

'Footloose' an unrealistic, high-energy musical

By IVY HILLIARD
Staff Writer

Movie musicals just aren't what they used to be. Time was, characters burst into song whenever the mood struck or when words just weren't good enough. Nowadays they don't even call them musicals, because it's just not good box office. Take, for example, the new Paramount release *Flashfoot* or, *Footloose*.

Review

In the tradition of other Paramount releases, such as *Saturday Night Fever* and last year's phenomenally popular *Flashdance*, the characters in the new musical don't get to sing. But they do get to dance up a storm, with the music entering the story through radio and other realistic sources.

The target of *Footloose* and its predecessors is the teenage audience that has been captivated by the charms of MTV and the music video.

It is no surprise, then, that *Footloose* succeeds with a mixture of high-energy musical numbers within a vaguely realistic plot, as its quick climb to the top of the box office charts after only one week in release illustrated.

The basics of *Footloose* come from the tradition of "youthful rebellion" movies that is even older than the

musical tradition but for 1984 this rebellion is remarkably clean-cut and nostalgic of the old "let's put on a show" movies.

The film takes place in a small Midwestern town where dancing has been outlawed for the last five years due to the one-man campaign of a fundamentalist preacher, Rev. Shaw Moore (John Lithgow). His daughter, Ariel (Lori Singer), is a daredevil, a rebellious girl determined to escape her father's authority.

Then comes Ren McCormack (Kevin Bacon), the new kid in town, fresh from the big city with rhythm in his step and a chip on his shoulder that bring good and bad results.

Ren's attitude draws attention from the townspeople, who heartily disapprove of his ways (bad), and from Ariel, who decides it's time to dump her redneck boyfriend Chuck (Jim Young) and go after Ren (good).

What works in *Footloose* are the performances and the infectious spirit of the soundtrack.

Bacon, whose performance in *Diner* as an alcoholic preppy showed real acting talent, is lean and sizzling in this film. By doing all of his own dancing except for a few of the more difficult gymnastic stunts, he shows talent as a fine dancer as well. Paired with Singer, he offers a sweetness and sexiness that's hard to resist. Singer herself is a lovely actress who gives a mixed but oddly winning performance.

Lithgow is as excellent as always. He manages to give his antagonistic character a vulnerable side, making his actions more sympathetic to the audience.

Christopher Penn, as Ren's pal Willard, is a true scene stealer, especially in his gee-whiz manner and his clumsily heroic attempts to lure to dance.

But best of all in *Footloose* is the music, especially the title track by Kenny Loggins and a Deniece Williams song, *Let's Hear It for the Boy*. When these numbers cut loose, the movie soars.

What's wrong with *Footloose* is that there is not enough of this energy to sustain the plot through its slow-moving scenes and contradictory storyline.

Dean Pitchford's screenplay touches on so many issues (book burning, New Right ethics, drug enforcement, parental abandonment, etc.) that it slows down what should be a lively, bouncy, just plain fun movie.

Director Herbert Ross gets the visual style of the film down wonderfully, but it's still the little things that are hard to swallow. Why is the Reverend so strict on everyone except his wild daughter? When the kids finally get to dance, why do they make moves that would put Michael Jackson to shame?

As an example of the new style of musicals, *Footloose* is lacking enough to create a certain nostalgia for the old brand and spirited enough to point out the possibilities of the new.

Artist Moonelis collaborates with students.

By ARLAINE ROCKEY
Staff Writer

Students were treated to two days with visiting ceramics artist Judy Moonelis Wednesday and Thursday. The event was sponsored by the Gallery Committee of the Carolina Union.

With the aid of slides, Moonelis spoke about the development of her expressive form of sculpture. Even as a young child she showed an interest in art. Her parents supported her interest by taking her to art museums. For Moonelis, art seemed the natural thing to do.

Moonelis studied painting in high school and began majoring in painting at the Tyler School of Art at Temple University.

In her second year, however, Moonelis took a ceramics course taught by Rudy Staffel. In 1972, when she began to study ceramics, the basic curriculum revolved around vessels. With vessels, Moonelis moved into figurative work in clay.

In 1975, Moonelis graduated from the Tyler School. She received her master's degree from the New York State College of Ceramics at Alfred University.

Moonelis now lives in New York City, where she has a studio. She has compiled an impressive list of exhibitions and experience for a young artist.

Moonelis was excited by the strong turnout in Chapel Hill. About 50 people attended the slide presentation and

the demonstration. Several others involved themselves in a collaborative project with Moonelis. "I received a wonderful, positive response from people," Moonelis said.

For the collaborative project, Moonelis and her collaborators created a large ceramic collage, about four feet long and two feet high, of several faces similar to her work now on display in the glass cases in the Carolina Union lobby. Moonelis thought it refreshing to have a group not only containing graduate art students and die-hard ceramics buffs, but also many novices.

Moonelis' pieces are figurative sculptures done on slabs of clay with a bright and often alarming use of color. The word "style" for Moonelis, however, focuses on technique; she is more concerned with expression.

Moonelis' work has been called "aggressive," and she agrees that it is. Her figures express the biting realistic dichotomy present in humanity. On one plane of a sculpture, the figure's expression is calm and nonchalant — "the side we tend to hold up to the world," Moonelis calls it.

The flip side of a piece of sculpture expresses "the inner, negative feelings that people don't like to deal with ... the anger, the fear that we as a society tend to keep down ... I force people to look at it," Moonelis said. Viewing her work forces a person to face this tension, which Moonelis feels is in all of society from the personal to the political.

"Change is prevalent in art," said Moonelis, who began her figurative work in vessels then moved to the abstract. Moonelis said she is now "finding (her) way back to the figure; (her art) is becoming more focused." Moonelis' philosophy on art is clear. "You challenge yourself all the time," she said.

Jason and the Scorchers' tour to stop in Raleigh

By J. BONASIA
Staff Writer

After three years, Jason and the Scorchers are finally starting to pick up some momentum.

Carolina music enthusiasts will be able to see Jason's much-healed, rhinestone-studded live act tonight at the Bear's Den in Raleigh.

Back in 1981, guitarist Warner Hodges, bass player Jeff Johnson and drummer Perry Baggs joined up with frontman Jason Ringenberg. By year's end Jason

and the Nashville Scorchers was formally begun. The group released its first EP, *Reckless Country Soul*, in February, 1982, but nobody paid much attention. It bombed badly.

Then, in 1983, Nashville's Praxis Records released *Fervor*, a mini-album that received popular critical acclaim but still failed to generate sales.

All of which leads up to 1984. Enter EMI-America and, with it, momentum. In January the band was signed by the powerful New York-based label. EMI promptly set about plotting a course to

create a scorching success.

Their first move was to drop the "Nashville" from their name. EMI officials thought this change would stress the group's rock 'n' roll image while playing down its country and western aspects. So much for loyalty to one's hometown.

Next, ZZ Top producer Terry Manning got behind the boards to remix *Fervor*. A cover of Bob Dylan's "Absolutely Sweet Marie" was included, and the record was re-released.

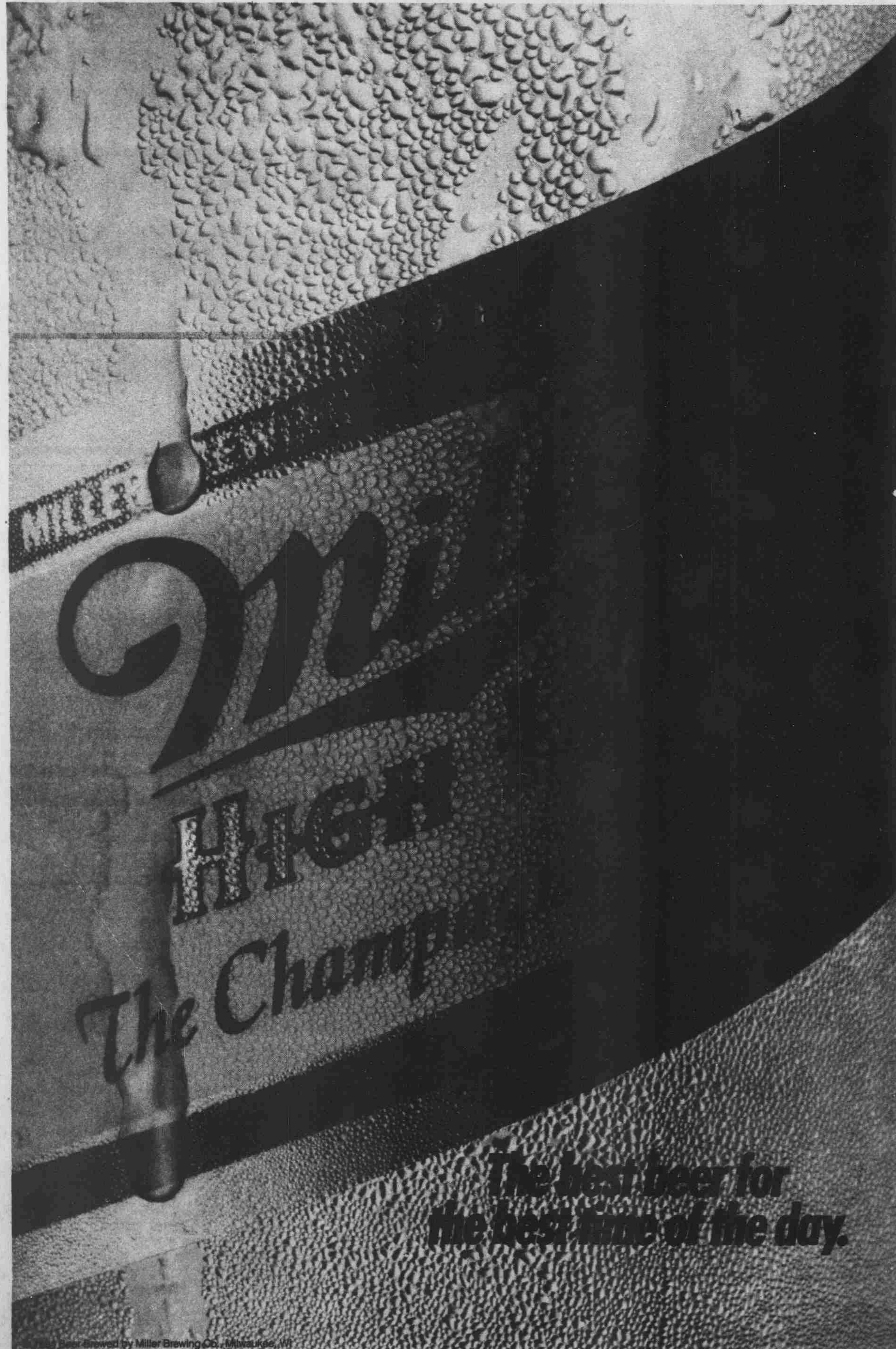
Finally, EMI has provided the promotional support that a small label like

Praxis couldn't afford. And all of it seems to be paying off.

Now the Scorchers are headlining a national tour of major cities to promote the "new" *Fervor*.

There has been mention of a hard-rocking version of John Denver's "Country Roads" in the band's repertoire, and one EMI spokesperson described a typical Scorchers show as very wild and "very ... uh, different."

Students who take a break from midterms tonight and head over to Raleigh will see for themselves.



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5 Edgar the painter	33 — Gatos	51 Racemose plants	13 Inquire
10 — avis	34 Fish	53 Straight rod	19 Credit's partner
14 Perfectly	36 Giggle	55 Extol	21 Blame
15 Uneven	37 Ballot	57 Catalonian	24 Pillars
16 Time periods	39 Chopin opus, e.g.	60 Shores	25 Presley
17 Lohengrin's bride	41 Secluded valley	62 Yearning	26 Marianne the poet
18 Very close, as a race	42 Actress	63 Seed coat	28 London gallery
20 Adorn	44 "South Pacific" hero	64 Way	30 Attention-grabbing
22 Think	46 Vowel group	65 Principal	31 Certain fisherman
23 Carte	47 Catered	66 Expansive	32 Festival of Apollo
24 Social groups	49 Dickens' "others..."	67 Traditional trees	35 Miss Adams
25 Big bird		68 Trees	38 Highly desirable
27 "Do — others..."			40 Ovals

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2/29/84

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