

BY DUNCAN H. BROWN

MOVIE REVIEW

World Trade Center, starring Nicholas Cage

World Trade Center is a wrenching, gritty, ultimately uplifting depiction of how two New York City Transit cops were trapped in the rubble of the collapsed World Trade Centers on 9/11 (2001) awaiting rescue. Oliver Stone keeps his focus simple in this movie; there are no political positions or statements as in his JFK, and the action takes place in a remarkably narrow strip; the trapped officers, their spouses and families awaiting word on their fate, and a group of searchers trying to locate survivors in the grim, haunting rubble of the felled towers. 9/11 was a confusing day; no one knew exactly what had happened, reports were garbled, and these attacks seemed to appear out of thin air. The movie echoes this.

Some might call this a "patriotic movie, or a celebration of American values. It's true that these events take place during a terrible attack on the American psyche. 9/11 will stick in people's minds like the assassination of John F. Kennedy stuck in the minds of those living in the mid-1960s.

But the movie transcends the country (and the circumstances) in which it occurs. The men and women trapped in the rubble are not thinking of their country: they are thinking of what's most important in their lives: their spouses, their kids, and their families. 9/11 wasn't a political tragedy: it was a human tragedy. About 2,700 people lost their lives that day, among them over 500 New York City firemen and policemen and transit cops who were called to the scene of the disaster to try to help evacuate the area and assist the injured.

The movie brings home, in very sad detail, the terrible waiting that the families of the officers had to endure as the hours and days passed after 9/11. For the two families depicted in the movie (based on

true events and people), the wait is ultimately rewarded, and the beloved husbands were reunited with their wives and kids and families.

Left unsaid but clearly seen is that a far larger group of people waited out that agonizing time of uncertainty, only to find (eventually) that there was no longer any hope that they'd see their loved ones again, and further, that they would be denied closure since many of their loved ones' remains were lost amidst millions of tons of rubble and debris which would ultimately take more than a year to excavate and

Continued on page 10

NEW AND NOTABLE ON DVD

Inside Man, starring Denzel Washington and Jodie Foster.

His film by director Spike Lee has elements of a caper/heist film and of a thriller, and is a thoughtful and entertaining addition to both genres. Washington is a hostage negotiator having a very bad day during a bank robbery seemingly gone wrong. Foster is a fixer; there's something to fix here, and her steely competence is interesting but chilling.

V for Vendetta, starring Hugo Weaving. A dark, violent, ultimately affirming vision of a totalitarian world in which a solitary hero fights for everyone's freedom with swords and bombs.

A Fish Called Wanda, starring John Cleese, Jamie Lee Curtis, Kevin Kline and Michael Palin. An excruciating, funny movie in which the excellent ensemble cast entertains us in a variety of ways. This film features a wonderful Kevin Kline.

The Shaggy Dog, starring Tim Allen. In this Disney movie a man turns into a dog. As a result he comes to understand his family better, and becomes a better man. Plus, he can now catch Frisbees in his mouth.