

Haitian voodoo flops

by Ian Johnston

The *Serpent and the Rainbow* is director Wes Craven's (*A Nightmare on Elm Street*) first hesitant attempt to leave the confines of the horror genre. And while the film is no masterpiece, it is Craven's most consistent movie in fifteen years, and a welcome change from his usual slash-and-shriek teen epics.

The Serpent and the Rainbow deals with Haitian voodoo prac-

tices, particularly a drug used to simulate death. An American pharmaceutical company wants the drug and sends an intrepid doctor and explorer to poverty-stricken Haiti to get it. Instead, what the doctor finds are brutal murders, magic, love, and premature burials, not necessarily in that order.

The suspense film is not that big a reach for Craven, who is a proven master at the "jump out from behind the tree" frights

exhibited in his films *Nightmare on Elm Street* and *Last House on the Left*.

And, indeed, *Serpent* is peppered with these types of scares, many of them wedged unceremoniously into the plot in familiar dream sequences: It's as if Craven doesn't trust his audience to sit still for character or plot development. He chooses instead to lapse into horror clichés to jolt the audience out of its seats every ten minutes.

This is too bad, since the plot has a lot more to offer. The characters, particularly the young doctor (Bill Pullman), are well-drawn and bring believability to the strange action.

As well, Craven has immersed his movie in the Haitian culture and people, giving it a look of disturbing plausibility and misty foreboding that affects the audience far more than gratuitous violence.

There are moments (quite a few moments, in fact) in *Serpent* that stay with you long after you leave the theatre. But much of it goes for nought, as Craven strains to leave behind his worst



A zombie of the genre

habits and fails, making *The Serpent and the Rainbow* more a roller-coaster ride of frights than a well-plotted suspense film.

It's a noble failure by Craven, who hasn't made as good a film

since *Last House on the Left* in 1972. Old habits die hard. Craven may still need a few more years and a few more films to reach his status as a "legitimate" director.

Memoirs of a ghost town

by Scott Neily

This week, Dalhousie Theatre Productions is presenting *The Rimers of Eldritch* by Lanford Wilson in Studio One of the Dalhousie Arts Centre. Directed by Ian

White, the play showcases the talents of the students of the Theatre Department in a story that can be favourably described as a mosaic.

The setting of the play is the midwestern American town of

Eldritch, population seventy, and like most near-ghost towns, decreasing. The action takes place in the spring, summer, and fall of 1947. The story follows the small-town existence of Eldritch and the consequential mentalities and dishonesties that are stereotypical of people who live in a dying area. The play is told in a stream of consciousness fashion, with conversations skipping back and forth through various periods in time.

continued on page 11

TRAVEL CUTS



is
**Student
Travel!**

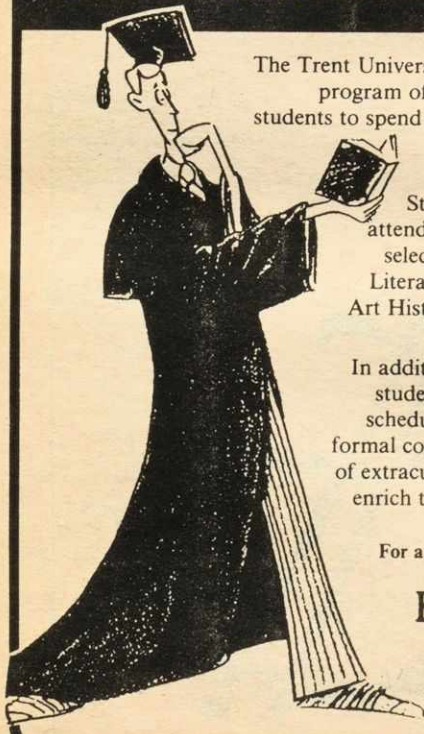
424-2054

TRAVEL CUTS HALIFAX
Student Union Building
Dalhousie University
Halifax, Nova Scotia B3H 4J2

THE TRAVEL COMPANY OF THE CANADIAN FEDERATION OF STUDENTS

TRAVEL CUTS
Going Your Way!

OXFORD SUMMER STUDIES



The Trent University - Oxford Summer Studies program offers a unique opportunity for students to spend five weeks at one of the most revered learning institutions in the world.

Students will live in college and attend one of six accredited courses selected from the areas of English Literature, Drama, British History, Art History, Classical Literature, and Political Science.

In addition to daily class-room study students will participate on several scheduled field trips as part of their formal course work. A varied program of extracurricular activities will further enrich the experience and is included in the total cost.

For a brochure and further information please call Susan Walker at:

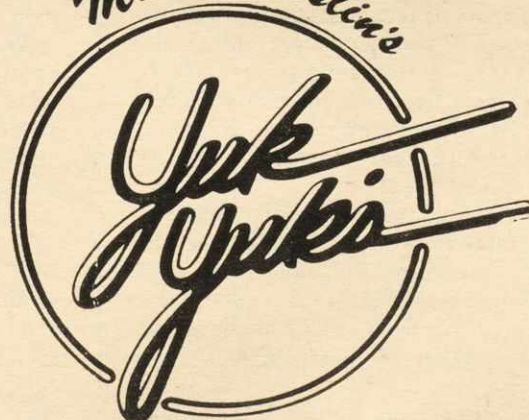
Blyth & Company
68 Scollard Street, Toronto
Canada M5R 1G2
Tel. (416) 964-2569
(800) 387-5603 Ontario
(800) 387-1387 Canada

**WILD, WACKY &
WONDERFUL!**

**Thursday Night is
Student Night**

Free Admission with
valid I.D.

Mark Breslin's



421-1038 Reservations Required

1567 Grafton St., Halifax Δ Above the 42nd St. Cafe



DALHOUSIE THEATRE
PRODUCTIONS
presents

**THE RIMERS
OF
ELDRITCH***

by Lanford Wilson
Directed by Ian White

STUDIO ONE
February 10 to 14

* Contains language or situations
which some may find offensive.

TICKETS
DAL ARTS CENTRE BOX OFFICE
424-2646