

Vid Flicks

As a rule I tend to avoid political issues in movies, but every so often a film comes along that is entertaining enough to help you ride roughshod (whatever that means) over the nasty bits.

One such film is *Walker*, the (sort of) true to life depiction of the life and times of William Walker - 19th century American military man, politician, visionary in the most twisted sense of the word. Basically, Walker espouses views that the American way is dreamt about by everyone the world over, and his calling (by God and all on the side of right) in life is to bring democracy to the third world, whether they want it or not. Bankrolled by a shipping magnate, Walker and an underqualified group of mercenaries (under the guise of freedom fighters) travel down to South America, taking advantage of a civil war to wheedle their way into power. The land is valuable to the businessman, as it constitutes overland passage between Atlantic and Pacific oceans - but Walker soon goes off the deep end and executes the puppet office he's set up and names himself President. When he becomes too difficult to handle his supply line is broken off and he soon runs out of arms and conveniences, allowing rebels to gain a foothold.

Ed Harris plays William Walker with maniacal glee - the puritanical, unflinching, uncompromising figure is shown for his absurdity. Director Alex Cox (*Repo Man*, *Sid & Nancy*) has many quirks which he incorporates into the characters and situations - (ie. one character has a wound in his arm which seems never to heal - until it simply falls off at the end of the film - as well as hilarious anachronism - the "freedom fighters" are rescued by a Marine Helicopter at the conclusion). During the closing credits Cox points at the continued American interference in South America, choosing news clips and Reagan speeches and so on.

UNB Film Society: "8 & 1/2"

Federigo Fellini's *Eight and a Half* (1963) will be shown this weekend (16-17 February) in Tilley Hall by the UNB Film Society.

By the time Fellini came to direct this film, he had established himself as one of the major artists of wide-screen cinematography, and he had assembled a troupe of extraordinary actors and technicians with whom to collaborate. One might reasonably have expected him to produce a major work at this stage, and indeed, if an Academy Award and a Moscow Film Festival Grand Prize, together with the New York Film Critics Award are sufficient proof, *Eight and a Half* is a masterpiece.

The Film's title refers to its place in the Fellini canon: this was work number eight and a half (two short works comprised the fraction). This reflective quality is continued in the subject matter, which concerns the separate struggles of a middle-aged film maker to complete an ambitious project which is beyond his vitiated creative powers. Various conflicts are driving Guido toward a crisis. His producer is urging him to create an epic feature; Guido is possessed by a desire to convey the essential truth of reality. Tormented by his wife (Aimee), hounded by his mistress (Milo), he seeks the inspiration offered by a beautiful actress (Cardinale). Inevitably, he retreats into his past, seeking the sources of his own drives and energies, and finally achieves re-birth curled up under a table at a press conference with a revolver pressed to his temple. This frees him from the nightmare images generated by his relationships with his parents, the Church, women, and his craft. Surreal, symbolic, and convoluted, the film has been likened to Dante's *Inferno* -- although Fellini himself has described it as "something between a muddled visit to a psychiatrist and an examination of a disordered conscience." It is also an exploration of its medium of production. Sound stage buzzers, arc lights, cameras, and other mechanical devices of cinematography constantly intrude upon the narrative, as the film strives to encompass its own creation. The final scene actually unites the entire cast and crew of *Eight and a Half* in a lunatic dance around a gigantic spaceship launching platform.

Fellini's apparent absorption in this rather autobiographical story and its attendant fantasies invites charges of self-indulgence and narcissism; fortunately his wild, manic eye and his flair for the grotesque are fascinating even in his most introspective sequences. Moreover, his images as subject matter, personal though they may be, function as universal symbols within the controlled sphere of the film, making *Eight and a Half* not so much a personal *Inferno* as a human comedy.

DIRECTOR: Fellini CINEMATOGRAPHER: Gianni de Venanzo

CAST: Marcello Mastroianni (Guido Anselmi) Anouk Aimee (Luisa Anselmi) Sandro Milo (Carla) Claudia Cardinale (Claudia) Madeleine Lebeau (the actress) Barbara Steele (Gloria Moran) Guido Alberti (Pace, the producer) Bruno Agostino (Bruno Agostino) and many more, including the entire crew!

press release

In lieu of a second review, I though I'd give you a list of my 11 all-time favorite films which you can't go wrong with if you rent on video:

1. Videodrome
2. Eraserhead
3. The Shining
4. Slaughterhouse 5
5. Pink Floyd - The Wall
6. Sid & Nancy
7. The Exorcist
8. Altered States
9. Birdy
10. Bladerunner
11. A Clockwork Orange

eric hill

Reading by Jim Smith

Wild East and Gallery Connexion present a reading by Canadian poet Jim Smith on Tuesday, February 20 at 7:30 at Gallery Connexion in Fredericton.

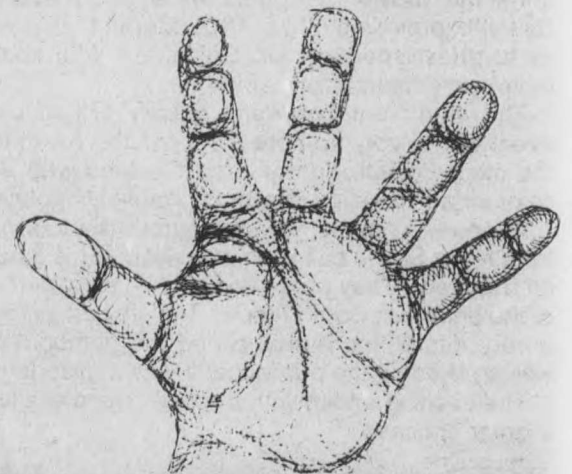
From *Surface Structures* to *Convincing Americans*, Jim Smith's poetry has been described as political, adventurous and challenging. Experimenting with rhythm, imagery and a philosophical sense of consciousness, Smith handles sensitive issues in both the political and social context. Many of his poems focus on the plight of people and the state of affairs in North and South America. Smith writes with clarity of thought without reaching beyond the realm of his personal experiences.

Apart from his writing, Jim Smith has been active in municipal politics and was an integral member of *Artica*, a Canadian based organization which has successfully initiated a dialogue between writers and artists in Canada and Nicaragua.

Gallery Connexion is located in downtown Fredericton, behind the Justice Building. This reading is open to the public with no admission charge and will be followed by an 'Open Set'. This event is made possible by the Canada Council, with the assistance of the Centre for Art Tapes in Halifax.

Wild East

Zastrozzi to play at UNB



The Canadian amateur debut of playwright George F. Walker Zastrozzi, *the master of Discipline*, took place last night at Memorial Hall. Answering a question that many had asked themselves since the first posters went up: "Is it a play, a movie or a martial arts show." If you had said play you would have been correct and if you get a chance to see it, then you will be very pleased with the magnificent interpretation of this work.

Zastrozzi is play about good versus evil, the insane vs. the sane and the master vs the servant. Set in a fictional Italy of the 1890's, it is the tale of a one complex man (Zastrozzi) who seeks to dispense his own form of justice on a more simple man (Verezzi). However there is a nemesis who seeks to protect Verezzi, and this is Victor. Victor represents a complete opposite to Zastrozzi. Where Zastrozzi has a plan, Victor makes it up as he goes along. Victor made a promise to Verezzi's father to protect him always. Even though he was unable to keep his own promise to God, he does quite well to avoid breaking this new promise. To add spice to the whole story we have two love interests that are as opposite as Zastrozzi and Victor. The scheming Matilda, who loves Zastrozzi, and the virtuous Julia who loves life. Rounding out the small cast in Bernardo, Zastrozzi's thug, a simple man who does what he is told.

The very talented actors who portray these characters have been expertly directed by Linda Macnutt, a graduate student in the English department. She has been the inspiration behind this show for close to a year now. The producer of the show is Dr. Kathleen Scherf, a recent addition to the English department, she has been a driving force in getting funding for the show and in keeping diplomatic relations all around. Finally, we have the Technical Director, Dr. Edward Mullaly. He has used this production as a practical experience for the students of his English 3150 class. This class has benefitted from his knowledge of set construction, painting and lighting. The very small class has had to therefore had to assume many roles in the course of this production. They have been at times stage managers, light and sound technicians, props people, set builders and painters.

Zastrozzi runs two more nights, tonight and tomorrow in Memorial Hall. Showtime is 8:00 p.m. and tickets are only \$2.00, budget priced with the student in mind.

richard renaud

Visiting Arts Program

As part of the Canada Council Visiting Artists' Programme, David Alexander will present a slide illustrated talk about his paintings at The Beaverbrook Art Gallery on February 20 at 12:30 p.m. This programme is offered free of charge.

The Beaverbrook Art Gallery recently purchased a large colourful canvas by Alexander entitled *One Foot In, One Foot Out*, 1988. This painting adds depth to the Gallery's collection of contemporary Canadian prairie landscape by western Canadian artists such as Ivan Eyre and Wynona Mulcaster.

Alexander's unrestrained, gestural manner and lyrical use of color in his paintings suggest references to the work of Helen Frankenthaler, Hans Hofmann, Jack Bush and the German Expressionists. It has been described as "straddling the line between landscape and abstraction"

Alexander presently lives in Saskatoon.

This programme is part of the 1990 Canada Council sponsored Visiting Artists Programme at The Beaverbrook Art Gallery. Future programmes include Wyn Geleynse, March 13; Richard Mueller, April 20; and Gemey Kelley, June 1.

For further information, please contact:

Tom Smart,
Curator, 458-8545

press release

editorial comment;

if any of you are
Halifax fairing
next weekend,
be sure to catch
Fredericton's own
DRUIDS at the
Flamingo Club
good luck guys!

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