

## Document Citation

Title	<b>Arizona dream</b>
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Source	<i>Reader (Chicago, Ill.)</i>
Date	1995 Jan 06
Type	review
Language	English
Pagination	Section 2, p.2
No. of Pages	1
Subjects	
Film Subjects	Arizona dream, Kusturica, Emir, 1993

CHICAGO READER

6 JAN 95 sec 2  
P 2SECTION  
MOVIESCRITIC'S  
CHOICE**Arizona Dream**

If you thought the families in *Twister* and *What's Eating Gilbert Grape* were dysfunctional, take a gander at the two families of infantile fruitcakes in the first English-language movie (1993) by Bosnian-born Emir Kusturica (*When Father Was Away on Business*, *Time of the Gypsies*). An orphan (Johnny Depp) who works for the New York Department of Fish and Game is asked to serve as best man at the wedding of his uncle (Jerry Lewis), an Arizona Cadillac dealer who's marrying a Polish woman (Paulina Porizkova) less than half his age. A cousin (Vincent Gallo) who comes along is an aspiring actor whose performances consist of repeating lines and gestures in sync with such movies as *Raging Bull*, *The Godfather*, and *North by Northwest*. The orphan starts an affair with a widow (Faye Dunaway) nearly twice his age who lives with her neurotic and disgruntled stepdaughter (Lili Taylor). The orphan dreams of moving to Alaska, the uncle dreams of climbing to the moon on a stack of Cadillacs, the widow dreams

of flying (and builds several wobbly planes with the orphan's help), and her stepdaughter dreams of being reincarnated as a turtle. This goofy, disturbing piece of magical realism, written by David Atkins and Kusturica, was picked up by Warners, cut by 20 minutes, unsuccessfully test-marketed, and then shelved—until the Film Center got the great idea of presenting the original 140-minute cut. It illustrates the truism that the biggest difference between European and American directors using America as a site for fantasies is that the Europeans at least know what they're doing. This wild and audacious black comedy about the way we all think and dream may send shivers down your spine, but it's also full of lyrical and surreal images. Film Center, Art Institute, Columbus Drive at Jackson, Friday, January 6, 6:00 and 8:30; Saturday, January 7, 3:30, 6:00, and 8:30; Sunday, January 8, 4:00 and 6:30; and Tuesday and Thursday, January 10 and 12, 6:00; 443-3737.

—Jonathan Rosenbaum