

Running- A feeble cliché

by Don Markham

Running with Michael Douglas was supposed to be modeled a la Rocky I and II. Conceivably, if successful, we would soon see a whole slew of this type of film. There would be such classics as Hoop-A ghetto kid with a ball and a dream. Rink-A Cape Bretoner and his skates. Slugger-boy with a bat. Pretty soon there would even be Fanny-grandma with a bingo board and a belief. Sounds ridiculous, right?

So perhaps we owe Running our gratitude, for it will stop most thoughts of making more of this type of film. Running cannot justify their continuance. Despite its almost pathetic attempts to copy Rocky, Running is only a pale charade, and does not even come close.

Even though Rocky was a simplistic film, it was done well. It projected an aura of excitement, an intangible quality that Running lacks. People were rallied to Rocky's side. He was the little guy trying to buck the system.

But in Running you have little empathy with Michael Douglas. You don't care whether he runs in the Olympics or into a car. You don't

pull for him as you pulled for Rocky. Since this character identification is the tour de force of a movie like this, it is crucial that this character captures the hearts of the audience. Douglas does not, and the movie is thus doomed.

The movie tells the story of a long distance runner named Michael Adropulis, who dreams of running in the 1976 Montreal Olympics. He leaves his wife, played by Susan Anspach, to devote his life to training. Despite the divorce that the two obtain, they still love each other deeply. No matter what Michael does, his lovely hare-brained wife accepts him back. One wonders why the pea-brain does not just dump him for good. Apparently, she is just too stupid to carry on without him. In one scene they are standing on the steps to her house holding each other. Wife: "Can't we just be friends?" Cut to next scene in bedroom. Good friends no doubt.

But there are other parts of the movie that are as inane as the wife.

For instance, there is one scene that takes place in a welfare office that is supposed to reinforce the idea that

Michael is the little guy trying to battle the evil system. Michael comes into over-exaggerated mayhem and tries to set things straight. When he speaks, everyone is suddenly silent. Perhaps they know he is the star of the movie? Michael defies the bureaucracy. He yells at the authority. Whoopee for Michael. The crowd goes "Yea!" without much conviction. Nobody is aroused. Where's Al Pacino when we need him?

The movie picks up during the running races. Unfortunately, instead of focusing on the relation between Michael and the other runners, the movie focuses on Michael vs. external forces, such as his coach, his boss, and the entire establishment. His animistic relationship with the coach is the height of the sublime. At one point you think his coach is going to throw banana peels to make Michael fall.

The movie is doubly insulting for us Canadians. To try and appeal to American patriotism it is bound to fail and to set the movie in the Montreal Olympics, which we know too much about, was a definite error. We know that the leaves in Montreal are not multi-hued in the middle of



the summer. We also know that the winner of the marathon was not a Canadian. These flaws might pass somewhere else, but not in Canada.

In summation, the quality of Running can be judged by noting that I ran to see the movie in a sweat suit. But I walked home.

Antiques and Crafts are great success



Antiques and Collectibles

by Sylvia Kaptein

If the number of people attending the crafts and antiques festival at the Halifax Forum last weekend was any indication, the festival was a tremendous success. Saturday afternoon packed and, from reports, it seemed that Friday night was even better.

The festival took place from Friday at 4 p.m. until Sunday at 5 p.m. After paying 25c admission, one could roam through the craft displays in the rink area as well as the antiques in the hallways. Over 150 craftspeople, artists, and antique dealers from the three Maritime provinces had displays set up.

In the antique area was everything from centuries-old furniture to postcards and newspapers from the 1940's. More people were browsing than buying, which was hardly surprising if one glanced at the price tags.

The craft section contained pottery, jewelry, weaving, woodwork, batik, macrame, and many other arts. The pottery was the only disappointment as there were few displays and not much choice among the displays that were there. A possible explanation for the poor choice might have been that they were already picked over by Saturday afternoon.

Made from these crafts were Christmas decorations, toys, clothing, household items, and knick-knacks of all kinds, all of which were selling quickly.

Although sales were brisk, the craftspeople complained of not being able to make a good living from the making and selling of crafts. Prices have to be kept low or else people are unwilling to pay them.

The artists invest much time in their work and one lady said she earned only 15c an hour. Clearly this is not enough to support oneself on. Many of the craftspeople enjoy crafts as a hobby rather than a profession, with the money from their sales only supplementing income from other sources.

Surprisingly, some of these artists, like people in various other occupations, are dependent on the weather. Production almost ground to a halt this summer for one lady who painted designs on brooches, stools, and ornaments. Because of the humidity, the paint wouldn't dry and because the temperature wasn't right, the finishes bubbled and remained sticky, ruining several objects, she said.

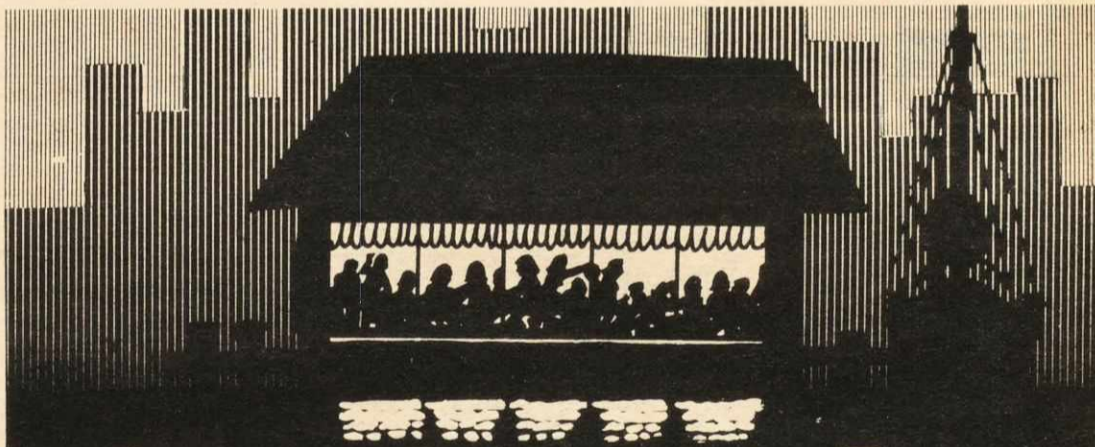
Besides being enjoyable for

those who came to see the displays, the festival seemed to be a social event for those people selling the goods, too. One of these sellers described

it as "great fun. You meet so many interesting people".

Aside from the crowds and the necessity to constantly push through them to see

anything, the craft and antiques festival was enjoyable and had much to offer both to those restricted to browsing and those with money to burn.



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