Screen



S c e n e

Are you one of the masses found each Friday and Saturday night, three singles clutched in one hot little hand and a feminine paw in the other, queuing in front of Edmonton's palaces of canned . . . canned . . . canned . . . canned what?

I suppose that question demands an answer more than why you patronize these temples of escape.

Yes escapism, amusment, lessons in goodness and right (regardless of your viewpoint) are the things our celluloid provides for your needy psyche.

But more, do you search for Good Acting, Exceptional Cinematography, Pleasing Production, or perhaps you seek a little further—a hint of personalized feeling, a touch of individualized perception, the highly subjective, slightly biased, self-expression which is art.

AVANT GARDE

Debates have raged since the French Avant Garde movement began in the 1920's over the effectiveness of motion pictures, as a vehicle for artistic expression.

The avant gardists maintained a story was unnecessary, and of little use in producing a meaningful screen gem.

What Are You Contributing To Hallowe'en Hulabaloo They urged a return to a more pure form of cinema, deifying one of the earliest movies ever made, Lumière's "Arrival Of A Train", in which a train simply arrives at the station while the crew photographs it. However, many Avant Garde directors could not stop using the story completely as the industry required some plot as a basis for

box office appeal.

Pure cinema is pursued to its utmost even today by people like Andy Warhol who, in his underground film movement, has produced real jewels like an eighthour, single fixed-camera, view of the Empire State Building.

ONLY COMMERCIAL

But commercial cinema is all anyone ever sees.

Even those who venture regularly to film society see films commercially produced in Europe and Japan.

This is not to say these are without artistic qualities, for art in these movies is more highly developed than in any others, but still it is tempered by commercialism. Without a story line they are still unacceptable to audiences.

acceptable to audiences.

How much experimentation is done depends in a large measure on production resources. Cameras, actors and supporting parphenalia are not available to willing novices.

Regardless of wishes for new dimensions in movies, the commercially produced films which are ground out for the North American market are of more interest.

Of all the films premiered by American companies in various cities in a given year, surprisingly few are ever considered of suf-

story Dave Mappin illustrations Bill Salter

fient quality for international competition.

This is because of the ultratransparent escapist plots, supported by fantastic gadgetry, which sell so well.

Escapism is occasionally pleasant but rather dreamy as a steady diet

but rather dreary as a steady diet.

It is hard to live in a dream world where you feel triumph and passion as identifying with Derek Flint, Willie Garvin, or Harry Palmer (know all three?) as you kick in someone's teeth or madly make out with the very available females.

In most of these movies the WHAT is never at stake, the directors seldom concern themselves with WHY a character is what he is, so the only variable is HOW and this is too often appallingly obvious.

Sometimes there is an exception, as in "Alfie", and precisely **WHAT** is going to happen is not apparent either.

Most of the movies in town are of the first type.

CRITIC A FARCE

This makes a farce out the jobs of people like Barry Westgate or John Thompson who are expected to review them. They can only comment upon the acting, production techniques and any twists in the plots.

All of these are outside the film media and relegate the camera to a recorder of events outside cinema.

Only in editing a film, and in structuring what is happening. does one make a motion picture an art form telling a story. A motion picture such as "The Pawnbroker", with its 'flashes' to show the wandering of the old Jew's mind, is

cinema at its fullest usage of the medium. To make "The Pawnbroker" outside the film media and still retain the same degree of effectiveness is impossible.

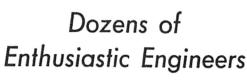
When a reviewer is confronted with a movie of this sort all the criteria used on lesser cinematic formula pieces become inadequate. It is harder for a viewer to do

It is harder for a viewer to do things a critic has trouble with and move beyond the apparent to all the things which are implied. But a motion picture, even in its commercial package, can be much more if you try to interpret what is not overtly stated.

THINGS IMPROVING

The trend in Hollywood, if indeed this is still the mecca of the American film world, is to more pictures of the Pawnbroker-Virginia Woolf genre.

While this is encouraging, to understand and enjoy these to the fullest the cinemaniac must learn how entertaining reality can be compared to escapism and how much enjoyment is inherent in the subteties and implications when those about you are making a getaway.



are on our payroll now

and we need more!

See your Student Placement Office for information about



Vancouver, British Columbia

