

5 AFI AWARD NOMINATIONS

"FUNNY AND SHOCKING, RIDICULOUS
AND SUBLIME: A TRUE ORIGINAL
... suggests Diane Arbus let loose
in Wonderland." Nigel Andrews FINANCIAL TIMES, London

"A WICKEDLY OFF-THE-WALL PICTURE."
Deborah Auld, VILLAGE VOICE, New York



sweetie[®]

A FILM BY JANE CAMPION

GENEVIEVE LEMON • KAREN COLSTON • TOM LYCOS
DOROTHY BARRY • JON DARLING • MICHAEL LAKE

director JANE CAMPION • producer JOHN MAYNARD • co-producer WILLIAM MACKINNON

screenplay GERARD LEE and JANE CAMPION from an original idea by JANE CAMPION

• music MARTIN ARMIGER • director of photography SALLY BONGERS

original songs Cafe of the Gate of Salvation

FILMPAC

"Sweetie is an account of a young bank clerk's efforts to find love and then keep it in a world she can't control. It aims to give grace to the fleeting moments of clarity through which we direct our lives. It also makes efforts to describe the delusions and subterranean forces that most often possess us." **Jane Campion, Gerard Lee**

VARIETY

A FilmPac (Australia) release of an ArenaFilm production. (Int'l. sales: UGC.) Produced by John Maynard. Directed by Jane Campion. Screenplay, Campion, Gerard Lee; camera (colour), Sally Bongers; editor, Veronica Heussler; music, Martin Armiger; production design, Peter Harris; sound, Leo Sullivan; costumes, Amanda Lovejoy; production manager, Patricia L'Heude; assistant director, John Frez; casting, Jane Campion. Reviewed at Hoyts screening room, Sydney, March 8, 1989. (In Cannes Film Festival, competing.) Running time: 97 MIN.

Dawn (Sweetie).....Genevieve Lemon
Kay.....Karen Colston
Louis.....Tom Lycos
Gordon (Father).....Jon Darling
Flo (Mother).....Dorothy Barry
Bob.....Michael Lake
Clayton.....Andre Pataczek

"Sweetie" is an original, audacious tragicomedy about two sisters, one who's afraid of trees but believes in fortune tellers, the other who's plump and plain and eager to make her mark in showbiz.

Director Jane Campion, whose short films "A Girl's Own Story" and "Peel" and telefilm "Two Friends" were screened at Cannes a couple of years ago, is competing in the fest with this, her

man described by a fortune teller as the man of her life is Louis (Tom Lycos), who just became engaged to a workmate. Kay sets about seducing him (in the factory parking lot) and before long they're living together in a rundown house in an unfashionable part of town. After a while,

The pic's other major characters are the girls' parents, Gordon (Jon Darling) and Flo (Dorothy Barry), who split up after several years of marriage. Flo heads north to cook for farmhands in the outback, while Gordon moves in with the sisters and Louis.

Campion and writer Gerard Lee have created some most unusual characters here, characters who are recognizable suburban types, yet slightly off-centre. The out-of-kilter approach is a factor in Sally Bongers' outstanding camerawork, with its strikingly different compositions.

The characters are inarticulate for much of the time, yet given to speaking home truths on occasion. Campion keeps the viewer guessing throughout, shifting attention from one to another including seemingly unimportant incidents that assume importance later. It climaxes with a tragicomic drama in which the hated trees play a major role.

Genevieve Lemon is so good as the overweight, slow-witted Sweetie that her part seems too small (she's introduced



first cinema feature. The picture quickly gets into its stride and manages to amuse and intrigue throughout. It's a genuinely different kind of pic, and shows a distinctively original vision on the part of Campion. If it garners the critical word of mouth it deserves, pic could do well in international arthouses.

At the beginning, focus is on Kay (Karen Colston) who works in an undefined factory in the inner city. She becomes convinced that a

though, they stop having sex. Enter Dawn (Genevieve Lemon), known as Sweetie, Kay's sister, who with her drugged-out boyfriend Bob (Michael Lake) simply breaks in to the house and moves into the spare room. Always garbed in black, Sweetie is decidedly odd, and though Louis takes a liking to her, Kay refers to her as "a dark spirit."

late in the film, and even then disappears for a while). Karen Colston is fine as the sensitive, constantly nervous Kay, with the supporting players all reacting well to Campion's direction. As Sweetie's tacky, somnolent boyfriend, Michael Lake steals his scenes.

Use of choral music is a plus and the film is tightly edited. In all, a refreshing, exciting debut from an obviously talented director.

— David Stratton,
VARIETY, May, 1989