

I5440 THE INDEPENDENT (USA, 2000)

Credits: director, Stephen Kessler ; writers, Stephen Kessler, Mike Wilkins.

Cast: Jerry Stiller, Janeane Garofalo, Max Perlich

Summary: Comedy mockumentary set in the contemporary U.S. with scenes from the 1970s and 80s. Commemorates the decades-long career of indefatigable exploitation titan Morty Fineman (Stiller), a shaggy composite of Roger Corman, Russ Meyer, and any number of filmmakers who made their name working with tight budgets and tighter hot pants. The film opens with Morty teetering on the verge of financial ruin and his daughter, Paloma (Garofalo), grudgingly agreeing to one more bailout. The only Fineman project on the horizon, however, is a dubious musical about a serial killer, and the only film festival willing to mount a career retrospective is located in a hooker community near a Nevada military base. One of the Fineman films shown in the retrospective concerns a pair of Siamese twin brothers who are drafted to fight in Vietnam (one is a hawk and the other is anti-war).

Bing, Jonathan. "Inside moves; Morty who?" Variety (Jan 31-Feb 6, 2000), p. 4.

Gross, Dan. "Stiller makes some noise in 'The independent'" Daily news [Philadelphia, PA] (Jan 25, 2002), p. 46.

Hewitt, Chris. "'Independent' a funny look at filmmaking" Houston chronicle (Feb 8, 2002), p. Houston, p. 9.

Hunter, David. "The independent" Hollywood reporter (Dec 14, 2001), p. ?

Leydon, Joe. "The independent" Variety (Apr 17-23, 2000), p. 30.

Lim, Dennis. "Schlock exchange" Village voice (Dec 4, 2001), p. 130.

McFarland, Melanie. "A good-time movie about a gloriously bad director" Seattle times (May 3, 2002), Ticket, p. H32.

Rickey, Carrie. "When the babes and the issues are hot, hilarity is the love child" Philadelphia inquirer (Jan 25, 2002), Weekend, p. 14.

Schaefer, Stephen. "Movies; Grumpy old mensch; Jerry Stiller takes his cantankerous charm to the big screen in 'The independent'" Boston herald (Jun 3, 2002), p. 35.

Turan, Kenneth. "Movie review; Mock-schlock appeal of 'The independent'? Pure entertainment; Fake documentary with Jerry Stiller as an exploitation filmmaker resonates with love of the low-budget genre" Los Angeles times (Dec 14, 2001), Calendar, p. 2.

Wang, Willie. "Das andere Hollywood" Weltwunder der Kinematographie 33/2 (spring 2001), p. 17-39.

Weiskind, Ron. "The full Morty; Mockumentary pays tribute to indie filmmaker" Pittsburgh post-gazette (Feb 1, 2002), p. 22.