

The Inheritors to end Foreign Film Series with a bang

by Mark Benko
staff writer

Penn State Erie, the Behrend College, will present the film *The Inheritors*, directed by Stefan Ruzowitzky, in the Reed Union Lecture Hall on Tuesday, at 7:00 p.m. This is the final film in the 2000-2001 Women's Film Series.

This internationally acclaimed, award-winning drama is set in a small Austrian town around the turn of the 20th century. When a tyrannical farm lord is brutally murdered, he completely disrupts the rigid class structure of the town by leaving his entire estate to the peasant workers he mistreated throughout his life.

The peasants seize the opportunity to escape their oppression by refusing to sell the estate to an aristocrat who intends to add it to his small empire. This refusal represents a direct threat to the other farmers in the area, who fear that other peasants may get the idea that they, too, could control their own lives.

The film is packed with ironic plot twists about the history of farmers and their attempts to subjugate the working class. The cruelty of the aristocrats is ignored by the local law enforcement, and the peasants are looked upon as ignorant upstarts, who do not know their place in society.

This film is a detailed, highly personal probe into the struggle against class oppression and prejudice. Ruzowitzky's portrayal of this struggle is tragic and at times heart wrenching. The characters are utterly intriguing and perfectly believable. At times the film is humorous, but the humor gives way to some deeply disturbing, suspense-filled and sometimes violent sequences.

The acting in this film is superb, as good as it gets. The movie is "a beautiful, stylish film and an uncommonly satisfying and stirring experience," said Kevin Thomas of the Los Angeles Times.

The film was "utterly magnificent! An entrancing mix of stunning photography, first-rate acting and

striking storytelling," raved The New York Post.

This totally compelling film is rated R, and does contain both violence and nudity. It is in German, with English subtitles.

I could not take my eyes off the screen during the last 20 minutes of this movie. At one point I was literally open-mouthed and would not answer my phone, or acknowledge that it was ringing. If you are interested in serious cinema, this one is not to be missed.

The Behrend student body has Professor Ursula Davis to thank for her outstanding selection of films in this year's series. After seeing all three films, and having been somewhat of a film buff myself for a number of years, I am finding myself drawn into wanting to take one of her film courses, or at least tracking her down and finding out what other films she would recommend.

The Women's film series is free and open to the public, and is sponsored by the Office of Student Affairs. For more information students or faculty are asked to call (814) 898-6171.



Sophie Rois and Simon Schwarz in love scene from *Inheritors*, which plays Tuesday at Behrend.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Cell phones becoming more necessary today

by Susan John
staff writer

It's late at night and you're all alone, driving home on a deserted street, when suddenly you get a flat tire. You're unfamiliar with the part of town you're in. What do you do? Well, if you have joined the latest craze, you'd pick up your cell phone and make a call for someone to come and help you in your desperate situation. Today, millions of people own cell phones, whether it's just for emergencies or whether it's just to keep in touch.

"I don't know what I'd do without my cell phone," said Denae Markiliski, a student at Indiana University of Pennsylvania. "If I have a question it's right there. I get information on parties, emergencies or just to talk, especially to friends at different colleges."

Two of the major service providers in this area are Cellular One and Verizon Wireless (formerly Bell Atlantic). Cellular One (from Dobson Cellular Systems) has been a cellular service provider since 1990 with markets in Oklahoma, Texas, Kansas, Missouri, Pennsylvania, Maryland, California, Ohio, West Virginia and Arizona. In 1999 it was named one of the top 20 cellular carriers in the country.

Cellular One started off as a

company directed towards providing service to customers in rural areas and has since stayed at this position.

The philosophy behind Cellular One is aggressiveness, competitiveness, and commitment. It also claims that it has always stressed the needs of the customer above all else.

Cellular One offers two major brands of wireless phones, Nokia and Motorola, which include different ranges of talk time and standby time. These range anywhere between one hour to eight hours of talk time and between 20 minutes to 32 hours of standby time.

As for service plans, they range between 100 and 1400 minutes of local home airtime. Some of the plans offer additional features such as call waiting, three way calling, caller ID, voicemail, call forwarding, message waiting indicator, and text messaging. Also with the service plans you can add features that you want for an additional cost. So, you can choose a plan that best suits your calling needs. Pricing on the service plans range between \$20 and \$150 a month.

Verizon Wireless is the largest wireless communications provider in the United States with more than 27.5 million customers. This company is jointly owned by Bell Atlantic, GTE, and Vadafone.

Verizon Wireless operates in 25 countries on five continents. According to its website, customers can expect the company to offer innovative, competitively priced voice and data products and services of the highest quality and best in class customer service. It offers brands of wireless phones such as Audiovox, Kyocera, LGIC, Motorola, and Nokia. As for service plans, Verizon Wireless offers anywhere from 50 minutes to 3,000 minutes ranging between \$25 to \$205 per month, and like Cellular One, you can also add in any additional features that you may want for your phone at an additional price.

"I wouldn't be able to call as many friends and keep in touch long distance without my free minutes on my cell," said Amy Tower, a Penn State Behrend student.

Also, there are many different accessories that can be purchased for the phone that you choose, with either Verizon Wireless or Cellular One. These include the charger, car lighter charger, leather carrying case, hands free vehicle charger, lithium battery, travel charger, different face plates for certain models of cell phones, and data connectivity kits (which allows the user to have Internet access, send faxes, emails data, CD-ROM).

Cellular phones are becoming

more convenient. The earlier models used to be huge and heavy, making it very awkward to carry them around. Today, they are smaller and lighter. They even have models that are small enough to fit inside a pocket or a purse.

Also, cell phones are becoming more personal. You can put in your own welcome note that can range from your favorite quote to just having your name appear when you turn on your phone. There is also the option of buying different faceplates for your phone. This costs around \$20. These can be either your favorite color, your favorite sports team or even just something you really like, for example, ocean, life.

Of course, these options are only

When choosing to get connected to the wireless world there are some guidelines to follow in order to get a phone that works best for you.

1. Choosing the model of the phone: There are two basic types of phones, analog and digital. The prices of phones can range between \$20-\$400, depending on the manufacturer and the model.
2. Determine your personal calling needs: Estimate how often you will be using your phone. Is it just for emergencies or to keep in touch with friends and family?
3. Define the features you want: Decide exactly what functions you want your phone to have. Do you want voicemail? Text messaging? Caller ID?
4. Select a coverage area that suits you: Consider where your home area is.

available with certain models of cellular phones. Also, some common features on models of cellular phones are games such as Snake and Memory, an alarm clock and a phonebook, so you don't have to go searching for phone numbers.

As with most everything there are downsides to cellular phones and service providers. "Sometimes I have really bad reception and it gets frustrating. I'll be in a conversation and I'll just get cut off," said Tower.

There are also the issues of health risks (which are still being tested) and the use of the wireless phone while driving (there have been regulations made about driving and talking on cellular phones due to accidents).

But there is also an alternative to driving and talking on a cell phone, as companies have come up with the hands free attachment. This makes it possible to keep both hands on the wheel while driving and talking and this also makes it easier to write or type while talking on the phone.

Another downside to cellular phones is the nuisance issue. They can interrupt or distract people in restaurants, classrooms, or movies. It can be pretty annoying when you're in a theater and someone's cell phone starts ringing and then they either ignore it or they answer it and begin to have a conversation.

Keeping all of these issues in mind, many still say that they would rather have cellular phones than not to have them, downsides and all. They're more common today, becoming more of a necessity than a luxury.

"I think they are a terrific invention. They have allowed us to reach people everywhere, which can be good in emergency situations," said Jennifer Crawford, another Penn State Behrend student.

Choosing a service provider might take some research to find out what works best for you, but it helps to remember the four steps to getting connected. You might find that you really don't have a use for a cellular phone or you might even find that you could not imagine how you'd ever survive without one.

LAST CHANCE TO CRUISE FOR CASH AND WIN \$250

Have you gone on a road trip lately?

If so, this is your last chance to write about it and send your entry to behrcoll5@aol.com no later than Tuesday, April 17, to be considered for winning \$250.

Cruisin' 4 CASH

win \$250

Contest Rules

Any Behrend student can submit a 300-500 word story about a road trip they have taken since the end of the spring 2000 semester. The trip must be more than 150 miles from the original location. A photo must accompany entry with sufficient proof that the trip was made. Insufficient proof will lessen chances to win contest. If more than one student took part in the road trip, only the student submitting the story is eligible, unless all members send name in with entry. If more than one student name appears on entry, prize will be divided amongst the students who entered. Send in entries as soon as possible to ensure publication in the Beacon. Only entries appearing in the Beacon will be voted on. Beacon members are ineligible and will vote on the winner.

NSBE takes award winning road trip

On March 14, members of the National Society of Black Engineers (NSBE) left Penn State Behrend to attend our 27th annual national convention in Indianapolis, In. The convention was a five-day excursion filled with programs and events to provide professional development and networking opportunities for the more than 10,000 members of the organization.

The convention offered a multitude of activities, including a two-day career fair with more than 300 of the top companies. Workshops covered areas such as career management, e-commerce, and cultural and community awareness. There were training sessions on HTML, software testing, and developing a business. The convention offered a number of competitions sponsored by prestigious corporations, so that members could show off their technical ability. These included a Boeing flight competition, a technical paper contest, and an oratorical contest.

There were also a number of corporate networking suites available to talk with company representatives. To help us unwind after a long day of attending workshops, meetings, and networking events, there were parties, live bands and a comedy show.

The highlight of our trip to the

National Convention was when our chapter was named the Region II Small Chapter of the Year. This is a prestigious award given to one small chapter in each of NSBE's six regions, to honor the hard work and continued execution of programs that promote the mission and vision of NSBE on a chapter level.

I must say, attending the convention was quite an experience for me, and even more so for the chapter members who had the pleasure of attending as well. Although, this was the second year I went to NSBE's National Convention, I was especially pleased

to share this unforgettable time with my members, and if I am correct in speaking for our chapter members, I can say that the conference afforded them the opportunity to meet and network with other black engineering students and professionals, who came together for one week in Indianapolis, In. with the same idea in mind--to support the mission of NSBE, which is to increase the number of culturally responsible black engineers, who excel academically, succeed professionally, and positively impact the community.

-Meisha Watkins
EET 08



From left to right: NSBE members Shea Johnson, Dante Spain, Angeliue Parker, Demeca Howard, Cheon Graham, & Anthony Bineyard on their way to a banquet at the National Society of Black Engineers Homecoming Convention 2001.