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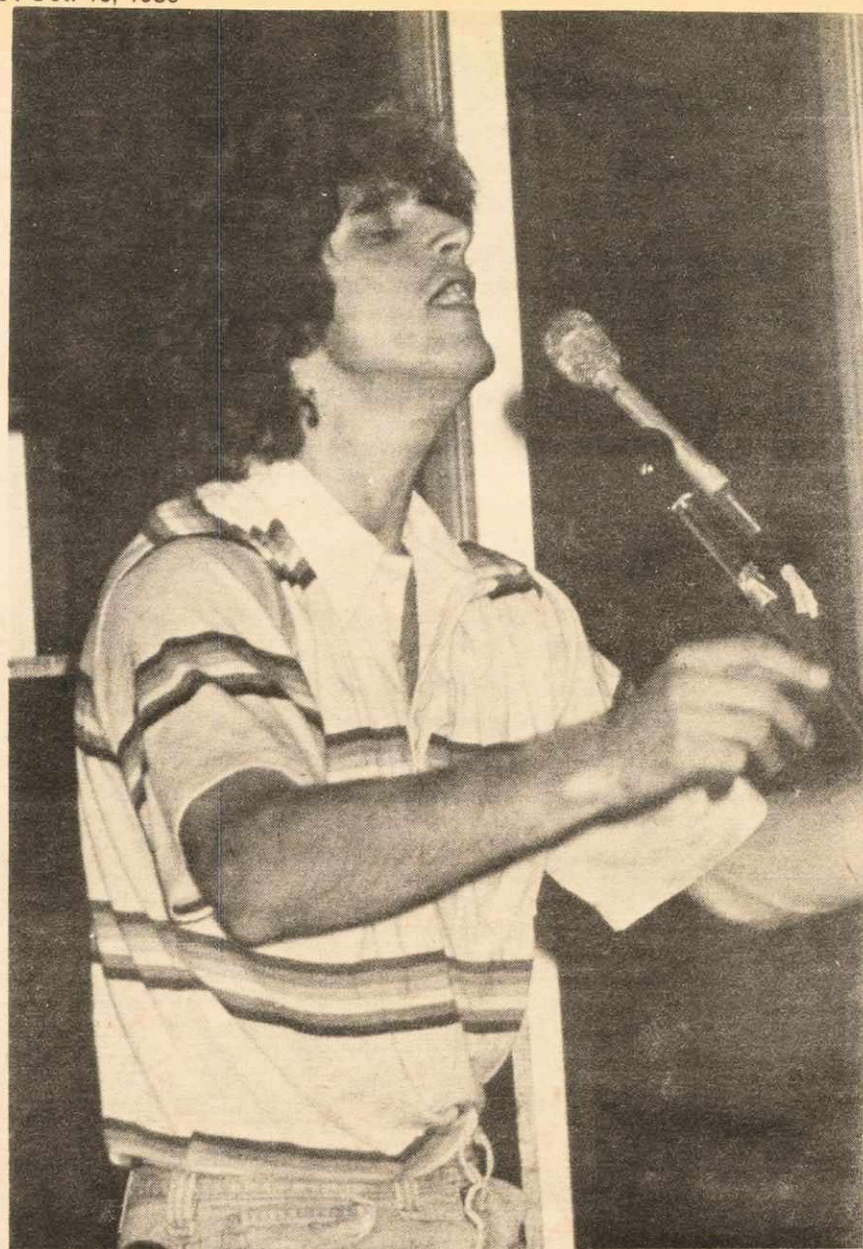
HAIRCUTS
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DAYAL/DAL PHOTO

Don Redondo, winner Grawood Talent Night.

The Army was no laughing matter until Judy Benjamin joined it.

*** GOLDIE * HAWN ***

PRIVATE BENJAMIN

A HAWN • MEYERS • SHYER • MILLER Production
 A HOWARD ZIEFF Film
 Starring GOLDIE HAWN in "PRIVATE BENJAMIN"

EILEEN BRENNAN • ARMAND ASSANTE • ROBERT WEBBER • SAM WANAMAKER • BARBARA BARRIE
 MARY KAY PLACE • HARRY DEAN STANTON • Special Appearance ALBERT BROOKS • Music by BILL CONTI
 Executive Producer GOLDIE HAWN • Written and Produced by NANCY MEYERS & CHARLES SHYER & HARVEY MILLER
 Directed by HOWARD ZIEFF

R RESTRICTED
 UNDER 17 REQUIRES ACCOMPANYING PARENT OR ADULT GUARDIAN

Distributed by Warner Bros.
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Now Playing—Check Your Local Listing

by Glenn Wheeler

The art of outrage is not new, but in the homogenized video age has been banned from the little screen, except for late night shows like Saturday Night Live. *Bette Midler*, alias the Divine Miss M, who gets a lot of mileage in her stage act out of the outrageous parody of our society's cultural myths, has heretofore been available, to watchers of the boob tube, only in a watered-down form. Now, at least *Divine Madness* is here, to fill in what we've been missing.

Divine Madness is definitely a fan's movie. You like Bette Midler? — you'll love the film. You don't like her? — well, I suspect you'll still laugh a lot anyway. The film, is an excellent edited collection of the best of Bette in concert, and if you thought Midler was a little spaced out in that star lurch *The Rose*, you're wrong. Now in her mid-30's, Midler has spent a decade perfecting the character that she plays, sings and dances, with consummate professionalism, and who only peeked out fleetingly from the sordid edges of the Joplin character she portrayed (excellent, by the way) in last year's film, her screen debut. Miss M is a marvellous creation: blowsy, busty, always in good fun, and a songbird to boot, able to crisscross from Boogie Woogie Bugle Boy to blues rock and back again, all the while debunking while she

warbles, the High Seriousness of each style. It's all show, at one outrageous remove from the subject matter, and perhaps the only sane approach in today's world, come to think of it. As usual, purists will frown, but Bette has a rejoinder. Explaining to the audience her desire to strip away all the trappings and glitter of showbiz, to reveal the real woman beneath all the paint, she reflects "But then again, I figured: FUCK 'EM IF THEY CAN'T TAKE A JOKE!!"

Where will the Divine Miss M go now? We have her on film, doing what she does best. Will it be downhill from here on in, a la Streisand, who started with a good thing, let it flash occasionally (most notably in the hilarious *Owl and the Pussycat*, ironically a non-singing role) but opted out to become Screen Goddess instead? Midler seems more careful. *The Rose* a tentative and wisely-chosen testing of the dramatic waters, proved that she can handle a serious role. Her choice of a next project will be interesting: perhaps she is the one to synthesize our fractured cinematic forms into a new art, much as Woody Allen is doing. Personally, I would like to see her try his brand o' 'serious' comedy. Midler has so far demonstrated that she just may have it in her to transcend her own creations. If she can, then Hollywood will have a new jewel in its faded crown.