

Mona Lisa is probably the best adult film playing in town right now.

Mona Lisa is truly a masterpiece

Mona Lisa
Cineplex, Principal Plaza

by **Graham S. Bell**

In *Mona Lisa* Irish director Neil Jordan creates a violent and dark gangster film that sometimes seems like a nightmare but in the end manages to leave the viewer feeling sane, even refreshed. The film's unlikely hero, Bob Hoskins, gives the film sufficient humanity to counter its powerful portrayal of violence and sexual corruption. *Mona Lisa* is one of those movies that quietly comes to town with little fanfare but manages to hang in by way of craft and talent — a real sleeper.

As in films like *My Beautiful Laundrette* and *Dance With A Stranger*, we are in the landscape of late industrial degeneration. Contemporary England is shown at her worst. Forget the picture postcard tourist locales and pastoral scenery. This movie depicts an urban hell, peopled by petty gangsters, pimps, prostitutes and pervers.

The decadence and perversion depicted in the movie — especially the beating and prostitution of young women who even might legally be children — is deeply disturbing. The movie could have ended up as a message of despair. But Bob Hoskins as the bull-necked gangster's lackey George gives the movie an unusual but appealing humanity.

George is the world's most unlikely knight errand. He's just a middle-aged, balding, short, ugly, little bloke. Hoskins has the stocky almost stunted physique of many Englishmen — check your local rugby club. It's not the kind of physique that leading men usually possess. He isn't anything like Olivier, O'Toole, Burton or Bates. Hoskins won't be invited to play Henry V or Hamlet. In the live theatre he would have always ended up as third spear carrier. Yet Hoskins is a born actor whose face can register the whole range of emotions. And in the cinema, in the tradition of Cagney and Bogart, the ugly little guy can be the hero.

Hoskins plays a hero who's also uneducated and naive. He doesn't know how to order drinks in swanky West End hotels or

how to dress to fit the scene. He can hardly express himself in standard English but we always know what George is thinking and feeling. Hoskin's face tells us that.

George has served one seven year jail sentence for a crime he never did; on his release from prison he goes stright back to doing the dirty work for the man who set him up, a vice king named Mortwell, played by Michael Caine.

But at heart the character played by Hoskins is a decent man. Nobody pushes him around and he becomes explosively angry at the ill treatment of very young

women. He endears himself to Simone (a classy black call girl played by Cathy Tyson) when he smashes in the face of a pimp, a scene any censor board might fairly advise to be 'disturbing'.

Much of the film deals with Hoskin's odyssey through London's clip joints and girlie clubs looking for a lost teenage heroin addict. More disturbing scenes.

Michael Caine is superb as the overweight cockney vice king who oozes evil but the film really belongs to Bob Hoskins and Cathy Tyson. Caine generously gives a strong supporting role.

The title? Well, throughout the film, we hear Nat King Cole's 1950 recording of *Mona Lisa*. The song sums up Hoskin's misplaced romantic love for the call girl Simone. The song also gives an ironic touch to the movie's seedy milieu of eroticism-for-sale. Bob Hoskins survives this landscape; he gets through. With very little sentiment and only a touch of whimsy, director Neil Jordan has created a very satisfying and complete movie. *Mona Lisa* is probably the best adult film playing in town right now.

Emma's Bar and Grill

by **Emma Sadgrove**

Here we are at the beginning of another school year after once again watching those lazy summer days slip by too quickly. Soon the temperatures will hit -40 and we will be wishing that we had applied to Florida State University instead of U of A.

In these first few days things like frozen toes, all night term paper sessions and inadequate student loans are too distant to matter. Today is for drinking toasts to old friends who forgot to write all summer, the new ones who keep coming out of the woodwork, and the absent ones who are in our hearts.

For all this getting acquainted and getting reacquainted — and getting inebriated — try one of these drinks.

Orange Blossom

2 cups gin
3 cups orange juice
1/4 cup grenadine

Combine these ingredients in a very large glass or a small pitcher. Top with a cherry and an orange slice and have a drink with everybody.

Stargazer

A highly suitable name

1 oz. Vodka
1 oz. orange juice
1/2 oz. lemon juice
1/2 oz. Apricot Brandy

Shake well and strain into a chilled cocktail glass. Then gaze at the stars.

For a good party we want to get out that famous green garbage bin that has been gathering dust over the summer. Or has it? Those readers who consumed Rob's Leftovers last April might find this idea more agreeable (pun intended).

Organize the punch beforehand and have everybody bring a particular bottle and pour it in as they arrive. Make sure that the early arrivals bring the good stuff.

In moments of sobriety it may occur to some of you that the kitchen is more than a great place to mix drinks and keep cold beer. Even the most confused should not have any problems with my favorite version of this easy recipe.

Sloppy Joes

1 pound ground beef
1/2 tsp. chili powder
1/2 tsp. onion powder

1/2 tsp. salt
1/4 tsp. pepper
1/8 tsp. oregano
2 - 14 oz. tins tomato sauce
1/2 tsp. tabasco sauce (or more to taste)
1 - 14 oz. tin baked beans in tomato sauce

Brown ground beef well in frying pan over medium heat. Add spices and continue to fry for a few more minutes. Drain grease. Stir in tomato sauce and tabasco, heat thoroughly over medium heat and then simmer over low heat for 20 minutes. Add baked beans and simmer for another ten minutes. Serve over warmed dinner buns. For the inexperienced, this means wrap them in tin foil and put them in at 200°F over for 20 minutes.

Unfortunately, with our new system, this year we miss out on a great tradition known as registration week party. I am sure that everybody will do their best with available time, but don't forget to crawl out of the bushes in time for classes. Have a fun year and savour all the pleasures of food and drink, but keep those distant goals in mind as well.

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