

# Lights, Camera, Action!

John Barth on catatonic madness

## Film compares university to asylum

By BRIAN PEARL

Avram Avakian's film End of the Road is a mad film about madness. Based on the novel of the same name by John Barth, the film is a wierd look at two of America's wierdest institutions, the insane asylum and the university.

In the asylum we discover a world of "causes but no effects." Thanks to Doctor D, played by James Earl Jones, the patients act out their private fantasies.

In the university there are causes and effects. Fantasies are deadly and destructive elemental forces in a life where everything

but the imagination is pacified. Joe Morgan and his wife Rennie seal themselves in habit and invent rules that neither need or keep. But each depends on the other's non-. existent self-image as tough, honest and uncompromisingly modern human beings.

The protagonist who moves between these two worlds and tragically opens each to the other is Jacob Horner, a Stanford grad who goes catatonic in a railroad station after commencement because he seems to have nothing else at all to do. Played with wondrous ability by Stacey Keach,

Jake Horner lives like Orpheus in a very, very bad boy" on a black- and taste, but weakly. The the underworld; he knows he must board all day long and who cries inevitable catastrophic effects of not get involved in his phantomized, mad universe but he has to turn around and look just the

Doctor D springs Jake from his trance in the station and takes him to the Institute for Psychic Remobilization where he undergoes psychotherapy in a room that sounds like the war in Vietnam or a tropical rainforest at midnight at the flick of a switch and has a slide show that puts Expo 67 to

D shows Horner his hard-core patients; a man who writes "I am

with joy when D orders him to start all over and write "I am a very, very, very bad boy," and finally a crucified man in a ballet costume, tied to a roofbeam with his entire body weight resting on his crotch, whose only desire is to be "approached" and told: "You seem to be having a jolly good time."

D explains that the only way to wake the catatonic is to enter his dream yourself and reach him there, for he is inaccessible to or from the real world.

Jake becomes a bemusingly boring teacher of grammar at a nearby college and there he meets the Morgans. Horner falls in love with Rennie, played by Avram Avakian's wife, Dorothy Tristan. Tristan acts with great economy involvement catch up with Jake as the film tears into the climax.

Avakian has talent, especially for impressionistic cinematography. But for a man whose film editing credits include The Miracle Worker, End of the Road doesn't run as smoothly as one might expect.

The film itself is having interesting problems in Toronto. Normally receptive to innovation, independence and incipient talent, Toronto's film critics gave End of the Road a cold shoulder. Why it happened, I have no idea but End of the Road deserves better treatment than that. It's an honest film, the acting is superb, and it has some very fine moments.



End of the Road is an insight into fantasy suppression in "asylums" and universities.

### Many of us not ready for sitar's depth

By GAIL SHISTER

There it was. A thousand years of Indian culture amidst a melange of sterile plastic backdrops. The scene was the Vanier common room and what the people had gathered to see was a lecturedemonstration of Indian Sitar music by Shambu Das.

"Hey man where's the music?"

Shambu Das: "Music must affect the mind; create some mood."

After a lengthy explanation of the instrument, which was received with a mixture ranging from half-hearted interest to intense concentration, the music began. Several freaks started to move with the rhythm. They were too early and it looked it. Another group with closed eyes in desperate efforts to Be There. A few practiced breathing exercises.

Das with his sitar emenated a distinctly different feeling than one got from watching say, the late Jimi Hendrix perform.

Sitar music produced no handclapping, no screaming. After the first piece, in fact, the audience wasn't sure if it should have applauded at all. Sometimes refraining from applause displays greater respect for the artist.

He started into his next piece. You couldn't help but marvel at the sitar, glowing in its majestic if not somewhat overpowering beauty. The devotion of the man to his

music was clear from the start. Girl with the Million Dollar smile: "The only trouble with it is ya can never tell when it's over."

"Yeah. And you can never hum it the next day."

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