



Lydia Bruce and Leon B. Stevens star in the Festival Theatre production of George S. Kaufman and Edna Ferber's "The Royal Family."

the daily Collegian arts

Pisier calls it 'kitsch melodrama' 'Other Side' trashy novel put on screen

By TOM MARCINKO
Collegian Staff Writer
"For me it is kitsch melodrama. I thought it would be fun to play a naive girl who ends up a bitch. The only way to look at the film is to laugh."

—Marie France Pisier on "The Other Side of Midnight," quoted in the Washington Post, June 21.

Yeah, I guess so. My only wish is that I'd known that before entering the theater.

"The Other Side of Midnight" is three hours of soap opera with a little simulated sex thrown in to spice it up. What director Frank Yablans has turned out is a trashy novel in the vein of, say, Irving Wallace or Harold Robbins. He chose celluloid as his medium instead of paper and ink.

This is one of those big, sprawling things which relies on sheer length for its meaning. If it were a paperback book, it would probably be five hundred pages long and carry a blurb like, "The timeless saga of burning romance that spanned three continents and lasted a generation," or, "She fought her way to

the top — to get revenge on the man she loved!"

The movie, incidentally, is based on Sidney Sheldon's bestselling novel, which seems to be that kind of a book. I haven't read it. The film doesn't encourage me to read it, either.

"Midnight" takes a long time to get started. Big, sprawling epics are like that. We are introduced to the lives of the characters and led along plot lines which become implausibly entangled.

Marie-France Pisier plays Noelle, a naive young girl who, on the eve of World War II, gets this fatherly advice: "You are beautiful. Use your beauty and you'll be that much farther ahead than everyone else."

She thanks Dad and, naturally, spends the rest of her life doing just that. As the bad novels say, she worked her way to the top — but always through the bedroom door.

First, though, she becomes the lover of an American pilot, Larry (played by John Beck, who was also "Audrey Rose's dumb second dad). He has to fly from Paris to the States but tells her to shop for a wedding dress and to meet

him on a certain date at the cafe at 7:00. Remember, at 7:00. Don't forget, now...

Eight years later, Beck is married to Susan Sarandon, who got to the top in public relations by playing fair. Beck won her by being obnoxious. Meanwhile, back in France, poor Noelle has nothing but a booming acting career (guess how she got the parts) and her wedding dress.

film review

Well, they say you never forget your first love, and Noelle doesn't. With the help of her newest lover, a Greek tycoon (Raf Vallone), she pulls strings from across the Atlantic and sees to it that Larry — who doesn't know anything but flying — stays out of work. She hires him to fly her private plane and gets her kicks by acting like a bitch.

It takes Larry a while to catch on, but let the two of them spend not ten seconds alone together and see what happens.

From there Yablans and screenwriters Herman Raucher and Daniel

Taradash throw plausibility and character consistency to the winds. The story ceases to become the kind of diverting pap you enjoy but are ashamed to admit to anyone that you did, and gets to be a bore. Does it make any sense for Beck to try to kill off Sarandon by taking her into a dark cave and just leaving her there? That's not the largest improbability the film asks the viewer to swallow. The ending is just plain unfair.

Marie-France Pisier was great in "Cousin, Cousine," but this role gives her little with which to work. The transformation of her character is almost believable until Noelle, like everyone else, starts doing things that she wouldn't do if she were the person she makes out to be. Like the other actors, she overdoes it at times — though not as badly as Sarandon.

"The Other Side of Midnight" might be considered really hot stuff by giddy teenage girls or bored housewives, but if you mean to enjoy it, you'll need a greater tolerance for camp than I have. Sprinkle plenty of grains of salt on your popcorn. You're going to need them.

Preview at Pavilion

Festival acting vets back onstage tonight

Two Festival Theatre veterans tonight tomorrow's opening of "The Royal Family" at the Pavilion Theatre at 8 p.m.

Leon B. Stevens and Lydia Bruce star in the George S. Kaufman and Edna Ferber play, the first in this summer's Festival series.

Stevens has appeared in a number of American and British television shows and films as well as daytime serials such as "The Doctors" and "The Guiding Light." He returns to the Festival for the first time since 1958.

arts notes

Bruce has been a regular player on "The Doctors" for 10 years. Like Stevens, she has appeared in numerous past Festival productions.

"The Royal Family" opens June 23 and continues through July 9. Penn State students carrying I.D.s can see it 8 p.m. tonight in a special \$1.00 preview. Tickets are on sale at 10 a.m. at the Playhouse box office in the Arts

Building. Also appearing in "The Royal Family" is Jonathan Frid, best known for his role in the occult daytime serial "Dark Shadows."

Other Festival Theatre productions for this summer include "A Little Night Music" (July 7-23), "The Last Meeting of the Knights of the White Magnolia" (July 21-Aug. 6), and the musical revue "Gershwin Revisited" (July 29-Aug. 6).

"Twenty Years of the Festival Theatre," an exhibition of paintings commemorating the Theatre's 20th anniversary, will be on exhibit in the Commons Gallery from now till July 2. The exhibit includes pictures from nearly every Festival Theatre production as well as photographs of prominent players.

HOLLYWOOD (UPI) — Groucho Marx went home Tuesday from Cedars-Sinai Medical Center where he had been recovering from his second hip operation this year.

10 cc's 'Bends' has a commercial twist

By TOM MARCINKO
Collegian Staff Writer
DECEPTIVE BENDS
by 10cc (Mercury)

A local disc jockey recently remarked on the air that 10 cc ought to change its name to 5 cc, now that only half the band is left.

I wish I could say that Eric Stewart and Graham Gouldman are getting along fine without Lol Creme and Kevin Godley. I'm sorry I can't say it.

10 cc has lately been one of my favorite groups. Their instrumental abilities have never been spectacular, but all of the members were first-rate studio musicians. Stewart and Graham are,

too, and "Deceptive Bends" is nothing if not professionally executed and produced.

But whether or not Creme and Godley's departure has anything to do with it, 10 cc has gone strictly commercial. Most of "Deceptive Bends" would be prime contenders for a Paul McCartney soundalike contest. Nothing's really wrong with that, but there are enough Wings albums around to satisfy anyone. (Aren't there?)

I can't begrudge 10 cc their hit singles "I'm Not in Love" or "The Things We Do for Love," but it's too bad that Stewart and Graham are repeating that formula.

They show every sign that they'll continue to do so until it's run ragged.

Nothing on the new album rocks as hard as "The Wall Street Shuffle" or "Art for Art's Sake." Nothing is as satirically brilliant as "The Worst Band in the World" or "The Second Sitting for the Last Supper."

What we do have are ballads in the "I'm Not in Love" vein (without all those beautiful background vocals), and of course "The Things We Do," which owes as much to Queen's "Killer Queen" as it does to McCartney.

"Honeymoon with B Troop" and "Good Morning, Judge" carry hints of

the old 10 cc — hints enough to make me want to give "Rubber Bullets" another listen. "You've Got a Cold" is probably the best here. Other highlights include the interesting arrangement on "Honeymoon" and Stewart's fine guitar lines on "Feel the Benefit."

Wings fans should definitely check it out, but if you're not into 10 cc, be advised that some record stores in town carry marked-down copies of "The Original Soundtrack" and "How Dare You."

I can't say 10 cc is the worst band in the world, but everything from those albums that appealed to me is gone from "Deceptive Bends."

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RECORD GAMES continue! Watch this space on Friday and listen to WDFM for more information about Record Games.

RECORD GAMES is starting now. Do you have a piece of paper with your name, address, and phone number and room for fifteen answers?

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KEN LYONS, bass, could paint 38 ROOMS per week. Steve Brooks, drummer, hit a detour on Interstate 38. Are you playing?

DRUMMER JACK Gronold had access to a special 38 KEY computer system. As a six man band, they qualified for a 38 day rehearsal cruise. Still playing?

RECORD GAMES is testing you! Cal Stevens knowledge with five Izitso yes or no questions. List the five correct answers on your answer sheet.

IN THIS COLUMN and on WDFM Record Games will start on Wednesday. Will you play?

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