

Blushing Brides no virgins

by Paul Creelman

The Blushing brides are no rock and roll virgins. They demonstrated their experience last Friday at the new Moon, where the Brides were double billed with Spice.

A huge poster on the back wall spelled it all out in no uncertain terms. The Blushing Brides were "North America's tribute to the Rolling Stones." If you couldn't afford to see the real Rolling Stones, then the Blushing Brides would be a good substitute.

The Brides were good, both technically and artistically. They looked like the Stones, sounded like the Stones, and even acted like the Stones. The music was so good that I couldn't help wondering why such topnotch musicians were prostituting their ability by imitating. It seems to be a prime waste of top-notch Canadian talent merely to copy someone

else's type of sound note for note and shaggy haircut for shaggy haircut.

Maybe the people who were cheated that Friday night were not the audience, but the musicians. Certainly, everybody in the audience had a great time, listening to their favorite songs of two decades. But I wonder how the people in the band feel like after every show, knowing that they are only riding on the coattails of a band that really made it.

Spice, a local band that is a favorite in college circles here, played two sets of Beatles music. Songs like "I Wanna Hold Your Hand" and "Love You Too" were light ballast for the Bride's heavy rock and roll medley's with "Can't Get No Satisfaction" and "Midnight Rambler," among others. The addition of recent additions of another guitar player to Spice has brought the number of

musicians in the band to four, exactly the same as the fab four. Spice pulled out all the stops for this engagement, dressing up in Beatle suits with skinny ties; and I noticed that the lead guitarist and singer Kevin MacMichael even seems to have gone to the bother of a George Harrison-like haircut. In many ways, Spice's show was very similar to that of the Blushing Brides. They didn't have the fantastic lighting set-up, or the move-for-move versimilitude of the other band, but nonetheless, Spice looked and sounded like the Beatles.

Just think — both the Beatles and the Rolling Stones in one night! What a combination! What a way to pack in the crowds! What a way to waste talent of some of our best musicians!!



HARTT/DAL PHOTO

It's my turn and loving couples

by Frank McGinn

Relationship movies have evolved into two species: those that feature long, lyrical interludes in which the lovers cavort while pop tunes say it all in the background, and those that don't. The Type A relationship movie is light-hearted but sincere in a manner which suggests that romance is important, mental anguish is loveable and can

lead to some darn funny predicaments and it can mostly all be worked out. The Type B relationship movie is sincere but light-hearted in a manner which suggests that self-actualization is important, mental anguish is routine and makes people do strange, foolish things and you can never really know for sure. Both types invariably deal in rich, successful career persons, as money worries would only distract

them from their love life worries.

At the Odeon Oxford, *Loving Couples* is a fine specimen of the bouncy-comic-optimistic type. James Coburn and Shirley MacLaine are an attractive, middle-aged married couple at a standard impasse. She is restless and seeking while he is complacently settled in what he imagines to be a perfect life. He shows more concern for his job than for her needs, a cardinal sin against the Cupid deity, and on schedule, he is punished. Shirly is swept off her feet by a romantic, young dog with good timing and winning ways (Stephen Collins). To comfort themselves, and to give the movie the symmetry which makes it worthwhile, the husband and the discarded girlfriend of the dog become idyllic lovers. Colourful complications ensue as the warm, crazy, loveable quartet group and re-group themselves until they've finally worked it out.

The loving couples are appealing human beans so it is no pain to observe their trials. James Coburn parodies his own rafish charm with refreshing candor, flashing his dazzling smile on cue and then simpering hideously when complimented on it. Shirley MacLaine barely has to exert herself to be straight and likeable. On the opposing team, Stephen Collins has a handsome, boyish charm that can't be denied even when it is apparent that both the character and the actor are relying on it to see them through. And, my personal favorite, Susan Sarandon is not only lovely and not as dumb as she seems, but she is in full control of the cutest and most expressive nose since Cleopatra.

But apart from the personal

attractiveness of its stars, *Loving Couples* reverts too much to stereotype. Even allowing that there are two different couples, are two different gushy musical interludes really necessary? And although Sally Kellerman is wonderfully funny as an obsessed, vengeful Beverly Hills matron, the comedy is often strained and flat. Wife to husband: "You're the only person I know who combines a business trip with an ego trip." does not just ring false, it isn't even accurate. (Who doesn't combine a business trip with an ego trip of some sort?) And, mainly, I would have liked and respected it more if it hadn't ended the way I was afraid it would. (I won't reveal what happens except to say that both women ditch their new men because it just wasn't meant to be and the husband wins back his wife by doing something crazy and romantic.)

Meanwhile, at the Odeon Hyland, *It's My Turn* is a prime example of the alternate type of relationship movie, the even, humourously-mellow, uncertain kind. Jill Clayburgh stars and it is her turn to try and figure out where her life is going. She has a PhD in mathematics, a comfortable, live-in boyfriend, an offer of a job in a different city and a potential new lover with whom she may really connect (Michael Douglas). In true slice-of-wisp fashion, the movie follows her through a weekend during which nothing linear develops — she goes to a wedding, she meets and is quickly drawn to Douglas, she goes shopping — and leaves her with nothing definite decided. She may know herself a little better, she may get what she wants if she can only identify it; then again, she may not.

You know that this is a movie not into pressuring its audience because it saves the big, musical number, "It's My Turn" (Diana Ross) for the closing credits, which 90% of the people miss. Director Claudia Weil, still one of the few women in that profession, is of the laid back, soak-it-in school. She does not force home many points and you never catch her trying to be funny. The movie unfolds passively, the characters interreact, we get to know a little bit about how they feel, and that's it. What did you expect from life, answers?

This approach is well-suited to Jill Clayburgh because the camera loves her and she is beautiful and strong and fragile and funny just doing ordinary things like carrying in the groceries or watching a ball game. She falls in love with great warmth and vivacity and the romantic scenes are nice in themselves. But *It's My Turn* is still more an idea for a movie than the movie itself. Too little dramatic contrivance is as ineffective as too much. If you want to look at life, take a busride — from art we expect a little organization. The funniest thing in the movie is Charles Grodin, there is something about his face when he watches Clayburgh, and he is criticised on this account. So that stops the main laughs. The silliest thing in the movie is the old timers ballgame, in which twenty or so real players like Mickey Mantle and Whitey Ford are trotted out to no apparent purpose.

You'd expect to find both these movies on some movie-of-the-week, and you probably wouldn't turn either of them off. But you might fall asleep and have dream relationships that are just as true to life.

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