

*Chabrol revives suspense art form of fifties*

# Le Boucher : a terrific suspense thriller

By LLOYD CHESLEY

There is a terrific movie in town. Chabrol makes thrillers. A member of the same set of French film freaks that revived the art form in the late fifties (also included, of course, are Truffaut and Godard), he has received the least notice. His films Therese and Isabelle, La Femme Infidele and This Man Must Die all got good critical reception, but what he needs is a rave so people will finally go see what he's all about. So I'm going to give Le Boucher a rave.

Le Boucher is over a year and a half old, but it's no surprise that it should take so long to get here after the poor reception of the earlier films. It is a tale of murder, and since it is the most suspenseful of Chabrol's films, it should be more popular.

A sophisticated French woman becomes a teacher in a small village. Again Chabrol photographs

the French countryside in his own muted, rich colour style. He is one of today's great colour stylists, ranking with Fellini in the use of a medium that is rarely used at all, merely shot in.

At a wedding in the village she meets the town butcher, a shy man, proud of his trade. He is charming in his rural way and she allows a relationship to develop. But meanwhile the village is threatened by a series of horrible murders. The discoveries of these murders make for some of the best movie horror we have had in years.

Chabrol was once likened to Hitchcock, but he has since stated that he feels more like Fritz Lang. This is quickly apparent in this latest release. He doesn't use the witty treatment of the black comic, but the pathos of the psychological moralist. His film is a complex morality play filled with

psychological undertones, both twisted and normal. Le Boucher follows the footsteps of Lang's M, a classic of criminal psychology.

What makes the film, as well as the work of the director, is the actors. In this case the female star, Stephan Audranne, last seen in La Femme Infidele. Her coolness is perfect as the centre for the action. More brilliant is her amorous attendant, the town butcher. He is played by Jean Yanne, seen in Weekend and as the pigish hit-and-run driver of Chabrol's This Man Must Die. He seems to be never less than brilliant, be it as a pig, or as the bumbling rural merchant in this film.

So there it is. A great thriller and psychological morality film with two excellent performers under the direction of a man fast becoming a master. I leave it to you to see Le Boucher.



Stephan Audran plays a woman who suspects a friend in the murders that have been terrorizing her small town in Le Boucher.

**Translation of play by Pavel Landovsky**

## Room by the hour — it needs improving

By RON GRANER

Room by the Hour is an English translation of the Czechoslovakian work by writer Pavel Landovsky.

The action takes place in Prague where Fana and Hanzl share a rundown apartment during their twilight years.

To earn a few extra dollars, the two old men rent their miserable room to young lovers who cannot risk presenting their passports at a regular hotel.

Fana, the first old man, is a retired butcher who became skilled in the art of black marketing during

the first and second world wars and is still able to ply his trade. He lives as an uninvited guest in the home of Hanzl, a former factory owner whose business has been seized by the communist government. He is ordered to share his apartment with Fana.

Although both men appear to have nothing in common, one a product of the upper middleclass, the other a simple peasant, uncouth and larcenous, both have found their common denominator in old age, penury, loneliness and cynicism.

Risha and Suzi are the two vacuous lovers. Risha is a schoolteacher cheating on his wife. Suzi, his playmate is an art student looking for something new and exciting but willing to settle for the same old thing.

Their main pastime is not lovemaking, but fighting. Fana and Hanzl's main pastime is watching them fight. Suzi, tired of sex without involvement, has invited Fana in for moral support while she rids herself of Risha.

On opening night there were more problems on stage than were written into the play. Besides the problems of two old men with nothing left in life but their class differences, and that of the artist struggling for recognition and involvement from the average man, there was a constant struggle for lines, style and direction.

In what is basically a psychodrama with strong political overtones, the director, Adolf Toman, aimed for a light situation comedy approach. It didn't work and so the play constantly bounced between a heavy cynicism and a giggle. The result was a yawn.

Acting style was also bi-polar. Vincent Cole and Peter Sturgess produced a style more suited to a large auditorium such as the O'Keefe Center than an intimate theatre such as the Colonnade. They declaimed rather than spoke. Their characterizations were complete in themselves but they stayed largely within themselves. Peter Sturgess was more successful in communicating and more apt to speak softly than Vincent Cole.

Suzi played by Julie Amato, had the right size voice for the little theatre but was inclined to play for laughs and not for insight.

At least Vincent Cole and Peter Sturgess had some depth in their interpretations, Amato just skimmed the surface.

Dominic Hogan as Risha was less superficial in his portrayal but was not really at home in the part.

Besides the lack of any direction there seemed to be insufficient rehearsal time. The actors were still struggling for their lines and were not at home in their parts by opening night. They had got their own parts together but were not really reacting to anyone else.

I don't think the play itself has that much to offer, but the evening will not be totally wasted if the actors find time to get it together.

I would like to see a new trans-

lation. The innuendoes based on references to the communist political situation in Czechoslovakia, become entirely unintelligible to a Canadian audience.



Room by the Hour plays at the Colonnade

**pendulum III after 5  
big bands from 9 pm**



**opp. Tor. Dom. Centre**

# Singles' Europe Adventure.

We want you to run away to Europe with us.

We'll drain our last pint of Guinness at the Tournament Pub in Earls court, London, hit the road south to the Channel and be in Calais by sunset.

A month later, we could be in Istanbul. Or Berlin or Barcelona. Or Athens. Or Copenhagen. Or just about any place you and your Australian, English, New Zealand and South African mates want to be.

On the way, we'll camp under canvas, cook over open fires, swim, sun and drink in some of the most spectacular settings on the continent.

We'll provide a small zippy European motorbus and your camping gear and a young cat to drive it who knows every wineshop from here to Zagreb, plus how to ask for a john, or how to find your way back home to bed, smashed, later on.

You can go for as little as 28 days or as many as 70. Spring, Summer or Fall.

The cost is ultra reasonable. And we'll get you to London from here just as cheaply as is humanly possible.

We've got a booklet that fills in the details and prices.

If you're single, under 30 and slightly adventurous, send for it.

We're booking now.

Please send me details, itineraries and an application.

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ Prov. \_\_\_\_\_

Mail to: Europe, Going Down the Road,  
214 A Adelaide St. West, Toronto, Ontario.