



# Coming Attraction

August 1, 1999 By Michael Polson

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*The Next Best Thing*

Directed by John Schlesinger

Paramount Pictures

What's left to live for after you've paid \$8 to see Rupert Everett and Madonna sleep together? In *The Next Best Thing*, très gay Rufus (Everett) kicks back a few cocktails with his best friend, Abbie (Madonna), and hark!, a child is born. According to Paramount's publicity parrots, these two form "an unconventional family bound by friendship." Five years later she falls for a straight man and a brutal custody battle over the child erupts. Keep an eye out for Rufus' HIV positive lover in the m $\acute{e}$ l $\acute{e}$ e. Shooting started in April, but the release date is up in the air—after Paramount sat on the script for two and a half years before giving it the green light.

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