

American Film Gains New Seriousness

'Cowboy' Brings New Brand of Hero to Screen

By FRANK RENFRO

Based on the Herlihy novel, MIDNIGHT COWBOY is a powerful piece of film. John Schlesinger, the able director of DARLING and FAR FROM THE MADDING CROWD, has created with the help of two of the better actors around today a story of loneliness that bites so deeply we wonder why he did not get down to 42nd Street sooner.

"I'm new in town, ma'am, and I'm looking for the Statue of Liberty"—Joe Buck realizes that in his new profession words must be well-chosen. "Well, it's down in Central Park taking a leak—if you hurry, you can catch the supper show," comes a reply from the uptown boulevard digger who could easily be Phyllis Diller's kid sister from the Bronx.

And, before we know it, they're scrambling bare-assed across the screen, into the bed, poodle and all, as the remotely controlled T.V. flashes from the late movie to the Jolly Green Giant. Noticing the garish Miami Hilton decor of the apartment, Joe Buck observes that she is possibly as "rich as an archbishop."

However, the Phyllis Diller woman has no intention of being taken lightly and after a tear-jerking scene that Scarlet O'Hara would have been proud of, she lessens considerably the bulge of our hero's wallet.

It is hard to imagine that Jon Voight was schooled in Shakespearean theater, for the Texas Panhandle grins and naive generosity which he is anxious to lavish on women are as believable and nontheatrical as they are becoming.

Now officially betrayed by the wily ways of The City, Joe Buck is not at all disheartened and wanders, no doubt unknowingly, into one of New York's more sleazy gay emporiums.

The camera pans slowly across the shadowy faces at the bar in a manner which is weirdly reminiscent of a similar scene from GRAND HOTEL.

Who should be sitting next to the cowboy but Dustin Hoffman. Now far removed from the pleasures of Anne Bancroft, Hoffman must not only steal for survival but suffer a social life that would seem overly despairing even in NO EXIT TO BROOKLYN.

He limps well, he Brooklynizes lines well, and after a while even the audience winces when someone pelts him with his hated nickname, Ratso.

He is a far cry from the miscreants and glamour boys of the decade such as George Hamilton, Warren Beatty, and the man Life Magazine likes to compare, John Wayne.

MIDNIGHT COWBOY is an

Calendar Campus

ATTORNEY GENERAL'S Office is now recruiting staff members for the coming year. If interested, come by Suite B, room 256, of the Union, pick up an application form, and sign up for an interview. Interviews will be held through Friday.

ANYONE INTERESTED in serving on any one of ten committees of the Carolina Union Activities Group is urged to interview any afternoon this week. Suite A.

NATIONAL MERIT Scholarship committee interviews in room 212 of the Union from 1-3 p.m. today.

CIRUNA (Council on International Relations and United Nations Affairs) will have its first meeting Wednesday at 8 p.m. upstairs in the YMCA. All persons interested in any phase of international relations are urged to attend.

CAROLINA BLUEBOOKS, the pictorial directory of new undergraduates, are still available at the information desk at the Union.

SUPER SUNDAY tickets are still on sale at the Union information desk. The first flick, THE TAMING OF THE SHREW with Richard Burton and Elizabeth Taylor, is scheduled for Sunday, September 28. Other features in the \$3 subscription series include PETULIA; A MAN FOR ALL SEASONS; RACHEL, RACHEL; HOW I WON THE WAR; & CLOSELY WATCHED TRAINS.



eloquent story of friendship. It is amazing how rarely motion pictures deal with friendship in any depth. The recently made LAST SUMMER is a rather savage exception, but it is more a story of how strong bonds between friends become simple alliances in a violent game of Get the Guest.

Soon, through Ratso's misguidance, Joe Buck finds himself in the hotel room of the fanatical Mr. O'Daniel. O'Daniel turns out to be not the aristocrat of pimps he had expected but one of the town's more excitable Jesus men, and Joe Buck registers a more than ordinary disappointment.

The flashback to Joe's youth in this episode is informative and well-edited, as the device is through-out the movie. Through these we learn of Joe's first girlfriend to whom he was "the only one, the only one, Joe," even until

Two New Ensembles Originated

Two instrumental ensembles will be sponsored this year by the Department of Music.

The first is called the Wind Ensemble and will be a specially selected number of woodwind, brass and percussion players.

It will perform challenging and diverse compositions written especially for this kind of group. The Ensemble will be conducted by a new faculty member, Paul Andre Christianson, who is fresh from the University of Miami (Fla.) where he worked as the assistant to Frederick Fennell, one of the originators of the wind ensemble concept, and the former director of the famed Eastman Wind Ensemble.

The Jazz Lab Band will concentrate on exploring the exciting repertoire being composed for this idiom by today's skilled young jazz writers. The band will include five saxes, five trumpets, four trombones and rhythm (piano, guitar, string or electric bass, and drums).

There will be ample opportunity for improvisational experience, and original music will be sought from members of the UNC community.

The Jazz Lab Band will be led by John Harding, a second year faculty member of the music department.

Mr. Harding has performed with several name bands himself, among them those of Maynard Ferguson, Les Elgart, and Si Zentner.

In Canada, Mr. Harding directed a highly successful collegiate stage band, and was regularly featured on nationwide radio with his professional Big Band (which appeared several times at EXPO in Montreal).

Both of these groups will rehearse regularly and will afford credit for participating members.

Interested musicians should contact the conductors of these groups for audition appointments. Mr. Christianson may be found in room 109 of Hill Hall, and Mr. Harding is next door in room 110.

(Mr. Christianson has just returned from South America where his Miami Youth Symphony played a highly acclaimed tour.)

Other instrumental ensembles sponsored by the UNC Department of Music include the University Symphony, the Chamber Symphony, the New Music Ensemble, and the Brass Ensemble program, which uses two small groups, combining once weekly in a Brass Choir.

approved by this attention to authenticity.

In MIDNIGHT COWBOY the appearance of brand names on signs, Time Square's swooshing Right Guard billboard, the Plaza Hotel, and all the other readily identifiable New York vignettes will be of special poignance to film societies who run this movie in the coming Age of Orwell.

Betrayed by Ratso, Joe Buck is now alone in a city which creates loneliness and preys on those who possess it. Soon, financial necessity forces him to become a very different type of hustler.

But Joe Buck is not much of a businessman and once again walks away from an unsavory affair empty-handed. At this time of complete defeat a briefly forgotten man rears his ugly Italian head.

"In my own god-damned place it's not Ratso but Enrico Salvatore Rizzo," and with that a new episode begins in Joe Buck's New York career.

As the manager of this very specialized commodity Ratso

grooms and appraises the cowboy and decides that his garb is "faggot stuff" nowadays.

However, not all women have forgotten how to love a man who walks tall in the big city sun and possibly sells Marlboros. Soon a discreet arrangement is made at a rather interesting party.

As photographically interesting as the party scene is, it jars badly with the general pace and mood of the film.

It seems that everyone of the New York hip scene is in attendance—toking, filming each other, loving each other at the sort of gathering you will never see at the Sigma Chi house.

Schlesinger has unearthed everybody: the Warhol people—Viva, Ultraviolet—and was that really Bob Bass lurking in a dark corner?

The bulk of the story is told in a very straightforward manner. The strange camera angles, the unusual coloring and lighting of flashback sequences is justified

artistically because they were remembered events that had occurred in a different time and place and were merely cinematic footnotes to the real story.

Conceived as it was, the party, though beautiful, had no place in the story which Schlesinger was carefully building step by step.

Like all men Ratso had dreams. Florida, the land of coconuts and sunshine and old ladies with noxema for



... a far cry from Ratso...

noses, is better than Broadway so they begin their epic bus ride. Ratso's health is deteriorating rapidly.

This last odyssey is brilliantly directed and with a restraint that is as rare in American films as it is difficult to achieve. The grief on Jon Voight's face at the end is remarkable and no one can fail to be moved by it.

The camera cuts to a shot from outside the bus of the two riding side by side, Voight's arm around his wimpy little friend. The reflections of buildings passing over the windows seem almost vulgar. The silver screen has witnessed few sadder tales.

MIDNIGHT COWBOY is one of several recently released movies that give weight to the idea of a new seriousness in American films. Others are EASY RIDER, MEDIUM COOL, and last year's FACES.

The coming of age of the post-war American film has been long-awaited and frequently pronounced arrived. Too long have directors been in servitude to super stars and

money-conscious producers.

There were great moments in the old days—which have certainly not left us completely—but it could be said with often justifiable cynicism, that the American movie theatre was no more than a glamorous brothel of the imagination—directors, the world's highest paid pimps.

Due to a number of disparate occurrences such as the new money in the hands of the young and the availability and relative cheapness of cameras and film, the Hollywood formula film is in rapid decline.

Men still grow rich peddling this art on celluloid, but let us hope that at least now the right men are getting rich. Directors are the new super stars.

Not necessarily the best of the films mentioned above, but a serious and successful effort, MIDNIGHT COWBOY is memorable and fulfills a test necessary for all art—one feels the sum total of his worth, vague as it may sound, is increased by having seen it.

UNC STUDENTS, YOU ARE BEING WATCHED.

We've seen a few of you trying to get into our Chapel Hill Main Office between 1 and 3 in the afternoon. So, from now on, we're going to leave an express teller window open from 1 to 3. This means you can bank all day. From 9 to 5 Mondays through Thursdays. From 9 to 6 Fridays. At the NCB Main Office in Chapel Hill. And if other banks start doing this, we hope you'll remember which one responded to your needs first.

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