

# of make-believe

roles in every film they ever played in. My own opinion is that a good actor is like a good bricklayer, praiseworthy but infinitely inferior to the architect (i.e. the scriptwriter and director). Thus I have never bothered to keep track of them, and none of the names now being mentioned mean nothing to me.

The talk about various films is likewise depressing since I have probably seen less than 20 films made in the seventies, and missed everything from *American Graffiti* to *Apocalypse Now*. Usually the advertisements are enough to turn me off. I feel like asserting that I am proud of my avoidance of certain films, and that I don't give a flying puck about the stars, but why cause friction?

Besides, as a reviewer, I probably have a duty to examine even apparently pathological films.

After the hors d'oeuvres we are bussed to the 20th Century film lot where *Quest for Fire* is to be screened. At the theatre we are given a *Quest for Fire* button and a slick color brochure explaining the film.

*Quest for Fire*, you see, is a film about primitive tribes of men living 80,000 years ago, who speak a language invented by Anthony Burgess and gesticulate with gestures contrived by pop anthropologist Desmond Morris. Alas, one cannot read and watch the movie at the same time, but thankfully one can, even without the pamphlet, determine that the film is a grade-A, oven-ready, turkey.

The film centres on a tribe called the Uhm who use fire but do not know how to make it. When their fire goes out, and wolves chase them into a swamp, they send out three tribesmen to fetch some. Their adventures as they search for some fire are improbable, ridiculous, and have the unmistakable smell of a B-flick.

Take, for instance, the scene where the three fire-searchers are sitting around at an encampment, and suddenly a pack of nasty-looking neanderthals appear over a hill and make menacing noises. What should happen but a pack of nasty-looking woolly mammoths appear on the opposite side and add their growling and trumpeting to the din? The film-makers, probably proud of their ingenuity in creating such a novel situation, full of dramatic tension, linger on it as long as possible, cutting back and forth between the nasty neanderthals, the nasty mammoths, and the knock-kneed tribesmen.

Finally, having milked the scene for every last drop of suspense, the film-makers have one of the fire seekers grab a tuft of grass and slowly climb towards the mammoths. It takes an eternity of screen time for the fellow to reach the mammoths,

The set-up is much too hilarious to be repeated only one or twice, so the film-makers repeat it over and over again until it becomes as interminable as the mammoth scene. It finally reaches a climax when Dumb-bell returns to camp and finds one

robin interviews between tables of seven or eight journalists and a rotating retinue of people connected with the film. Our table's first interviewee is Michael Gruskoff, executive producer, who assures us that the movie "strives for authenticity as much as possible". The rest of the interviews are full of equally outrageous self-flattery.

I hold my silence since the only questions I can think of are excessively impolite. The rest of the table, as far as I can tell, swallows the pretensions that the film has of being an accurate and educational depiction of life 80,000 years ago. Then comes the news that *Quest for Fire* has already grossed more than *Raiders of the Lost Ark* in France.

I return to my room for the night in a state of high depression, and pick up the free copy of *Los Angeles* magazine. Its cover story is "Super-model Christie Brinkley - Shaper-upper of the Year," showing Brinkley herself in a skin-tight baby blue exercise suit. Another headline is "Exclusive: the California Girl Dier". Another is, "L.A.'s Best Bets for Happy Hour".

I flip through the magazine to the classified ads. There under the heading "Self-Improvement" is the following:

#### Conscious Drug Use

*A personal growth workshop on the management of recreational drugs in a manner that does not interfere with your lifestyle.*

The workshop is put on by an outfit called "Alternativity". The "Self-Improvement" section also contains ads for removing hair by electrolysis, face-lifting, and hypnosis.

I give up and go to bed.

Saturday, 4:00 PM

Well, this morning was a bit better. We screened *Porky's* - a film about a Florida high school set in 1954. It has plenty of sex, action-packed sequences, and low grade buffoonery, most of it involving a prudish Phys-Ed teacher named Miss Balbricker (get it?) and her attempts to suppress the normal biological urges of the students and teachers.

At the press conference afterwards the first question was a zinger about sexism aimed at writer and director Bob Clark: "Why were there no intelligent women in the movie?"

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*It is curious that actress Rae Dawn Chong wears no clothes when everyone else in her tribe does so.*

with the cameras cutting between the disgruntled mammoths, the quaking grass-carrier, the other two pop-eyed tribesmen, the mammoths again, the hesitant neanderthals, an extreme close-up of the scowling brows of one of the mammoths, who lets loose with a savage honk every few seconds just to keep everybody on the edges of their seats, then back to the fellow approaching the beasts with the clump of grass, who has apparently only edged two feet up the hill, then cut to the neanderthals who look impatient to attack, then back again to the grass-carrier who has advanced another 3/4 of an inch towards the ferocious mammoths, at which point one feels like getting up from one's seat and screaming, "Enough of this crapola. Give the mam-

moths the grass for chrissake, so they can chase the neanderthals away and we can get on to the next imbecility!"

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## University Exchange Program

English liberal arts universities.

remission of tuition and fees.

one year of a 3 or 4 year program.

University of Alberta for final year.

graduate student or landed immigrant.

from the Student Awards Office.

February 26, 1982

at the Student Awards Office (Room 3221) or Elizabeth Lunney, Director of Academic (259 Students' Union Building).



THE STUDENTS' UNION requires a

## CJSR Director

Term: 1 year term

Salary: under review

Qualifications:

- experience in radio communications
- ability to work with volunteer staff
- knowledge of CRTC (Canadian Radio & Television Commission) regulations

Duties: Responsible for

- presentation of broadcasts of interest to students and the general public
- encouraging interest and participation in radio
- assisting in the public relations work of the Students' Union and the University
- promoting and publicizing the activities of the Students' Union organizations and the University
- the content of all programs broadcast on CJSR
- the proper functioning of CJSR
- the proper care of SU equipment and facilities used by CJSR
- the administration of CJSR according to CRTC regulations.

For further information, contact Steve Cumming, Director, CJSR, at 432-5244, or Room 244 SUB. Applications available from Room 259 SUB. Deadline for applications: February 5, 1982 to Room 259 SUB

## Gold Medal Award



Each Spring, the Students' Union awards a student with a Gold Medal for excellence in curricular and non-curricular activities at the University of Alberta during the previous academic year.

Criteria:

- candidates must be in the graduating year of their most recent degree program
- candidates must have a Grade Point Average of at least 7.5 in courses taken two years previous to the graduating year and in the first term of the graduating year
- extra-curricular involvement in University and/or community activities.

Deadline for Applications: Friday, 26 February 1982

Contact the Students' Union Executive Offices for application or nomination forms, and/or for more information (259 Students' Union Building, 432-4236).