'Catlow' indigestible experience

One afternoon last week, after a hectic morning which kept me working well past my usual lunch hour, I staggered into the Pine Room ready to eat practically anything - which is about as ready as you have to be to venture in there. I banged through the turnstile, grabbed a tray, and rushed across the no-man's land of the newly renovated cafeteria section to survey the fare. There were some "veal" patties in grease sauce, some chopped meat patties in grease sauce, and some other unidentifiables - also in as hungry as I thought.

Unfortunately, when I surveyed the Chapel Hill film fare for this past weekend, my instincts didn't serve me quite so well. Like the Pine Room lunch menu, the selection - "Preacherman," "Marriage of a Young Stockbroker," "Omega Man," and "Catlow" - was something less than palate-grabbing. But determined to see something, I chose what I took to be the least of four evils, "Catlow," a Western directed by Sam Wanamaker and starring Yul Brynner. There was a book, apparently of the same name, by a certain Louis L'Amour.

Roughly, the film goes something like this: Catlow (Brynner), at the depilated head of a gang of gunslinging hippies, rustles some unbranded cattle ("Mavericks") and drives them through Indian territory to auction at a tidy profit. His old Civil War buddy, now a marshall played by Richard Crenna, pursues, and stages an unsuccessful ambush. Caught with his pants down, Catlow blasts his way out with a derringer hidden in his boot - he has asked to die "with his boots on." The bad gang grease sauce. It turned out that I wasn't scatters - corpses littering the ravine and only the leader, Miller (played by Leonard Nimoy of "Star Trek" fame). stalks on

Through a rarely amusing cycle of ambushes and escapes the action proceeds (or recedes) to Mexico, where the Catlow gang is after a shipment of "maverick" gold. The gold, like the cattle, belongs to no one in particular, thus possession is the only legitimate claim. Catlow's thieving is portrayed as merely the transferring of property - i.e., not really stealing. Attempted humor blurs with attempted romance, but the aging Brynner, funloving good bad-guy, is

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the age of Aquarius

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hardly up to it, and Richard Crenna, though occasionally funny, is more often

A lesson is to be learned from all this. Next time your stomach rebels at Pine Room fare, take the long trek up to Y-court. Perhaps the Pine Room people, taking the hint, will throw away their usual slop and start disgorging edible, if not gourmet, vittles.

THE BRITISH INVENTED drawing room comedy, so I suppose they're the ones who have to be credited with the realization that there's something inherently ridiculous about their Upper Crust - those people who, as Henry James said in another contect, would be "infantine if infants ever expressed themselves in falsetto." Imagine a world in which one's major concerns are getting "dressed" for the inevitable seven o'clock dinner party, worrying about a scratch on one's Rolls, and tending each year's crop of chestnut and bay thoroughbreds. "See No Evil," with Mia Farrow, is set in just such a world, with its wrought iron gates. well-wrought urns, long drives, rolling English lawns, glacial white country

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nouses, and their frosty inhabitants.

I always find myself involuntarily charmed by these people and the naive ernestness with which they take the business of living. It's questionable if anyone who has not been born pristinely innocent can truly fox-hunt or steeple chase in the second half of the twentieth century; and perhaps it's our recognition of the edenic quality of the setting which makes us accept the propriety of a snake in the garden - or of a maniac killer who broods awhile on the scene, and then invades it and slaughters its inhabitants. Of course, the crime is unmotivated; or at least it has no motive beyond the hatred of a Satan for anyone happier than

I rather liked "See No Evil" despite the elements of put-on, and the main reason was Mia Farrow, Farrow, playing a blind girl who is first hunted by the killer. then kidnapped and abandoned, takes a role which a less tasteful actress would have turned into a virtuoso performance and makes it convincing. Her desperate determination and human dignity are almost out of place amid the artifice of the film - the quirky hand-held camera, the strangely angled shots, the hyper-stylized presentation of the villain (all you see of him for the first half of the film are his cowboy boots and his identification bracelet and particularly abrupt hand gestures). But Miss Farrow brings it off and in the process makes "See No Evil" a good night's entertainment. It's playing at the Yorktowne.



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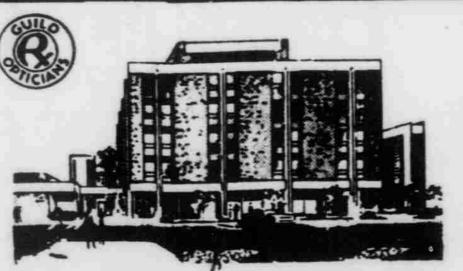
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Tull comes South

"Basket by Chamberlain, assist by

"Where the hell's that sound truck?" In the middle of a screaming crowd of flag-waving horn-tooting basketball fans, a few long-haired freaks try not to think about how they're going to get ready for

Sound truck arrives. An odd assortment of Scottish and English roadies start looking round.

"I don't care about any damn basketball, I want those people OUT! They're going to rip off all our equipment.

Flushed and happy flag-wavers going out clash with lean and hungry looking freaks trying to get in. "GET THOSE PEOPLE OUT OF

The Pinks start to clear the hall.

"Christ, this'll take at least two hours look, the group's going to be here in half an hour

"I MUST have a piano tuner lan will go out of his mind if there's no piano

About six groupies mill around.

"We're with the group." Groupies start getting dressed up and ready to start their big pitch.

"OOH! There's Ian!" Ian Anderson stalks into the hall with

a tote bag on his shoulder, and guitar and flute under his arm. Feverish activity among roadies and

"That speaker to the front . . . get that amp over here ... I NEED A BLOODY

HAMMER!"

Finally, some kind of order reigns. Jethro Tull do their sound check, while Curved Air play soccer on the court with an old basketball.

"No, we can't let the people in for another half hour. Tull run through "A New Day

Suddenly, the sound of a crowd on the move, and people start sprinting across

the floor to the front. Both groups retire to the dressing-room.

"We want beer, ice and food . . . TONS . . . of beer. NOW!" 'There's no way we can get a car out . . . no way in the world."

"Don't worry, someone's gone . . . " Curved Air start to play. The lights,

four huge spots, flash on and off. The bass drum pulsates with green, blue, red and yellow in time to the music.

"What do you think?" "Oh, definitely psychedelic."

Curved Air finish. Lights come up. A groupie sits embroidering a denim jacket A policeman confiscates a toy airplane Tull start to get dressed, in an amazing assortment of multicolored gnome suits hot pants, candy striped failcoats and skin-tight leotards.

(Meanwhile, some people get busted for breaking and entering. Two of them handcuffed together, take off into the night. "I'm sorry, chief, my cuffs just must have walked away.")

Pandemonium as Ian Anderson prances onto the stage

"You'll just have to use your imagination if it doesn't come out like the record.

Cheers and yells. lan starts clowning, holding his flute

between his legs. A drunken couple down by the stage starts to boo, screaming that they had

been cheated because the main attraction

had started late. Immediate reaction from Anderson who gesticulates at them like a drunken

Tull start to play, against a tidal flow of noise from the audience.

Ian keeps up a continuous display of acrobatics, leaping, pirouetting, sinking to his knees, exhorting the group.

He clutches the mike to him, fondles it, caresses his flute, croons, screams, and

tosses his hair back. The whole group line up on the front of the stage to announce the next song "A NEW DAY

YESTERDAY!" they shout "A NEW DAY

YESTERDAY!", over and over again The music goes on and on, Jethro Tull moving from one song to another without a break, playing far into the night. The other players leave the stage to

the guitarist, whose solo dissolves into a Bach prelude, and then swells back to screaming Clapton. "MORE MORE MORE"

They come back for an extended

Finally, the end. The crowd melts into the night. Time to pack up. Goodbye. Ian, you crazy, insane, beautiful man.

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