

'A Symphony of Horror' - food for fright

Just as the 1933 version of *King Kong* is memorable and has been influential, even if laughable in parts, *Nosferatu* has power in its own way. Although crude at times and without emphasis on psychological study, so important to us now, it is the first and best of the vampire films. It succeeds in creating an atmosphere of supernatural horror (Bela Balazs spoke of it in terms of "glacial draughts of air from the beyond"), and it has influenced such people as Ingmar Bergman (*The Magician*) and Jean-Luc Godard (*Alphaville*). F.W. Murnau, the film's director, is considered by many critics to be the greatest of German film giants.

The unauthorized version of Bram Stoker's *Dracula*, year of the

film is 1838. The story concerns a young married clerk who goes from Bremen to the Carpathian Woods to negotiate real estate matters with Nosferatu at his castle. Nosferatu, a skinny, macabre chap whose very appearance indicates he's up to something nefarious, spends days in a coffin and nights sucking blood from unfortunate victims. The clerk becomes a prey, diminishing night by night, until escaping and returning to his wife. Nosferatu pursues the young man by ship, infecting during passage the entire crew with dire pestilence. Eventually the ship reaches Bremen and Nosferatu meets the clerk's wife, who detaining the vampire in her bedroom after daybreak, effects his destruction.

Paul Rotha writing in *The Film Till Now* (first published in 1930) said *Nosferatu* "would certainly never be shown except privately", and Mordaunt Hale reviewing for *The New York Times* in 1929

The Film Society - Eighth Showing - Head Hall Auditorium — Sat. Jan. 29, 1977 8:00 p.m.; Sun. Jan 30 6:30 and 9:00 p.m.

Nosferatu, eine Symphonie des Grauens [*Nosferatu, a Symphony of Horror*] or *The Vampire* Germany, 1922 Silent. Directed by F.W. Murnau.

threw rotten tomatoes at *Nosferatu* by saying damagingly that "it is the sort of thing one could watch at midnight without its having much effect upon one's slumbering hours". But we today at least

can be amused by the film, maybe accepts its defects open-mindedly, and very possibly appreciate it as a technical achievement for 1922.

Nosferatu was shot on location, an unusual practice as the 20's began, with good landscape shots and views of a real castle. Camera angle is used to establish macabre mood, and effective use is made of projected negative and one-turn-one picture device (which produces an effect of erratic, jerky movement, giving the phantom coach a bizarre appearance as it moves through the woods). Quite rightly, Lotte H. Eisner in her book *The Haunted Screen* speaks of nature participating in the action of the film, of every shot having a precise function, and of the excellent camera work of Fritz Arno Wagner.

Although the film is a perfect expression of Expressionism, it excels most in use of the camera to portray horror. Moreover, Murnau fully understood how visual power can be obtained through editing.

Nosferatu is a film to feed our appetite for the supernaturally horrible, as *King Kong* caters to our taste for fright by menacing natural monsters. Also, seeing it is a must for anyone caring about growth of the film, especially in the vampire genre, and for anyone who as a collector of memorabilia of all sorts is interested in what a relatively distant year has to offer.

Admission by subscription only. \$5 for six films. One guest permitted. Next showing Feb. 12-13: Renoir's classic *Rules of the Game*.

Canadians urged-give their own a chance

The music is fast and loud down at the River Room this week with a Canadian group, Skarecrow, setting the pace.

Formed in October of 1976, the group offers music of a Patti Smith variety. Ace Briand is the lead vocalist and percussionist Wilf Rene is on lead guitar, Terry Sept is on drums with Krys Val on base guitar and harmonica. Behind the scenes are Bill Ross taking care of Audio and Bernie Landry managing Video.

Krys Val, speaking for the group had several comments to make about the reception which a Canadian group receives from the audience, the promoters, and the American customs.

"Canadian audiences sit on their hands" were his comments on audience receptivity. Whereas the American audiences were less critical and more willing to listen. Val considers this one factor in the controversy which most Canadian musicians have with Canadian promoters and DJ's. "They'll copy the American hit charts and to bypass the law regulating that a



certain percentage of Canadian music must be given air time, they'll only use proved and popular hits, there's no way they will give a new group a chance". Val said "this is why so many top notch Canadian groups have to

make their debut in the States." However, according to Val, there are problems involved there also, in that for the past four years the American customs has been vetoing any Canadian groups attempting to cross the border for

their American "gigs". "Lloyd and Doyle are the head assholes at the American Customs" said Val, who then cited an example. Attempting to cross the border for a showing on New Years Eve in a club, they were refused entrance

for a variety of "trumped up" excuses. Val said they had the proper papers and visas and were compelled to get a number of others. Once these were procured, the previous ones were considered outdated.

The group's members are from a variety of provinces across Canada and are a prime example of good Canadian music. They do not consider themselves 'club' material in that they have contrived their own style, and due to the audiences' preferences are sometimes compelled to play music other than their own.

In the offing, there are plans to cut an album once they reach the States. "I'm a Canadian and proud of it" said Val but the record companies here just won't give us a chance".

The manager of the River Room speaks highly of this group and is pleased at the number of people who have been in since they started. They will be here until Saturday, so for an example of what Canada can do in the musical category, "truck on down"!



Luis Nadeau

Images of France

A series of photographs by Fredericton photographer Luis Nadeau are now on display in the Memorial Hall Arts Centre.

Mr. Nadeau attended the Seventh International Meeting of Photography in Arles, France last summer as a representative of the National Association for Photographic Art (NAPA).

The photos being shown are a pictorial record of the photo-

grapher's experiences while attending workshops and travelling in France, and are indicative of the artist's characteristic candid style of photography.

Mr. Nadeau is Staff Photographic Technician at the New Brunswick Provincial Archives on campus.

The show closes Monday, January 31.

There is some good news some bad about Walter L. and Alden Nowlan's new play "The Dollar Woman" appearing tonight and Saturday at the Playhouse.

The cast of "The Dollar Woman" contains some well chosen roles. Warwick Learning and Sullivan both gave excellent portrayals of their characters, especially Warwick, difficult to hear. Several of the other actors, each had were delivered their backs to the audience. I do not query on grounds, but it did make a respective small boy and voices almost inaudible. Stephen's character seemed occasionally.

ACT 1 contained too much dialogue and not enough action. The middle of the act a mass of information was to be assimilated but which seem to have a consequence. Consequently audience began to wander. The first Act 1 successfully interested audience again, and led willingly into Act 2.

ACT 2 was the most successful act as far as speed, dialogue and purpose are concerned. The fault, as in Act 1 was that there was a great deal of assimilation no breathing space in which to think. Specifically, Train's dialogue in the "court" scene thought since it was an opportunity given to the audience to perceive a view opposite Lewis White's. (Train's dialogue, incidentally, was too long point was made by the example.) The additional argument between Al Lewis White detracted from an important speech. Alicia's taunt at Lewis that she would find herself a pauper's auction should jail was important —

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