

King Heavy at York

The King Heavy film festival is not three long hours of one full commercial after another. It is a film of edited commercials that have been placed in a thought-out order, not to influence the viewers, but in the words of one of the editors, "to expose advertisers as they are".

King Heavy is the work of Paul Mandel, David Shute and Jouko Salomaa. Having been lucky enough to acquire 16 hours of television commercials intended for the garbage, they spliced chopped and patched up a picture of what Madison Avenue thinks we are.

The best thing about King Heavy is not so much just the ads as the way they are put together. For example, there is an extended section where we see dozens of detergents and close ups of Oxodol and Tide and soon you can't tell one green crystal from another and you don't know what is saving you how much what. Another memorable section is when a string of 30 minutes of nothing but food commercials had people hollering for hamburgers, pizzas, sandwiches anything!

Sexual overtones abound all over. There is Clairol's nice and easy, Planter's dry roasted nuts and rivers of the strangest looking chocolate, caramel, nougat and cherry cream (Caramel Malt-Creamy chewy!).

King Heavy is on view Thursday February 11 at 7:30 pm in lecture hall two room 1. Admission is one dollar at the door.



The Chicago rock rip-off

By BRIAN PEARL

Does anybody out there know of a rich young rock group with a good future that could use \$100,000 worth of slightly used Traynor sound amplification equipment? I just happen to know of a major rock band that's going downhill on roller skates — They're called Chicago, and they probably won't be needing theirs much longer.

Last Monday, Columbia records and Martin Onrot Associates conspired to ruin my week with a show in Maple Leaf Garage and a new double-headed album that just goes round on the turn-table and lays there going nowhere. Fortunately, I managed to avoid a press conference for the boys from the band at the Westbury Hotel on Monday afternoon.

The show on Monday night at Maple Leaf Garbage Can began when it should have finished and sounded like it really did finish before it began, or at least the band felt so. The delay, which could have spelled the end of Martin Onrot as a dependable rock promoter in this city had it gone on much longer took then an unbelievable four hours. It was caused by a hassle with the equipment at the Rainbow Bridge followed by a truck breakdown en route to the Peace Bridge in Buffalo where prior arrangement sped the equipment-laden lorry on it's way to arrive at Sonic Boom Gardens at Ten-thirty. By twelve the amplifiers, speakers and instruments, (which looked great) were ready to go. And it did go — all around that cavernous arena and back again to produce the most screwed-up sound I've heard since the God-awful Doors concert at the Coliseum (or "Garbage Can Cow-Palace" as Peter Townshend of The Who called it) two years ago.

There was, however, an amazing cone of sound the width of the stage (about thirty feet) and about twice that in length, within which those lucky people who payed six dollars and change for their seats on the ice surface could actually hear the words of the songs and all the instruments playing separately. What they heard was about two hours of Chicago's Greatest Hits from their first two albums. The odd song from the new album was interjected just to let us all know how well their new, lacklustre style goes with their new lackadaisical music.

But, it has to be admitted that the very lazy twenty minutes of the show, when they played "Ballet for a Girl from Buchannon", also known as "Make Me Smile", and then two encores (the audience was deliriously happy to hear some music at last): a repeat of "25 or 6 to 4" and "I'm a Man" both of which

managed to sound like the Chicago of old and snatched victory from the jaws of disaster. All 15,000 of us at the show left at two in the morning much more tired out and just a bit happier than when we arrived at eight-thirty.

And now, a few words about the real object of this visitation to our fair city and its richest young citizens by those self-righteous regents of rip-off rock, an album set called Chicago III. Chicago produces one double album every year and this one was right on time, and right off in every other respect.

The music is either a pale imitation of their own past albums, which were both strong and original, or an ever paler version of someone else's music. The Beatles, Crosby, Stills and Nash (and Young) and even Superstar, by Rice and Webber, are all echoed in instrumental technique, arranging or the tunes themselves. Completely gone is the driving Chicago sound of "25 or 6 to 4" and it's replacement seems to be some really crappy instrumental hashes like "Motor boat to Mars". An incredibly gross suite called "An Hour in the Shower" replaced "Ballet for a Girl from Buchannon" with all the talent of George Plimpton playing quarterback instead of Jonny Unitas.

But the really rotten part of this album isn't the music, it's the minds of the musicians. When Chicago came out two years ago with their first album after the disastrous Democratic convention of '68, their songs really touched the deep confusion and anger of the times. And their second album, with "It Better End Soon" also barely reached into the revolutionary ethic of the growing American urban guerrilla movement. But this time out, Chicago has blundered, tripped and dropped the mask. They USED that convention to launch their national popularity and USED the leftist revolutionaries to keep their next album of the Billboard top 100. But Chicago III is a failure, both as music and as propaganda. There are a few feeble efforts to tie into the current fear of pollution, particularly in a sophomoric opus called "Progress" which uses the sounds of car horns and air drills (how original!). But the place where Chicago is really at is filling Maple Leaf Gardens at high prices for an impossible show. Martin Onrot knew that the gardens was unsuitable for anything but athletics or silent cinema, and Chicago didn't give a damn if anyone heard their music or not, just as long as the people paid their admissions and the guys in the band got their egos stroked.

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