

The Nostalgic Cinema

# A new place to see film as good as it used to be

Mark Lewis  
Are you tired of seeing *E.T.* for the twentieth time? Looking for something new at revue theatres besides the usual overplayed 'classic' or foreign film or last month's first-run

feature? Have you always wanted to see a movie serial or silent feature, but never had the opportunity? If you've answered 'yes' to any or all of these questions, you should know about a theatre in Toronto called The

Nostalgic Cinema.

It's located above the Kingsway Theatre at Bloor and Royal York Road in the city's west end, four doors from the Royal York subway stop. A small facility, like a private

screening room, it seats about 40 people. Welcoming you is a 1920's title card illuminating the screen while soundtrack music, usually by Bernard Herrmann, fills the theatre. In the projection booth, the Nostal-

gic's founder, programmer, and projectionist, David Eustace, is getting the 16 or Super 8mm prints ready for showing.

On one machine is perhaps threaded Chapter 8 of *The Adventures of Red Ryder*, with its cowboy hero ready to right the wrongs of the West, only to find himself in some hopeless situation in time for the credits. "To Be Continued Next Week." On the other projector sits the evening's feature. Tonight it may be an art classic like *20th Century Fox's Citizen Kane*, a camp classic like *Plan 9 From Outer Space*, a comedy from the 20's, a musical from the 30's, a soap opera from the 50's, or a film like Hitchcock's *Vertigo* or *Rear Window*, until now 'lost' to the public because of legal or availability problems. In showing these films, the Nostalgic has made it possible for a new audience to appreciate movies that might otherwise be mere references in film history books.

For David Eustace, the greatest pleasure in running the Nostalgic comes when a person discovers the joys of a film he/she may never have heard of before but whose title or genre piqued curiosity. In one case, a man who had never seen a silent movie before, and in fact saw few films of any kind, was so impressed and entertained by a screening of *Intolerance* that he stayed to talk to Mr. Eustace about the film for an hour afterwards.

The Nostalgic Cinema is a member of the TJ Theatres group, which include the Bloor, Kingsway, Fox, Brighton, Cinema Whitby, and the Oakville Playhouse theatres. With a \$5 membership, good only at

the Nostalgic and renewable in April, 1983 for \$2, the admission to the cinema is \$1.99; non-members pay the regular admission price plus an extra \$1 for a special pass good for one show only. Titles and times of the films to be screened can be found on the last page of *The Festival* newspaper, available at any of the above named theatres, or every Thursday in *Now*.

## BOOKMARKS

### VARIOUS PERSONS NAMED KEVIN O'BRIEN by Alden Nowlan

Review by Paul Pivato

*Various Persons Named Kevin O'Brien*, by Canadian award-winning writer Alden Nowlan, is a delightful tale about the return of Kevin O'Brien to his childhood village. His brief sojourn ignites frozen memories, and as he relives his past, various Kevins slowly become known to the reader.

Kevin's mind, filled with shavings of the past, jumps from Kevin the boy, locked in a dream world, to Kevin as a shy and awkward adolescent: "bits of the past, the present and the future bounce about in his mind as beads of cold water bounce about in a hot frying pan." Nowlan succeeds in the mechanics of shifting perspectives, as well as in switching the narrative from the present to the past, from the objective to the subjective point of view.

The world of his past is peopled with earthy folk: his father, a brutish, alcoholic millhand; his mother, a voluptuous woman who abandoned the family and who once whored in the mud for a package of cigarettes; and his grandmother, who sang lustily through the night as she waited for death.

Nowlan describes the novel as a "fictional memoir". Indeed, O'Brien, like Nowlan, is a journalist writing his biography. At one point Kevin says: "All fictions are ghost stories, and some fictions are exorcisms." So it is with Nowlan.

In the end, as he prepares to return, Kevin comes to a new understanding of his past. He no longer needs to struggle in order to be accepted by the community that once drove him away.

Alden Nowlan has written a well-crafted and richly animated novel that takes the reader into an uncharted world. In conjuring up the ghosts of his past, he spins a fascinating story.

### THE STRATFORD TEMPEST by Martin Knelman

Review by Mark Lewis

With a plot as intricate and with characters as varied as in any of Shakespeare's plays, *The Stratford Tempest* is a fascinating account of the crisis generated by the resignation of 1980 of wunderkind Robin Phillips from his post as Artistic Director of Canada's most prestigious theatrical event, the Stratford Festival. Author Martin Knelman tells the story through the actions and reactions of the drama's principal characters, and from his own vantage point as a theatre journalist and critic. He reveals both the personal and cultural forces behind the events in a way that draws the reader into the proceedings as completely as if he or she were watching a Stratford stage production.

*The Stratford Tempest* is woven around Canada's emerging cultural nationalism as it endeavours to displace its traditional feelings of inferiority to British culture, and of the conflict between the financial and artistic considerations necessary in managing what is considered by many to be this country's national theatre in a country where government support for the arts is limited. But the book is primarily about the people working within the system, trying to maintain or change it for what they consider to be, in the best interests of the Festival, its patrons and performers, and for Canadian culture in general.

As in many plays and performances, the book has its weak points, arising from Knelman's insistence on including the "critic" facet of his work in a book predominately and properly journalistic in nature. The inclusion of his evaluations of the Stratford productions performed during the period covered in the book, and a tendency towards "cleverness" when commenting on certain events, are obtrusive in the work's otherwise straightforward use of reportage in examining the stratford crisis. These lapses, however, do not seriously affect the strengths of the book in its recounting of how the people involved in the crisis responded to the situations they found themselves in.

It is the human elements lying behind the news which makes *The Stratford Tempest* an enjoyable book for anyone interested in the arts in Canada, or for anyone interested in tales where truth is as engrossing as fiction.



Starring HAL HOLBROOK · ADRIENNE BARBEAU · FRITZ WEAVER · LESLIE NIELSEN  
CARRIE NYE · E.G. MARSHALL and VIVECA LINDFORS as Aunt Bedelia

A LAUREL PRODUCTION "CREEPSHOW" A GEORGE A. ROMERO FILM

Executive Producer SALAH M. HASSANEIN Original Screenplay STEPHEN KING Produced by RICHARD P. RUBINSTEIN Directed by GEORGE A. ROMERO

RESTRICTED  
UNDER 17 REQUIRES ACCOMPANYING PARENT OR ADULT GUARDIAN

DOLBY STEREO

Soundtrack on Varese Sarabande Records

DISTRIBUTED BY WARNER BROS. A WARNER COMMUNICATIONS COMPANY

Technicolor Read the Plume Paperback

NOW PLAYING

EXCALIBUR STAFF  
MEETS FRIDAY AT NOON  
ROOM 111 CENTRAL SQUARE  
ALL WELCOME  
ROSS BUILDING  
667-3201

## JEANS & CORDS

### \$5.00 to 8.00

New Brand Name Seconds  
Lots of Small Sizes

The Elegant Garage Sale  
1554 Eglinton Avenue W.  
781 - 6938

Saturday and Sunday 11-5  
Wednesday 2-9