

entertainment

'Star 80' and 'Splash' reviewed

By WILLIAM CLAIRE
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The most delicious irony of *Star 80* revolves around co-star Eric Roberts who plays Paul Snider, the man who discovered Dorothy Stratten, made her famous and murdered her.

Roberts will surely find the fame Snider so desperately sought for himself. In a film packed with excellent acting, Roberts stands out. He establishes himself as a talent to be reckoned with.

His performance is diametrically opposed to the gentle, courteous sailor who befriended Sissy Spacek and her two sons in *Raggedy Man*. (His other film was *King of The Gypsies*.) Snider is a small-time hustler, always looking for a bigger and better con. Obsessed with his own looks and fame, he emotionally manipulates an innocent, shy, awkward 18-year-old into posing for Playboy audition photos.

Stratten gets her Playmate of the Month status, a pile of money, instant fame and the grade-B offers from movie studios that inevitably follow a centrefold appearance. And Snider becomes a parasite, thriving on Stratten's fame and spending her money on cars and other women.

Marcel Hemingway certainly reflects the wholesome, fresh, girl-next-door image Hugh Hefner (Cliff Robertson) solicits when deciding which females to exploit. With hair dyed blonde and her artificial chest, Hemingway fits the part to perfection.

Director Bob Fosse keeps the picture moving quickly. He immediately acknowledges Stratten's death by intercutting scenes of her murder and its aftermath with Snider's earlier behaviour, creating tension by highlighting his penchant for violence and misplaced outrage.

Fosse's use of rich and full colours in combination with an almost unceasing motion created by moving cameras, bodies and objects gives the film a speed that reflects Stratten's rocketship rise to fame.

Robertson is a fatherly Hefner, seemingly harmless, clad in slippers and pajamas, pipe in hand. The shots inside his Playboy mansion are insightful: 'perfect' women, food, furniture, entertainment.

Yet when Hefner briefs Stratten before her first press interview, it becomes apparent that the difference between Hefner's vision of the Playboy family that he pedals to Stratten is different only in degree from the outright lies Snider tells her. Both are cons offering fame and instant success. Both use young, naive, trusting girls to gratify themselves.

Fosse, who also wrote the screenplay, has crafted an intense drama. By adding elements of fiction to *Star 80*, he manages to tell more than just the story of a teenager from Vancouver who became a Playboy centrefold and was killed for her effort. He explores a number of modern-day obsessions and suggests that too ardent a pursuit of these obsessions can only lead to destruction.

A MERMAID'S TAIL -- *Splash* is the story of a mermaid who falls in love with a mortal. The fantasy romance offers many hilarious moments thanks to the zaniness of John Candy, Eugene Levy and a bullpen of fastball gag writers.

Despite a slow and uneven opening when the storyline is being established, director Ron Howard scores two in a row. First he gave audiences and Michael Keaton a break with *Night Shift*; now, someone finally takes full advantage of the comedy skills of Candy and Levy in a movie.

The buffoonery of the duo from SCTV and *Second City* errs on the side of one-sidedness in the early portion of the film. The appearance of Madison the mermaid provides the necessary counterpoint.

Madison (Daryl Hannah) arrives to search out the fellow with whom she fell in love-at-first-sight 20 years earlier. Not only does the blonde-tressed mermaid's entrance lend a softer touch to this tender, off-beat love



Daryl Hannah portrays Madison, a mermaid who visits New York to search out her true love.

story, it also tends to shut up the high school male moron chorus (if we sit real quiet, maybe we'll see her breasts, eh boys!).

Hannah is the focus of many of the better laughs in the first half of the picture as she learns to adjust to society after her casual nude stroll at the site of the Statue of Liberty by educating herself in the habits and language of North America in front of a television set.

Childlike in her new environment, Hannah exudes a fascination and openness when exploring New York. At the same time, she hints at a mature sensuality capable of asserting itself at

a moment's notice.

Tom Hanks plays Allen Bauer, the love of Madison's life. Hanks is basically the straight man for Hannah and the comedy. A veteran of stage and television and most recently seen in *Monsters and Mazes*, Hanks is no slouch when it comes to the quick comic delivery.

The highlights of the movie belong to Candy and Levy. Years of doing satires, improvisations and caricatures on the tube and on stage have resulted in larger-than-life, hilariously grotesque portraits.

Candy is Freddy, Allen's quick-talking, lecherous older brother. (His least ef-

fective moment is his serious 'big brother' speech. It makes him too real.)

Levy is Walter Kornbluth, the overzealous scientist with a malicious streak who is determined to prove Madison is a mermaid.

Lowell Ganz and Babaloo Mandel who wrote *Night Shift*, combine their talents with Bruce Jay Friedman, throwing one-liners left, right and centre. Once the film gets rolling, Howard effectively orchestrates their visual and verbal gags, giving the humour a fresh, unexpected flavour.

Splash is one fish story you should probably not let get away.

TNB wants you

TNB SEARCHING FOR LOCAL TALENT

This summer Theatre New Brunswick will present *Bagatelle*, a musical celebration of New Brunswick's first two hundred years. The show will be performed in both English and French, and will tour throughout the province from June to September. The production is TNB's contribution to New Brunswick's Bicentennial celebrations and is being sponsored by Imperial Oil Limited and the New Brunswick Bicentennial

Commission.

TNB is looking for talented performers for the production, so if you can sing, dance, act or play a

musical instrument and would like to participate, please contact Brenda Robison at the Playhouse 455-3080. Auditions will be held on April 8.



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