

# 'Lake City'

By Stephen Farber

A Southern family drama flavored with moments of nail-biting suspense, "Lake City" is a hybrid that works. The film, which premiered at Tribeca, owes a debt to "Witness," another film that brought dangerous thugs into a bucolic rural setting.

This film begins by introducing two antithetical universes. Maggie (Sissy Spacek) leads a comfortable life on her family farm in Virginia. Her son, Billy (Troy Garity), is a city boy involved in a drug deal gone bad. Fleeing the dealers, he takes his girlfriend's son, Clayton (Colin Ford), to his mother's farm. Mother and son try to sort out unfinished family business while waiting for Billy's dangerous associates to catch up with him.

The film is effective in its intimate moments as well as its violent set pieces, and it could

attract audiences, primarily because of Spacek's superb performance, which represents another career high for this reliable actress. Although Spacek exudes salt-of-the-earth strength, she also highlights Maggie's failings, which played a part in her estrangement from her son.

Despite a few moments when his Southern accent wobbles, Garity also delivers a magnetic, persuasive performance. Young Ford is marvelously unsentimental in depicting Clayton's suspicion of Maggie and Billy. Keith Carradine brings considerable charm to the role of a local who's harboring a yen for Maggie, and there are fine turns by Rebecca Romijn, Dave Matthews (yes, the musician) and Drea de Matteo, who makes the most of her few moments onscreen.

Toward the end, when the villains descend on the farm, the film becomes slightly more stock, though there's a neat homage to Hitchcock in a chase through a cornfield. Directors Hunter Hill and Perry Moore take full advantage of the pastoral setting throughout the film. Although the story strands are wrapped up a tad too neatly, the performers see to it that the emotional epiphanies are honestly earned and eloquently expressed. **THR**

**BOTTOM LINE** Down-home drama delivers tears and thrills.

**VENUE:** Tribeca Film Festival.

**CAST:** Sissy Spacek, Troy Garity, Rebecca Romijn, Dave Matthews, Keith Carradine, Colin Ford, Barry Corbin, Drea de Matteo.

**DIRECTOR-SCREENWRITERS:** Hunter Hill, Perry Moore. **PRODUCERS:** Allison Sarofim, Donna L. Bascom, Mike S. Ryan.

**EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS:** Mark Johnson, Sally Pope, Weiman Seid.

No MPAA rating, 92 minutes.



Troy Garity and Sissy Spacek