Burton Film Series Like Home Movies

by Rick Blair

I was absolutely disgusted with the opening of this year's film series at Burton on Sunday, and it wasn't the films themselves that were the cause.

The lights dimmed and the projector started rolling--we saw double images--stop projector--start after a few seconds again--picture fine now--sound is tiny and garbles--re-adjust sound--now just garbles and scratchy--end of reel--wait five minutes for next one to start--finally starts.

Now I ask you, doesn't this remind you of somebody's home movies? It's even more ludicrous because they charged people money to see it.

I brought my mother-in-law with me and she had to pay $1.50 to sit through 3 1/2 hours of uncomfortable "entertainment".

The films themselves were good. La Notte by Michelangelo Antonioni is one of his early attempts to show life and its futility. He carefully builds his theory upon everyday images with allegorical meanings.

The simple plot of a writer and his wife who have drifted apart sexually becomes as complex as human nature itself when the story ends and the whole film provides a great deal of thought provocation.

The second film Divorce-Italian Style is the better of the two, if only because it is more polished. La Notte is crude in parts with painfully long pauses. There is definitely an improvement in style from this film to Antonioni's latest film "Blow Up".

"Divorce" is a carefully designed ridicule of Italians (to be more exact--Sicilian) Society. A much-fallen baron falls in love with his 16 year old cousin and decides he must kill his wife in order to "divorce" her; only he plans it so that he kills her in the arms of her lover (whom he has trouble finding--she is remarkably faithful).

Marcello Mastroianni plays the male lead in both these films --showing his remarkable talent for switching roles. In both he is an anti-hero but in both he is a truly different character.

In the first Mastroianni plays a writer who has lost sight of his goals and his wife. This part comes off painfully well.

In the second, the more natural Mastroianni, the comedian comes through. Playing a partially impoverished baron whose family lives as through pride alone, his sleepy, indifferent expression and nervous twitch provide a remarkable contrast to the passion and painful desire that we see whenever he encounters Angela, his cousin. Mastroianni is truly the greatest thing to happen to Italy since Sophia Loren. Rule Italia!

P.S. There had better be some changes in projection and sound or the fate of the film series will hang precariously from Burton's projection booth. Just in case you didn't notice it, Nick, quite a few people walked out after the first film on Sunday. I may be tempted to do the same next time!

Sgt. Pepper's Lonely Hearts

by Billy Shears

...Third in a series

The first side of the album was dealt with in two previous articles.

The record's second act gets the Beatles into deeper, more cross-currented waters. The first number, "Within You Without You" puts forward the Beatle manifesto to the tidal, wave-breaking sounds of an Indian raga. George Harrison chants his message, which is the Quintessence of Hippieism: "About the space between us all...and the love we all could share when we find it." At the end of the song comes a small gale of very self-satisfied laughter, which may be "straight" people laughing at the idealistic, hippie message, or may just be a transition into the next two light-hearted songs, which are about the opposite of loneliness.

"When I'm Sixty-Four" laughs off the ravages of old age with a sax-and-traps parody of last generation's pop. The Beatles parody ragtime with a total affection that betrays their longing for good old Sgt. Pepper's simpler, tea-dance age. The singer is looking forward to every possible kind of social security.

And so into "Good Morning, Good Morning," interpreted by most Beatleologists as an affirmation of everything happy in life. But this is an ambiguous song, in which can also be seen a denunciation of the urban rat race.

But it's back to the cheering audience and a thumping, hard-sell reprise of the Sgt. Pepper song--yells, bravos, laughter, and exit the Beatles, their musical over. Except for their most triumphant and theatrical bit of all--an epilogue which wipes the grin off the face of a wildly contented audience and sends them home with the willies. A "Day in the Life" is no joke; all the buoyant comic comment finally gives way to a flood of tristitia mundi. Paul McCartney's sweet, detached, phantasmic voice begins, "I read the news today, oh boy," --a strange, sad phrase which grows more hallucinatory. At first the news is about the Guiness heir, son of a Beer peer, dying in his Lotus elan, sad waste of youth, but comic in its utter meaninglessness. The singer turns on. "Four thousand holes in Blackburn, Lancashire And though the holes were rather small/They had to count them all..." this refers to Scotland Yard's search for bodies buried in a moor. The method they used was to sink poles in the earth and sniff the ends for the odor of decomposing flesh. "Now they know how many holes it takes to fill the Albert Hall," the song continues, i.e. now they know that an audience, like the audience on the record, is so many dead, empty, hollow, units of loneliness. "I'd love to turn you on," concludes the song. What else could you do under the circumstances.

As few works have since the days of Brecht and Weil, "A Day in the Life" provides a strange, new, jolting way of looking at the familiarities of modern life, so habit-forming that they are no longer disillusioning.

...to be continued next week.

Dave Cooper

— Review —
Monique Leyrac

by Don McKay

Monique, je t'aime.

SATURDAY NIGHT
UNDERGROUND
tickets on sale - 10:30 p.m.
doors open - 11.30 p.m.
November 4, 1967 $1.50
DUO CONCERTANTES
by Larry Jordan
HOLD ME WHILE I'M NAKED
by George Kuchar
SCHMEERGUNTZ
by Gunvar Nelson
SON OF DADA
by Robert Preston
MOMENT IN LOVE
by Shirley Clarke
PALACE OF PLEASURE
by John Hofsess
ADMITTANCE RESTRICTED
cinecity
YONGE AT CHARLES 922 9055
Also at Cinecity: Godard's
PIERROT LE FOU with
Jean-Paul Belmondo.
for showtimes-922-9055

Leftovers

by Bill Novak

Confession time, honey. I've been sort of kidding you all along about this folk music kick. Sure I dig it and all that, but you and I already know that's not where it's really at. It's happening in other places, like magazines. Like politics? "If I were given a choice in a presidential election--between lyndon johnson and ronald reagon--it would be like being given a choice of being burned by napalm or suffocated by Saran Wrap".

How about history? Remember JFK? Sure you do... Suddenly he was killed by the man who had most to gain--Mark Lane--who in turn was killed at the police station by Vaughn Meader".

Or editor's gossip: "A reporter told me of a time he was at the world telegram and sun and heard an assistant editor ask a senior editor, concerning the number of reported dead in a fire: 'The journal american had 13. Can't we make it 14?'"

The above quotes, which admittedly lose something in the transliteration, are all from the latest issue of the realist, far and away the best magazine around.

It's also happening in commentary whose latest issue contains, among other virtues, a good piece on normal mailer.

Even the national review has been enjoying itself lately, and it's always good to know what the other side is thinking. I use that term loosely, although Buckley's publication is certainly valid, honest, and useful, if not always brilliant.

partisan review of this summer may interest you--try Philip Roth's story on masturbation.

The new republic can often be bought for a low-rate trial subscription.

The nation is just as good, but more costly. And ramparts should long ago have ceased publishing. And if all this means nothing to you, better stick to EXCALIBUR and pretend you never read this column, O.K.?

York University
center for continuing education

Unique! Contemporary! Challenging!
THE LIVING THEATRE:
TRENDS IN DRAMA

Led by Jack Winter, this is an invigorating course for everyone interested in theatre trends. Students will read ten plays and attend ten lectures. They will see two performances at special rates, in co-operation with the Canadian Crest Players Foundation and the University Alumnae.

Fee $35.00

Location: Room 129, York Hall, Glendon Campus (Bayview and Lawrence)

For full details call: 635-2504 or 635-2526

Other courses being held on "Speech and Film"

Fri. Evenings 8 p.m. Nov. 3, 1967 to Feb. 2, 1968.