

Controversial novel is now a movie



Bob Spence
Entertainment
Thomas News Service

Last Exit To Brooklyn, a movie based on a 1964 novel that sparked a major controversy, opens in Canadian theatres in May.

When Hubert Selby Jr.'s novel - a look at the dark side of the "fabulous fifties" - was released 26 years ago, Newsweek called it "a serious work of literature," while Time magazine said "it screams like a borderline psychotic."

"That the author is able to make one believe at all in this sordid, hopeless world (that he has created) is an extraordinary achievement," said the New York Times.

The novel received critical acclaim in Great Britain, but there were cries in Parliament to have the publishers prosecuted for promoting obscenity. The Last Exit To Brooklyn was banned in Britain.

Screenwriter Desmond Nakano has adapted Selby's novel - which consisted of six loosely connected stories - for the screen.

Set in a working class neighbourhood on the Brooklyn waterfront during the sweltering days and nights of the summer of 1962, the story unfolds against a backdrop of prostitution, gang violence, loveless sex, drugs, union corruption and labor riots.

Stephen Lang and Jennifer Leight headline the cast.

Last Exit To Brooklyn opens May 4 in Toronto, Montreal and Vancouver; later in May or in June at a number of other Canadian cities.

The Good Brothers, recipients of eight Juno Awards, have released their first album in four years.

Live Fast, Love Hard, recorded in late 1989 in Toronto, includes Live Fast, Love Hard, Die Young, a reworking of the old Faron

Young standard, She Told Me So (written by Bobby Braddock) and Honk On Hobo and Enquiring Minds, a pair of off-the-wall songs composed by two of the Good Brothers, Brian and Bruce.

The album is being released in 14 European countries this summer and Canada's singing brothers will be launching an extensive European tour in late September.

Cartoon All-Stars to the Rescue, the anti-drug cartoon special being shown by all major TV networks on April 21, airs at different times in various regions. In last week's column, I said it would air at 10:30 a.m., but that's only in the Eastern time zone.

The actual schedule is: Newfoundland, 12 noon; Atlantic time zone, 11:30 a.m.; Eastern, 10:30 a.m.; Central and Pacific, 9:30 a.m.; Mountain, 8:30 a.m.

CBC-TV and Sullivan Films have reached an agreement for production of 13 more Road to Avonlea episodes.

The new episodes, featuring the same cast that performed in the episodes aired during 1989-90 TV season, also will be loosely based on Lucy Maud Montgomery's novels.

Road To Avonlea returns in August with repeats of the first nine episodes. Four episodes that were filmed in 1989 but have not yet been aired, plus the new episodes, will follow, starting in October.

Filming of the new episodes is scheduled to start in June in Prince Edward Island, Toronto and Uxbridge, Ont.

Getting A Needed Rest

Lying down and resting may be as beneficial as sleeping in the case of an afternoon nap, according to a recent study conducted by Texas A&M's Sleep Laboratory. Both habitual nappers and non-nappers reported about the same amount of mood improvement from napping and from resting without falling asleep. Researchers concluded that sleep itself does not appear to be crucial in improving mood.

Queen of Hearts is romantic, enchanting film

By DIAHANN NADEAU
Herald Special

QUEEN OF HEARTS: This is a charming, utterly romantic film that enchants its audience with its operatic story and lovely performances.

Beautiful Rosa is promised to Mr. Barbarecci in Italy in the forties. She does not love him, she loves her neighbor, Danilo. The two run away, pursued by the furious fiancé, while the whole town watches. They climb the church tower and leap - but not to their deaths; they land in a hay wagon and leave for England. This opening takes place with almost no dialogue, just a highly dramatic intensity reminiscent of a Verdi opera. Then the narrative begins as Eddie, the youngest of the couples four children, recounts the family history some 20 years later.

It seems that Danilo is blessed with visions and luck. A pig's head speaks to him in a restaurant and thus he becomes a 'man of property.' All proceeds well until the ominous arrival of Mr. Barbarecci, wealthy and single, bent on revenge of the most insidious kind.

Eddie becomes part of the narrative at this point, as he struggles to keep his world together, his family from falling apart. It's a lot to ask of a 10 year old. Will Danilo survive the devious plot to ruin him? Can Eddie save his family? You'll have to see for yourselves.

The acting is superb, with a special nod to Ian Hawkes as Eddie, and Tat Whalley as his precocious friend, Beetle. Queen of Hearts is an impassioned, romantic and beautiful movie, well worth watching. This is a film that takes a chance and plays straight to the heart, without manipulation or sentimentality. If only more movies had this kind of nerve.

RUDE AWAKENING: The first hint of a problem comes with the opening credits - there are two directors for this film. This is never a good sign; a lack of cohesive vision seems to be the inevitable result of a dual director approach. Rude Awakening starts off with some promise, and an interesting cast, but quickly degenerates into a silly, chaotic,



and annoying experience. It exploits the sixties nostalgia craze and worse, uses the environmental movement to try to give it some depth. It comes off as a cynical attempt to cash in on a vital issue, and the dedication 'to all those who care about the earth' is an infuriating mockery.

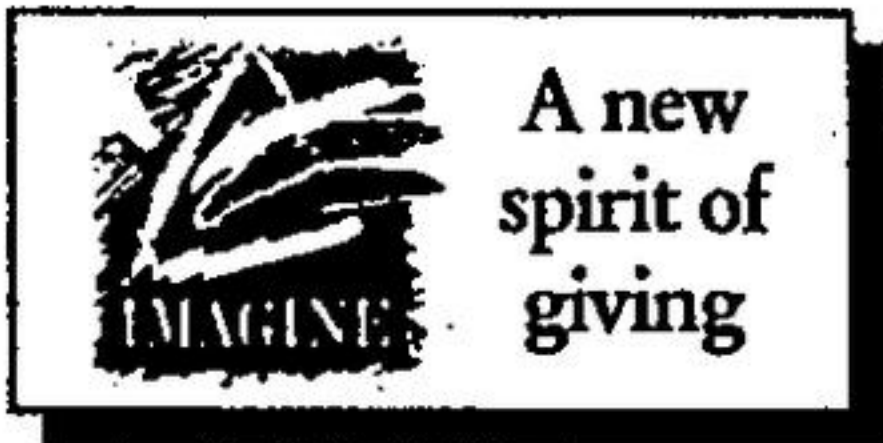
Cheech Marin and Eric Roberts play Jesus and Fred, a couple of fugitive hippies on the lam from the FBI for various illegal activities. They wind up living in a central American jungle commune for 20 years, smoking pot and having acid flashbacks. This utopia is shattered by the death of a CIA agent carrying plans of an invasion to remove the communist government in 'Managador.' Fred and Jesus head back to New York to inform the world of this new Vietnam, looking to their old cronies for help. Boy, are they in for a 'rude awakening.'

Petra (Julie Hagerty), the artistic flower child, is now a neurotic woman with too much money and an expensive apartment. Sammy (Robert Carradine), the writer with a conscience, owns

tanning salons and is married to a materialistic snob (Cindy Williams). At first they are shocked by their buddies' return, but soon they decide that the old values are better than the new ones (i.e. none), and join Jesus and Fred in saving the world. Everything backfires though, and Fred is demoralized, until he is rescued by some teens with environmental concerns. How very timely.

There is a waste of good cast here, as Buck Henry, Andrea Martin, and an older and fatter Louise Lasser (Mary Hartman) are also along for the ride. Rude Awakening has some very funny moments, and a few perceptive observations. But on the whole it is unsatisfying and shallow, misleading and disappointing. It's not a total loss, but one feels betrayed in the end.

Videos supplied through the courtesy of Country Video.



Social night at Brit Club

May 1st - Social Night: Susan Powell of the NEC has been invited to present "The Limestone Legacy", an audio-visual program highlighting the Niagara Escarpment, including its flora and fauna, as well as the Niagara Escarpment Commissions mandate to protect this environmentally sensitive zone for future generations to enjoy. Social nights are held in the first Tues-

day of each month at the Copper Kettle Inn, Glen Williams. New members are welcome.

May 4th - Pub Night: The Halton Hills British/Canadian Club will be hosting a night out at the Auld Triangle Pub on Sandalwood Parkway in Brampton. Dinner will be available. For further information call 877-3292 or 846-6215.

Tokyo opened to foreign trade in 1867

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Today is the 115th day of 1990 and the 37th day of spring.

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TODAY'S HISTORY: On this day in 1867, Tokyo was opened to foreign trade.

TODAY'S BIRTHDAYS: Guglielmo Marconi (1874-1937), Italian inventor; Edward R. Murrow (1908-1965), broadcast journalist; Ella Fitzgerald (1918-), singer; Paul Mazursky (1930-), director; Meadowlark Lemon (1932-), basketball player; Anthony Lukas (1933-), writer; Al Pacino (1940-), actor; Talia Shire (1946-), actress.

TODAY'S QUOTE: "People say con-

versation is a lost art; how often I have wished it were." — Edward R. Murrow

TODAY'S MOON: New moon.



ON AN AVERAGE DAY: the federal government spends \$459,537 on the National Endowment for the Arts.

Source: "On An Average Day," by Tom Heymann (Fawcett Columbine)

TODAY'S BARBS BY PHIL PASTORET

They call pieces of legislation "bills" because, once enacted, they prove to be so expensive.

Things that go bump in the night in ghost stories are tame stuff when compared to things that go bump on the freeways.

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