

'Stationmaster's Wife' is Fassbinder success

By STEVE CARR
Staff Writer

The majority of Rainer Werner Fassbinder's films are erratic. They make gargantuan demands on the viewer's patience and optimism. Yet the German director's brilliant genius always gives something back. Fassbinder's manipulation of color and shades is nothing short of astounding, and his deliberate use of melodramatic clichés provides a sort of wry counterpoint to the raw emotions always present in his work. His masterpiece is probably *Lola*, which has all his creative powers working in perfect tandem. But the majority of Fassbinder's other films do not have that continuous stream of originality. *The Stationmaster's Wife* is really more indicative of the kind of work Fassbinder was doing throughout his career.

Fassbinder drew his film from a 1931 novel, titled *Bolwieser*, by Oskar Maria Graf. Originally a three-hour television production, the film was later re-edited by Fassbinder for theatrical distribution. *The Stationmaster's Wife* is a sort of *Frau Bovary*. Hanni Bolwieser is the bored wife of a subservient little train attendant. She carries on with the town butcher and the hairdresser, while her husband refuses to acknowledge her adulterous nature because of his own blind passion for her.

The first half of the film represents the astounding genius of Fassbinder. In one scene Hanni and her husband make love, but only their wedding band hands are shown — almost strangling each other on bleak white sheets. In another scene emphasizing hands, Hanni meets the town butcher, Merkl, at a ball. As Bolwieser,

Hanni and Merkl stand in a diagonal line, the camera travels from the clasped hands of Bolwieser and Hanni to the hand of Merkl, which is gently massaging Hanni's buttocks, to Hanni's hand — the one with the marriage ring — squeezing Merkl's crotch.

After the first half, the movie seems to decline along with the moral fibers of its characters. Merkl and Hanni have been subjected to some town gossip, so they sue the gossipers. But Bolwieser perjures himself on the stand in order to protect his wife. When Hanni drops Merkl and starts to have an affair with Schaffhalter, the town hairdresser, Merkl decides to get revenge. He tells of Bolwieser's perjury, and the stationmaster loses his job and is sent to prison.

After this point, the movie starts to plod. The prison scenes go on and on and make a dubious contribution to the movie.

Another major shortcoming is the character of Bolwieser. His feelings about his wife are never properly delineated. Sometimes he is capable of destructive jealousy, but then he can be an incredibly subservient vegetable. His acceptance of everything that happens to him is totally unbelievable. Is this character human? When does he draw the line?

Despite this failure in perspective, *The Stationmaster's Wife* is an impressive film. It has succeeded in a visually beautiful transition from television to screen. While Bolwieser's character is marred, the film does examine the deeper aspects of mankind.

There is a tremendous preoccupation with appearance in the movie. Things are to be done in the proper fashion. This preoccupation leads to inevitable hypocrisy. When Bolwieser confronts his wife



Elisabeth Trissenar performs in 'The Stationmaster's Wife' ... the film deals with subjects of morality and love

with her adulterous affairs, she works her guilt into an indignant self-righteousness. She ends up humiliating Bolwieser even further. Of course, humiliation is an important factor in this movie, just as it is in Fassbinder's other films. Bolwieser is reduced to a mere nothing at the end of this film. In a way, his character is believable as the embodiment of a whole generation of post-World War I Germans. Hanni seems to represent the actual institution of Germany. Different classes of people want her for their own purposes, and their jealousy for her destroys innocent people like Bolwieser.

As in most of Fassbinder's films, the acting in *The Stationmaster's Wife* is top-notch. Elisabeth Trissenar as Hanni Bolwieser has a sultriness accentuated by a slight peasant-like quality. She is sexy yet

emotionally vulnerable. Her anger and hypocrisy effectively produce an ugliness, yet she also has a distinctive purity and innocence.

Kurt Raab, as Bolwieser, is the real star of the show. His facial expressions can show a childish respect for authority and then immediately change to a vicious cruelty vented on Hanni. He seems to know nothing, yet his face can show a knowledge that makes it seem as though he just feigns innocence. Raab's performance is even more impressive because of what he does with an impossible role.

Some of Fassbinder's best qualities come out in *The Stationmaster's Wife*. But he prepared to take the flashes of genius with some stilted viewpoints and some outright boredom.

The Baptist Student Union Thursday program will begin at 5:45 p.m. Thursday at the BSU. Dr. Sam Williamson will speak on "Steps Toward Reconciliation: U.S.—Soviet Relations."

Sara Evans, author of *Personal Politics*, will speak on "Working Class Women and Feminism" 4 p.m. Thursday in 111 Murphy Hall. The lecture is sponsored by Women's Studies.

Pre-law Club will meet at 3:30 p.m. Thursday in the Carolina Union. Election of 1983-84 officers will be held, and plans for next semester will be discussed.

Learn to skydive; join the UNC Parachute Club. There will be a club meeting at 6:30 p.m. Thursday in the Carolina Union. Everyone is welcome.

The Career Month Committee of ABS will hold a mandatory meeting following the general ABS meeting Thursday. Margaret Daly Hayes of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee will speak on "Inter-American Security" at 7 p.m. Thursday in the Dry Hall Toy Lounge.

Being Gay; Being Same is Thursday's topic for Gay Awareness Week which will be led by a psychologist and clinical social worker at 7:30 p.m. in the Carolina Union.

BSM interviews for membership chairman will begin at 4 p.m. Thursday in the office.

Fellowship of Christian Athletes will meet at 8:30 p.m. Thursday in the Carolina Union. Dr. Brown, from the State Board, will speak. Bring \$7 for T-shirts.

Daniel A. Reed, Purdue University, will speak on "Performance Based Design and Analysis of Multicomputer Networks" at 4 p.m. Thursday in 210 New West Hall.

Professor Morris L. Eaton, University of Minnesota, will speak on "Multivariate Tests with Incomplete Data" at 3 p.m. Thursday in 324 Phillips Hall.

AXO photo contest for Easter seals and open house will be held from 2 to 5 p.m. April 10 at 215 E. Rosemary Street. Entries are due April 8. Call 968-0057 for more information.

ITEMS OF INTEREST

UNC Cycling Club members may pick up posters for the Metric Century Ride to put up on campus and in town. Call Cynthia at 933-7818.

"Inform the Courts." Pre-ent, pre-med, and pre-vet rising seniors may apply to work in the advising offices. Applications and information are available in 201-D Steele.

Nomination forms for the Robert White Linker Award, given to the most outstanding residence hall leader from the freshman or sophomore class are available in Carr Building and are due by 5 p.m. Friday at Carr Building.

Pick up applications for Campus Y Crafts Bazaar co-chairman at the Y office. Deadline is April 1.

Entries to the AXO Photo Contest for Easter seals are due by April 8 at 2 p.m. at 215 E. Rosemary Street. Entries must be mounted 11 x 14. Call 968-0057 for more information.

SHS is offering a three-week brown bag luncheon, "Freedom from Smoking Club," meeting at room March 31 and April 5, 6, 7, and 12. Pre-register by calling 966-2281, ext. 275 before Friday.

There will be a Student Film Night at the Carolina Union on April 24. Applications to enter films are available at the Union Desk.

Attention all freshmen women: Apply for the Publications Council's Freshman-Women's Scholarship to earn one semester's in-state tuition. Applications are available at the Union Desk and at 01 Steele Building and are due April 1.

Black Ink editor applications are available at the BSM office, Suite A of the Carolina Union. Anyone interested in the position may call 933-4661 for more information.

Recruiter on campus calls Peace Corps competitive

By DANA JACKSON
Staff Writer

The truck driver saw, but did not understand the green sign above the highway. From memory the old man knew that he would be turning off at the next exit. He would soon be retiring and would no longer be driving the long haul from Maine to Florida, as he had for most of his life.

The man did not know how to read. He had driven without the aid of street signs. After he retired, he learned to read with the help of an adult literacy program sponsored by the Peace Corps in North Carolina. He became a member of the board of directors of the reading program and an outspoken advocate for adult literacy, wrote newspaper articles and even taught for the program.

"He had a chip on his shoulder (before joining the program) because he couldn't read. He always felt inadequate," said Alex Wilson, who was a Peace Corps volunteer from 1976-78 and worked on the adult literacy program.

Wilson, who is on campus this week as a Peace Corps recruiter, worked in the Volunteers In Service To America program in North Carolina. VISTA was part of the Peace Corps until February 1981. He attended undergraduate school at UNC and graduate school at Harvard.

He said he volunteered for the Peace Corps because he wanted to work in a service-related position and have contact with people.

Most Peace Corps volunteers are now sent to Third World countries, where they try to introduce appropriate technology for basic human needs, to leave an understanding of America and to bring an understanding of the Third World back to the United States, he said.

The normal tour of duty for volunteers is two years, following a three-month training period in the host country.

Volunteers receive financial support equivalent to what a small family would make in that culture, plus \$175 per month in savings for a readjustment allowance, Wilson said.

Those with community service backgrounds and degrees in any field (not just special skills programs such as math and science) are welcome to volunteer, Wilson said.

"It's fair to say that it's more competitive now than ever," he said, "but we really stress that the biggest challenge to get in is you deciding for yourself it's what you want to do."

The most memorable thing for Wilson was the amount of faith he gained in his fellow man. Volunteers in other nations learn how to adjust and discover the many identities they have as Americans — members of a minority, he added.

Most volunteers felt they got more out of it than they had to offer, Wilson said. It can be lonely at first, and the biggest assets a volunteer can have are personality and the ability to make friends, he said.

It is not for everyone, he said. "You can call it a job but really what it's offering is a lifestyle." He said that volunteering for the Peace Corps is not a career in itself, but a good career bridge.

Wilson and another recruiter, Mary Carozza, will be at an information table in the Student Union lobby from 1 to 4:30 p.m., March 21 through 25. Applications are available in the placement office in Hanes Hall and interviews will be given in Room 211.

Former Peace Corps volunteers in the Chapel Hill area should see Wilson during the recruitment to re-establish links with the organization.

More than 700 people from North Carolina have served in Peace Corps programs, he said, and a good portion have been graduates of UNC. Students, faculty and staff are encouraged to apply, he said.

CAMPUS CALENDAR

TODAY'S ACTIVITIES

Should UNC divest? Come to a debate between four South Africans to see different sides at 7:30 p.m. in 101 Greenlaw.

Progressive students: Attend the Public Interest Research Group meeting at 5 p.m. in the Carolina Union.

NCAF (North Carolina Action for Farmworkers) will meet at 6:30 p.m. in the Carolina Union. Come to learn about the boycott and issues affecting our state's farmworkers.

The Anglican Student Fellowship welcomes everyone to Holy Communion at 10 p.m. in the Chapel of the Cross. Refreshments and fellowship follow the service.

Dr. Paul Henning, noted sex therapist, will speak on the issues of love and relationships at 8 p.m. in the Carolina Union.

The UNC Industrial Relations Association will hold its first Student-Faculty Wine and Cheese Party at 7:30 p.m. in 217 Carolina Union. All paid members are welcome.

The Student Fee Increase Referendum will be held. Polls open at 10 a.m. and close at 5 p.m.

STAND (Students Taking Action for Nuclear Disarmament) will hold a meeting for all interested persons at 4 p.m. in the Campus Y Building.

STAND will offer rides to Admiral Carroll's address, "Peace through Strength: How much is Enough?" at 8 p.m. at Duke. Sign up at 102 Campus Y Building.

The Baptist Student Union Council will meet at 7:30 p.m. Come get beans and cornbread for lunch at noon in the Pit. Donations go to the Carboro Community Kitchen. Everyone is welcome.

CHIMERA, the Fantasy and Science Fiction Club, will meet at 7:30 p.m. in 265 Phillips Hall. Anyone interested in attending Stellanor this weekend should attend.

The Carolina Gay Association will sponsor a workshop on "Reconciling Spirituality and Homosexuality" as part of Gay Awareness Week at 7:30 p.m. in the Carolina Union.

The Campus Y Committee on Undergraduate Education will meet at 7:30 p.m. in the Campus Y.

The Carolina Union Forum Committee will meet at 5 p.m. in 207 Carolina Union.

The UNC Cycle Racing Team will meet at 7:30 p.m. in the Carolina Union to discuss plans for the upcoming Orange Grove Road Race. All cyclists are welcome.

Alpha Chi Sigma will hold a meeting at 7 p.m. in 221 Venable Hall.

Learn more about the Soviet Union: Help form a Soviet student discussion group at an organizational meeting at 11 a.m. in 217 Carolina Union.

COMING EVENTS

Film shorts pertaining to sexuality as it relates to sexuality will be shown at 8 p.m. Thursday in the Carolina Union. Optional discussion groups will follow.

Association of Business Students will meet at 3:30 p.m. Thursday in T-7 New Carroll. Bob Arnold, from IBM, will speak on careers in marketing.

The ABS will hold a faculty/student luncheon from 11:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. Thursday in 220 New Carroll Hall. ABS members should come for lunch and meet their professor.

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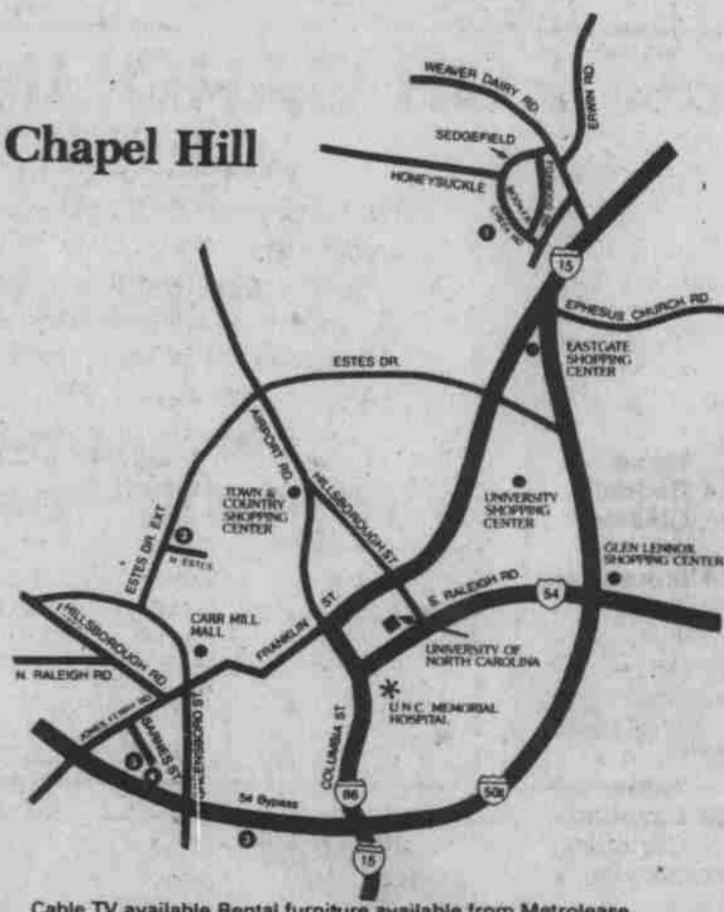
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