

Good looks outweigh good sound on MTV

First Music Television revamped the music industry.

The stagnant FM radio business and the record industry were strengthened and revitalized by the new music and faces MTV brought to life.

Then MTV became an integral part of millions of viewer's TV time. The time that was once spent watching mindless sit-coms can now be spent watching mindless, nevertheless entertaining videos.



Chris Welsch

MTV is now an institution. It decides directly or indirectly which groups and songs will become "big-acts".

The first aftershock of the MTV explosion has been and increasingly continues to be an undue emphasis on a band's visual aspect.

A driveling musical hack like Michael Bolton can now succeed, obviously not because of his unoriginal borish music, but because he has a nice butt and looks mean and horny.

Many groups now succeed because of appearance,

whereas before they would be doomed to small bars because their sound was neither original nor bankable. A short while ago, record companies would not take very many chances with unknowns. MTV has changed all that.

While it has helped break many new and exciting acts into the spotlight, e.g. the Stray Cats and The Fixx, MTV also has created a market for the unoriginal (good-looking) coat tail grabbers.

If MTV had been setting the standards in 1967 when Janis Joplin was rearing her ugly head above the crowd, she never would have made it. She was a brilliant vocalist and musician, but she was painfully plain and probably would have made an "unappealing video."

That's one complaint I have about MTV — it's too appearance oriented.

Another is sexism, and to a certain extent, racism. There is no question that there is a lack of black videos on MTV. MTV claims many black groups don't play the type of rock they feature. They don't say that many white groups who have heavy rotation videos don't play the "New Music" MTV claims to solely play.

There can also be no doubt that MTV is sexist, and not just because rock 'n' roll is sexist, as bubbly, spunky video jockey Martha Quinn stated in a Daily Nebraskan interview. MTV pushes sexism to new heights, and MTV may do more in damaging the status of women in our society than any other element on television.

Rock 'n' roll is sexist. Men sing about cruel women, women they want to use, dumb women, etc. Of course there are exceptions but MTV tends to stretch the sexist implications in a song to it's outer limits.

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Coppola . . .

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Their tastes remain somewhat adolescent and parochial. There is nothing wrong with that. However Coppola seems to have a wider and bawdier sense of what it takes to make a good film, not just a high-powered, two-dimensional thriller.

For those who saw "Come Back to the 5 & Dime Jimmy Dean, Jimmy Dean," you will recognize similar production techniques using one-way mirrors and see-through scrim to show the merging of time and place which enhances, etheializes and is also efficient for the narrative. When two scenes that relate but take place at different locations are filmed in the same time and place the point is made in half the time.

The lighting is all artificial with a film noir approach.

The torchy and slinky music track features the jazzy blues of gravelly-voiced Tom Waits and Crystal Gayle. Great stuff.

A good movie reviewer should ask three things of a film: 1. What is the story? (he should stay away from this as much as possible), 2. Was the story presented well? And 3. Was the story worth telling?

Judging from this criteria, "One From The Heart" succeeds in every way. It was a film waiting to be made.

The film is confidently put together and radiates a kind of pretentiousness, which might explain many of the cool reviews that eventually led to its being shelved.

Also starring Harry Dean Stanton as Moe and Nastassia Kinski as the captivating showgirl in the giant martini glass. "One From The Heart" will show at the Sheldon Film Theatre tonight through Saturday.

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