

ARTS

Pavarotti's acting debut proves he's a singer

Yes, Giorgio
A Short Review

Why is it that so many artists who shine in one field feel it necessary to test the waters of other artistic endeavours. You can admire their pluck, but often there isn't much in the way of performance to esteem. That is about all you can say about Luciano Pavarotti's debut as an actor in *Yes, Giorgio*, now playing in Edmonton. One can appreciate his efforts, but few could admire his acting performance.

Pavarotti is indeed one of the world's foremost tenors, if not the best. However, as an actor he can't seem to hit the right note. What he lacks in acting talent he makes up for in affability; but a toothy grin does not make a movie.

The story is about a romance Pavarotti, as Giorgio Fini, plays a famous opera singer (what else?). He travels to America on a concert tour. He loses his voice in one of his performances and a woman doctor is dispatched to cure him. The doctor and he have a cross-country love affair and she bolsters his career to new heights.

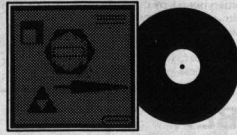
It is hard to discern just what the people involved in this film were aiming at. Initially, the film appears to be a light romantic comedy. It is light, fluff in fact, but it isn't comedy. It degenerates into a pie throwing (literally, if you can believe that old chestnut) vaudevillian performance, and then some sort of tragi-comedy. The romance doesn't elicit any kind of emotional response other than the odd bit of laughter at such poor performances.

Pavarotti is convincing as a singer, but not as an actor. He isn't given much help along the way by either of his co-stars. Kathryn Harrold plays doctor and house with him. The only kind thing one can say about her is she has a nice wardrobe. Eddie Albert plays Mr. Fini's concert manager and does his best to salvage poor writing and directing.

The saving graces of this film, if there are any, our Pavarotti's singing and some of the production numbers. We are served up some old standards such as *Ave Maria*, *O Sole Mio* and some new material from Boston Pops conductor John Williams. Mr.

Williams is perhaps better known for his composition of the *Star Wars* theme. In addition, the audience is treated to some marvelous scenes from the opera, *La Turandot*.

What can the viewer take from this movie? Not much. Forget the movie. Buy the album or better still, see Pavarotti at his best, in live opera productions. There he hits all the right notes.



DIRECT DRIVE

by James L. Stevens

No Stranger To Danger
PAYOLA\$
A & M Records (SP9070)

Vancouver based Payola\$ have proven themselves to be one of Canada's brightest and strongest new bands. This, their second album, is an energetic and powerful release and is a solid follow up to their first

attention grabbing album, *In A Place Like This*. The first single released from this album, *Eyes Of A Stranger*, has become a chart topper. And what's more, there should be at least one, if not two more hit single releases off the album for the Payola\$.

All of the songs on *No Stranger To Danger* are penned by lead singer Paul Hyde and lead guitarist Bob Rock. They are an inspired songwriting duo that have managed to incorporate street life realities and insight into aspects of the human condition with driving, biting pop-rock music. This is most evident on the cuts "Youth", "Hastings Street" and "Pennies Into Gold." As well, the album contains a re-working of a cut that had been released on their debut E.P., "Rose", which accentuates the reggae influence that permeates much of their material.

Some credit must be given to producer Mick Ronson for not losing the gut level music while delivering a finished sound. He did a great job in keeping a sharp edge to the guitars and a punchy drive to the drums.

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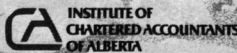
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by Jack Verme

As I perused my list of upcoming films, searching out a neat topic for this week, my eyes fell upon the phrase "Hitchcock series" in the Princess program. My duty was obvious....

How can I make you aware of Alfred Hitchcock's impact on film language with so little time and space at my disposal? Well, I'll try by way of four trivial bits of information. First, Hitchcock is considered by many critics to be the most technically competent director to ever make films. Second, Francois Truffaut, no slouch as a director himself and a confirmed Hitchcock junkie, has suggested that Hitchcock answered THE fundamental question of film language: how to express oneself by purely visual means. Third, one of my film textbooks (a representative work, I think) mentions Hitchcock for the first time on page four and for the last time in the conclusion, 400 pages later. Finally, even our own inadequate film section, in the Rutherford Library, has at least ten volumes devoted solely to the work of Hitchcock.

Why is Hitchcock such an impactful and influential fellow? There are, of course, many reasons, but from what I've seen and heard, the two most important are: technical competence and his relationship with his audience.

Evidence abounds as to Hitchcock's virtuosity as a technician. It has been said that he precisely planned all shooting and cutting before putting a project in front of the cameras. Indeed, he often carried a stopwatch during filming in order to insure that a scene he had preplanned to run for say, 30 seconds, ran no longer than that. Evidence as to his precision is also reflected in his mastery of the editing technique. This mastery is obvious to anyone who has seen *Psycho*. The shower-murder scene encompasses 34 shots in little more than 10 seconds, and succeeds in making even today's audiences cringe.

Complimenting his editing technique is his all-seeing and ever-moving camera. Just one lone example should illustrate his genius with respect to camera movement. In the film *Young and Innocent* (*The Girl Was Young* in the U.S.), a young couple are searching for a murderer (what else?). They have just discovered that this murderer has a twitching eye. Hitchcock cuts to the top of a hotel ballroom filled with people, and slowly tracks down

towards the bandstand. Closer, closer, and closer until the drummer is isolated in the shot. Then still closer until the camera rests, four inches in front of the drummer's eyes...and then the twitch! It took two days to construct a special crane and track for this scene. From 145 feet to four inches in one shot!

Now, in Hollywood, a director can be the best technician and still starve. If he can't put people in the theatres, he's out. Hitchcock managed to do just that by making the audience a part of, instead of apart from, his films. Much has been written about Hitchcock's manipulation of audiences. He makes us voyeurs, murderers, and victims often in the same film, all by way of his visual style. Didn't you have a weird feeling while you were watching *Psycho*? I sure did. I couldn't pin it down at the time, but I'm sure it was due to the ease with which Hitchcock managed to screw us, the audience, around. I mean, one minute, we're identifying with Janet Leigh and then...hack, hack...and then we're identifying with Anthony Perkins, and then Vera Miles, and then Anthony Perkins again, and then...arghh!!...SCREEN-INDUCED SCHIZOPHRENIA!! Totally unsettling, but gimme more, gimme more! This drawing-in of the audience is achieved primarily through Hitchcock's camera placement and movement. It goes back to what Truffaut said: Hitchcock could do it by purely visual means.

Jeepers, these damned scene restrictions always cause me to end so abruptly. Anyways check out the Hitchcock series and see if I've been telling the truth. Here's something neat:

Suspicion - (1941) Surprise! A Hitchcock classic. Is Cary Grant really trying to kill Joan Fontaine, or...October 12 (9:30 pm) at the Princess.

The Long Good Friday - (1982) I haven't seen a single negative review of this British gangster film. Supposed to have a superbly acted lead role. Oct. 13 (8 pm) at SUB.

Cul-de-sac - (1966) If Polanski is not weird, then Moby Dick is a minnow. This should be a bizarre film, if, as the program says, Polanski imparts his "personal stamp to every frame of film and every line of dialogue". Oct. 7 (9:20 pm), Oct. 8 (7:30 pm), Oct. 10 (7:30 pm) at the NFT.

The Stranger - (1967) OK, existentialists, this one's for you. Carné's novel on the screen. Oct. 13 (7:30 pm) and Oct. 14 (9:30 pm) at the NFT.