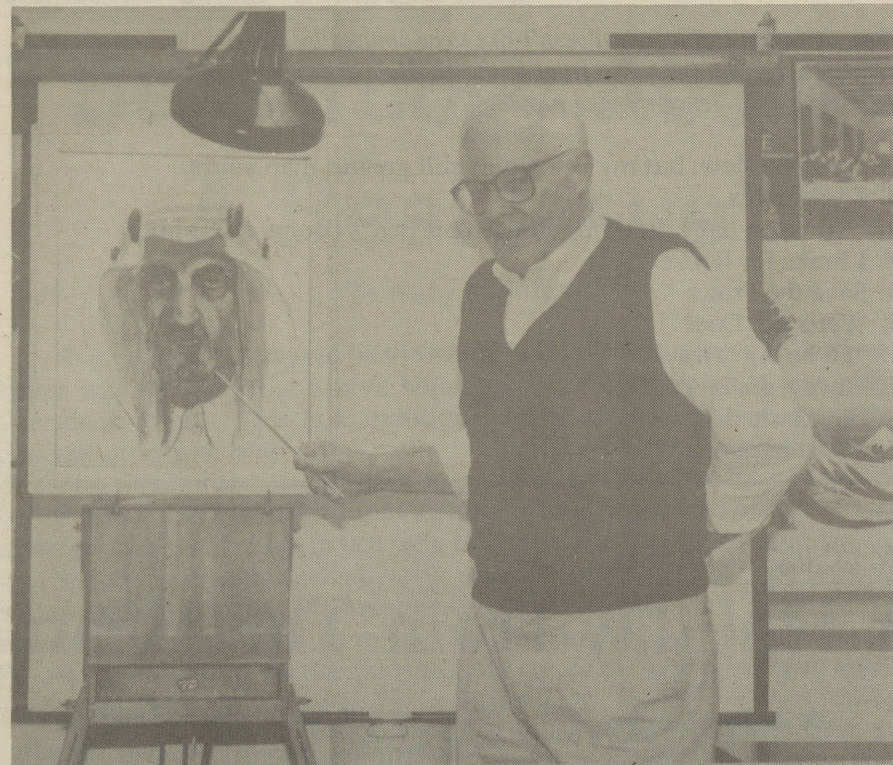


Entertainment



George Alburger, an adult student here at Delco, recently displayed some of his magnificent artwork during one of Connie Kirker's art classes.

Photo by: DIANA MICERI

Coppola's 'Dracula' Almost By The Book

By Kaspar Stromme

The vampire bent down toward his victim. His mouth opened to reveal a set of razor-sharp teeth, stained red after centuries of nocturnal feeding. The victim only felt a short prick as the vampire emptied her veins with the force of an extra-strength dirt-devil.

Sounds corny? It should because it's exactly the type of vampire you would encounter if you went to see the new Francis Ford Coppola film *Bram Stoker's Dracula*. For the student discounted price of \$4.50 you can see a two hour and ten minute blood-sucking horror flick with a sense of humor and a good dose of sex. Coppola has decided to graphically depict the subtle eroticism tied to the vampire lore; the Count himself is literally "hungry as the wolf". In addition, the tale is one of ever-lasting love. This movie certainly covers all its bases.

The story itself is a romantic version of the Bram Stoker original. In fact, that author would probably be turning in his grave if he could see how emotionally vulnerable the

"prince of darkness" has become. His love for the beautiful Mina (Wynona Ryder) dooms him. With this exception in mind, the plot itself does not deviate dramatically from the original story. In fact, it follows more closely than many other versions of Dracula that I have seen.

If you are unfamiliar with the adventures of the blood-sucking fiend, here's a quick rundown. Bored supernatural beast wants to vacate dull Transylvania castle for high-society London life. He falls in love with the wife of his real estate agent and seeks her out upon arrival in London. Unfortunately, old meddling doctor interferes and the beast is exposed for what he is. From here on it all goes downhill for "the dark knight"; needless to say he dies a horrible death.

What is new to Coppola's story is an attempt to explain the circumstances leading to Dracula's sorry state. By doing this, the vampire comes to resemble more of a tragic hero than a monster. In addition, the plot also explains why his love for Mina becomes a fatal attraction. Dracula buffs may leave before the last scene, because it is disgustingly romantic, and it also deviates from the book.

Throughout the production itself, one can notice a striking influence from the father of gore, Roger Corman, of whom Coppola was an apprentice many years ago. The result is a gorefest. Heads fly, stakes impale, and blood flows. The opening scene brings back memories of *Evil Dead II* or the banquet scene in the *Untouchables*, and the transition from the decapitated head to the pot roast is destined to become a highlight when cult followers of this movie sit down to enjoy.

The special effects in this film are good for a couple of laughs. They were probably made with this in mind and add to the film's corny side. It's just that this 40 million dollar production has the special effects of a B-grade film. It compares to the special effects found in low budget classics, such as *Doctor Who*, *Godzilla 2000*, and others whose names I will never admit having known. The backdrops of Transylvania were obviously borrowed from the sets of *Doctor Zhivago*, and watch those little HO trains run!

Gary Oldman, last seen ineeh.... does a good job with the part of Dracula, Wynona Ryder is her usual cute little self, and Keanu Reeves is lost. The star performance comes from Anthony Hopkins, who plays Dr. Van Helsing. He is brilliant as the raw and cynical doctor who flirts with young women and discusses decapitations over dinner.

Finally, the answer to the question on everybody's mind: was it worth the price of admission? YES. Will I go again? NO. And I quote Siskel & Ebert: "One thumb up, one thumb down".

Book Review:

Bottom Line is Personal Choice

By Andy McIntyre

James Joyce may perhaps be one of the greatest writers of fiction to have ever lived, not so long ago in a local bookstore by chance my eyes happened to stumble upon *A Portrait Of the Artist as a Young Man*.

After a few minutes of thought, I purchased the book for two reasons. First of all, it was a work of Joyce, and second of all, for sometime I had heard a great deal of talk about this particular book from several friends.

My first experience with Joyce was with his collection of short stories *The Dubliners*. As a Scotch-Irish youth growing up, I had often heard the mention of this man, and so, being a Student of Anglo literature, I decided to attempt to get a better understanding of the man James Joyce.

Of course, I really do not believe Joyce is for everyone, so in this book review I will not tell you that it is a must to go out and purchase this work. One's convictions about reading a book should not be induced by advertising and the opinions of others, but instead, one's convictions should come from within.

Too often I think we allow ourselves to get caught up in that feeling that we must read a book because so and so did, and since they read it, surely we must read it as well.

So perhaps, that is why I must confess that I didn't really enjoy *A Portrait Of the Artist as a Young Man* nearly as much as I have enjoyed other works by Joyce. For, as I said in the beginning, one of my reasons for purchasing the book was because I had heard it spoken of by several different friends.

In any event, the book deals

with a young Irish Catholic boy named Stephen Dedalus, who is growing up in Ireland during the early 20th century under the supervision of the Catholic church. Basically, the book deals with the inner struggle between living with religion, and living with the world.

The Church makes God's law very clear, and if one strays from God's law, punishment will most certainly follow.

Sadly, although I fully understand the point Joyce attempts to make, at times the book became very repetitive, and along with Joyces complexity, it was at times difficult to stay awake. Eventually, it got to the point where I began to assume that if I skipped a few pages I wouldn't miss a thing.

However, that is not to say that the book doesn't contain a certain amount of finer moments either. At times Joyce is simply brilliant. Often while reading I found myself having to stop in order to fully appreciate the torment that Stephen Dedalus finds himself consumed by.

The great fear that if he doesn't lead a perfect life his only resolution will be found in hell. Although the book does tend to get a bit long and wordy at times, Joyce has on the other hand, truly succeeded in describing the constant adversity experienced in life, between the young Christians inner self and his relationship to the outside world. In this sense Joyce has done a wonderful job.

Yet, this book review is only based upon my perceptions of how I see the book. Obviously, my opinion is certainly not final nor is it absolutely correct, for my opinion is merely my opinion. When it comes down to it the only determiner of this book or any other book should be you.

'Spiral Blue Has It All

As many of you may remember from last year, there is a new and energetic rock-n-roll band on the scene. "Spiral Blue", featuring Brian DiBon as lead singer and lead guitar, Rich Lucas as rhythm guitar, Jerry DeJohn on bass, and Dave DeJohn on drums, performed at Penn State Delco twice last year.

Since then, this band has established themselves as one of the hottest new bands in the area. They've played at several clubs in Philadelphia like the Kybress Pass, 40th Street Underground, The Ambler Cabaret, and Springfield, and Christiana Mall.

They make their J.C. Dobbs debut on December 13, located on 3rd and South in Philadelphia. Recently, they have also left a blaze of fire at Universities such as Temple and Widener.

Their reunion with bass player Jerry DeJohn has helped Spiral Blue create one of the most energetic musical combinations since the Beatles. Their original songs, unique look, and dynamic sound has caught the eye (and ear) of many record producers by blowing many other bands off stage.

All four members of Spiral Blue are also involved in completing successful college careers. Former Penn State student Brian DiBon believes that there are many bands consisting of college students who possess great talent. The key is hard work, determination, and perseverance.

Spiral Blue should be a reminder to all of those musician/students that, "you CAN have it all!"