

Newman, Redford 'amiable, charming' in Award winner 'The Sting'

by Terry Dupuis
One of the most popular box-office hits of recent years returns tonight for a special week-long engagement at the Odeon Theatre in Midland. The movie is *The Sting*, a 1973 film in which Paul Newman and Robert Redford portray a couple of con men during the Depression.

The *Sting* begins with Redford and an older partner pulling a successful "switch" con on a passerby. It turns out, though, that the money belonged to a dangerous racketeer named Lonnegan (Robert Shaw). Redford's friend is killed and Redford himself

narrowly escapes with his life. On the run, he looks up a master con man named Gondorff (Paul Newman), who was also a friend of Redford's murdered partner. For revenge, Redford and Newman set up an elaborate scheme to "sting" the racketeer Lonnegan.

Their scheme to swindle the big swindler forms the basis of the plot. The *Sting* is basically a fun movie, with Newman and Redford as amiable and charming a team as they were a number of years earlier in *Butch Cassidy and The Sundance Kid*. Not surprisingly, the

director of *The Sting* is George Roy Hill, who also directed *Butch Cassidy and The Sundance Kid*. Both Newman and Redford have always worked well with this particular director. Since *The Sting*, Redford did *The Great Waldo Pepper* with Hill, and Newman recently did *Slapshot* with him.

In *Butch Cassidy and The Sundance Kid*, Newman and Redford were pretty much the whole show. In *The Sting* they share the spotlight with some supporting players, several of whom have gone on to become better known to the general public in recent years. Robert Shaw is excellent as the nasty racketeer who is the

target of the Big Con. (Since *The Sting*, Shaw has gone on to movie stardom in such hits as *Jaws*, *Swashbuckler* and *Black Sunday*. Charles Durning is also very good as a crooked cop on Newman and Redford's trail. (Durning later played important roles in *Dog Day Afternoon*, *Breakheart Pass*, and *Twilight's Last Gleaming*.)

Also contributing towards making *The Sting* a superior entertainment are the costumes and sets, which convincingly recapture the underworld milieu of Chicago in the 1930's. Mention must also be made of the fine adaptation of Scott Joplin's ragtime tunes by Marvin Hamlisch.

The *Sting* won 7 Academy Awards, for Best Picture; Best Director; Best Original Story and Screenplay; Best Costume Design; Best Art Direction; and Best Film Editing; and Best Musical Score. It also received nominations for Best Actor (Robert Redford); Best Photography, and Best Sound.

An action and suspense double bill begins tomorrow at the Pen: *The Day of the Animals*, and *Sundance Cassidy and Butch The Kid* (not to be confused with the Newman-Redford western). The Midland Drive-In begins a double feature tonight of *A Star Is Born*, with Barbra Streisand, and the Alan Arkin comedy *Rafferty And The Gold-Dust Twins*.

Rock music comes of age

by Peter Whittington
Rock music has matured with arresting rapidity during the course of the last 25 years. The immature, inexperienced child of the 1950's and early 60's turned into a rebellious, experimental teenager in the late 60's. The 1970's have found a serious, sophisticated young adult. Rock and Roll has grown up.

Originally, the basic purpose of Rock and Roll was to get people dancing. Witness the culturally starved but undeniably danceable music of the fifties. Bill Haley and the Comets. Chuck Berry.

The late 60's saw the emergence of the Rock Concert and bands who became famous for outrageous onstage antics. Witness 'The Who' and their early amplifier attacks.

Presently, with organizations like 'Kiss' around, music often takes a back seat to showmanship. Conversely, the seventies have also been the age of the non-performing studio rock band. Groups that hole up in the studio for years rehearsing, overdubbing, and tightening music that will never be presented onstage. Witness 'Ambrosia,' and... 'Steely Dan.'

With their last public performance in 1971, it's our good fortune that the Dan have decided to undertake a road trip this fall. Transferring that studio wizardry onto the stage should be quite a job. Apparently they'll be carrying a number of keyboard players, guitarists and vocalists. Definitely something to look forward to. Also, look for a new Steely Dan album sometime in August.

That collection of nostalgic noseblow, "The Beatles At Hollywood Bowl" received gold status early this month. Talk about using a name to sell a record. Sure, that may be George John, Paul and Ringo twisting and shouting but there's no getting around the fact that it's simply not very good music. "Hollywood Bowl" is the 21st collective effort to be

released by the Liverpool label. Must be a frightful bore having all your records turn gold. They don't play that well either.

Steve Miller's new album, "Book of Dreams" also developed the Midas touch promptly after it's release and is now only a few thousand copies away from the three million mark.

Keep on top of the free concerts at Ontario Place this summer. There's a colourful variety of entertainment slated, something for everyone, and it's all free with admission to the grounds.

Not much music news locally except that Balm Beach's very own Fillmore East, The Barrelworks, will be opening for business Thursdays, Fridays and Saturdays starting on the long weekend. (Two weeks time.)

Keep listening.

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