

If you could do it all over again. . .

By MICHAEL FRIESEN

"...if you could do it all over again, what would you do differently...." This is the basic idea behind Francis Ford Coppola's latest film -- "Peggy Sue Got Married". Although this movie shares the concept of backwards time travel with the immensely popular "Back to the Future", the two movies are miles apart. For a while, "Back to the Future" was essentially an extended sitcom/adventure, "Peggy Sue..." is a beautiful film about people and relationships. "Peggy Sue..." essentially deals with a somewhat unhappy woman who, at her 25th class reunion is transported back to her last days of high school and is thereby given the chance to "... do it all over again...."

But what actually happens is not what makes the movie great. The special effects were very good and tastefully sparse, but they didn't make the movie great, either. The superb acting, the beautiful music, the not-so-wonderful pacing, and the scientific shakiness - none of these things alone is responsible for the quality of this movie. Instead, it is ALL of these things, all carefully blended, all in perfect proportions that make "Peggy Sue Got Married" a great movie. Francis Ford Coppola has been around the movie block more than a few times - he was responsible for unforgettables like "Apocalypse Now" and "The Deer Hunter". Each of these movies was characterized by

exemplary acting, solid scripts, and above all, visual excellence. "Peggy Sue..." shares all these qualities, and has a few more besides.

Unlike the other Coppola films mentioned, "Peggy Sue Got Married" always shows great respect for the audience. There is no violence, no explicit sex, precious little offensive language, and when tears are shed, they are absolutely convincing.

As already stated, there are really very few special effects. The camera goes a bit blurry when Peggy Sue fades out, and there are lovely flashes when

she is sent back, but otherwise, it's all straight stuff. Having mentioned the "flashes", it may be appropriate to expound. I have seen MANY science fiction movies, and have seen MANY special effects. And while those in "Peggy Sue..." were by no means the most elaborate, they were, without a doubt, the most EFFECTIVE special effects that I have ever seen.

Still on the subject of visual content, this film has some of the most beautiful footage that I have seen in years. It is not simply a matter of effectiveness - the fact is that this film is

worth seeing for two scenes alone. First, the "farmyard morning" scene is so effective that the viewer forgets that s/he has ever seen it before. Second, the love scene with Michael, the radical. This scene is virtually devoid of flesh, yet it very powerfully expresses the erotic quality of the action portrayed therein.

But enough of this praise. The movie may be great, but it is not perfect. Primary among the problems that arise in this film is the question of pace. The speed of the movie drags in some places, and is disturb-

ingly fast in others. Another difficulty lies in the basic concept of time travel itself. Admittedly, it wasn't handled well in "Back to the Future", but asking the audience to accept "Richard's burrito theory" is a bit of a cop-out.

But we mustn't be too critical. Else we might get disgusted and never bother going to movies ever again. And in the case of "Peggy Sue Got Married", that would be a big mistake. Theoretically, this movie could have been better, but not much. It gets a 9 out of 10. Go see it.

George Wood - and his work

Calgary artist George Wood gave a noon-hour colour slide presentation at the Lord Beaverbrook Art Gallery on Oct. 21, 1986. It was part of the lecture series, *Artists and their Work*, sponsored in part by the Canada Council.

Born in Regina, Saskatchewan, he studied at the Alberta College of Art from 1952-56, and at the School of Art, University of Manitoba, 1957-58. After his graduation in 1956, George Wood had a series of exhibitions. In 1967-68, his work was shown at the Atlantic provinces Travelling Art Gallery, and in 1972, at the Memorial University Art Gallery, Newfoundland. It was at this last exhibition that his major painting "Fleet Cushion" 1971 was purchased by the Beaverbrook Art Gallery.

In his presentation, Wood

showed slides of some of Alberta's most reknown artists' work...artists that Canada has every reason to be proud of, and most of whom were somehow affiliated with the School of Art, University of Manitoba. As he conducted his presentation, Wood was reminiscent of his association with the artists, and he provided brief individual sketches of them as the artist and as the person, giving small anecdotes that only brought the audience closer to the artist and his work.

One such artist was Max Bates, who Wood described as Churchillian in appearance, and who was first introduced to Wood as his teacher at the College. Bates graduated from College with an architectural degree in June 1939. In September of that same year, he joined the British expedition forces against Hitler. Three months later, he was captured, sent to a German prison camp to work in a salt mine, and it was here that Bates once again became interested in art, teaching at the camp. When asked what he used for supplies, Bates remarked that they used brushes made from their own hair, the labels off cans as paper, and the labels were boiled to remove their colour for paint.

Other fine artists like Greg Arnold, Katie von de Roy, and Doug Haines are artists that made Canada proud. Dying at the young age of 47, Arnold accomplished all that there was to explore with classical Greek Art, long before the rage hit the art center of the western world, New York. Wood also presented slides on the work of Von de Roy. Having studied jewelry and sculpture at the School, Ms. Von de Roy combined the two; using steel,

chrome, ball bearings, and slight mechanics to produce the most original pieces of art. Like Von de Roy, Doug Haines' originality stands out. His work with lead grounds, coated over with stove-pipe enamel, which was then scraped back in different areas, produced a master piece in its own right.

Slides of Wood's own work were part of a series which he has worked on for the last ten years, and that he has never shown publicly. In these paintings, the most poignant memories of his own childhood are evident. As a child, Wood heard countless stories of his father's war -- World War I. In his own childhood, he experienced the effects of the Spanish Civil War, through his mother's community and church work. At age twelve, World War II was very real to him.

In his Flag Set series, there are numerous flags and in each painting is a Raggedy Ann doll. Wood associates the doll with what he sees as coming with the putting on of a military uniform. He sees its donning as making the person naive, anonymous and unable to think for themselves. As a child, he saw the Raggedy Ann dolls everywhere, no one was too different from the other, and all had a vacuous look; much like what he sees the soldier as.

In one of the paintings he did for his daughter, George Wood the protective and loving father is evident. Wood explained that his second daughter always felt that she did not belong, and upon her joining the Royal Canadian Mounties, Wood began to paint. In the final painting, the father figure is evident in the way he still perceives his

daughter -- as his little girl. There is a mixture of toys; a doll, balls, rocking chair, presents, and a child's boot, combined with the adult side of his daughter; parts of the Mounties uniform, flags and banners.

Many of the Alberta artists, in the junior stages of their careers paint the Alberta landscape. However, as their career matures, they branch out to different ideas, yet return to the Alberta landscape. Wood accounts this move as "going back home", a state of painting which the artist feels comfortable and related with. He sees the increase of literalism in the arts as making this move possible, by awakening a curiosity into the rustic and unexplored.

Other works by George Wood, can be seen at major Canadian public collections, both in the Maritimes and PEI.

George Wood, one of Canada's most impressive artists.

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Not all her works are as bold, but each uses color to create the mood.

Some of her charcoal works are equally impressive. "Portugese Cove" shows the quietness, and feeling of a portugese village at night.

Her ongoing interest in gardening and her travel diaries continue to inspire this talented woman.

My favorite piece is "Overlooking Prospect Bay" - a watercolor with a contrast of serenity and warmth to the coldness of the sky and the bareness of the land.

Don't forget the show will be on display until Nov. 25th.



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