

## Heavy Traffic offers view of bleak New York life

In the sphere of the popular feature cartoon, *Heavy Traffic* appears to be, if not an artistic breakthrough, at least a unique creation in animation.

For its creator Ralph Bakshi, who not only wrote and directed it, but also used his voice for several of the characters, *Heavy Traffic* is a personal, inventive view of an integral part of his roots—the bleak, rough and bricky life in his native New York. A former chief of CBS-TV's Terrytoons, he gives us the dimly lit world of shipyard docks, rooftops, bars, dingy apartments, streets and alleys.

greg lukow  
key grip

We meet Michael, a original young artist who gets caught up with a loud, hustling black chick named Carole, plus, true to the movie's ad campaign, a myriad of kooks, hustlers, cops, hardhats and God.

The film probably is insulting to nearly everyone from Italians, Jews and blacks to prostitutes, transvestites and cripples.

The film is contemporary, but there are many items in it that could date it at nearly anytime since the '30s, perhaps suggesting the city as giant, entrapping organism, impervious to betterment or change.

For a cartoon, it has many haunting images to drive its point home. A dead, naked woman dangling from a clothesline high above the barren streets, a voice at the beginning asking, "What kills the pain? Who do you screw?", and a captured pigeon that Michael in vain tries to chase away, and which finally splatters him in the eye.

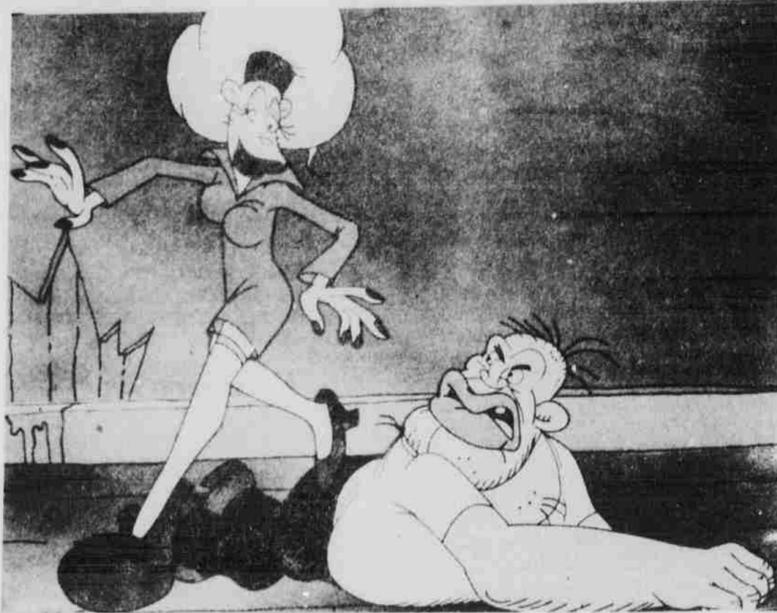
"I set you free, and you shit on me," he says.

The cartoon begins and ends with a live action framework using a flesh and blood Michael and Carole. This part is not only unnecessary, but even incongruous with the rest of the film.

It also has a set of completely dissimilar, yet effective, musical selections; from Chuck Berry's "Maybelline" to Vivaldi's "The Four Seasons."

With blood, gore, sex and assorted genitalia like that from the underground comics, *Heavy Traffic* deserves its X rating. But if Bakshi's previous effort, *Fritz the Cat*, was a more shallow capitalization on that rating, *Heavy Traffic* is not only a meaningful statement, but also inventive within the realm of animation.

He mixes fantasy and the real world simply, yet effectively. A cartoon car cruises down the photographed streets of the city. Michael and Carole sit in a cartoon bar with a real background behind them and Michael watches Clark Gable and Jean Harlow in *Red Dust* while sitting in a vast empty animated theater.



A hardhat finds his date is not all "she" appears to be in Ralph Bakshi's *Heavy Traffic*.

There are cartoons within cartoons, and the graphics and other technical gimmicks combine the most brilliant psychedelics since *Yellow Submarine* with an energetic, raucous power. In a medium where this type of effect is attempted rarely, let alone achieved, Bakshi's dialogue and animation are even more remarkable.

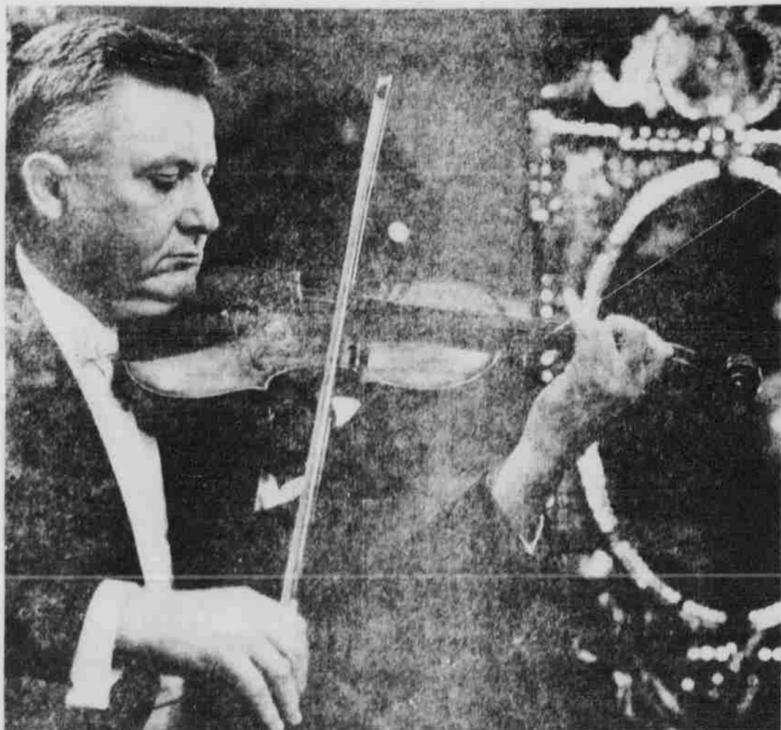
Regardless of what tradition has said the feature cartoon should be, I was bored to tears at *Charlotte's Web*. *Heavy Traffic* is not a great film, but it is a well made cartoon.

I wouldn't call *Harry In Your Pocket* absolutely the worst movie I've

seen in quite awhile. Dull and worthless are more fitting words.

James Coburn, Machael Sarrazin and Walter Pidgeon move through two hours of nonacting, mostly hanging around hotels and pulling off phony looking pickpocket maneuvers. The movie is not even the comedy the ads indicate it to be. Melodrama is a better term.

You do learn several neat pickpocket terms though, like cannon, rat kicks, wire mob, stall, steer and skin the poke. And you probably will leave the theater with the useful habit of checking for your wallet every five minutes. So I guess it's not a complete waste of time.



Joseph Vlach, leader of the Czech Chamber Orchestra, will be featured in the ninth season of the Lincoln Friends of Chamber Music, opening Oct. 26.

## Middle East war may prevent Tel Aviv Quartet performance

The war in the Middle East has had a most surprising effect locally; the Tel Aviv String Quartet, featuring clarinetist Yona Ettlinger, was scheduled to open the ninth season of the Lincoln Friends of Chamber Music on Oct. 26. However, the ensemble may be unable to leave Israel because of the conflict.

In that event, the Stradivari Quartet, assisted by Richard Stoltzman on clarinet, will open the new season. The Stradivari ensemble, from the University of Iowa, was founded ten years ago, has made four European tours and has performed in major music centers in North America.

Members of the Stradivari Quartet are Allen Ohmes, first violin; William Preucil, viola; John Farrell, second violin; and Charles Wendt, cello.

Stoltzman is recognized as one of the great American clarinetists. He is affiliated with the Marlboro Music Festivals and has often performed with Rudolph and Peter Serkin.

The quartet will present Brahms'

"Clarinet Quintet", "Quartet No. 1" by Bartok, and the "Quartet in E-flat Major" by Mendelssohn.

In addition, the new season will feature four other groups. These include: on Nov. 9, the Baroque Ensemble of the USSR, which consists of a violin, flute, cello, oboe and harpsichord; the Lincoln Chamber Players, a group of local artists, on Dec. 15; the Czech Chamber Orchestra, led by Joseph Vlach on Jan. 25; and finally, on March 1, the Janacek Quartet, which will play a piece by Smetana in addition to one of Janacek's quartets.

The concerts will be in the Sheldon Memorial Art Gallery Auditorium, with the exception of the Czech Chamber Orchestra, which will be in Kimball.

The series, cosponsored by the Sheldon Art Gallery, is open to the public on a subscription basis. Season tickets are \$15, and are available at Sheldon or from UNL professor of philosophy Nelson Potter.

## Boys choir to open concert set

The youthful voices of the Texas Boys Choir will fill Pershing Auditorium tonight. The chorale, from Fort Worth, opens the Lincoln Community Concert Series at 8 p.m.

This highly touted choir has toured the world. The boys have sung before Pope John XXIII at St. Peter's Basilica in Rome, represented the U.S. in Austria's Vienna Festival and appeared on national television with Ed Sullivan and Perry Como.

It won an International Film and Television Festival award for its film, *A Time of Waking*. It also participated in an opera in Santa Fe and Fort Worth.

The choir has recorded eight albums for Columbia Masterworks, and two of their records won Grammy Awards for best recorded choral performance.

The choir's director, George Bragg, founded the group

in 1946 in Denton, Tex. Since moving to Fort Worth in 1957, it has been supported by private contribution in addition to its recording and performing revenues.

Composer Igor Stravinsky conducted the boys in a recorded performance of his composition, "Persephone." After the recording was complete, he called the Texas Boys Choir "the best boy's choir in the world."

This year's Community Concerts will have four other performances. On Nov. 5, the Bayanihan Dance Company from the Philippines will appear. The other concerts include soprano Roberta Peters, the musical *Brigadoon*, and an organ duo, Worth and Crow.

All concerts are at Pershing Auditorium. Season tickets will be sold at the box office at tonight's program only. Student tickets are \$5.25. For ticket information call, 423-0443.