

# Oliver Stone's JFK scores a big hit

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Controversy, controversy, controversy. That's what surrounds Oliver Stone's latest picture, JFK. Stone has never been one to shy away from the truth. At least that's what he wants to show in JFK.

The movie obviously centers around that fateful day, Nov. 22, 1963--the day John Fitzgerald Kennedy was assassinated.

JFK is, by far, the best picture this year. I haven't seen a film of its caliber in some time. I look for this film to garner many nominations come Oscar time. I look for Costner to be nominated for an Oscar, as well as Stone, the film, and possibly the script (which was extremely well written). It may be three hours long, but goes by quickly.

One of the most interesting parts of the movie was Stone's direction; he combined actual footage with newly-shot footage. The result is a masterpiece.

During those troubled times, only Jim Garrison, district attorney of New Orleans, stepped forward with his beliefs of a murder conspiracy. The challenging role of Garrison is played by crowd favorite Kevin Costner.

The real Jim Garrison, now a judge in New Orleans, has a cameo role in JFK as Judge Earl Warren.

The film begins with the assassination, but the story doesn't pick up until four years later, when Garrison begins to question the Warren Commission's

findings. He starts his own secret investigation into Kennedy's untimely death.

Garrison does not believe that Oswald acted alone on the killing, and speculates

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that there was crossfire coming from the grassy knoll and from across the street.

So, Garrison and his associates go to Dallas and talk to witnesses. One person said she saw two men behind a fence on a grassy knoll. Another man said he saw a man who looked "rather suspicious." People who were standing by the grassy knoll said they heard gunshots coming from behind them.

From here Garrison scopes out the view from the book depository, Oswald's location when he allegedly shot Kennedy. An employee of the depository at the time, Oswald had easy access to the higher floors of the building.

Garrison was troubled by the view from the window. Why did Oswald wait to shoot Kennedy on a turn when he could have had a head-on shot?

He concludes that the point where Kennedy was killed was a prime site for an ambush.

Also, the gun Oswald supposedly used to make the difficult shot was a piece of junk. There was no way he could have gotten off four shots in six seconds. It

took two seconds just to reload the gun. Garrison's partner told him that even the FBI's best marksmen couldn't match that.

The storyline follows Oswald and his ties with the CIA and the Cubans.

Gary Oldman, who plays Oswald, is a dead ringer for the assassin. During Oswald's arrest and subsequent questioning, he remained calm, adamantly claiming he was a patsy (not Cline).

When Garrison looks into Oswald's background, he discovers that Oswald supposedly defected to the Soviet Union earlier in his life.

When he arrived home, you'd think he would be arrested as a traitor to his country, but nothing was done. Some believe he was a secret agent.

Oswald starts to seem more like a patsy when Garrison gets a phone call from a Mr. X (Donald Sutherland), who ties everything together.

Mr. X, a former Pentagon employee, tells Garrison that at the time of the murder, Kennedy was drafting a bill to pull the American troops out of Vietnam by 1965.

According to Mr. X, the higher-ups in Washington didn't want that, because the war was good for the economy. The military knew Johnson would support them in war.

So, who plotted the murder? Was it the CIA, the military, or Lyndon Johnson?

Mr. X also tells Garrison that when he was in New Zealand on operations, he picked up a newspaper in the airport and

read that Kennedy was killed. The paper also contained a bio on the man who supposedly murdered him.

The only problem was that New Zealand is four hours BEHIND United States time. How could this information already be out, unless it was already given to the press before it actually happened?

When Garrison goes to trial, he brings in Clay Shaw, played by Tommy Lee Jones.

Shaw had murky CIA ties and was a closet homosexual who frequently partied with Dave Ferrie, a communist militia leader. Shaw claimed to know nothing about the murder and was declared not guilty by a jury following his trial.

In the trial itself, Garrison brings up a major point. Since I am only 21 years old, I don't have the firsthand experience about the subject; nonetheless, I was intrigued.

Garrison tries to disprove the single bullet theory Arlen Specter helped invent. At that time, Specter was a clerk, and President George Bush worked for the CIA.

The single bullet theory is a joke. How could one bullet weave in and out of two men seven times? It just isn't possible.

What is it that the government is trying to hide? We'll have to wait until 2029 to see the Warren Commission's findings.

It might be me, but didn't people think it was strange for "the truth" to be hidden for so long? I guess they figured everyone would be dead by then.

# Simplicity yields complexity in art exhibit

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Only eight pieces of art inhabit the Gallery Lounge in February--a sparse arrangement compared to other exhibitions shown there. Yet, simplicity can be surprisingly complex.

Allen Moore, who teaches Graphic Design and Visual Communication at Marywood College in Scranton, doesn't call himself an artist.

"I consider myself a visual sociologist," he said. "Years from now, probably after I'm dead, society will decide whether I was an artist or not."

He filters his own response to society through a screen of jewelcolor and silversheen. His psyche explores the philosophical through the tactile and visual, mixing a little trash in with his truths.

Two large works, part of his "Heroes and Villains" series, are a recycler's delight. Paper, plastic, resins mixed with pigment, coffee grounds, mustard and other mysterious elements combine into pearly underwater pastels in one piece.

Similar materials yield darker tones in the other, bringing to mind a vision of earth from the sky's vantage. Their ragged outlines force them to hunch over. They stretch from floor to ceiling, connecting space in a new way. The ceiling crouches over the viewer's head and the Gallery becomes a cave.

Both the mermaid's tapestry and the satellite painting are dotted with conspicuous lumps that prevent them from being merely a pretty assortment of colors. The inclusion of the pads is visually arresting, emotionally irritating

and socially discomfiting.

But then, art has nothing in common with peace of mind (for peace of mind, consult your local tv program listings).

"It has to do with things we think

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about, but don't necessarily articulate," Moore said. "For me, it's about my own life and problems and hangups. What do you think it says?"

The moods and feelings Moore puts into his work are his own, but what comes out of it belongs to us. He's forcing us to confront something we're accustomed to ignoring by turning it into an icon. I found my feelings changing every time I turned away from the pieces

and then looked back.

The "Heroes" or "Villains" (it's as hard to distinguish the good guys from the bad guys here, as it is in real life) reflect the influence of abstract expressionism on Moore's artistic vision.

"Abstract" means non-representational in a visual way and does not exclude emotional content from the work. It can deal with moods and feelings without referring to recognizable figures. It coaxes the viewer to see things that are invisible, yet manifest; intangible, yet real.

The three framed pieces adjacent to the "Heroes/Villains" are working drawings for the series. At first glimpse, they appear to be satellite maps of the western states with their olive and red marbling and sharp corners. After a moment, their hunched posture indicates a willingness to

"go head to head" with the enemy and the resemblance is clear.

For Moore, drawing is a gestural activity that doesn't necessarily involve paper and pencil. It is a line recording the movement of the hand, eye and mind. Although the three Heroes/Villains are painted, they are drawings in this larger sense.

"Drawing occurs whenever two substances meet and affect each other," Moore said.

Three smaller geometric works of glazed plywood hang on the wall like missing puzzle pieces, showing us Moore as reductionist.

"I like to see how much you can take out and still have something meaningful left," Moore said.

The hard-edged spears gather light in surface wrinkles and veins, concentrating it in their darkly-crystalline interiors.

Powdered pigment mixed with plastic resin give him a paint thick enough to mold and sculpt.

"The process is first," Moore admitted. "Thought comes later."

The clean-edged shape and dimly luminescent colors conceal the amount of work these pieces represent. With up to 30 layers of various coatings, they can take anywhere from six to eight months to complete.

The wall surrounds them, yet they define the space. The cloudy, translucent hammer-shape on the corridor wall seems related to sea-tumbled beach glass. The paired shards are head to head, evoking the opposing forces depicted in "Heroes/Villains."

Allen Moore's work will inhabit the Gallery Lounge through Feb. 29.

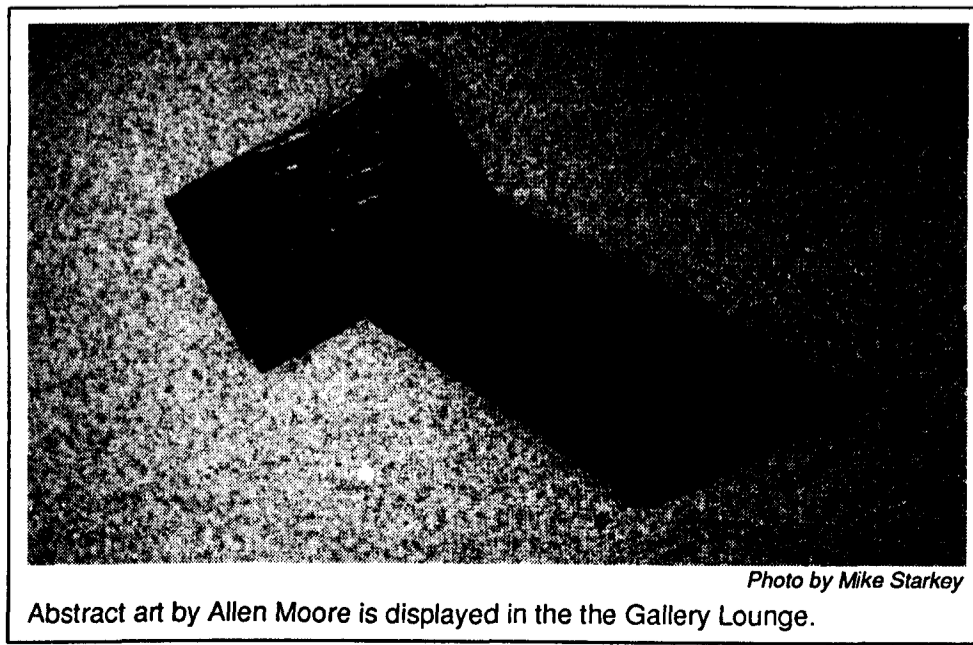


Photo by Mike Starkey

Abstract art by Allen Moore is displayed in the the Gallery Lounge.