

Mac and Me

(working title: "Recycled Abattoir Slurry and Me")

US : 1988 : dir. Stewart Raffill : Guild

: 101 min

prod: R.J. Louis : scr: Steven Feke & Stewart Raffill : dir.ph.: Nick McLean

Jade Category; Lauren Stanley; Danny Cooksey

Christine Ebersole; Jonathan Ward; Katrina Caspary; Vinnie Torrente; Martin West;

Ivan Jorge Rado; Laura Waterbury

Ref:	Pages	Sources	Stills	Words	Ω	8	≠	M	☺	Copy on VHS	Last Viewed
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"Ever get this creepy feeling you're trapped in a two-hour fast food commercial?" asks Lauren Stanley

Leonard Maltin's Movie and Video Guide 1996 review:

"Slight "E.T." clone about Mac, an outer space creature, and his plight in suburban L.A. More a TV commercial than a movie: There's a production number set in a McDonald's, and the alien survives by sipping Coca-Cola. Rated "PG" *1/2 "

Halliwell's Film Guide review:

"A family of aliens is inadvertently dumped in California. A cardboard confection, copying much of the plot of "E.T.", that is little more than a dull and extended commercial for fast foods."



Really subtle product placement, eh? EH??

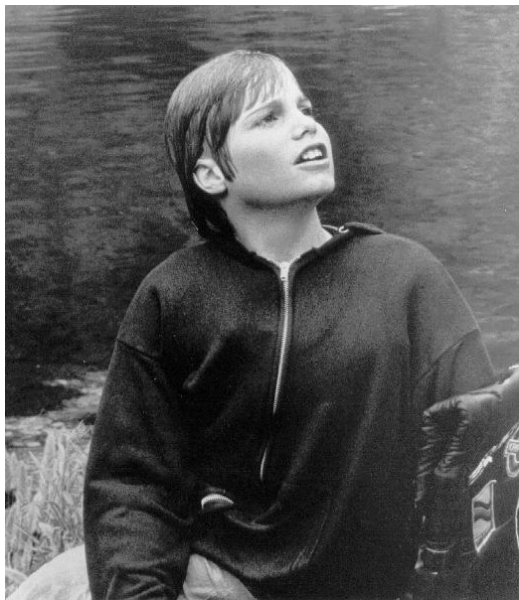
Rating the Movies (1990) review:

“This shamelessly derivative sci-fi adventure lifts its premise and emotional tone from **"E.T. - THE EXTRATERRESTRIAL"**. An alien family lands on Earth and a young, impish member of the group befriends a wheelchair-bound lad. Some kids may find this

sentimental fantasy amusing, but MAC (Mysterious Alien Creature), despite looking suspiciously like **"E.T."**, is no substitute for the original. Rated "PG" ** ”

TV Times Film & Video Guide 1995 review:

“Lovable extra-terrestrial Mac finds himself stranded in suburban America but survives on a diet of Coca-Cola and the friendship of a disabled 10-year old boy. A squirm-inducing children's film with more than a passing resemblance to Spielberg's "E.T." but with the shameless product placement of the MacDonalds hamburger chain. Several scenes are set in branches of MacDonalds and children in the film wear clothing with the firm's logo. Young children won't notice this, of course, but it's a scandalous new form of advertising. Mercifully the film is so awful it doesn't much matter. *”



Video Movie Guide 1993 review:

“Imagine the most product-friendly film ever made, one where even the title has commercial innuendo, and you have (Big) "MAC AND ME". To be fair, "MAC AND ME" stars the courageous Jade Category, a paraplegic wheelchair-bound since birth, and a share of the producer's nett profits will be donated to Ronald McDonald's Children's Charities. But the plot rips off everything in sight. Rated "PG" *Turkey*”

Front of house stills captions:

“Jade Category plays Eric, a young boy who is befriended by a little alien creature - Mac in

"MAC AND ME" directed by Stewart Raffill and produced by R.J. Louis.”

“Eric (Jade Category) makes friends with his new next door neighbour Debbie (Lauren Stanley) in "MAC AND ME", directed by Stewart Raffill and produced by R.J. Louis.”

[no listing in "The Critics' Film Guide", "Film Review 1988-89", "Film Review 1989-90", "John Willis Screen World 1988 Film Annual", "Movies on TV and Videocassette 1988-89", "The Time Out Film Guide", "Variety Movie Guide 1993" or "The Virgin Film Guide"]

Radio Times review:

“A corny, sentimental "E.T." copy, in which a boy in a wheelchair befriends a Mysterious Alien Creature fleeing N.A.S.A's clutches. Annoyingly, MAC is also a constant reminder of one of the film's sponsors, and the alien's dependency on a brand of cola is another. This aside, acceptable entertainment for young children¹. ***”

“First showing on network television for this children's adventure. Mac, a mysterious alien creature from outer space, is befriended by a wheelchair-bound boy who shelters him from government agents and helps him to find his family.”

TV Times (?) note:

“Lovable extra-terrestrial stranded in suburbia.”

TV Quick note:

“A lovable extra-terrestrial lands by mistake in suburban America (where else?) and causes family problems.”

What's On TV review:

“Separated from his family and hunted by anonymous government agents, a cuddly, toddler-sized alien hides out in suburban California, is befriended by a boy and helped by the neighbourhood kids. This shameless

¹ It's "corny, sentimental, derivative and annoying" - therefore this BBC critic considers it "acceptable for young children" - patronising oaf!

extra-terrestrial rip-off displays no discernible wit, flair or imagination and the whole movie is one never-ending product placement - a certain fast food chain does especially well out of it. Do the kids a favour, rent a video of "E.T." instead. Nil "

"Sci-fi fantasy adventure. A young space alien makes friends with a 10-year old boy after finding himself stranded in suburban Los Angeles."

"Children's film about a lovable alien who makes friends while stranded in America."

"Children's film about a lovable extra-terrestrial who is stranded in suburban America."

"A cute extra-terrestrial finds himself stranded in America in this kid's adventure."

"A lovable extra-terrestrial finds himself stranded in America."

Sunday Times note:

"Stars Chrisitne Ebersole, Jonathan Ward and Jade Caleyory. Discovering a stranded alien adds a new dimension to the life of a young wheelchair-bound boy."

Category: the only thing worth watching this junk for



No further information currently available. Deservedly lambasted by the critics, who were surprising only in their hesitance to use the phrase "blatant rip-off". The mystery, indeed, is why Universal did not launch a multi-million dollar lawsuit for such bald-faced plagiarism. Perhaps it **would** have done so, had McDonalds not broadcast that the profits would go to children's charities. Note, though, the disparity between the film guide comments and the TV guide listings. Once a film arrives on the box, all questions as to its quality become secondary. Mac is "cute" and "lovable" is it? I wonder..

Trust the awful minds of those corporate self-publicists McDonalds to hit on the notion of making people **pay** to see a 100-minute promotional gig for their own franchise, and shamelessly hanging it on the coat-tails of somebody else's work. It's true that trashy rip-off titles have always followed in the train of major box office hits - "**JAWS**", "**THE EXORCIST**" and "**STAR WARS**" all had their legion of imitators - and we shouldn't forget that the original **Popeye** cartoons were themselves sponsored by (among others) the Wimpy burger chain. But there is just something grasping and shameless about the egregiousness of it. McDonalds also released a computer platform game littered with their corporate logo ("Mick and Mac"?), and I shouldn't wonder if they had their own kids' TV show in the States. Their marketing strategy is so aggressively targeted at children (birthday party catering, the giveaway novelties, that loathsome clown, charity sponsorships) and they've proved so

successful at it that I daresay poor box office returns for this venture didn't trouble their accountants very much. Product placement is in any case so brazen in large-budget US features today (not least Spielberg's own) that this had to happen sooner or later.

Handsome Jade Cauley, who plays Eric Cruise, doesn't rate a name-check in *The Moving Picture Boy*, (perhaps out of kindness to him), but nor does Danny Cooksey, who plays Jack Jr, although Cooksey (Ben in the US sitcom "**Growing Pains**") was widely seen on television. A country & western singer at the age of 5, he was Sam in "**Diff'rent Strokes**", and played in the series "**Cavanaughs**", but he also had a small part as Eddie Furlong's friend Tim in "**TERMINATOR 2: JUDGMENT DAY**". He's about 12 here. Nothing else is known of Lauren Stanley, although she doubtless did other work. She looks a perfect understudy for "**ANNIE**".

As for "**Mysterious Alien Creature**" - file that under **Clumsy Ridiculous Acronyms Please**, along with "**D.A.R.Y.L.**" ("**Data Analysing Robot Youth Lifeform**"), "**A.L.F.**" ("**Alien Life Form**") and "**JOSH AND S.A.M.**" ("**Strategically Altered Mutant**"). Now, for your homework - suggest a witty reading of the acronym **B.I.G. M.A.C.**

See "**E.T. - THE EXTRATERRESTRIAL**" (which itself has been hamstrung by the sale of its creature model and theme music to British Telecom for their "keep talking" advertising drive) and subject index under **BOY MEETS GIRL, DISABLED / HANDICAPPED, MOVING HOME** and **SCIENCE FICTION**.

