

Lights, Camera, Action!

Characters are human and believable

Prologue stands without hurting anyone

By BILL AUCHTERLONIE

August, 1968. . . Chicago. . . . the Democratic convention. . . Abbie Hoffman...confrontation...Mayor Daley. . . situation. . . the whole world is watching. . . choose — the whole world is watching. . . . the whole world is. • . . the whole world. . the. . ,the prologue has ended.

Prologue is Robin Spry's latest film. Since Flowers On A One Way Street Robin Spry has continued looking into the things which interest him most — the youth scene today, the world scene tomorrow.

Prologue is the filmic realization of Spry's statement on involvement — to be or not to be? And the question is creatively proposed, handled, and answered by the film. The story is honest, the characters are human and believable, and the film stands up without stepping on anyone.

The central character of the film is Jesse (played by John Robb), the editor-publisher-salesman for an underground newspaper based in Montreal. He is an activist, a responsible member of the new society.

Elaine Malus plays the part of Karen, his loving and sensitive woman. Karen loses sight for the purpose of Jesse's aims and loses faith in Jesse's methods. So while he joins Abbie Hoffman, the Chicago Seven, Ginsberg, and Humphrey-Daley, in Chicago, she goes off to the woods with David, a draft-dodger who cannot see any good in protest and wants only "to give peace a chance" in a country commune outside Montreal.

Abbie Hoffman, in his first role in a feature film, plays himself. "FREE" visits Jesse and Karen in Montreal and explains his streettheatre strategy of politics for them and us.

In the same scene Abbie and

to pull him their respective ways. Hoffman's presence in the film somehow detracts from the "real" presence of the film as a whole, because his relation to Jesse is not followed through later on when the film moves to Chicago and the open confrontation.

Jesse goes one way — David goes another. Karen goes both ways and comes back to Jesse. All three learned, loved, and understood a

Karen tug at Jesse — each trying little better by the end of the film. And so did I.

> Like Flowers, Prologue was shot in a documentary, black and white style. These filmic devices and the playing, and the directing, give the film a "realistic presence" that kept the film strong in me as a good experience which grew more significant in more ways as time allowed me to realize the film in my terms.

speak to the film course after an cures. advance screening of "Prologue" He recounted some of the hassles encountered while filming in Chicago in August, 1968. Some of the aggressive and openly violent aspects of Chicago are shown in the film, but interestingly, I did not feel angered at the situation, nor did I fear it. Instead, I felt subtly hurt, and, at the same time, sure that the event was a necessary

Spry was at York last week to remedy for a society looking for

The film is a search — a search which finds an answer, and leaves you to find yours. You gotta move. Go see the film. It will help. The prologue is almost over.

Prologue, produced by the National Film Board of Canada, opens Feb. 20 at the Odeon Coronet Theatre, 399 Yonge.

Radical actors protest revue at McGill U

MONTREAL (CUP) — About 40 McGill University students and members of Montreal's Theatre Radical Quebecois took over the stage of McGill's Red and White Revue production, No, billed as a series of "musical anti-establishment scenes," last Thursday calling the play an "insult to the oppressed people of the world.'

The play's sketches included a monologue by what is supposed to be a 14-year-old under-privileged killer-thief, and sexual jokes on the conquest of Quebec by Wolfe.

They were described as "funny only to middle class students whose present social position as ruling class allows them to remove themselves from the problems" of the oppressed.

"They are disguised racist jokes designed to entertain the very people who are responsible for their suffering," said the protesters.

Student members of the audience applauded the protest at



Abbie Hoffman (left) stars in Prologue, a new National Film Board release.

Hitchcock films this weekend should be good

By DAN MERKUR

Film buffs should delight in this weekend's group of six of Hitch's films. I'm rather sorry I have to work tonight and so miss Shadow of a Doubt and North by Northwest, neither of which I have ever seen, although I am told Joseph Cotten's performance in the first is so overpowering as to almost steal the thunder from the old master in one of his early (1943) triumphs, and of course North by Northwest is quite clearly famous as being about his best film ever. Cary Grant stars, and by the way, it is in colour.

Saturday night has a vintage espionage-suspense thriller with Joel McCrea in the lead. Also in Foreign Correspondent are the late U.S. humorist Robert Benchley, in one of his few film roles, and George Sanders long before (1940) he ever became a villain. To Catch a Thief stars Grant again, and is a good example of Hitchcock's direction in the mid-fifties, which was the period of his greatest artistic success.

On the other hand, Suspicion is a classic among his films. In the forties only three of his films gained classic stature - Rebecca, Notorious, and Suspicion. Joan Fontaine won an Oscar for her role as the paranoid, or is it persecuted, wife of Cary Grant. And the other film Sunday is Psycho. I don't see the need to explain what that is all about.

For the last few weeks, and beginning again after reading week, Marc Rosen's 201 Film class have been holding Wednesday night sessions with double bills open to the public for the price of 50 cents. In Burton, at

So far, we've seen a couple musicals, a couple comedies, a couple westerns a couple gangster films, and a couple of war dramas. Orson Welles' Magnificent Amberson and Touch of Evil are to follow. The films are cheap at the price, and very, very good.

One interesting note is the audience reaction from the kids who are all in the film course and many majoring in film.

The greatest audience enjoyment had to be for two of the most violent films of recent years - For a Few Dollars More (39 counted dead by yours truly) and Point Blank (where Lloyd and I couldn't agree as to

counting flashbacks or not). The audience relished every punch to the groin, every bottle broken across the face, and every deafening gunshot that spilled catsup across the screen. One would think that an educated audience of this nature might be sophisticated to a point where it didn't ooh, aah and wow every bit of blood and pain. Especially with the current immorality of violence in the arts.

The bloodless murders of Hitchcock's films seem a little too easy sometimes - sort of an evasion of the fact of death. But the bloody gore in evidence the last few weeks ignores the horror of violent death by candycoating the macabre and making it so attractive that we actually enjoy it. Perhaps it is only because we know it is all stage that we can enjoy it, but in the meantime I feel sick at the fact that I am enjoying the gore so much.



Marlene Dietrich and Gary Cooper in Josef von Steinberg's Morocco, Feb. 27 at Cinemateque.

The Silent Cinema is picking up the campy classics of yesterday — so far with Chaplin's The Great Dictator and Modern Times, a couple of Marx Brothers films, and currently with Forty Second Street. The prints they are using are black-market and privately owned. As a result the quality is not as good as it might be if they were paying the going rates for the stuff they've got. I get to see the stuff on a press pass, but when I consider what you could see at any of the Film Society's in town, at Cinecity, Cinematheque or Cinemalumiere, at no greater cost and with much better projection and prints, I wonder what is sustaining The Silent Cinema.

Cinematheque, which I run along with Lloyd and the Ryerson Eyeopener's film reviewer, is still going on, Friday nights at 7:15 and 9:30, in the basement of the Music Library at Avenue Road and St. Clair.

The reason I mention it is that we can use the plug, and anyhow, you might just be interested to know that tonight we are showing Mae West and Victor McLaglen in Raoul Walsh's Klondike Annie, which hasn't been around since the thirties. Upcoming Gene Kelly, Debbie Reynolds and Donald O'Connor in Singing in the Rain (Feb. 20) for which we got a print that is a good deal better than the one shown at York in January; Morocco, with Marlene Dietrich and Gary Cooper, directed by von Sterberg (Feb. 27); followed next month by Tracy and Hepburn in State of the Union (March 6); and Errol Flynn in Michael Curtiz' Captain Blood (March 13).

Tickets are \$1.50, and membership is required and available at the door for 50 cents.

The Toronto Film Society has not announced yet that their summer series this year will be devoted to Preston Sturges. At the moment, they are considering what to get since Miracle at Morgan's Creek is unavailable. There is a good chance they will end up with The Great McGinty, Hail the Conquering Hero, The Lady Eve, Christmas in July, The Palm Beach Story, and perhaps even The Big Pond, a Chevalier vehicle Sturges scripted in 1930.