

FILM REVIEW:

Interview With the Vampire

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So, the real question here is: what have you heard? Did you hear about Oprah running out of an advanced screening after only fifteen minutes? She said as she exited that it was too bloody evil and thereupon joined others in the theatre's lobby who were chanting and trying to "stamp out these forces of darkness." Did you hear about Ann Rice (the creator of the book from whence the movie came) and her wild condemnations of Tom Cruise's imminent performance? Then her wild retraction of these proclamations upon seeing the actual film? Did you hear that Cruise and Brad Pitt neck in the movie? Or, maybe, you have more vivid memories of the book's popularity. Remember the girl who sat behind you in your High School Sociology class who first introduced you to the book. The same girl who wore army fatigues and who daily donned make-up which made her look,

shall we say, reflective of light. This book, *that* book has been made into a movie and that film opened Friday to tons of advanced notice as well as public controversy.

Interview With the Vampire is one of those movies about which you might know too much ahead of time. Like the first *Batman*, anyone who even casually follows movies has absorbed more than enough information about this picture's story, actors, sets, director and even producers. And absorbed this information dangerously long before the film's release. What this does positively is build anticipation. What this does negatively is build anticipation. If the film is good, everyone, especially the lurkingly ominous critics, will be satisfied and thank all involved for the filling meal. If the film is poor then there arises a heightened sense of robbery, of being cheated. *Why the hell did they build it up when it's so damned bad?*

This time it paid off. *Interview*

With the Vampire is an awe-inspiring film. It risks a great deal and amazingly pulls all of it off. The questions of Tom Cruise, the homoerotic overtones, the gore and blood all survive a scrutinous eye well, each filling its own place in the story and doing nothing more than contributing to the seductively dark effect. Brad Pitt is very fine although he seems to rely more on looking pretty and troubled in this film than he has in his more intuitive performances of the past. Antonio Banderas plays the picture's third beautiful young vampire, building to his rare reputation as a Hollywood leading man not afraid of roles which leave impressions of sexual ambiguity.

But best and most surprising of all is Mr. Cruise. Dressed in frills and lace and a blonde wig, he acts, he drinks blood, he does everything. Usually annoying when he really starts trying to act (looking as in *Born on the Fourth of July* as though he were trying to give birth) Mr. Cruise plays the bitchy, terrifying, world-weary Lestat ef-

fortlessly. It is understandable how Ms. Rice would have felt rather obliged to retract her criticisms after seeing the first cuts of Mr. Cruise's performance.

Not often do you see something like this. The part was originally slated for Daniel Day-Lewis. The character was written after Norse beauty and Blade Running toughguy Rutger Hauer. The performance was condemned and dismissed before it ever began and the principal involved had to be sure that when it was finished everyone EVERYONE would scrutinize every detail. Still, with the youthful confidence that true movie stars always exhibit, Tom Cruise pulls it off spectacularly.

The Crying Game's Neil Jordan has also proven he can direct a big budget success. His subtlety is most apparent in the blending of the film's remarkable special effects with the movement and pace of the story. Cinematographer Phillippe Rousset mixes the placement and perspective of the camera well, keeping the tonality con-

stant while varying the kinesis. And Production Designer Dante Ferretti (who did such an awe-inspiring job on *Age of Innocence*) mimics his previous effort with a bizarre and eery nineteenth century society being the result. The best of these praises, however, must go to the make-up artists. The stunning effect of the look of these vampires is jarring, as it should be. Never do the alterations look fake (at least not any more fake than the principle idea of vampires) nor do the tiny blue veins or the white pallor detract from the actors' attractiveness.

As for the responses, so far they have been varied. From Oprah running out of her theatre to Ann Rice breaking down crying in her's; believe what you want to believe. Whether it is because of the power of darkness or the talents of those persons involved, it is a good movie. It is entertaining, maybe not educational or informative, but it is entertaining. Trust me, go see the movie. Don't listen to Oprah.

AGONIES AND ECSTASIES

Yes, it's been a while and thank-you, it's good to be back. The world of the American Democrat was altered, to say the least, this last week when the Republican GOP swept themselves into major-

ity control of both the U.S. House of Representatives and Senate.

As many of those in the media and even more of those in the Republican party are fond of saying; the people have spoken. Yes, and what did the people say? We want

Newt! We want Pataki! In a bold show of the common man's Political Sensibilities Georgia congressman Newt Gingrich has been thrust into the powerful position of Speaker of the U.S. House of Representatives. His good buddy, U.S. Senator and North Carolina legend Jesse Helms, has been positioned to become the new Chairman of the U.S. Foreign Relations Committee. And of course, Kansas's favorite son and Monster of the Midway, Bob Dole is set to become the Senate's new Majority leader.

It is the first time in forty years that the Republican party has controlled Congress. Ann Richards has slipped past our earthly restraints as has Tom Foley and the worst news in a decade: Mario Cuomo is no longer. With these and other hard facts like Alfonse D'Amato, one must say that this is indeed a dark time for the Democrats.

Still, Ted Kennedy won and Florida asserted itself as the only sober state by re-electing Gov. Lawton Chiles to office. Yes, the people have spoken: they left Florida as the sole major state in the Union with a Democrat

Governor and they put a man named Newt in control of Congress. What was it Aristotle said about Representative Government...?

The Guilford Fighting Quaker Football Team finished the season in dramatic style Saturday by coming back from a 28-7 defeat in the first half to beat Salisbury State in the final minutes. The team had dropped the last two games, both in which they were favored, and it looked as though a once promising season was doomed to end dismally. But with the bullet coming straight on, Guilford did not blink. They caught a long tipped pass they blocked a point after and they forced penalties. And before one could stop to worry they had won the game. "That was awesome," said one female spectator. Congratulations, guys.

For those wondering where the Guilfordians have been the last few weeks, we were in New Orleans. Ah, New Orleans, a town whose depravity seeps out onto the city streets each morning with breakfast and this year home to the annual College Publications Convention. We attended seminars and lectures on

how to make a college newspaper pretty and smart and cool and nice. We entered our paper for competition. We did not place. But fear not, those of you faithful readers, I have heard your pleas, "Not the Guilfordian! They're the best! How could they not finish first?" Well, a lovely little paper from Ithaca College in Ithaca, New York won first prize in our category. An attractive young woman walked up to accept their trophy and then the whole lot of them made like bandits for a plane back to Ithaca. How smug. Still, there is time and life yet in these tired Guilfordian bones. And as the Dallas Cowboys proved so adequately this past weekend: Nobody's stays on top for long. Watch out, Ithaca.

And finally in a rather foreboding note, Billy Ray Cyrus released a new album this week entitled, "Storm in the Heartland". This is, of course, a biblical sign that Armageddon is near. Be careful out there.