

Martin A. Grove

Hollywood Report

Warners developing 'JFK's' 'positive effect'

Warners words: In talking to Warner Bros.' distribution president D. Barry Reardon and worldwide advertising and publicity president Robert Friedman here Thursday about "JFK," they made it clear that the studio is determined to rebut widespread media attacks on the film.

"When the media refer to 'JFK' — especially the media that are not knowledgeable about boxoffice — they talk about our 'disappointment' with the gross," Friedman told me.

"First of all, nobody ever called us to ask if we're disappointed or not. Clearly, we're not. It basically stems from, No. 1, in our opinion, antagonism toward the project in general; and, No. 2, a clear lack of knowledge about what it takes to calculate the success of a gross, especially taking into account (fewer) showtimes (for a very long film)."

Have theaters been scared away by the media flap over the picture? "No, not at all," says Reardon. "As a matter of fact, we've gone up in theaters. Last weekend we were in 1,183 screens and this weekend we're going up to 1,335 roughly.

"We're starting to increase our theaters because consciously we held back (on screens when 'JFK' opened). We didn't want to release the picture in too many theaters because we thought it was special and upscale and that it would take a while for the movie to get word of mouth going on it. Now we feel it has come to that point and we're starting to increase the number of theaters that we have."

In Hollywood, "JFK," directed by Oliver Stone and starring Kevin Costner, has fared well, earning four Golden Globes nominations (picture/drama, actor, director and screenplay). Given the strong correlation between Globes success and Academy Awards nominations, that automatically makes it a contender for nominations in several prime Oscar categories.

"We're very, very pleased with the reception we've had in our own community," says Friedman. "They've accepted the film, first and foremost, as a piece of brilliant filmmaking by Oliver, who has a history of quality films. They've also accepted the opportunity to see another set of ideas about what happened in the assassination of JFK.

"That's really what Oliver has put forth — his ideas — here. It's what he set out to do all along.

"One of the great by-products of this film — and it's rare that when you talk about a piece of entertainment you can achieve something like this — is the fact that these files (about the assassination of President Kennedy) actually may be released. Because of a film, something the government has chosen to keep locked away for another 30 or 40 years — and even longer for some of the CIA and FBI files — (may be made available to the public now).

"The fact that a film that entertains and that's of high quality can also have a real positive effect on society, is a real tribute," Friedman says.

"The last movie I can think of that had this kind of social impact was 'The China Syndrome,'" says Reardon, adding that its impact stemmed from the coincidental timing of its release with the nuclear disaster at Three Mile Island. "It made people aware of what was going on."

"One of the great by-products of this film . . . is the fact that these (Kennedy) files actually may be released," says Warners' Robert Friedman.

Shocklee draws on music of streets for 'Juice' score

Producer set out to make 'visual' soundtrack

By Patricia Smith

BOSTON (BPI) — The new film "Juice" will hit with urban teens for two reasons. First, it tells the story of young streetwise buddies struggling against the familiar lures of the city. Second, kids will like it because it sounds the way they do.

That's because the film's musical fabric is woven by rap producer Hank Shocklee and his Bomb Squad, the brains behind Public Enemy. The soundtrack, which hit stores earlier this week, is a collaboration between Shocklee, the Squad and Kathy Nelson, senior vp film music for MCA.

The 14 tracks include contributions by Eric B. & Rakim, Teddy Riley, Naughty by Nature, Big Daddy Kane, Too \$hort, Aaron

Hall, Salt-N-Pepa, Cypress Hill, Son of Bazerk, Rahiem and the Brand New Heavies. Shocklee also scored the musical backdrop throughout the film. He became involved thanks to director Ernest Dickerson, who also worked as cinematographer on all of Spike Lee's films.

"It was pretty much Ernest's call that we get involved," said Shocklee. "We had worked with Spike on 'Do the Right Thing,' and 'Fight the Power' really hit. Ernest knows what kind of a movie he'd be doing eventually, something with a real street feel, and he wanted us for the music. 'Juice' is right up our alley. If it had been me, I would have called us, too."

Although Shocklee had never
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TV review

'Against Her Will'

By Linda Renaud

CBS' "Against Her Will: An Incident in Baltimore," a sequel to the Emmy Award-winning 1990 telefilm "The Incident," sees lawyer Harmon Cobb (Walter Matthau) uncover a Maryland mental hospital scandal.

Unfortunately, the telefilm lacks motivation and drive. It's not really clear why Cobb decides to relocate from Colorado to Baltimore where he becomes involved in a seemingly impossible case.

And while the telefilm is set in

the 1940s it lacks the look and feel of the period — not to mention the syntax. "You're a piece of work!" the hip Cobb admonishes his new law partner at one point.

Cobb moves to Baltimore with his widowed daughter-in-law Billie (Susan Blakely) and his granddaughter Nancy (Ariana Richards) to join his old adversary, Judge Stoddard Bell (Harry Morgan), in pleading cases in federal court. After only a few weeks, however, Cobb is bored and hankers for a

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TV review

'Drug Wars'

By Rick Sherwood

It's half good — the second half. Unfortunately, that's not enough to make Sunday night's debut of NBC's "Drug Wars: The Cocaine Cartel," the miniseries sequel to 1990's well-received "Drug Wars: The Camarena Story," good enough to be worth the time it takes to get there.

That's too bad, because Monday's second half is what the entire production attempts to be — an exciting, action-packed story of good guys vs. bad guys. It combines that energy with a lot more humanity than part one, and is able to wrap the pieces together to

DRUG WARS: THE COCAINE CARTEL

NBC

ZZY I Inc.

Executive producer..... Michael Mann
Co-executive producers..... Richard Brams,
Gordon Greisman

Director..... Paul Krasny
Writers..... Gordon Greisman, Gail Morgan Hickman
Director of photography..... Roy H. Wagner
Production designer..... Michael Z. Hanan
Casting..... Joy Todd
Editor..... Doug Ibold
Music..... Charles Bernstein

Starring: Alex McArthur, Dennis Farina, Julie Carmen, John Glover, Karen Young, Michele Placido, Assumpta Serna, Gustav Vintas, Geno Silva
Airdates: Sunday, Jan. 19, 9-11 p.m., Part I;
Monday, Jan. 20, 9-11 p.m., Part II

make a solid action drama.

Sunday's premiere installment, on the other hand, plays almost

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