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by Andrew Sarris and

Nicholas Ray's **REBEL**

WITHOUT A CAUSE (1955),

from a screenplay by Stewart Stern and an adaptation by Irving Shulman, based on a story by Ray, with James Dean, Natalie Wood, and Sal Mineo, endures blazingly as the most emotionally charged ritual adventure about teen icons of the '50s. While Ray maneuvers his camera through patches of vivid color and explosively angled compositions, he also pays tribute to the classical unities. In one day bracketed by nights of painful confron-

tation, three psychically scarred adolescents (Dean, Wood, and Mineo) break away from their real families and form a surrogate union full of suppressed

yearnings and fetishes. The film's full scope, literal and figurative, can be perceived only in a theatrical wide-screen presentation. Wood tends a bit toward sprightly blandness and Mineo to mannered hysteria, but Dean's performance is more dynamic than ever. *Rebel Without a Cause*, an artistic landmark of its time, remains a lasting testament to the fruitful and poetic collaboration of the angst-ridden souls of Dean and Ray. (Cofeature: Ray's *Bigger Than Life*, beginning a retrospective of the Cinemascope/wide-screen legacy) **Film Forum 2: 4:45, 8:30; also Saturday with an additional 1 p.m. screening**