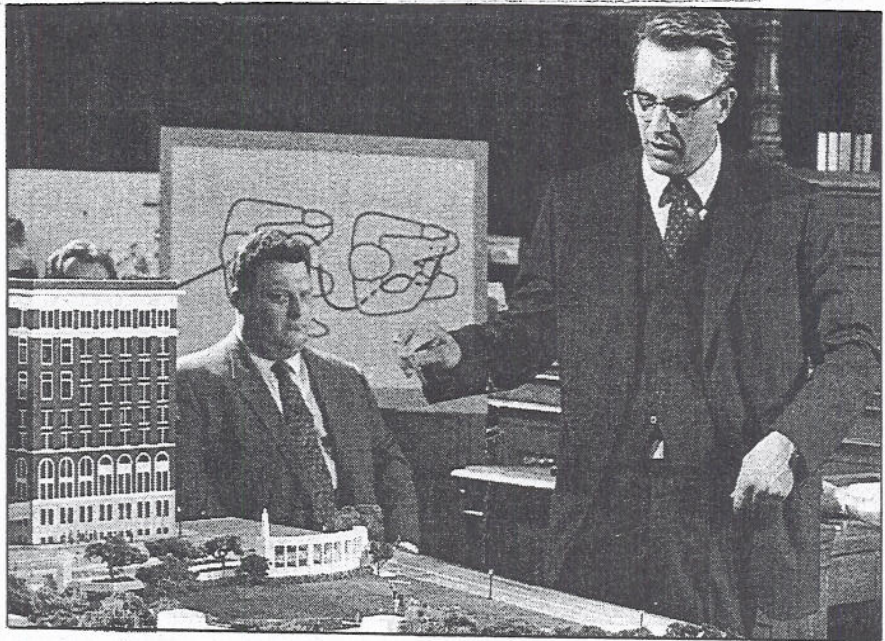


For all those who  
about absolute fidelity  
This is not faithful  
either to the TSBD  
or the terrain

Oliver Stone's 'JFK,' starring Kevin Costner, right, is just one of the movies hoping to make a hit in the upcoming soft holiday market. Others include 'For the Boys,' Steven Spielberg's 'Hook,' 'Bugsy' and 'The Prince of Tides.'



## MOVIES

## Hollywood's hopes for the holidays

### Troubled economy worries filmmakers

By Bernard Weinraub  
The New York Times

**A**t the Twentieth Century Fox commissary, Joe Roth, the head of the studio, bit into his cheeseburger. "So many movies, so many bad movies," he said, shaking his head. "Ticket prices are up. Attendance is down. The economy is bad. Disposable income is leveling off. The numbers just don't add up."

Across town at Universal Pictures, Tom Pollock, chairman of MCA, said, "Look, there's a finite pool of talent. More movies are being made than there are talented people to make them. That results in a dilution of quality."

Another motion-picture executive said pointedly: "Are there any pictures you really want to see? Go to the cineplex. What's playing?"

And David Geffen, one of Hollywood's major power brokers, said

bluntly: "It's a continual slide. The audiences have become trained to accept less and less because of television. The material available is not very good, and the quality of the writing has declined. And everything is overpriced — the actors, the directors, the writers, the movies. There's the stupidity of the studios who don't say, 'Enough is enough.' They're afraid. That's the prevailing emotion now — fear."

In this bleak mood, Hollywood looks anxiously, even fearfully, toward the Thanksgiving-Christmas season, which is traditionally a time when studios open major films to large audiences.

"Am I nervous?" said Scott Rudin, the producer of "Little Man Tate," the Jodie Foster film that just opened. "You bet I am."

Rudin, who is also producing the upcoming "Addams Family," one of the major holiday films, added, "It would be nice to open in a more hospitable economic climate."

With the summer season a major disappointment and autumn film grosses lagging considerably be-

hind last year's, which weren't particularly good either, the highly competitive studios are jockeying for holiday release dates. "There are about six weeks of movies," one studio president said. "We're all fighting for the same piece of real estate."

Apart from Steven Spielberg's lavish "Hook," which must make huge profits to break even and is one of the first major gambles of Sony's Hollywood investment, the other key films include "Bugsy," the Warren Beatty movie about the gangster Bugsy Siegel; Barbra Streisand's "Prince of Tides";

"For the Boys," with Bette Midler and James Caan; Lawrence Kasdan's drama "Grand Canyon"; Disney's "Beauty and the Beast," "Billy Bathgate" and "Father of the Bride"; "Cape Fear," the Martin Scorsese drama; and Oliver Stone's "JFK."

"If the Christmas season fails," said Peter Dekom, an entertainment lawyer, "it'll be devastating."