

At Long Last Love

Cole Porter songs fail to lift love disaster

By STEVE HAIN

I left the Hollywood theatre after viewing Peter Bogdanovich's *At Long Last Love* with one nagging doubt on my mind.

Was the purpose of this film to parody the hit musical films of the forties, or, as the hype sheets seemed to suggest, to produce "an original movie musical in the generic sense"?

If there are any you who heed my humble advice, spare yourself some unnecessary pain and \$3. As a parody it fails, and as for entertainment value — well . . .

Peter Bogdanovich had the dubious honour of producing, directing and writing this "film musical created for the screen". Perhaps it would have been better if the wind had caught hold of the pages before they were bound. In the words of the press release, "The plot of Bogdanovich's original screenplay . . . is also happily inspired because it allows much of its tale to be told through Cole Porter's lyrics in an easy and natural flow."

This much was true. Unfortunately, I have difficulty understanding anyone, talking or singing, who appears to have marbles in his mouth. But then again, the lack of vocal clarity may have been due to the theatre's sound system and my mounting disinterest.

Drawing from the press release again, "the casting is a happy inspiration, tapping a new vein of debonair charm in Burt Reynolds, and an engaging sense of comedy in Cybill Shepherd." Yes, Burt certainly was dashing and debonair, reminding me of a jock I once had the pleasure of meeting in a taxidermist's office. And Cybill definitely was engaging, but even I, an admirer of pretty faces, grew weary of her mug towards the middle of the picture.

Ah, yes, I caught that last question. My suggestions for the leading roles? Well if it is to be a parody, then perhaps Johnny Carson and Sally Kellerman; but if it's entertainment the director is after there can be no doubt. John Davidson and Olivia Newton John of course!

Not to be misleading, there are some high points in the film. Unfortunately my date requested a book of matches, and as a result, I missed the screening of the opening credits. Seriously though, Eileen Brennan of *The Sting* fame, turned in an amusing performance as a servant with talent for matchmaking extraordinaire.

But we must constantly keep in mind that like any other business, once you cut your first wave, you just let it ride and ride. Until you crash.



Madeleine Kahn, Burt Reynolds, Cybill Shepherd gaze incredulously at Duilio del Prete

His latest movie on love panned, Bogdanovich still won't say he's sorry

By AGNES KRUCHIO

Peter Bogdanovich is a hustler, a real showbiz hustler, and he makes no bones about it. He was in Toronto recently to hustle his new film, *At Long Last Love*, which opened here last Friday.

Wunderkind of Hollywood, and a darling of critics everywhere since he swept the Academy Awards nominations, and walked off with eight of them for *The Last Picture Show*, Bogdanovich may at long last have come up with something the critics do not approve of.

He was curt and tight-lipped on the Elwood Glover Show at noon, but by the press conference with the students that same night, he had loosened up through having made the rounds of the Toronto press.

Which is how it came to pass that with perfect charm and boyish can-

dour and the cultivated air of the boy genius spewing out brilliant lines, he could tell a roomful of critics that they 'did not matter' to him.

"I'm not terribly keen on critics. Being a critic must be a terribly unrewarding and unfulfilling job — watching other people's work all the time." Critics such as Pauline Kael in New York have no impact, he said, except for a small literate section of society. "It's what people say to one another that matters," he said.

There may be shades of sour grapes in his statement, as the New York critics have thoroughly panned his new movie. He said he periodically goes into the Music Hall, where it is playing, just to "hear people laugh." That, plus the \$43,000 it grossed there in its first three days, tells him he is doing something right, he said.

For a thirty-five year old ex-actor and ex-journalist (he used to write movie reviews for *Esquire*), he has had a remarkable series of successes: *Targets*, *The Last Picture Show*, *What's Up, Doc?*, *Paper Moon* and *Daisy Miller*. He said he just "up and made a movie", because he wanted to. "It's not very difficult", he said. "It's a myth invented in Hollywood, that film making is difficult, to keep people from coming there."

"A film maker is whoever he says he is", he said, referring to the thousands upon thousands of film majors which institutions like York are producing every year. "I don't believe that adversity can prevent anyone from making a film. I always choose a movie I will like to make, and hope that other people will like it too." As a consequence of this motto he has turned down jobs directing *Chinatown*, *The Great Gatsby*, *The Exorcist*, *The Last Detail*, and *The Way We Were*.

He has, however, written, produced and directed, and occasionally hammed his way through *At Long Last Love*, a spoof (an affectionate one, says Bogdanovich) of the tradition of the musical. Set in 1935, it stars Cybill Shepherd, Burt Reynolds, and Madeleine Kahn, with some 16 Cole Porter songs recorded live and without orchestration. And, you guessed it, it's about love; not only that, it's about a triangle.

His favourite quote comes from John Ford: "most of the good things in a movie happen by accident"; by

definition, then, a director is one who "presides over happy accidents". Situations he cites for this are such as Burt Reynolds almost dropping a bottle, and Madeleine Kahn laughs, or people taking a deep breath and clearing their throats in preparation for singing. "You can get things so perfect, one can't touch it. This way there is a feeling that the song is not a "number", and that the actors are having a good time with it."

I love Burt Reynolds" said Bogdanovich about his leading actor. "He has worked terribly hard to destroy his machismo image." As for Cybill Shepherd, he said he does not feel she had been typecast after *Heartbreak Kid*.

"They were really quite different personalities", he said, referring to the characters she has played in a series of films. Some critics had claimed that she was really playing herself, a spoiled rich socialite, in all of the films she has played in, starting with the WASP seductress Kelly in the *Heartbreak Kid*, through *Last Picture Show* and *Daisy Miller*.

His favourite films are "everything ever done by Lubitch, Keaton, Griffith, Renoir", and "almost everything ever made" by Ford and Hawkes.

Asked which one of the hats he most enjoys wearing in making a movie, he unhesitatingly replied, "acting. But no one will give me the chance." In the future, he said, he is in a position to do what he wants "within limits." His next film will be about modern gypsy life in New York City, starring — you guessed it — Cybill Shepherd.

Glendon flushes

Tonight, at Glendon College, *La Toilette de Gala de Roland LePage* sera présenté dans le Pipe Room. Metteur-en-scène: Martine Guay; entrée: 50¢

The Glendon Humanities department is showing a 1971 Quebec film, *La Maudite Golette*, directed by Denys Arcand next Tuesday 3:15 p.m. in room A111.

Next Wednesday, the Glendon Hum. department will show *Les Carabiniers* of Jean-Luc Godard, vintage 1963, at 4:15 p.m. in room 204.

The Glendon campus is at Bayview and Lawrence Avenues.

Fortin bests hecklers

By BRENDA WEEKS

Claude Fortin in her one-man show at the York Cabaret last Friday night proved very resilient in view of the constant heckling she received. Her audience at the Open End Pub at Vanier College consisted of a good many loud, horny jocks, who took every opportunity to insert a sexual remark during the course of Fortin's monologue. But Fortin was a clever performer, able to top their remarks, or work the uncouth ejaculations into her material.

Decked out in baggy pants, lumberman's shirt, woollen cap and work boots, Fortin portrayed the classic image of a French-Canadian miner from Timmins, Ontario. There was a hint of Charlie Chaplin in her waddling walk and in her un-questioning, naive approach, to life. Fortin's first skit around the stage, showed this idea well, as she delved into the tribulations of mining, and related the problem her brother and herself had having worked for 20 years without a raise. The comical way in which they could be put off by their English boss provided the punch-line to the story.

Fortin stretches her comedy by the use of play on words. Her Francophone interpretation of English permits her to say such things as 'stand under' for 'understand' and 'do not interpret me' for 'interrupt'.

Fortin did a long dissertation on the cycle of life, showing that a bit of a philosopher lurks even in the heart of a French-Canadian miner. She pitted herself against random suggestions from the audience, and related them to her 'cycle of life' theory. She did a very ingenious ad-hoc monologue about 'music', for example. She turned the vertical lines of the wood panelling behind her into an imaginary musical scale; musical notation looks like sticks; sticks grow on trees; trees have concentric rings; rings are circular; hence the resemblance between 'music' and the 'cycle' of life . . . A predictable groan ascended from the audience.

"You got it", said Fortin, "the Cy-

cle of Life!"

Fortin is every bit as tough a performer as the mighty miner she portrays. When the heckling got particularly rough, she quickly retorted "This ain't tit, you know. Man it's all muscle!"

Fortin is a theatre student in the Fine Arts department at York. She performs during the week at the Friar's Tavern in downtown Toronto as well, and you may catch her Claude Fortin act there, if you missed it at York.

Vibrations electrify

By EVAN LEIBOVITCH

Avant garde electronic music is not the sort of thing easily obtainable commercially. Radio stations are afraid to touch it, and therefore so are record shops. It has a small but loyal following, which the Vibrations concert by the new music cooperative last weekend clearly demonstrated.

The audience was one of those silent, appreciative groups that a performer could only love. This was even considering the fact that the music performed practically commanded an active participation from the listener. Although the tempo of the music varied greatly, the changes and melodies of many of the pieces of the three concerts were subtly in nature.

For about an hour before the Friday and Saturday concerts, the third floor common room of the Fine Arts displayed a spiral-like exhibit of vertical fluff, complemented by a wide variety of student-produced electronic music recordings.

The atmosphere was very relaxed, and sometimes, when something scheduled had to be postponed, some of the artists would do an improvisation, as pleasing as the rest of the evening's material. The instruments and themes varied, from explorations into overblowing a clarinet to find some interesting harmonies, to piano duets to illustrate

subtle rhythm. According to one of the organizers, nobody who had approached them with a piece had been turned away. Many of the pieces made use of the services of two or more people, and in many cases, the coordination within the groups was superb.

One of the highlights of the festival was the Sunday afternoon exhibit in the second floor faculty lounge. One of the two exhibits there were a video tape using visual synthesizers using the brain waves from a dancer to enhance her image. its composer Richard Teitelbaum, was present to answer questions on that and another piece he had made.

In another part of the lounge, Michael Snook was inviting participants to hook themselves up to an odd looking device, and allow their alpha brain-waves to compose the soundtrack to various slides and a movie as they watched them. It took some time to set up, but the results were appropriate if somewhat surprising.

All in all, a great effort had been put forth by all involved, from the tedious preparation of equipment in the foyer, to the provoking liner notes in the program. The results of the work were stimulating to say the least, and one could tell by looking at the audience during a piece that it was provoking its desired effects as a stimulant to further activity, rather than an ending in itself.