

# the ARTS

## Waspish con-game

Well, you see, there's this up an' comin' grifter name of Hooker, Johnny Hooker, an' he's workin' this place called Joliet, few miles outside a Chicago, and what with the depression an' all, grifting, or the art of con as those outside the business call it, is one of the few respectably illegitimate ways to earn a livin'.

Anyhow, Johnny works with this old spade, Luther, till one day they hit some racket money.

Now that's a mistake, cause the racket boss is a guy to whom pride is everythin', and he don't hesitate at all when it comes to knockin' off some two bit grifter. Well, as it happens, ol' Luther buys a one way ticket to the morgue leavin' Johnny with the location of one of Chicago's best, least he used to be till the Feds caught up to him. Since then, he'd been hidin' out, waitin' for that big break.

Well, Johnny hits Chicago, finds the dude Luther told him about, guy called Henry Gondorff. And Paul Newman, Robert Redford, and George Roy Hill are laughin' all the way to the bank.

They've put together a box office hit with all the properly entertaining ingredients, and if an evening of entertainment is what you're looking for, that's just fine.

The plot continues with Johnny (Redford) and Gondorff (Newman) planning to avenge Luther by pulling a con job on the rackets boss who ordered him killed. The movie is filmed in a series of chapters, with a title page at the beginning of each segment giving a brief hint of what is to come. A bit gimmicky, but then again, the film relies on gimmicks to provide any real entertainment value. Not to detract from that value, you understand.

The individual performances of Newman and Redford are good, taken together, they are great. It is the interplay of the two that gives strength to the other's performance. Of course, this isn't too surprising considering that the teamwork is similar to that which they

utilized in Butch Cassidy and the Sundance Kid, which Hill also directed. Newman is the epitome of a con man polished to perfection. He is a great chameleon, ready to switch roles at the blinking of an eye, and he never loses his cool. Redford is the brash kid, ready to be hasty, jump in, but the older man's coolness rubs off on him.

Godnorff and Hooker are planning to con the banker cum racker boss, Lonnigan, through an involved series of illegal bets on horse races. Robert Shaw comes up with a fine performance as Lonnigan. His thin veneer of elegance, that touch of class, never quite hiding that animalistic ballsiness which suggests he clawed his way up to where he is.

I won't spoil the story by divulging any more plot.

Eileen Brennan gives a solid reading to the role of Billie, Gondorff's woman, instrumental in setting up the sting, as does Harry Gould, who plays a grizzled grifter called The Twist Kid.

David Ward provides a screenplay that is tailor made for Redford and Newman, and they utilize it most effectively. George Roy Hill's direction is rather lazy, he lets things drift at times, but when the going gets fast, he comes up with fast, tight, brisk sequences.

All this is punctuated by the delightful rag-time piano pieces of Scott Joplin, sometimes wistful, usually rollicking, they are fantastic accompaniment.

Universal apparently had little thought of budget when they made the film. The period pieces are perfect right down to the ubiquitous breadline of the depression era. Edith Head chalks up yet another score with costuming. Indeed, everything is tight in the movie, everyone holds up their end, and this is what makes the sting such great entertainment. Not too much in the way of seriousness or deep social significance, but in these times who needs it? By the way, don't tell the ending even to your best friends. The promos are quite right about that.

Satya Das

## Community concerts

The Edmonton Community Concerts Association announces that the third program of the 1973-74 Concert Season will be held on Tuesday, January 29, at 8:15 p.m., in the Jubilee Auditorium. Featured on this program will be the Tucson Arizona Boys Choir, under the direction of Jeffrey R. Haskell.

The Tucson Arizona Boys have three times been guest stars on the Ed Sullivan TV show, shared star billing on NBC's Telephone Hour with famed Western recording star Eddie Arnold and Hugh O'Brian (Wyatt Earp), were featured in the 1966 nationwide CBS Christmas Eve telecast from San Xavier Mission near Tucson,

starred on a George Gobel Christmas TV program, sang on the General Motors TV program "Wide, Wide World," and have been seen and heard in motion pictures.

The concert is open to all persons who have memberships in the Edmonton Community Concerts Association. However, memberships in the association will be available at the Jubilee Auditorium Box Office prior to the concert. Membership in the association also includes the March 7 concert of Richard Tucker, the 'World's Greatest Tenor'. Memberships are: Student, \$6, Adult \$12 and Family plan \$36.

## The Country Wife

William Wycherley's Restoration comedy, *The Country Wife*, will run from February 6 - 16, in the thrust theatre of the Fine Arts Centre on the University campus. Please note the revised production dates from those announced earlier. Excluding Sunday, there will be performances nightly at 8:30, except Friday, February 8th when the performance will commence one half-hour later, at 9:00. Matinee performances on Saturday, February 9, and Saturday, February 16, will begin at 2:30. The box office for this Studio Theatre/Stage 74 production will open Wednesday, January 30.

Director, John Terfloth, has assembled an unusually distinguished cast for the production, which will once

again feature the professional students in the Department of Drama's theatre-training program. In addition to members of the Department's teaching faculty, the cast includes a number of well-known actors from the local community: Keith Digby and Jim Dougall (Walterdale Theatre Associates and Theatre 3); Barbare Reese, who appeared in Prestige Productions' "Play It Again, Sam" and "Cabaret", and has also performed with Walterdale; and Ron Holgerson, who was a member of the York University production of the play. Jeremy Hart is an Assistant Professor in the Drama Department, and has played in professional theatres in England, Canada, South Africa and the United States. Visiting Assistant

Professor, David Barnet, came to the Department from the National Theatre School and Manitoba Theatre Centre; and James De Felice, whose area of specialty is theatre history, is a successful playwright as well as an accomplished actor; two of his plays were produced by the Department a year ago. (Bios attached)

*The Country Wife* includes the young actors and actresses whose exuberant performances in *Godspell*, last December, earned rave reviews from the local press and radio: Bob Baker, Susan Ferley, Janet Green, Sandee Guberman, Fiona Law, and Sheelah Megill. The production is designed by John Madill.

## French film series

February 6: AGNES VARDA *Le Bonheur*, 1965.

13: ALAIN RESNAIS *Hiroshima, Mon Amour*, 1959.

20: JEAN-PIERRE MELVILLE *Le Samourai*, 1967.

27: LOUIS MALLE *Zazie dans le Metro*, 1960.

March 6: ERIC ROHMER *L'amour, L'après Midi*, 1972.

13: FRANCOIS TRUFFAUT *l'enfant Sauvage*, 1970.

In the above list the directors are emphasized not because their films are not singularly interesting, but because we hope to provide a broad perspective - and perhaps a stimulus for further study - of French New Wave cinema. There seems to be no single idea that exactly typifies the New Wave except its espousal of the "auteur" theory, which claims the director as the primary creative influence in film-making. Compared to the American cinema French cinema always seems to have lent more recognition to the director than, for example, the producer. But the New Wave marked a revival of the French Film industry based upon the individual director's self assertion and rejection of studio control over choice of material or production.

It is difficult, therefore, to find directors who are associated with the New Wave whose films resemble each other's in either technique or content. Yet each has distinctly contributed to what critic Andre Bazin called "the evolution of film language," that is, to the cinema's unique means of artistic expression.

The directors in this series illustrate this independence of vision by the diversity of their professional backgrounds: Varda was originally a fashion photographer, which explains her preoccupation with "the art

of appearance." Resnais began in film editing and then made documentaries long before he startled the 1959 Cannes Film Festival with "Hiroshima."

Melville, more a precursor of New Wave than a participant, was making feature films according to its ideals long before '59. It is a further measure of his individualism that he abandoned many of its "new directives" when it became identified as a "school." Also studio trained like Melville, Malle established and has maintained independence by making highly experimental films, both in content and execution. And finally, along with Jean-Luc Godard and Claude Chabrol (International Series), both Truffaut and Rohmer began their careers as critics, writing sometimes highly theoretical pieces for the film magazine *Cahiers du Cinema*, before they had any practical

experience.

Rohmer's films reflect this intellectual approach while simultaneously spoofing the self-conscious seriousness of "nouvelle vague" directors like himself and Godard, and they are perhaps indicative of his later entry into film-making than the other Cahiers critics.

Of all those represented here it is Truffaut whose theories appear to have been most affected by practical experience. Although each of his films is distinctly a Truffaut film, the subject-matter seemingly fluctuates between the highly personal (as in "The 400 Blows") and the relatively commercial/entertainment oriented (as in his recent "La Nuit Americaine"). Those attending the International Series should find it interesting to compare "Les Deux Anglaises" with L'enfant Sauvage" of this series.



*L'amour, l'après-midi*, d'Eric Rohmer...

i love my  
friends well  
but  
myself better  
saxby philips