

entertainment

'Flashdance' leads the list for the worst movies in 1983

BAD: adj. worse, worst 1. not good; not as it should be. 2. inadequate or unfit 3. unfavorable 4. rotten or spoiled 5. incorrect or faulty 6. a) wicked; immoral b) mischievous

By **BRIAN DONLON**
Gannett News Service
Webster's definition of "bad" goes on for six more definitions, but you get the idea.

If Webster ever decides to include "bad" in his dictionary, the company give some thought to using scenes from several of this year's films.

And to help out the dictionary people, here's a list of the "bottom" 10 movies that made this viewer squirm in his seat, constantly check his watch and read the ingredients on candy wrappers.

1. "Flashdance" — There are a number of unanswered questions raised by this fantasy flick. One is: Why would Jennifer Beals' character want to join the Pittsburgh ballet, when her style of dancing is new wave? Don't look to the movie for the answer! The music wasn't bad, but the story was slow-moving and its main characters were uninteresting. It was better in excerpts on MTV.

2. "Stryker" — A rip-off of "The Road Warrior" sans Mel Gibson and slam-bam action. This should have been called "Stinker" instead.

3. "Jaws 3-D" — An unfitting end to this soggy saga of sharks. Dennis Quaid must have had "The Wrong Stuff" when he was making this flick — a rare poor performance by him. And Lou Gossett Jr. should give back his Oscar for this film. The 3-D effects were full of defects.

4. "Staying Alive" — From the "Flashdance" school of filmmaking. Sly Stallone, who showed he has a knack for touching his audience's emotions in the "Rocky" films, decided to concentrate on



A scene from 'Jaws 3D'

dancing and not on the characters. What's left of John Travolta's Tony after Sly gets done with him is a dancing fool.

5. "Young Warriors" — Raping, pillaging and stealing — it's all here. The film had some raw young talent (James Van Patten, Tom Reilly and Mike Norris) but to believe that these "Animal House" refugees partied by day and became vigilantes by night proved to be a bit much.

6. "Beyond the Limit" — Talk about slow! A good performance by Michael Caine, but as soon as Richard Gere opened his mouth with that phony English accent, it was time to walk out of the theater.

7. "Stroker Ace" — Burt Reynolds and Loni Anderson may enjoy fireworks off-screen, but on-screen they're a dud. It looks like everyone — including Burt — is tired of his "chase 'em and race 'em" movies.

8. "All the Right Moves" — A "Rocky" of the football field? No

way! This Tom Cruise vehicle was totally predictable, from his getting a scholarship to having a teammate quit school because he "had" to get married. Craig T. Nelson made a nice try as the coach, but he couldn't do it alone. The writers must have left this film at half-time.

9. "Two of a Kind" — Two John Travolta films are on this list, but he's not a bad actor, just a bad decision-maker. He needs someone to help him pick better scripts. This long-awaited re-teaming of Travolta and Olivia Newton-John is just a "greasy" deal to make money on their previous film success.

10. "The Big Score" — This story was originally written as a "Dirty Harry" movie, but Clint Eastwood said no thanks and it's no surprise. This script has more holes in it than a .44 magnum target. Director-star Fred Williamson has a knack for action, but the story here fired a blank

Broadway's 10 Best

Worst 10 plays prove no one wins 'em all

By **JACQUES LE SOURD**
Gannett News Service
In theater, the honor roll was not easy to fill this year, though the very best was superlative, if rare.

Two extraordinary straight plays and one outsized new musical are not a bad tally for a year — even a good year, which this one assuredly was not.

The new season is only half-gone, and it already has surpassed the last in achievement, though signs of recovery for the Fabulous Invalid are still weak.

Some valiant actors went on without him, for one night.

7. "Marilyn" — Great makeup, good wigs, splashy sets, but where were the book, music or lyrics for the story of Norma Jean? Oy veh!

8. "My One and Only" — Sets left over from one concept, book borrowed from another, songs filched from Broadway and Johnny Ringo and Twigg — an unconvincing romantic pair. This mishmash won some Tonys in a sad, sad season.

9. "K2" — Two guys on a snow-capped mountain, and the mountain stole the show. Death by freezing.

10. "Buried Inside Extra" — A no-news newspaper play. The paper was folding, there was an atomic bomb in the pressroom, and the staff sat around discussing failed marriages. A work of crushing boredom.

11. "Private Lives" — A great comedy, two blundering performances at a rumored \$70,000 a week. Liz (Taylor) and Dick (Burton) left early.

12. "Dance a Little Closer" — Wags dubbed Alan Jay Lerner's newest "Close a Little Sooner." It did.

13. "The Guys in the Truck." Few showed up on opening night, because the star (Elliott Gould) had quit.

14. "Painting Churches" — Tina Howe came to terms with the memory of her mother and father in this poetic (and funny) play about a young painter who does a portrait of her aging Boston Brahmin parents. And Marian Seldes finally got a major part in which to shine.

15. "La Cage Aux Folles" — Broadway opened up its closet in this giddy, glorious, and radical musical based on the French farce, adapted by Harvey Fierstein, Jerry Herman and Arthur Laurents. The best musical on Broadway since "A Chorus Line."

16. "Brighton Beach Memoirs" — Neil Simon, always underrated, wrote his most tender and thoughtful play about growing up in the Depression years; and in Matthew Broderick a star was born.

17. "Night, Mother" — Marsha Norman's play about a young woman's deliberate, reasoned suicide shed new light on a volatile subject, and etched two characters (a mother and daughter, played by Kathy Bates and Anne Pitoniak) into our memory.

18. "Baby" — This original musical by Richard Maltby Jr. and David Shire couldn't fail to win hearts and stir deep emotions. It was about birth, and the havoc an impending arrival can wreak on the lives of parents.

19. "The Caine Mutiny Court-Martial" — Herman Wouk's World War II courtroom drama glowed anew in a sizzling production, the only revival worth mentioning in this company.

20. "Jeeves Takes Charge" — A gifted young British quick-change artist named Edward Duke brought Bertie Wooster, his man Jeeves, and a gallery of P.G. Wodehouse characters to life in a sidesplitting one-man show.

21. "Funhouse" — A gifted young American quick-change artist named Eric Bogosian brought the seamier side of the current urban street scene to life in a scary one-man show that was a chamber of New York horrors.

22. "La Tragedie de Carmen" — Peter Brook's latest stunt, a no-frills 90-minute version of Bizet's tragic opera, was important theater, even if a profusion of casts made for great unevenness from night to night. The production is sure to be copied.

THE 10 WORST
1. "The Man Who Had Three Wives" — Edward Albee's latest opus was a self-pitying lament on the loss of a

talent, and one had to agree with that portion of the playwright's self-appraisal.

2. "Moose Murders" — Now a legend, the benchmark for theatrical disasters. Eve Arden got out just in time — before the curtain went up.

3. "Total Abandon" — The subject was child-abuse, and Richard Dreyfuss' performance was so bad it killed his little boy. He got no sympathy from us.

4. "Private Lives" — A great comedy, two blundering performances at a rumored \$70,000 a week. Liz (Taylor) and Dick (Burton) left early.

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Bush Gardens to hold auditions for its park

Busch Gardens, The Old Country, will be auditioning talent in Pittsburgh for its 1984 park season Sunday, Jan. 29 from noon to 6 p.m. in the Music School's Recital Hall at Duquesne University.

Busch Gardens, The Old Country, is a 360-acre family entertainment park featuring eight authentically detailed 17th century European hamlets at Williamsburg, Va.

The staff of The Old Country is holding auditions in 14 other cities in search of young talent to fill more than 250 full-time seasonal positions for the park's six-month 1984 entertainment/lineup.

Auditions will be conducted on a first-come, first-served basis. Performers attending the auditions should be at least age 18 and be available for full-time seasonal employment. Audition presentations should be limited to three minutes.

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Stanley to undergo facelift

By **REX RUTKOSKI**
Staff Writer

With the Orwellian year of 1984 rapidly nearing, it is delightful irony that "Big Brother" is expected to increase the area's stature in the arts.

"Big Brother," in the form of the federal government, is to be the major funding for the proposed new \$35 million cultural project in downtown Pittsburgh, which could begin taking shape by next summer.

If all goes according to plan, a \$20 million government grant will be approved by April, the Heinz Endowment will purchase the 3,600-seat Stanley Theatre from DiCesare-Engler Productions and the theater will undergo a major renovation which will make it the new home of the Pittsburgh Ballet, Opera and Civic Light Opera.

Once the work begins, the Stanley will be dark for 12 to 18 months, a spokesman for the city of Pittsburgh said.

Plans are to enlarge the backstage of the Stanley, renovate the lobby area, demolish two buildings near the

theater and construct a new building containing offices, rehearsal rooms and storage space, which will be attached to the theater.

The Stanley, once it reopens, is still to be available for general concerts, including rock and pop shows.

About the project, David Matter, executive secretary to Pittsburgh Mayor Richard Caliguiri, observes, "I think it will help to put Pittsburgh on the map as a major performing arts center in the nation. I think that the Stanley will give us the recognition for the performing arts that we have for the symphony. As Heinz Hall has helped to put the symphony on the map, I think the Stanley will help to put the opera and the ballet on the map.

"Heinz Hall is acoustically very sound, but it has been a victim of its own success. It is overcrowded (with organizations wanting to use it) and not nearly large enough to accommodate the performing arts," for rehearsal and performance space.

Matter says the Stanley, after renovation, will be able to handle full-cast, full-production, Broadway touring shows. Both the Stanley and Heinz Hall, a block away, are only able to offer less than full scale Broadway productions now because of the limited size of their backstage areas.

The Stanley is to be operated by the Pittsburgh Trust for Cultural Resources, a non-profit corporation from the public and private sector, which will explore additional avenues for creating an entire cultural district in the Heinz Hall-Stanley area. A major corporate presence in that area is to be the Allegheny International complex, for which ground could be broken by next summer.

If the Stanley is dark for an extended period of time, it is likely to expect that the Syria Mosque (comparable in size to the Stanley) will become a much more active venue for rock and pop concerts.

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