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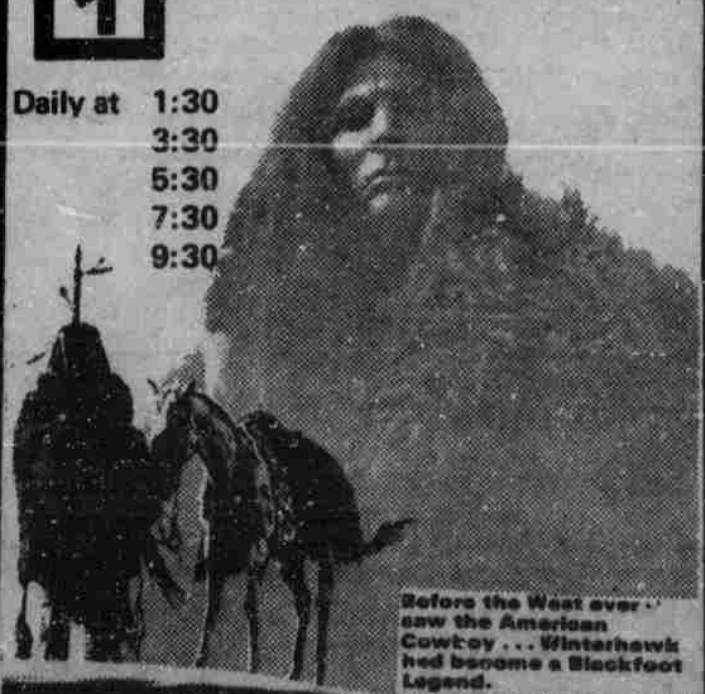
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Before the West ever saw the American Cowboy... Winterhawk had become a Blackfoot Legend.

PG

WINTERHAWK

at the movies

'Aloha' promise fades

Review by Greg Lukow
Aloha Bobby And Rose begins with a feeling of promise. In modern day Los Angeles we meet Bobby (Paul Le Mat), a transmission repairman with money problems, and Rose (Diana Hull), a drive-in waitress with a four-year-old son and no husband.

They are young and lower class, just plain folks, entrapped in a lenetic jungle of bright lights, flashing billboards and the countless junk-food drive-ins with the wierd night people who inhabit them. It's the look and sound of an updated *American Graffiti*, as fast cars race the police and each other while rock music (mostly Elton John) and all night DJs haunt the background.

When Bobby and Rose meet they stand out as quiet little people in a loud, ugly and artificial world. A sudden and rather contrived accident turns a practical joke into an unintentional murder and the two are on the run from the police.

No escape

Aloha is a road movie, but here the road never leads anywhere. It offers no escape for the couple as they drive endlessly through suburb after suburb of the entrapping City. *Aloha* is a violent, youth culture love story and with a little discipline it could have been a sobering, sleeper of a movie.

The promise of the movie is soon dispatated, however, because director Floyd Mutrux has no idea of what to do with his people. They become just two more kids on the lam, disparate and desperate characters who spend the rest of the movie kissing, crying and driving.

They have little soul searching talks between themselves and other lonely, frustrated acquaintances. The talks are supposed to show the bleak emptiness of their lives but end up going nowhere. Mutrux compensates with endless technical bric-a-brac in the form of focus racks, sun flares and bluish close-ups to go with the already grainy photography.

Rip-off ending

The ending is a rip-off of the shooting of Sal Mineo in *Rebel Without a Cause*. Here Bobby runs out into the rain, unaware that policemen are in the shadows waiting to arrest him. Bobby starts to tuck his shirt in or something and a cop yells "look out he's got a gun," Matrux then grinds the picture into painful slow motion and cuts off the soundtrack as the policeman levels his gun and fires. Rose, standing in the

background, looks properly terrified and hysterically screams out "Oh Bobby."

Endings like this used to be maddening because we could not change what was happening in the movie. Now they make us mad at the movie, largely because these tiresome, fatalistic denouements have become cliched easy-outs.

Indian epic

Producer, writer and director Charles Pierce likes slow motion even better than Mutrux. In the new family oriented Indian epic, *Winterhawk*, his use of it is apparently the only way he can show the majesty of his subject, a famous mysterious Blackfoot chief who roamed Montana and Canada in the 1940s.

Time after time a scene is interrupted by slow down glimpses of the "passion, poetry and novelty... if his brave warrior...", in the words of the written preface that dedicates the film to the American Indian.

Yes, there's Sacheen Littlefeather (the young Indian woman who refused Brando's Oscar) humming and sewing complacently inside her white husband's cabin just before an evil and grimy white fur-trader comes along to torture, rape and murder her.

Ways of white man

Yes, there's Michael Dante as Winterhawk, talking in English with his old wizened father and philosophizing about the ways of the white man. And yes, there's Dawn Welles as the beautiful missionary's niece who is captured by Winterhawk and who ultimately decides to ride off with him to where "the echoing of the coyote in the moonlit canyon became our music."

Winterhawk has so many white-man sub-plots that it deals more with the pursuing mountain-men then it does with the Blackfoot band, their way of life and hardships.

Still, along with the striking colors and beautiful, wide-screen, outdoor photography, *Winterhawk* has a modest understated dignity that sets it off from the pretensions of other such diverse pro-Indian movies as the bloody moralizing *Soldier Blue* or even John Ford's stately and noble *Cheyenne Autumn*.

Also, for lovers of crusty old character actors, the movie offeres such veterans as Leif Erickson, Elisha Cook, Jr., Denver Pyle, Arthur Hunnicutt, Woody Strode and L. Q. Jones, who are collectively the best reasons for going.

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