

ARTS

# White Hunter, black movie

by Joanne White

*White Hunter, Black Heart* directed by Clint Eastwood produced by Warner Brothers

Action? Well, it may not be what you expect from Clint Eastwood, but *White Hunter, Black Heart* won't bore you.

The story is of a film director with a definite attitude problem who goes to Africa to shoot a film, but is sidetracked by the allure of the safari. His obsession with killing an elephant becomes apparent near the beginning of the film and slowly overshadows his directing artistry.

Clint Eastwood assumes the role of the main character, John Wilson, who is loosely based on the famous director John Huston. The film is a fictitious account of John Huston's visit to Africa to film *The African Queen* (starring Humphrey Bogart and Katherine Hepburn).

*White Hunter, Black Heart* is based on Peter Viertel's novel of the same name. Like the book, the film focuses not on the making of a movie, but on one man's lust to commit the ultimate sin (killing an elephant).

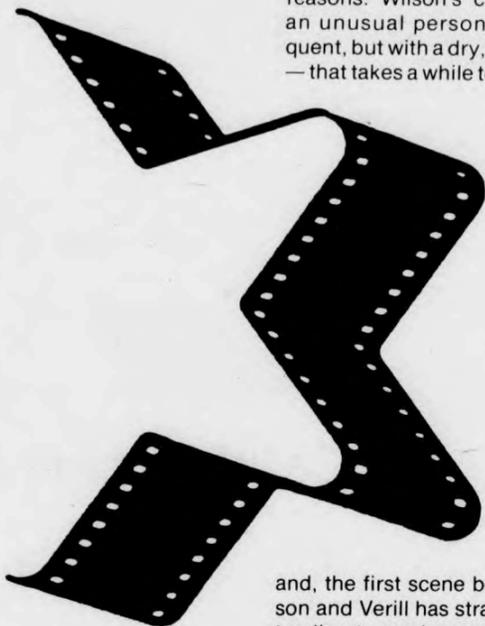
Peter Verill (a character based on Peter Viertel) is portrayed by Jeff Fahey, an "up and coming young actor" (although where

he's going I'm not quite sure). Fahey's most notable credits include the movie *Impulse* and the daytime drama *One Life To Live*.

Fahey does an excellent job co-starring with Eastwood, even though his role is noticeably smaller; but, to me, he does not exude the essence of a star.

Eastwood's first appearance in the film seems to be rough for two

reasons: Wilson's character has an unusual personality — eloquent, but with a dry, cynical edge — that takes a while to get used to;



and, the first scene between Wilson and Verill has strange timing, tending to read more like a stage play than a screen play. But, after a while, you get used to Wilson's character, and Eastwood doesn't seem to be reading half-observed cue cards anymore.

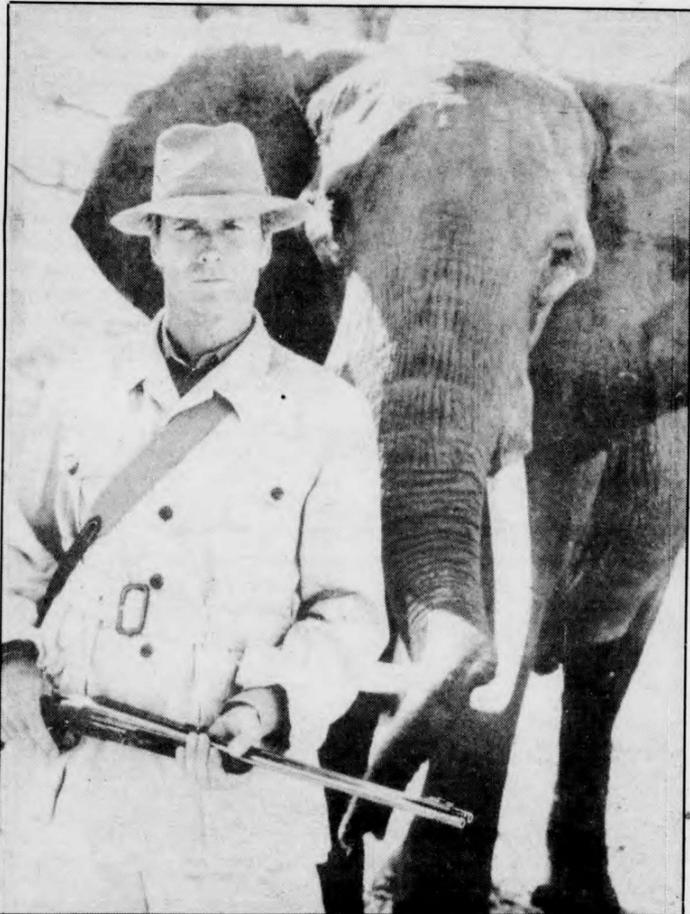
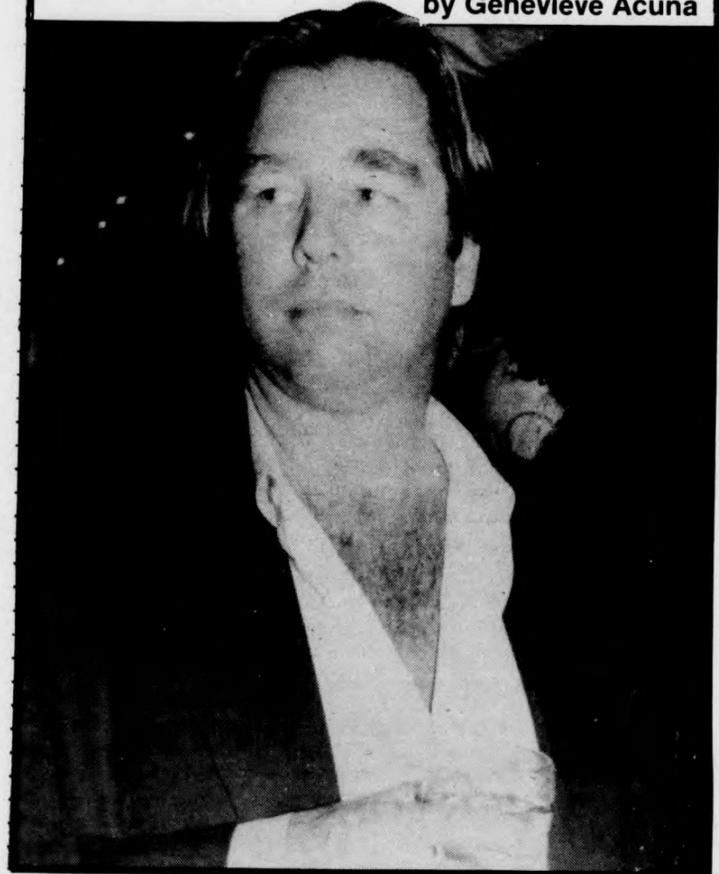
It is at this point the true mastery of Eastwood's direction comes to the forefront, seeping into the visuals and soaking into an already fluid script. Some of the lines are "new classics," and the black edged humour that paints the dialogue is worth hearing.

*White Hunter, Black Heart* appears at the Festival of Festivals. Watch for two performances in particular: Catherine Wilson, who plays Eastwood's girlfriend Irene; and, Alun Armstrong, who appears as Eastwood's nemesis, Ralph Lockheart. Not much action; but, great photography, story and acting make this film one you shouldn't miss.



Above: revellers at a Festival of Festivals party share a moment, as well as the latest gossip about Beau Bridges. Below: Beau Bridges ignores the people sharing a moment at his expense.

by Genevieve Acuna



Clint Eastwood's *White Hunter, Black Hunter* may not have the kind of action you expect, but it won't bore you. Above, Eastwood shares a moment with a member of the cast which he is determined to kill.

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