

films

You go into *Bonnie and Clyde* (at the Rialto) knowing that it is going to try and pull the old sentimentality-for-the-mobster out of you, like a Jesse James saga of the 1930 era.

The wonderful thing about it is that it does just that. It is a compelling story and no-anti-sentimental reaction serves as much defence against the humorous and bloody approach it takes.

It seems likely that the real story of Bonnie and Clyde would have been a considerably different one, but the movie is not intended to be a gangland history portrayal. The beginning of the film version is like a children's game of cops and robbers.

No words are needed for Warren Beatty who plays big, bad, but handsome, Clyde Barrow. He seems to have suffered a sexual repression since *Splendor in the Grass*, but it hasn't retarded his acting ability, and his performance is wonderfully captive, and associative-able (i.e. Prince Charming at his charmingest).

He attempts to rob a bank which has folded—during the depression things are rough even for bank robbers—and gets laughed out. "Come here," he drags the giggling teller out to the car. "You've got to explain this to my girl."

Bonnie (Faye Dunaway) reacts to this fiasco with a loud guffaw failing to see the more serious side of this degrading situation which forces Clyde to compromise his professional integrity and rob a grocery store for supper.

Like a roving circus, they pick up a loveable young tough, played by Michael Pollard, who has to be the most brilliant moron on the screen. He plays C. W. Moss, the "unidentified suspect" get-a-way driver, who drops Bonnie and Clyde at the chosen bank, then drives off looking for a parking place.

The three of them create their own fairy-land excitement as a substitute for the drabness of life in the depression, but unlike Winken, Blinken and Nod, they are headed for Hell, not the moon.

The movie presents this escapism as a justified reaction to the Cruel World, but the love-relationship between Bonnie and Clyde is not tied directly to the violent surroundings. The movie gains universality and popularity from the juxtaposition of this lovers-against-the-world story (or the individual-against-society story, or combinations thereof) to the disparate environment, which results in the remarkable emotive powers it generates.

This same idea was contained in Pasternak's novel, and came out much the same in the more love-orientated movie version of *Dr. Zhivago*.

The terms of expression are more gory in *Bonnie and Clyde*, but the story is equally applicable to the period of the Russian Revolution, the dirty thirties, or to the sixties, regardless of the adjectival obituary used to describe this decade.

The love relationship of Bonnie and Clyde is humorous, tender, and filled with warm understanding, and yet somehow avoids being schmaltzy. We accept them as they are presented—a part of wild fun loving, innocent people, out to escape the dull life, never intending harm to anyone.

It seems completely incongruous to the innocence presented to have the police come charging in, armed like the first wave of a military invasion. The shooting becomes more than a game, the blood runneth over, and the whole situation is carried beyond what it originally appeared to be. The newspapers begin attributing to them crimes which were geographically impossible for them to commit, public fear increases, and Bonnie and Clyde are changed into a demonic legend. We know they are not all that bad.

The film is directed by Arthur Penn. After a well constructed build-up, he brings the technical and photographic excellence of the film together with the terrific acting and smashes out a beautifully tragic climax for an outstanding film.

—Gordon Auck

At the symphony

Rewarding weekend in music and football

For those who were torn between going to the Edmonton-Calgary football game and the Edmonton Symphony concert presented Saturday night, and ultimately chose the latter, the reward was twofold; the lesser of which was a courtesy announcement at intermission giving the up-to-the-minute score of the football game. The primary, and certainly most satisfying reward was being in the aural presence of Vladimir Ashkenazy, a Russian pianist featured by the Edmonton Symphony Society.

To the head of the program—Rachmaninov's Piano Concerto No. 2 in C Minor, Francois Morel's Neumes d'Espace et Reliefs, and Tchaikovsky's Symphony No. 4 in F Minor—was added Mozart's Piano Concerto in B Flat, K.595, to compensate for the brevity of the Morel work. That this concerto, indeed any Mozart concerto, should be used as a filler is incredible; however, this notion was put aright by the preference given it in the order of program, as well as in the quality of performance.

K.595, for all its light-hearted moments, was the last piano concerto composed by Mozart, eleven months before his death in 1791. As for the soloist of this work, Mr. Ashkenazy played throughout with a simplicity and liveliness that is accorded Mozart himself. Often the nature of the Larghetto is conceived as that of a Romanza; however, the slower tempo, chosen by the pianist indicated, rather, a contemplative mood which was, for his part, well-sustained and convincing. In the rondo, the vivacity of the pianist was transmitted to the orchestra, and so upheld to the finale.

In contrast to the clear, well-marked phrases and sentences of the Mozart Concerto, came the

long, ever-changing lines of the Rachmaninov Second Piano Concerto, their expected cadences dissolving to become secondary relationships, in turn giving impetus to new ideas. Along with the contrast in composition came an excellent example of versatile musicianship, the adaptability of the performer to the style.

The persistent Ashkenazy who scaled the heights of this concerto, very different from the intimate, serene one of the Mozart work, was, alas, not always accompanied by his fellow explorers, particularly in the first movement, where the cellos seemed to be in conflict over several rhythmic and melodic figures.

An interesting structural feature of this work is the absence of a conventional cadenza. In its place are several rhapsodic passages for piano, surrounded by orchestral material, the fusion between the two giving great fluidity to the whole movement. This applies also to the immense, final movement.

During the "second quarter" (which may be mathematically reduced to the musical "last half") of the concert, the audience was privileged in yet another way; hearing the world premiere of Neumes d'Espace et Reliefs by Francois Morel of Montreal, and commissioned by the Centennial Commission. This interesting work is scored for an augmented wind and brass section, and percussion. It explores extreme registers of these instruments, plus special

effects such as flutter-tonguing in the brass, and glissandi in the timpani.

In extremes also, are the dynamics, ranging from a muted pianissimo to a healthy fortissimo. This academic excursion through space and contours terminates with a final cadence in the percussion. The difficulty in presenting a contemporary work does not go unnoticed or unappreciated.

The performance of Tchaikovsky's Fourth Symphony as a concluding work may have provided a clue to the evening's playing in the case of the orchestra. Written in 1877, after the sudden flight of Tchaikovsky from his new bride, it is a study in Sturm und Drang. For instance, the first movement opens with what the composer refers to as the Fatum theme, a unison passage in the brass.

This gives way to a waltz-like second theme which, by quiet pulses from the tampani, is prevented from being as carefree as it might otherwise be. The anxiety of the string players is here presented, as well. On the brighter side was the third movement, the Scherzo: Allegro, entirely pizzicato for strings, capped by murmurs in the woodwinds, and punctuated by staccato chords in the brass. For me, the concert ended with this cheerful movement.

Incidentally, the final score, as revealed at the close of the concert was in Edmonton's favor, 20-11.

—Barbara Frazer

Entertainment calendar

You still have time this week to catch the photography showing in the SUB Gallery. It's called "The Canadian Profile", and is billed as "a definitive study of the whole spectrum of Canadian life from the past up to modern times".

The Sunday evening concerts continue this weekend with the Mt. Allison University Trio playing in Convocation Hall at 8:30. See the article on the opposite page for more details on these concerts.

The Prague Chamber Orchestra Soloists, a strong orchestra of thirteen musicians, will appear on Sunday at 3:00 p.m., again in Convocation Hall. This is part of the Jeunesse Musicales series. They will play selections from the baroque, classical, romantic and contemporary periods.

The Little Symphony starts its four-concert season next Thursday, November 9, with Edmonton pianist Marek Jablonski; season tickets are available for \$9.00 at the Bay.

The Light Opera of Edmonton will stage *Paint Your Wagon* at the Jubilee for four days starting Wednesday. The following week *Funny Girl* commences at the SUB theatre.

For what it's worth, the Ink Spots are at the Caravan tonight and tomorrow.

These are also the last two nights to catch *Barefoot in the Park* at the Citadel—phone 424-2828 to see if there are tickets left.

—T.D.

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