

—Henry Kwok photo

HAVE SOME MADEIRA, M'DEAR?—Luther (far right) looks a little dejected in this, one of the great drinking scenes in the history of drama. Perhaps the fact that the play is named after him could cheer him up; and you can be cheered up at the fact that the play will be in the SUB Theatre December 13 through 16.

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At the Citadel

A comedy of Plautitudes

The Citadel Theatre's next production, commencing on December 6 and running for three weeks, will be *A Funny Thing Happened on the Way to the Forum*. This hit musical comedy has been filmed as well as produced on Broadway.

Artistic Director for the play is Robert Glenn. The lead star, Danny Dee, is a member of a sixteen-person cast.

Mr. Dee appeared as Senex with Sterling Holloway and Gil Lamb, in the west coast tour of *Forum*. Last July he portrayed Alfred Doolittle in *My Fair Lady* in Indianapolis with Jane Powell.

In the 20th Century Fox movie

Star, due for release next year, Mr. Dee has a feature part with Julie Andrews.

Other members of the cast are Carl Don, Tony Marlowe, Lia Armstrong, Carole Lewis, Edward Holmes, Einar Berg, Robert Silverman, Grant Cowan, Anita Dencks, Sandy Stokes, Sandra Jean, Carmen Hylton, Leslie Carlson, Alan Jordan and Mel Tuck.

Edmonton theatre-goers will recall Mr. Silverman's portrayal of The Street Singer in *The Threepenny Opera* at the Citadel last season.

Mr. Holmes, Mr. Berg and Mr. Carlson are hold-overs from the cast of *Hedda Gabler*.

Returning to the Citadel to handle the musical direction will be Raymond Allen, the Dallas composer who was musical director for last season's production of *The Threepenny Opera* and *All The Crazy Things That Crazy People Do*.

The play will be featured Tuesday through Saturday at 8:30 p.m. with Sunday performances at 7:30 p.m. There will be one Saturday matinee at 2:30 p.m., December 9.

Reservations can be made by phoning 424-2828.

films

The Great Spy Movie, after ignominious decline, is writhing in the last convulsive throes at the Rialto.

I searched diligently for something nice to say about *Operation Kid Brother*, but there really was nothing. Neil Connery, it might be explained, is the little brother of Britain's top secret agent (Sean do you suppose?) which explains the rather clever title.

"You've been reading too many Fleming novels," he is told when he expresses some of his suspicions, but Fleming's pages never seemed to contain anything quite as contrived as the magnetic waves which paralyze the world's machinery, Moroccan anti-poison powder, or radioactive rugs.

Neil Connery is too much: besides being a world-known plastic surgeon and an eminent professor at Columbia, he is also a master in the ancient art of some wierd type of hypnosis which he uses with a liberal eye, a lip reader, fluent in ancient Arabic, a champion archer, an expert in karate (which he unleashes with no concern for his delicate hands), an unmerciful international playboy, and now, yes—oh no—a secret agent.

I am not set against personal achievement, but it is unfortunate that with all his other accomplishments he was employed as a not so brilliant secret agent when there was an off-chance that he could have disinterred the hero-doctor movie for which he seems slightly better qualified.

I didn't dislike the film because of the bad sound synchronization, the sloppy way it was put together (a twin engine plane on approach magically changes into a single after it lands), the poor acting by most concerned, or even Neil's little beard, but it did seem objectionable to drag it out beyond the limits of endurance.

The evening was partly salvaged when I moseyed on down to *Waterhole No. 3* at the Paramount, a Western satire starring James Coburn.

Waterhole No. 3 is a Good Fun Film. All the characters enjoy contributing to the confusion, and the humor is reasonably sustained throughout the movie.

It is basically a mad chase by practically every avaricious soul in the picture after four elusive gold bars taken from the U.S. Cavalry by an army sergeant and two other desperados. Coburn finds the gold buried in waterhole No. 3 but is soon confronted by a crooked sheriff, then his sexy daughter, then the original entrepreneurs who took the gold, a meek immigrant shoe-maker and the town prostitute who join the chase in a carriage, followed closely by a cavalry troop. The gold is constantly changing hands but its movement becomes incidental to the comic rivalry among the characters.

Weaknesses do occur from waterhole to waterhole, but they are adequately patched by a witty narrative ballad sung by Roger Miller.

The criminality is too farcical to be taken seriously and Coburn, in all his depravity, evokes a good deal of sneaking admiration.

He is challenged to a traditional gunfight at high noon. He calmly walks out of the saloon, takes his rifle from his saddle and guns down his opponent who has his arm poised, still waiting to draw. None of this fair-fight business when you know you can't win; it's the code of the West: "Do unto others before they do it unto you."

The sheriff is more concerned with Coburn's taking of his prize horse than the partaking of his daughter.

"Doggone it Billie, I can only keep my eye on one offence at a time," he tells her mounting his white mule and charging into the desert after Coburn. At the moment his horse is of more immediate concern than the dubious concept of his daughter's virginity.

Billie, however, is a greater believer in concepts than her father, and chases after Coburn, not for retribution, or gold, but for love. She gets possession of the gold which quickly draws Coburn.

"Take me the way I am?" he asks, implying consent to her matrimonial intentions, and she does. But soon he is on his horse about to leave. "That's the way I am," he explains.

The story winds up in a dusty cloud of confusion with Coburn peacefully trotting across the Mexican border with sheriff John's horse and the well-worn gold bars, leaving Billie and the others (and probably us) a little unsure at how it all came about.

—Gordon Auck

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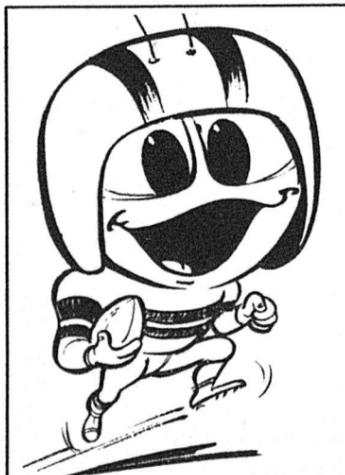
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