvera, Barton Heyman, and Hector Elizondo. PG-13, 90 min. (AG) ▶ LaSalle Bank Cinema. Also on the program: episode two of the 1938 serial *The Spider's Web*.

Waist Deep A better-than-average urban crime picture, with a strong narrative line and astute recycling of classic noir themes. A paroled ex-con (Tyrese Gibson), bumping up against California's three-strikes law, gets jacked by a thug who takes his car and his son; the boy winds up in the clutches of a brutal gang lord, who gives the father 24 hours to deliver a \$100,000 ransom. This is spoiled by an absurd coda on a tropical beach, but until then it's dark and perverse

Critic's Choice



Projector Obscura

Films by Peter Miller

The best of these eight 35-millimeter works by Chicagoan Peter Miller, who's headed for Vienna on a Fulbright, are self-aware, wryly humorous explorations of the nature of film and film viewing. *Forever Film* shows him threading up projectors, and it's screened for viewers as they enter a theater with the lights on. For *Projector Obscura* he turned theater projectors into cam-

eras, filming the theaters they belong to and capturing rising curtains and white screens. The rapid-fire still images of Chicago parties in *360* create the illusion of depth and make bodies seem to float, and the yellow flashes in *Firefly* were made by the bugs themselves flitting past coiled-up film. Miller will attend. 65 min. ▶ Thu 7/27, 8 PM, Cinema Borealis. —Fred Camper