

Cassandra Crossing long but attention-grabbing, coming to Odeon

by Terry Dupuis
A new disaster epic will be opening in May at the Odeon Theatre in Midland. It is the latest in

a cycle of box-office hits such as The Poseidon Adventure, The Towering Inferno, Earthquake, Juggernaut and the three

"Airport" movies. Like its predecessors, The Cassandra Crossing is big-budget, has an all-star cast and some

spectacular and suspenseful scenes. The Cassandra Crossing is about a fleeing terrorist who is hiding out on a train bound from Geneva to Stockholm. He is unknowingly the carrier of a highly contagious and deadly bacteria. There are over a thousand passengers aboard the train.

Many of the passengers will be familiar faces to moviegoers. They include Richard Harris, Sophia Loren, Ava Gardner, Martin Sheen, O.J. in the cast are Burt Simpson, Lionel Stander and Lee Strasberg. Also Lancaster and Ingrid Thulin as an Army intelligence officer and a sympathetic doctor in Geneva who must deal with the plight of the passengers on the plague-infested train.

The Cassandra Crossing runs a little over the two-hour mark, but it

manages to hold the viewers' attention quite nicely.

The Cassandra Crossing is scheduled to play at the Odeon in about three weeks time. In the meanwhile, The Domino Principle starts tonight. It is an action thriller with Gene Hackman, Candice Bergen, Richard Widmark, Mickey Rooney and Edward Albert.

At The Pen: Three worthwhile double bills are coming to

the Pen Theatre. Tomorrow and Friday evenings is a double feature of Bad News Bears and Mahogany. The Bad News Bears is the baseball comedy which stars Walter Matthau and Tatum O'Neal; Mahogany is a drama about a model

starring Diana Ross. Beginning this Saturday evening is Clint Eastwood's latest action thriller, The Enforcer. The second feature on the same program with the Enforcer is The Ritz. It is a wild and zany adult comedy based on the hit

Broadway play of the same name. Most actors who were in the original play recreate their roles for the movie: Jack Weston, Jerry Stiller, Rita Moreno and Kaye Ballard.

Opening at the Pen next Thursday, May 5th is a double bill of comedy and drama. The comedy is the hilarious George Segal and Jane Fonda film called Fun With Dick and Jane. The drama is provided by Obsession, a fascinating Hitchcock-type of thriller by Brian dePalma, the director of Carrie and Phantom of the Paradise.



'Fastmatics' champs
Parkview School of Midland edged St. Joseph's School of Penetanguishene in the area Fastmatics competition on Cable T.V. last week. Parkview's competitors (above) are (left to right) Simon Moore, Wilson Cowan, Lindsey Martin and Clayton Truax, St. Joseph's (below): Neil and Marc Ladouceur, Paul Marchildon, and Michele Morrow. Staff photo

Book Review

Hebert's real Canadian horror story

by Shirley Whittington
Roman Polanski will enjoy Anne Hebert's latest novel and so will all of you out there who long for a real Canadian horror story.

Children of the Black Sabbath is an evil unsettling book, setting the horrors of demonic possession against the punctilious ritual of the Sisters of the Precious Blood in Quebec City.

Don't look here for the gloomy introspection of Kamouraska - Children of the Black Sabbath moves swiftly and dreadfully toward an ambiguous but shattering ending. The story is set down in constant present tense with relentless simplicity that defies you to disbelieve.

The children of the Black Sabbath are Adelard and Joseph, born to a pair of lustful and cruel shanty dwellers who pursue terrifying religious rites, based on drugs and alcohol, in the deep woods of Quebec.

The children, brought up in squalor, are initiated into maturity with ritual incest. Joseph runs away to join the army. Adelard finds herself in a convent as Sister Julie.

She is about to take her vows when the story opens, but she is constantly visited by odious visions from her childhood. She is apparently possessed and the convent with her. Stigmata appear on her flesh. She utters foul and dreadful oaths. Mysterious chill winds blow out sacramental

candles. Neither the passionate prayers of the good Sisters, or the ministrations of priests and doctors can drive out the devil. Exorcism fails and indeed the methods of the Sisters in dealing with Sister Julie's possession are so blindly archaic that one can scarcely believe that the novel is set in 1944.

Sister Julie becomes pregnant - we are never told exactly how - it's a virgin birth of a peculiarly perverse sort. And the child? See Rosemary's Baby for a clue. The Sisters deal with the child in typical cloistered secrecy. Sister Julie escapes, and maybe this time, the Devil wins.

Children of the Black Sabbath was published in 1975 under the title Les enfants du sabbat, so in a sense it is not a new book. But the English translation is new and Anglophone readers will find it compelling reading. The French version won the Governor General's Award, the Prix de la Fondation

Juvenal and the Grand Prix de Monaco. On its 25th anniversary, this prix was given for the first time to a foreign French writer - Anne Hebert.

The French press has said of Black Sabbath, "If Anne Hebert had published this novel in Montreal during the 40's and 50's, she would have provoked the greatest

scandal in our literary history. We would have exiled, if not hanged her." In the 70's, when Quebec is breaking out of cloistered mummified existence, Children of the Black Sabbath is frightening food for thought.

Children of the Black Sabbath: by Anne Hebert. Musson pub. 198 pp. \$8.95...

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