

## FLASHES

PAT HARRINGTON/OUTLINE



QUICK DRAW: Groening

**TV:** The just-published, paperback edition of Alex Ben Block's *Outfoxed*, a history of the Fox network, contains a new chapter on *The Simpsons* and some surprising news about the show's origin: It was created in 10 minutes, while cartoonist **Matt Groening** waited for a meeting with producer **James L. Brooks**. "It's true," says Groening. "Originally I was going to do my comic strip, *Life in Hell*, for Brooks. Then I found out whatever I did would be owned by Fox. I had 10 minutes to come up with something else: a family that drove each other crazy. I was inspired by my own family. It took me the whole 10 minutes to draw them."...

**MOVIES:** The social mores of 1870s New Yorkers might seem a leap for **Martin Scorsese**. Yet the filmmaker (whose *Cape Fear* comes out in November) is taking a trip back to *The Age of Innocence*, adapting Edith Wharton's Pulitzer Prize-winning 1920 novel as his next feature. **Daniel Day-Lewis** and **Michelle Pfeiffer** are likely to play Wharton's tale of doomed romance. Scorsese starts filming in upstate New York early next year. No word on whether Pfeiffer will dye her hair and skin to achieve the exotic "almost foreign-looking" dark look Wharton so meticulously described.... ♦ What does **Robert Redford** have to do to rebound from his \$45 million *Havana* flop? Follow the old formula of seeking safety in big casts. Redford is joining a cast that will include Oscar winner **Ben Kingsley**, Oscar nominees **River Phoenix** and **Mary McDonnell**—and possibly **Sidney Poitier** and **Dan Aykroyd**—for *Sneakers*, a comedy/adventure that begins filming Oct. 28 in San Francisco.

Says Phoenix: "The script's really good. I play a computer hacker. We're a team of five. Redford—gosh! Kingsley—gosh!"... ♦ **Robin Williams** is considering a change of pace in what is becoming one of the most interesting movie careers around: the role of **Harvey Milk**, the gay supervisor of San Francisco who was assassinated in 1978. The film, *The Mayor of Castro Street*, based on **Randy Shilts'** 1983 book of the same name, will be coproduced by **Oliver Stone**. The rumor that Stone will also direct is not true, yet. "There's no director set," says Stone's press agent, Andrea Jaffe. "Oliver is just developing the project." —Lawrence O'Toole, Lou Aguilar, Stephen Schaefer, Rebecca Ascher-Walsh

A ROLE TO MILK: Williams



DARK PART: Pfeiffer

## After Midnight

IT'S TRUE that trends in the music business come and go as fast as **Cyndi Lauper's** career. But the record industry's latest publicity ploy—making eagerly awaited new albums available at midnight in record stores—already seems to have peaked.

The trend began with the Sept. 17 unveiling of **Guns N' Roses' Use Your Illusion** albums at more than 1,000 record stores around the country—a publicity bonanza so perfect that even **Ozzy Osbourne** showed up at New York City outlets that night to flog his own album. Next up: At 12:01 a.m. Oct. 22, the death-thrash band **Slayer** will appear at Tower Records in New York to officially release its new live album, *Decade of Aggression*. (A spokesman for Def American, the band's label, says the stunt "wasn't influenced" by GN'R and that the idea had been in the works for several months. Uh-huh.)

Rumor had it that **Ice Cube** was also considering a similar promotion for his album *Death Certificate*, due late this month, but nixed the idea at the last minute. The reason? "He thought it was hackneyed," says his spokeswoman. —David Browne



DRANE LEIGHTON/TINA



ALLEN S. PETERSON/AMAZE

**NIGHT MOVES:** Slayer (top) will stay up late, but Ice Cube isn't hot on the trend



ILLUSTRATION BY DAVID COWLES