



Disguising his identity by posing as a stunt double for a movie company, a young fugitive undertakes one hair-raising stunt after another in *The Stunt Man*, both an entertaining look at movie-making and a drama about the conflict between reality and illusion.

Stuntman a terrific "foreign film"

by Enrico Bedard

After nearly a decade working with his film *The Stunt Man* and six years trying to get financing, director Richard Rush has done what I've always attempted.

He got moviegoers to go see a European "foreign" film.

I have never been very successful at getting these people out of their Hollywood habit because of their fear of "not understanding the film" or the foreign languages, or the shifting points of view.

Rush has produced the best that Hollywood (and only Hollywood) can produce and melded it in complete harmony with the best in European film.

He doesn't challenge the viewer, but he completely fools us with constant shifts of reality. Reality isn't always what it seems. Just when you get familiar and comfortable or completely entranced, Rush does a sleight of hand, and goes off on a different tangent.

It still has its funny moments, and the cinematography is adequate.

I won't confuse you here with the story line because no matter how I try the limitations of space and time will only confuse you.

But in case you disregard my advice and go see this movie, brought to you only by grass roots pressure on the distributors, I'll throw out a few hints.

It's all about a fugitive (Steve Railsback) who falls under the spell of a director (Peter O'Toole). The young man becomes the stunt man in an anti-war film while falling for the leading lady (Barbara Hershey).

If you missed the pun, forget the movie.

Rush and the independent financier Melvin Simon had to promote *The Stunt Man* after a record breaking box office sneak preview in Seattle, August 1979. Following hundreds of trade screenings and a triumphant Dallas Film festival, *Stunt Man* ended up as a co-winner at the World Film Festival in Montreal this August because of its "non-commercial" value. The distributors felt they would not recuperate the cost of distribution until the film broke all opening day box office grosses on the entire theatre circuit.

Breaking records means surpassing *The Empire Strikes Back* and *Close Encounters of the Third Kind*.

Nothing in *The Stunt Man* is what it seems except O'Toole's performance. He is one of the great actors of our time and casting him as the God-like director in the film within the film should bring a sixth Oscar nomination.

O'Toole was the only actor Rush considered for the part. He also made a

wise choice when he selected Railsback and Hershey.

If this film goes on and realizes the profits that the distributors expect, *The Stunt Man* will really be a breakthrough in American cinema. It will open the door for other future films not considered as appealing to the masses and the big bucks.

Perhaps promoters and distributors are discovering with *The Stunt Man* that audiences are more sophisticated than they imagined. I for one will be dishing out a few bucks to see it again, maybe even with a few of my friends who never watch "foreign" films.

De Danaan simply delights



Demonstrating self-confidence and fine musicianship came easy to De Danaan at Tuesday's Folk Club concert.

by Kent Blinston

It seemed the minute we let them into our heart, De Danaan started to make it better.

De Danaan, a Celtic folk group best known for their hornpipe version of *Hey Jude*, had to gain the confidence of both themselves and the audience before Tuesday's concert at the Museum Theatre became a success.

Once they overcame their shyness they alluded to a disastrous appearance in Winnipeg where the audience apparently did not understand De Danaan's music (or their jokes). Repeated rousing ovations, however, soon convinced fiddler Frankie Gavin that we were the

best and smartest audience in Canada.

Winning the audience was not as easy as De Danaan made it seem. The crowd was not a standard South Side Folk Club audience; most of the people I talked to before the show were expecting something like the Irish Rovers. So.

De Danaan are a lively group but solidly traditional folk. They played authentic Irish jigs, reels, polkas, and hornpipes. No one was disappointed at the lack of leprechauns and black velvet bands in De Danaan's instrumentals.

There were also four ballads sung by Maura O'Connell who is accompanying the group on this tour. O'Connell has a good range, fine control and a voice that is

simply lovely. She too seemed nervous at first but sang beautifully throughout the evening.

The highlights of the evening were *Hey Jude* and a duet with Johnny McDonagh on goatskin bodhran and Gavin on tin whistle. My only complaint was that Alec Finn on bouzouki and guitar and Charlie Piggot on banjo were often drowned out in the mix, particularly by Jackie Daly on accordion.

The South Side Folk Club deserves full marks for bringing an act that can sell itself (in fact oversell - my count was that over 100 people were turned away at the door) to the public. It shows promise the club can do the same.