

By Herman Surkis

Rascals a smash, but Union Gap & Witness Inc. bomb

The Rascals, Union Gap, Witness Inc., righteousness, teenage tears and plagiarism! That just about sums up the performance at Maple Leaf Gardens last Friday night.

A local musical transplant from Saskatoon, Witness Incorporated, aptly showed the 4,000 spectators why Canada has not yet made it.

Their uncontrolled volume hardly made up for their lack of originality and talent. The singer leapt around the stage banging his tambourine. He bounced up on the amps, danced about, but unfortunately he only occasionally tried to sing.

The only enthusiastic response from the audience came when the

sound system broke down.

Gary Puckett and the Union Gap were better than I had expected, but it's impossible to reassemble their Hollywood studio sound on the stage.

Puckett looked uncomfortable holding his guitar throughout the performance. His voice during Young Girl, Woman Woman, Lady Willpower, lacked the mellow quality of his records, but several numbers from their first album proved enjoyable. The group tried a new departure for their album with a 'head' number that got peculiar reactions from some of the audience around me.

During the 15-30 minute intermission I talked with the Rascals organ-

ist and chief composer Felix Carriere.

"We want to put out a record Nov. 5 because its called A Ray of Hope," said Felix, "and that is exactly what we think of the election. If there is anything needed in that election it is 'a ray of hope'."

We talked about the group's having been together so long when most groups have changed several members by the end of their first year (one can hardly use the adjective 'Young' with the rascals anymore). Felix felt that the group's common point of view on many matters is probably the reason for their getting along.

"You won't do anything unless your head is together. Everybody is getting their heads together and realizing that they can do a lot of good things," he said.

On stage the Rascals' polished sound was a contrast to what comes from many another group. Their repertoire ranged from good time music to hand clappin' soul.

An hour was not enough for a group of the Rascals calibre. One of the inferior groups before them should have been cut from the show.

On Nov. 15 James Brown returns to Maple Leaf Gardens. I hope that his dynamic talents will be given ample time.

"
*living off
human
flesh*
"

By David McCaughna

When actress Anna Karina was married to director Jean-Luc Godard someone asked her why he hides always behind his dark glasses. She answered, "It's not that his eyes are too weak. It's that his universe is too strong."

For many viewers, Godard's latest film *Weekend*, at Cinecity, will prove so strong and relentless that they will be unable to sit through it. In this brilliant film, Godard's most didactic to date, he slams the audience in the face constantly. Yet for all its violence and cruelty Godard had created a true cinematic poem.

The film concerns the weekend journey of a bourgeois Parisian couple to the wife's family in the country. But it is a Dantesque journey through the modern inferno. The film is a brutal indictment against the bourgeois ethics which prevail today. Corrine and Roland, a selfish and unloving couple leave their apartment in Paris and the facade begins to crack. Below, on the street, they casually watch a deadly battle between car owners. They are anxious to get to Corrine's parents where they want to get money to satisfy their shallow wants.

In a lengthy scene we watch a shadowy Corrine in her underwear sitting on a desk describing to her lover in coldly clinical terms a three-way orgy that was climaxed with a man breaking eggs between her legs. She can't even decide if it was real or a dream.

They set out on the French country-side where the roads

"
*would you
rather
get laid by
Johnson or
Mao*
"

Godard creates a cinematic poem



have become clogged with burning cars and blood-stained bodies. This has no impact upon the characters. There is a superb single-tracking shot lasting over a quarter-of-an-hour that follows the couple through a colossal traffic jam that juxtaposes absurd comedy with horrific scenes of death.

Roland and Corrine move from incident to incident, each with increasing violence and horror and each a separate entity unto itself. They set fire to Emily Bronte dressed as Alice in Wonderland. They are forced to give a lift to a miracle-worker and his girl-friend to whom they express their greatest wants in life: naturally blonde hair, a St. Laurent dress, an expensive car and a weekend with James Bond. But the scene suddenly evaporates and we move on to the next episode.

The scene in which Corrine and Roland murder her mother is a gruesome sequence where waves of the mother's blood flow over the skinned body of a duck. But this is not the ultimate horror.

Roland and Corrine are captured by a hippy-guerilla band living in a forest and carrying on a battle against bourgeois society. Living off human flesh, the band performs atrocious cruelties upon victims to break down their middle-class morality. They rape one girl with a fish. Roland is murdered by the band watched by the unsympathetic Corrine and the film ends with Corrine, now a part of the band, happily

munching upon the meat of some English tourists mixed with her husband's.

During a part of the film when Corrine and Roland are trying to hitch lifts with passing cars, one occupant poses the question, "Would you rather get laid by Johnson or Mao?", and this, in part, symbolises the point of *Weekend*: the choice between revolution or the status quo; the move from the brutal shallow morality and life of western civilization today to the search for a new order.

Godard is constantly playing tricks and games with his audience. The film is filled with bloody mangled bodies which the audience rarely flinches at but when a live pig has its throat cut upon the screen and when a swan is decapitated the audience's reaction is one of repulsion. We have accepted the murder of human beings, says Godard, but can't accept the death of a lowly animal.

In the film violence and evil are tolerated, in fact, accepted. Roland sits comfortably in the grass while a passing stranger casually rapes his wife in a ditch. When a girl's lover is killed in a collision with a tractor, the girl thinks more of the ruined car with its high price than of her dead lover.

The film only lags when two-garbage men face the camera and in long monologues state their cases against the system. Here the propaganda becomes too blatant and too verbose. This is the only occasion in the film

when Godard, who throughout the film has brilliantly meshed art and ideas, breaks down and allows the film to drift into straight, boring polemics.

Godard never lets his audience forget that they are watching a film. At one point when the going gets pretty rough Roland complains for having taken such a lousy role. We are always aware that Roland and Corrine are moving through a world populat-

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*strong
and
relentless*
"

ed by actors. When Corrine expresses mild distaste at Roland's setting to Emily Bronte she passes it off by telling her that it doesn't make any difference since she was an illusionary character, and later on in the film she turns up as part of the audience in a barn-yard piano concert. Jean-Paul Leaud appears first as Saint Just and later as a modern boy-friend singing a silly love-song into a telephone.

Godard has quoted in his films this sentence from Novalis: "The world becomes a dream . . . and the dream becomes a world." And in *Weekend* with its poetic structure, its beauty, horror, and its humour, it is the world transformed into a dream where art and criticism have become one.

Film was once defined by Godard as "the truth 24 times a second" and *Weekend* is Godard's truth transformed in a brilliant and revolutionary film. It is a film that nearly defies criticism.

At the end of the film Godard tells us that this is "the end of the world" and that it is also "the end of cinema". But I doubt if this is his ultimate statement to the world. Already Godard has completed two new films since *Weekend*, one about Paris and one with The Rolling Stones.

Wind in the Willows - bad

By Herbert Hilderley

The *Wind in the Willows* is a group of seven musicians who play the backgrounds to all their music with a large variety of instruments including piccolos, bassoon, harpsicord and kazoo. This is an admirable aim in today's age of studio musicians. The arrangements on their first album, "The Wind in the Willows" are generally well done showing both control and balance. String arrangements by group member Wayne Kirby are excellent.

But the album suffers from two very serious flaws. The vocals by one of the male singers are obnoxious. His voice is off key and flat on "Moments Spent" and on several other cuts. This could be excused in the face of the excellent voice of Deborah Harry and some very good harmony on cuts as "There's But One Truth Daddy" and "So Sad."

However, the group's second major fault cannot go unnoticed: their material is very poor. Most of the songs are their own and although lyrically sufficient and at times almost poetic they are mostly monotonous and musically repetitive. They do a very melodious harmonic version of Don Everly's "So Sad" but it seems the only memorable song on the album. There is also a moving reading from Kenneth Grahame's "The Wind in the Willows."