

SO MY FRIEND promises she'll take me out for lunch after the all-night festival that was my birthday party. We arrange to meet at *La Boheme* for a feast to bust the massive king kong hangover down to the ground.

## FOOD

*La Boheme*  
Dresden Row

I'm sitting there, waiting for her to arrive (why are women always late when they make dates with me? maybe I'm the one who's always early — hmm, Freudian, eh?), writing letters and drinking coffee to kill the attitude I've been building all morning.

She shows up about two letters later, and the two of us rip through the menu in a feeding frenzy of mythic proportions. We order two different salads, one with lots of green pepper, onion and tons of feta cheese, the



# Lambency at La Boheme

other a splendor of shaved almonds and juicy chunks of melon. She orders dressing on the side in some weird cinematic attempt to prove her high-maintenance factor is equal to the when Harry met Sally thaang.

The waitress is totally understanding when we fashion our own ice teas out of crushed ice and hot tea (there was none on the menu, OK). We didn't order any wine, but I'm now (like right now) drinking a stellar, and yes, politically correct, Miguel Torres Sauvignon Blanc from Chile (if you hadn't already guessed).

We wade through the salads and take a small break before the main course. I'm staring at her and damned if I just can't figure out the human sexuality thing. Here I am with a perfectly beautiful woman who makes wicked conversation, grooving on a spectacular luncheon, and all I can think about is the person I'm supposed to meet later for a long walk through the park in the rain. The worst, but the best too I guess; it's

that bitter sweet seasonal spring action kicking in.

The tortellini I ordered and the perogies she wanted come into the picture, floating on a heavenly cloud of garlic, cheese and lots of fresh ground black pepper. The tortellini is stuffed with veal and showered with a four-fromage sauce that actually includes blue cheese - coolies for the whole weird family to enjoy. The perogies look like perogies; I don't even bother tasting them, I don't like perogies much. I'm sure they're great as far as perogies go.

For dessert, we share a hot slab of poppy seed strudel, swimming in whipped and ice cream. It's so good I eat way more than the one bite I originally promised.

Chilling over coffee at the end of the meal, I'm forced to unwrap yet another super birthday present. Wild — it's a kazoo, one of those professional models they make out of high tensile steel or something.

Scanning the crowd frequenting the dark, somewhat stilted atmosphere of the cafe, I lick my lips and then play a little post-fueling Wagner. Man, the suit-like dudes sitting in the corner totally pull some nasty faces, so I put the kazoo away. Who can't appreciate a little fine music, I ask you?

Other than the retentive crowd, *La Boheme* is red hot material. Check your kazoos at the door though.

Luckily, I made it in perfect time for that luvin stroll on the wet streets of Halifax. Now while Hope springs eternal, I only do so in late March, early April. So pick yourself up — hit *La Boheme* for bohemian treats galore.

## BY BRUCE GILCHRIST

AT THE CLIMAX of a frenzied and explicit fucking session, a phrase often to be repeated in this movie, our murderous heroine implants a rather phallic looking icepick into her male partner's neck. He dies, spurts more than blood, and the audience laughs.

## FILM

*Basic Instinct*  
Hyland Theatre

They laughed. This is not desensitization, this is pre-sensitization. And it's sick, along with most of this morbidly diseased movie.

The premise goes as such: a tough as nails, wickedly rich, and (of course!) drop-dead gorgeous woman named Catherine Trammell, played by Sharon Stone, is accused of killing her sometime lover (the icee). Michael Douglas is the pitiable San Francisco cop put on the case. Thing is, she's a writer, and she's intent upon using Douglas' character as the basis for her next book. There's also the fact that her sometime lover's death happened exactly as was written in her last thrilling book, aptly entitled 'Love Hurts'.

Whenever Douglas' character comes sniffing around, Trammell appears in various states of total undress, and likes to screw over his mind by flaunting her bisexuality at him. Using her body as a weapon she lures him away into his previous habits of vice, while getting kicks from showing off her vagina in public. Cute.

She then goes on to promise that the character modelled upon him will die at the end of her new book,

hint hint. Of course, the movie never bothers to show where she finds the time for writing because she's fucking for most of it. From her own mouth: she doesn't make love - she fucks.

This movie ends up being prurient and crass. For all the hype about the controversial sex scenes, there is very little erotica. What there is, is violent and signals a dangerous mixing of force and sex. Michael Douglas' character literally rapes a woman on screen. "That wasn't making love," she says. No shit. There are copious references to masturbation interspersed with violent sex scenes. This movie is not about sex or love, it's about fucking. I would rather switch to *Bleu Nuit* — at least it's meant to be fun.

The movie starts out holding a tone of uneasiness, but continues endlessly, not improving upon the tension, but meandering slowly to its predictable and poor conclusion. My friends and I had figured out the better part of the plot within fifteen minutes. The problem is director Paul Verhoeven (*Robocop*) doesn't know what to do with the story. He has tried to construct a reworking of Hitchcock's *Vertigo* but he rushes and rushes (probably to get all the fucking in) although the movie goes over two hours.

The pace yields little coherence and although the cinematography is quite good, the editing is horrendous in places, and the tinny music is forever trying to jar you up to the pace. The result is a fatuous, patently offensive, and sometimes boring diatribe on human sexuality. There is

## Basic Instinct is just base

no character redeemable, sexually healthy, or even close to being capable of love in this movie. It has no direction and ends up hating sex (maybe it is a film for the nineties!). When Verhoeven manages to make sex repetitive, he has lost the focus entirely.

There is a serious lack of plot advancement and although it looks really good, and Sharon Stone acts invincible, there is nothing deep to this movie. There are none of Hitchcock's layers of intrigue and terror. Many shots and themes from *Vertigo* appear in the movie: the dyed blonde hair, the car rides along the coast, the apartment on the hill in San Fran, the mixed identities and so on. But it doesn't work. Sharon Stone is no Kim Novak, Michael Douglas is no Jimmy Stewart, and most of all Paul Verhoeven is certainly no Alfred Hitchcock.

And as far as the lesbian scandal attached to this movie, it would be better to ignore it entirely. Screaming at someone not to see this film for its fleeting, yet definitely homophobic content, without having seen it first, is as moronic as Jimmy Swaggert trying to get "The Last Temptation of Christ" banned for its 'alternate' view of Christ. The best thing to do is to boycott it economically (and artistically!), not politically. Only then will this movie crawl back under its creator's rock, leaving slime trails as it does.

