

## films

"Once upon a time there was a virgin . . ."

That's the way *The Family Way* begins, and that's the way it continues for a frustratingly long period of time.

And that's the whole problem.

(Well actually, that's only most of the problem, but more of that later.)

Arthur Fitton is faced with a rather embarrassing situation; his wedding night didn't come off quite according to Hoyle. Then the honeymoon trip he had planned turned out to be arranged with an unromantic fraud and he is left stranded in his parents' house where things get much worse before they get better. To compound the trouble, his wife (Hayley Mills) lets the cat out of the bedroom, which can hardly be considered anything but grounds for divorce. The gossip which gets around makes Arthur a very miserable king in his own castle.

The humor is discreet and makes an attempt at avoiding the bawdy, usually succeeding. But it is not completely dependent on Arthur's unfortunate situation. The whole film is witty and gets around to throwing a few cats out of other people's bedrooms as well.

The loud-mouthed projectionist for whom Arthur works (he is the same one who disconnected the bed on that first inglorious night) offers to do the job for Arthur, and is purse-whipped by his disgruntled wife who notes a slight contradiction between his boast and his performance on the home field.

It is a novel exploitation of an old joke, typically ambiguous and good (clean?) fun. Much of the humor is independent of the situation and comes out in many of the individual characters.

John Mills, who plays Hayley's father-in-law, is only one example of the fine casting and good acting which characterizes the whole movie. He tends to dominate the scenes he is in, but the rest of the troops hold their own extremely well. His part is blessed with a well written characterization on which he capitalizes with a typically brilliant John Mills performance.

He plays a raucous, obtuse, but loveable old man who utters naive comments under any circumstance: "It says here the Chinese are increasing so fast there isn't going to be enough food to go around. Somebody should tell those Chinese to stop it."

He is always his ignorant but genuine self whether drunk and singing after the wedding much to the annoyance of his audience, or desperately trying to comprehend the problem in his son's marriage ("Hasn't taken?" "Hasn't jelled?") until it is finally explained in lucid detail, or pleasantly reminiscing about the best times of his own honeymoon which were spent walking down the beach with his best friend, Billy, who was invited along to form a threesome.

But the film isn't all drollery. Arthur fails to see the funny side of his problem and there is a sensitive understanding of his frustration which begins to poke through the good humor. The neighbourhood cheer squad of sadistic gossips form a cruel reminder of his continual failure.

*The Family Way* has another serious side, which turns out not to be a funny at all. This side is marked by the enigmatic intrusion of the long lost friend Billy, who never appears, but has apparently played a larger part in the threesome than his bosom buddy ever realized.

This disturbing flash of stark realism has no right to project itself into the unreality of the satirized British society and the capricious fantasy of Arthur's problem. It grates against the sensibility and puts a rather tragic flaw into the humor of the proceedings. If we accept it as an integral part of the story (which it isn't), *The Family Way* turns out to be a more serious movie than the humorous handling of the trivial problem of the newlyweds would mislead us to believe. It introduces a rather disappointing and quite unfunny fact of life into an otherwise pleasantly unrealistic and comically patterned situation.

But the conclusion doesn't drivel in its own sentimentality. It winds up quickly and efficiently—Arthur gets his woman, his father wins a son, and the humor wins out in the end, making it one of the more entertaining pictures around.

—Gordon Auck

## Art

# Dynamic art at Wohlfarth show

The Jacox gallery is currently featuring a one man exhibition of twelve color kinetic paintings by Harry Wohlfarth.

In this series Mr. Wohlfarth has attempted, in his own words, "to honestly, intuitively, and objectively reflect the time segment of which he (the artist) is an integral part". Through his extensive use of color kinetics, Mr. Wohlfarth has been notably successful in his aim.

By using a few highly intense colors in powerful combinations,

Mr. Wohlfarth has achieved a kinetic effect and a dynamism which, it seems to me, does indeed reflect the spirit of our age.

He has accentuated this effect by the use of very simple flat forms. They are hard-edged and two dimensional figures, without depth or texture of their own. Without his masterful use of color, they would be lifeless.

As a result, the figures themselves have no impact. They are effective only in relationship to their background. This is an in-

teresting concept, and a very penetrating reflection of society.

The only real flaw I can find with Mr. Wohlfarth is his stated attempt to remain objective. An artist is by nature subjective, and is either directly or indirectly a social critic.

In the past, Mr. Wohlfarth has won many honors. He has a Doctoris Academiae from the Roman Academy of Arts and Sciences, and is a senator of the same organization. He is a member of the German Academy in Bonn, and a fellow of the International Institute of Arts and Letters. His works may be found in state and private collections throughout Europe and the world.

The paintings now hanging in Jacox are a clear demonstration that each one of these distinctions is warranted. This work forms an important statement in modern art.

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Campus art galleries should be well filled this year. At least fourteen separate exhibits are planned for the Fine Arts gallery and the Students' Union gallery.

The SUB gallery started the year with a display of well known Canadian painters. The Fine Arts gallery, located directly east of the Arts building, has not opened its doors yet this year. However, an exhibition of such internationally known graphic artists as Hayter and Vasarely is tentatively being arranged. The prints concerned were brought by the Art department this summer. It is hoped they will be on display in a week or two.

Other exhibitions to be seen through the year include Japanese block prints (SUB), a display of Persian and Indian miniatures (FA) currently showing at the Edmonton Art Gallery, western sculpture and craft (both) and a photo display of Quebec architecture.

The two galleries will close the year in April with displays of work done by U of A students and faculty.

—Bill Pasnak

## Arts Calendar

# A filmsock right in the eye and an Ashkenazy in the ear

All together now—what's the liveliest art these days?

Call it the Cinema, if you want to sound impressive. Movies. Film, in all its forms, from the vigorous and joyful "trash" Hollywood still delights us with to the most elaborate explorations of our human condition of the great European directors.

So what's the liveliest entertainment package available in Edmonton this year?

The Edmonton Film Society's Main Series, ladies and gentlemen.

Where else in Edmonton can you see the best recent foreign films (that ones that aren't obscene enough for the Garneau, anyway) uncut and undubbed?

Just look at this year's line-up. The season opens this Monday night with a Japanese film by one of the world's unquestioned master-directors, Kurosawa: *High and Low*, a gangster-movie in depth.

It continues with Antonioni's first film in color, *Red Desert*, for which he had huge sections of Florence actually repainted to get the color-values he wanted!

After that you'll see Losey's trenchant war-movie, *King and Country*, *The Sleeping Car Murders* (a romp starring Simone Signoret and Yves Montand), and a spoof of recent British working-class films called *Nothing But the Best*, starring Alan Bates.

The New Year continues with a new brilliant and chilling Japanese film about regimentation, *Face of Another*, followed by the French classic *Diary of a Country Priest*.

Then come two exotics, the Argentinian *Summer Skin* and the Greek *Elektra*. The season will finish with a film yet to be announced.

And all this costs only \$5 for students. That's just 50 cents apiece for ten extraordinary Monday nights.

If you haven't bought your tickets yet, get them at the Jubilee Auditorium Monday night. And happy film-going!

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*Barefoot in the Park* pads on at the Citadel. But you lucky Citidel - season-membership-holders can treat yourself to a 2 p.m. theatre appreciation matinee on "The Ibsen Woman in Love and Marriage" and get all enthused over the upcoming production of *Hedda Gabler*.

That's next Wednesday afternoon at the Citadel.

Piano-puffs will want to catch Vladimir Ashkenazy's performance with the Edmonton Symphony this Saturday and Sunday in the Jubilee (8:30 p.m. and 3 p.m. respectively). The concert also includes the premiere of a new Canadian work, Francois Morel's "Neumes d'Espace et Reliefs".

And we hear Jorge Bolet playing Mendelssohn and Franck and all, yes all the Chopin Ballades next Tuesday evening at the Jubilee courtesy the Celebrity Series.

For free you can hear Arthur Jacobs, the distinguished British musicologist, discuss "Opera since Puccini" in TLB 1 tonight at 8:30 p.m.

And don't forget that Glen Yarbrough is singing next Monday and Tuesday at 4:30 and 8:30 p.m. in our own SUB theatre (tickets at Mike's), or that the Ballet Roland Petit is dancing next Wednesday in the Jubilee (tickets at Allied Arts in the Bay).

—John Thompson

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