

# Arts & Entertainment

## East and West, art and reality are juxtaposed in miniature film

Review by Eric Peterson

*The Hullabaloo Over Georgie's and Bonnie's Pictures* is fine and delicate, slow and appreciative. The film showed Sunday and Monday in the Sheldon Film Theatre as part of UPC's Foreign Film series.

James Ivory, who directed the film, has been particularly concerned by connections between the West and the very different world of India. His most recent film, *Heat and Dust*, has the feel of an appreciative outside observer of Indian life, even though the film was based on a novel by an Indian woman. *Heat and Dust*, featuring Julie Christie and Nicholas Grace among others, was a long and rather beautiful film in which bridges between past life and present, Indian and European worlds, are built.

*The Hullabaloo Over Georgie's and Bonnie's Pictures* is much shorter and lighter — only 85 minutes long — and much less ambitious, in every sense, than *Heat and Dust*.

In both pictures there is a continuous interplay of East and West; the difference is that in *The Hullabaloo Over Georgie's and Bonnie's Pictures* the juxtaposition of the two worlds is rarely ironic. The sense is not so heavy that the uninvited west is intruding where it does not belong. Jazz seems very natural in the marble halls of the palace where the shorter film is set. In Georgie's study, old photographs of his family in stiff traditional dress are next to modern ones of the European women to whom he is attracted.

The clearest and most delightful mixing of two worlds is a Christmas celebration that Georgie, played by Victor Bannerjee, holds for his Western guests. Indian school children sing "Jingle Bells" and he dresses up as Santa Claus.

The guests, however, have come to scavenge. Georgie and Bonnie, brother and sister, are settling the family estate between them, although Georgie, as the male, seems to have the final say in what goes to who in the division. Lady Gee, an old friend of the maharajah's family, played by Peggy Ashcroft, and Mr. Haven, an American collector, played by Larry Pine, have come to Georgie's palace to see if they can get their hands on his priceless family collection of miniature paintings.

She wants to put them in an English museum; he wants to look at them every day in his own house. "I believe works of art belong to those who most appreciate them and desire them the most," Haven explains his aesthetic

elitism.

Art is regarded as a form of holiness within the film, and the collectors are its fervent devotees. In the hushed voice a religious person might use to talk of the conversion experience, Haven speaks of the first time he saw an Indian miniature and of the last time he talked to a great collector of Indian manuscripts and paintings:

The centerpiece of the film is a look at the manuscripts which lasts several minutes. The whole film feels as if it were constructed around these delicate painted scenes, to do them justice in some way and dramatize their power. Haven has persuaded the raj Georgie to show the paintings to him; they go to the dusty room where the pictures lie neglected and molding, and carefully bring them to light.

The still shots are quite beautiful, of tiny deer and delicate colors continued by firm outlines. A fantastical garden is revealed, the laws of perspective repealed in order to view each rare and lovely space from top and side at the same time. One painting commemorates the wildest of parties, Indian lords and ladies enjoying various drugs and drinks, several sprawled on the grass. At one extraordinary sight, a man and lover with elegant dark hair and red-tipped fingers, Haven and Georgie can only look at one another in the silent awe of the image's beauty.

In order to keep the paintings in his own house, where in the end they stay, Georgie spirits them away to another hiding place and burns the fake miniatures he replaces in the dusty storage room, to throw the salacious collectors off the track of them. Lady Gee walks in the Christian cemetery, looks at the rows of crosses, and talks of her despair at their loss to the world. "What does one love them for? — that they're supposed to be here always." The miniatures are a security and a contemplation safe in a world which is not as delicate and ordered as they are.

There are indications, however, that the miniatures, as lovely as they are, are not as strong as life. Georgie's English lover, who seems to be without energy or consciousness, is nevertheless right on target when she points out the petty actions the desire for art has driven the collectors to. And Bonnie, who values the future more than she does the traditional past, prefers new opportunities to paintings. "I'm not one of your precious pictures," she tells a devotee — and for that we have to be glad.



Luke Skywalker: "Another great American."

PBS

## Tom and Glenn reminisce about past Star Wars lore

Tom: This is Tom Mockler and Glenn Stuva *At the Concession Stand* and today we're going to talk about the *Star Wars* movies! Oh boy.

Glenn: Oh boy.

Tom: Well, Glenn, why do you think they were so popular?

human need. Don't ask me what that need was.

Tom: Who's your favorite character Glenn?

Glenn: Oh, ah, Han Solo.  
Tom: Why so, Glenn?

Glenn: Because he's so neat.  
Tom: Oh yeah? I like Carrie Fisher.  
Glenn: Why's that?

Tom: Because she's really beautiful. And no room would be complete without a poster of C3PO.

Glenn: Did you ever buy one of those Darth Vader masks they had? I always wanted to get one.

Tom: No, sorry, although I do have all the soundtrack albums.

Continued on Page 9

### Tom Mockler & Glenn Stuva

Glenn: Oh, ah, I don't know... why do you think they were so popular?

Tom: Oh — because they were really neat. Because there's nothing I like to see better than a bunch of bad guys get blown up with space-age weapons.

Glenn: I think they fulfilled a basic



MTV

Confirmation of the impact of Michael Jackson's monster hit album *Thriller* will come on tonight's broadcast of the Grammy Awards. For complete details, see Television.

## NOTSPOTS

### Television

• If everything goes as expected, the 26th annual Grammy Awards should provide the official coronation for Michael Jackson. Jackson is up for a myriad of awards for his monumental *Thriller* album and other achievements. The program airs at 7 p.m. on Channels 6 and 10. John Denver will emcee.

• It may not be as important as the Grammys, but the New Hampshire primary results will be broadcast at 10:30 p.m. on all three networks. Most coverage is set to last a half hour.

• *Refuge*, a drama about four people thrown together on a remote island off the coast of Maine, will air as part of the American Playhouse series at 9 p.m. on Channel 12. It was written by Huck Fairman and Luther Sperberg.

### At the Sheldon

• A documentary by French oceanographer Jacques Cousteau will be presented in the Film Theatre at 3:30, 7 and 9 p.m. *World Without Sun* won an Academy Award for its documentation of Cousteau's exciting sea romps. Admission is by donation.

### Around Town

• Country music singer-songwriter Jack Elliot will be at Earl's Tavern, 56th Street and Havelock Avenue. Cover charge is \$1.