

Review of the controversial new Michael Douglas film 'Basic Instinct'

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The history and future of art-house cinema in Las Vegas

Part 2 of 2

by Daniel W. Duffy

The history of art films in Las Vegas can be traced back to the late '70s when the art-house theater, The Guild, was torn down and made into a parking garage.

UNLV professor Jean Decock sees a similar path for the new art-house revival in Las Vegas.

"It is doomed to failure in one way or another... unless you turn it into a social event," he said.

After a failed attempt on campus, Decock went elsewhere and helped to start the Las Vegas Film Society with a local doctor. It was actually quite popular in its early stages. Decock said that "as long as it was a social event, there was a full house. It was the thing to do." The Society would show an international or an art film on the first Thursday of

every month that was a gala event for the people of Las Vegas.

The downfall was when The Society tried to expand to more showings of these films, "to please too many people," Decock said. "From there it petered down. It died. It was no longer the social thing to do. That was the end of it."

Film professor Francisco Menendez took that social event idea one step further. "It's got to have a whole environment to it," he said, in order for an art-house film scene to succeed. "There needs to be an atmosphere where people can hang-out and watch movies."

Menendez commented that the Gold Coast has a "built-in audience" with a one mainstream/one art film combination. If the commercial film sells out, people will generally go check out the art film. He said, "Paradise 6 can almost make it. (It has) a nice environment, you can go with your buddies, sit around and drink coffee and discuss films." He also said that an ideal situation for the

Mountain View Cinema would be to have a Cafe Espresso Roma-type coffee house next door to the movie theater to draw in the fringe crowd and to have a place to exchange ideas on films.

Decock said that the rebirth of the art film in Las Vegas is not necessarily due to the fact that the tastes of the community have changed, but that the amount of theaters that need to be filled has grown.

"The scene has improved over the last three or four years because of the multiple cineplexes," Decock said. "It has improved because they had to fill these theaters with films they wouldn't have otherwise shown."

Chair of the film studies department at UNLV, Hart Wegner said that art-film theaters are not given enough time to establish themselves in Las Vegas. "It takes time for people to be conditioned to these sorts of films," Wegner said. "Impatience is one of the big prob-

lems," with the scene, as is "the lack of the promotional dollar."

Attendance at these films could be labeled as sparse, to say the least. Wegner said that these films are so terribly unattended, "that it's almost a joke." Decock added that the only way these films are advertised is word-of-mouth and that for a scene to flourish under those conditions, "is almost suicidal."

Even though there is an air of pessimism surrounding the scene, the academic film community at UNLV does support the art movement.

"The more foreign films that we show, the more people will get used to seeing foreign films," Wegner said. Decock said he is pleased with the current art-house rebirth because it can "broaden (the community's) horizon beyond the mindless action films. I'm delighted that it's happening."

Sugar sweet, Phish stink

by Jared Dean

The critically acclaimed Sugarcubes released their third album to critics and crowds last week, receiving mixed reviews for the effort. *Stick Around For Joy* is a mixture of pleasure and pain sung in classic Bjork Gudmundsottir style. The edges of the Cubes' sound seems to have been smoothed giving *Joy* its uprising, while at the same time accommodating it's downfall.

Part of the great Cube appeal is spontaneous pain, which seems to be lacking but not altogether missed. The music is melodic at times, with just enough honesty to be creative, save the preach. If your an avid fan of the Sugarcubes, depending upon the basis of your loyalty, *Stick Around For Joy* will not disappoint.

Phish, pressed upon the same label as the Cubes (Elektra), has only one thing going for them, a vacuum cleaner. Said cleaner is listed among



Cube appeal! The Sugarcubes release their latest album *Stick Around For Joy*.

ALBUM REVIEWS

Sugarcubes
Stick Around For Joy
Elektra Records

Phish
A Picture of Nectar
Elektra Records

band instruments as well as trombones, a Hammond organ, and vocals. Lot's of vocals. Everyone in the band is credited for vocals. Sad.

Phish spawn in Vermont where they took the title for the release, *A Picture Of Nectar*, from "a bar in Burlington...that

supported their early efforts." After amassing a substantial following at home, they toured nationally twice before getting signed to a label. The music lacks almost everything imaginable, but the tour sounds like a blast with "on-stage trampoline and Fisherman's Zero-Man cape." Not to mention lights, sound and a dog. It seems like some of the money put into live shows should be dumped into the music to make it more... something. Not mainstream; but Phish needs to find some stream and swim.

Computer as an artist's tool: lecture Thursday

"Cross Over the Bridge," a lecture by Bill Ritchie on the use of the computer as an artist's tool, will be sponsored by the Southwest Gas Distinguished Artist Series and the UNLV Art Department at 7:30 p.m. Thursday in the Hendrix Auditorium.

An art teacher at the University of Washington for 19 years, Ritchie first became interested in prints. He later added video and computer art. Inspired by traditional carpet and tapestry designs, Ritchie creates computer graphic prints in color and programs computers in such a way as to show his work on video display terminals.

Ritchie's works are in more than 300 private collections and 50 corporate and

public collections, including the Seattle, Tacoma, Washington and Oregon State Art Museums as well as in collections belonging to Microsoft Corporation, Seafirst Bank and Safeco Insurance Company. Four museums and the Washington State Arts Commission purchased his works in 1988, 1989 and 1990.

Ritchie has had 20 solo shows in art galleries and public institutions since the '60s. He was in group exhibitions throughout the late '60s to the present, currently showing in two travel exhibitions works done in computer and print making.

For more information call the College of Fine and Performing Arts at 597-4210.

Abbey Simon performs tonight at Ham Hall

The UNLV Music Department presents a performance of "Abbey Simon: Piano" at 8 p.m. tonight in Artemus W. Ham Concert Hall.

Recognized as one of the masters of piano, Abbey Simon has appeared with virtually every symphony orchestra and on most major recital series throughout the world.

The program will include Carl Czerny's variations on the theme by Rode "La Ricordanza," Muzio Clementi's "Sonata in F minor," Franz Schubert's "Sonata in A Major Op. 120 (Posthumous),"

Sergei Prokofiev's "Sonata in A minor Op. 28" and Frederick Chopin's "Sonata in B minor Op. 58."

Audiences have acclaimed him not only for his virtuoso technique but also for his musical insights. Simon has recorded the complete music for piano and orchestra by Rachmaninoff, the complete solo piano music of Ravel, solo works by Schumann and the complete Chopin repertoire.

Tickets are available at the Performing Arts Box Office. For more information call 739-3801.