

# Romance takes time in warming the heart

By Gerri Pare  
Catholic News Service

NEW YORK (CNS) — A waitress in a Manhattan diner loses her appetite when the new cook puts love on the menu in *Frankie and Johnny* (Paramount).

Bruised and bitter after a failed love affair, Frankie (Michelle Pfeiffer) discourages the unassuming Johnny (Al Pacino). She's pretty much given up on life and love while Johnny's got a new lease on it, having just been released from prison after being convicted for writing bad checks.

Johnny perseveres and shows up unexpectedly at her apartment to escort her to a going-away party for one of the workers. With infinite patience he breaks down her emotional barriers and shares with her his own imperfect past until she can begin to consider the possibility of hope and love once more.

Director Garry Marshall gingerly develops themes of hope, renewal and family ties, enlivened by glimpses of life in the

bustling diner and on the New York City streets.

The diner crew and the regulars are a likable lot — all good people trying to make the best of life and maybe help each other along the way. A thickly Greek-accented Hector Elizondo is their patriarchal boss, and an especially fine Kate Nelligan plays an earthy waitress looking for love with mixed results.

Pfeiffer is believable in this uncharacteristically non-glamorous role and Pacino is quite appealing, though it's easy to question his instant, overwhelming love for the glum waitress. The romance gets overly talky, however, as Johnny constantly tries to sell Frankie on his offer of love, marriage and family.

Towards the end there's a lovely montage of the diner workers in their home settings that serves as an apt visual counterpoint to the individual loneliness of Frankie and Johnny. Followed by its quietly upbeat finish, the movie has a sweet, warm-hearted feel to it that helps offset its sometimes stalled pacing.

Because of brief shots of unmarried encounters, many sexual references and some rough language, the U.S. Catholic Conference classification is A-III — adults. The Motion Picture Association of America rating is R — restricted.



Al Pacino and Michelle Pfeiffer star in *Frankie & Johnny*, the funny and tender story of a short order cook and a waitress who meet at a New York City diner and begin an unlikely courtship.

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# Thriller worth dealing with red herrings

By Gerri Pare  
Catholic News Service

NEW YORK (CNS) — A widow's life rapidly unravels when she discovers her husband's identity was completely fabricated in *Deceived* (Touchstone).

After a car wreck burns her husband's body beyond recognition, Adrienne Saunders (Goldie Hawn) is shocked to learn from Social Security that her seemingly devoted husband Jack (John Heard), a respected museum curator, was using a long-dead classmate's identity.

Shaken, she pursues this mystery, unaware that someone is watching her loft apartment intent upon retrieving an ancient necklace belonging to the museum.

As she persistently digs deeper, Adrienne is frightened to find Jack was leading an intricate double life. The stakes get higher when her loft is trashed, her maid is murdered and the killer takes Adrienne's little girl (Ashley Peldon) in order to guarantee getting the necklace from her mother.

There are more holes in this plot than on a golf course, but it hardly seems to detract from director Damian Harris' edgy sus-

pense movie.

The red herrings and bumps in the night come fast and furious, right up to the shattering conclusion.

Despite its implausible situations the movie is very emotionally involving as Hawn uncovers layer upon layer of deceit visited upon her by the man she thought she could trust with her life.

Heard is remote and never convincing when trying to manipulate those around him. However, he is shot from menacing angles and the use of light and shadow throughout, especially on faces, is quite effective. The spooky loft apartment in the deserted building absorbs much of the atmosphere of dread and ever-present danger.

Some developments invite laughs, but if you can suspend common sense the movie is a nifty thriller and the climax is a scene of sustained suspense worth the roller-coaster ride of false clues and tricky twists.

Due to momentary violence and mild sexual innuendo, the USCC classification is A-II — adults and adolescents. The MPAA rating is PG-13 — parents are strongly cautioned that some material may be inappropriate for children under 13.



Rob McEwan-Touchstone Pictures  
Goldie Hawn stars in the new suspense thriller *Deceived*.

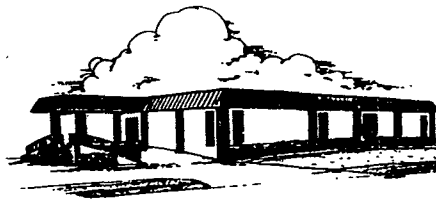


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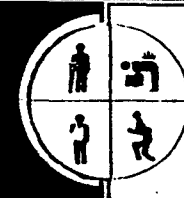
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