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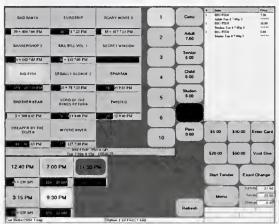
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liet love story set at the 2004 Republican Convention, director Mora Stephens takes both characters' emotional journeys seriously, even though she leaves little doubt where she stands politically. Her warm and natural visual style, combined with two excellent lead performances, make Conventioneers a shelf-worthy addition to the fictional documentary microgenre perfected by Haskell Wexler's 1969 Medium Cool. –Mark Keizer

THE SLATE > REVIEWS

# The Departed

A rat's a rat

Plumbing the

psyche of Irish cops and gangsters, auteur Martin Scorsese here succeeds in creating a bleak picture with a fatalistic Irish sensibility. It's an excitingly labyrinthine treatment of the perennial theme that cops and crooks, no matter their ethnic extraction, are fundamentally the same.

—John P. McCarthy

Excellent Cadavers

This *Cadaver* doesn't swim with the fishes

Comprised of news footage, interviews with the slain lawmen and highly disturbing still images shot by noted photojournalist Letiza Battaglia, this documentary charts the Sicilian mafia and its ties to political systems throughout Italy in the period between the rise of the 1980 mafia wars and the 1992 murder of two prosecuting attorneys during the spectacular Maxi-Trial. –Tim Cogshell

#### Flicka

Literally and figuratively speaking, a horse of a different color

This adaptation of Mary O'Hara's now classic, tough-love, coming-of-ager is updated, re-gendered, tamed—dare one say, gelded, Still, despite numerous weaknesses, some satisfaction must be taken in the effort to produce a movie about a modern-day teenager that is neither a cartoon nor set in a shopping mall. -Bridget Byrne

## Flushed Away

Aardman/Dream-Works animated film is a royal Flush

Sadly for reviewers who like to work a film's title into negative comic commentary, Flushed Away is a very fine addition to the animation art form, with lead characters that have a winning every-

man quality and propulsive action set pieces within crisply colored environments—but never at cost of personality.

–Kim Williamson

#### NYFF

## 49 Up

The seventh installment in the documentary series is the most revealing yet

Every seven years

since 1964, director/producer Michael Apted has visited the same group of people from various backgrounds and English locales in a bid to learn how class and socioeconomic status shape a person's life. Here, another enthralling, self-reflective layer has been added to the series.

—John P. McCarthy

## Hannari— Geisha Modern

This doc could learn a lesson or two about entertainment and hospitality from its subjects

Comprised almost

entirely of interviews with and footage of modern-day geisha, Miyuki Sohara's doc plays like an academic exercise. Although there's much to admire, there's very little that could be considered entertaining to someone not already enamored of