

Arts & Entertainment

'Berlin Alexanderplatz' shows last time

By Eric Peterson

The screening of *Berlin Alexanderplatz* over the last two weeks and the elaborate preparations made for the Rainer Werner Fassbinder epic, including lectures and a visit from guest critic Andrew Sarris of the *Village Voice*, was a daring venture by Sheldon Film Theatre Director Dan Ladely — it could have been difficult to find a large number of viewers undaunted by a 15½-hour undertaking.

The screening went very well. More than 300 people bought \$10 tickets for the entire event; others went to see pieces of the film, which showed in serialized form on weekdays. Close to 200, or two-thirds of Sheldon's capacity, were at weekend marathon showings in which the one-hour segments were shown with occasional breaks all afternoon and evening long. Many ate some very good German food both Saturday and Sunday at supper time.

Ladely was so involved with keeping things running during the weekend that he will only get to see the entire film this Sunday and Monday, with the final marathon screenings.

Ladely knows what to expect, partly from audience reactions. "Most of them really liked it, found it beautiful, found it depressing, but they liked it," Ladely said. He noted that one viewer remarked, "What a miserable way to spend 15 hours of my life." Ladely said he noticed a feeling of shared expe-

rience during the marathon screenings. "There's a communal mood because everybody's there for that number of hours." For some viewers the one-hour pieces of it began to pass remarkably quickly.

Donna Stuver, a UNL student who worked with Ladely during the marathon weekend, said she thought the marathon viewings — seeing it all at once — definitely helped build a deep and sad impression. "I'm glad I'm going next weekend without the fanfare (the lectures and panel discussion, the catered German meals), because the movie isn't conducive to fanfare."

Ladely said having extra information available, in the form of Sarris's lecture Monday and introductory remarks by German scholar Peter Reinkordt, was valuable, and many viewers took the opportunity to ask Reinkordt questions during the breaks between screenings on the marathon weekend.

Ladely noted that Sarris was well disposed to come to Lincoln because his wife, Molly Haskell, a film reviewer for *Ms.* magazine, had a good experience when the Sheldon Film Theatre had a series of films related to a book she had written.

The Sheldon is selling T-shirts from the showings, black with red letters, the *Alexanderplatz* street-sign logo and little Biberkopf figure underneath; the shirts will say I SAW IT ALL, and are still available for order.

Ladely sent out a mailing on the *Berlin Alexanderplatz* screenings all over the state, and said the event has generated considerable interest.

Ladely said *Berlin Alexanderplatz* may possibly be serialized on NETV as part of the Sheldon film series on that channel. He has talked to a couple of NETV people about having the serialized film introduced by a guest critic, and having that person give the final wrap-up lecture.

Ladely said that while it was nice to get Andrew Sarris to come to Lincoln, he kept thinking what it would have been like to get Fassbinder here, were he still alive. Although Fassbinder was "a scary person," he often liked to make odd trips, and as Sarris noted Monday, might have been intrigued by the filmic possibilities of Nebraska's phallic state capitol.

Selleck movie offers Nazis and cat burglars

Review by Glenn Stuva

Making the transition from the television screen to the motion picture screen can be very difficult for an actor. What people will watch on television, and what they will pay to see in a theater are two different things.

Tom Selleck star of television's *Magnum PI*, has enjoyed a great deal of popularity during the last three years while portraying the easy-going private investigator Thomas Magnum. Despite the popularity of this show, (it consistently ranks in the top 10) Selleck's first theatrical movie, *High Road to China* was something of a disappointment. A critical flop, and only a mediocre draw at the box office. It did little to establish Selleck as a star of the silver screen.

His latest effort *Lassiter* is a different story. It is a nice little film that revolves around the adventures of one Nick Lassiter (played by Selleck) who happens to make his living as a very successful cat burglar. He gets along just fine until an overzealous London policeman frames him for a crime he didn't commit.

The year is 1939 just before the outbreak of WWII, and the German government is smuggling \$10 million worth of diamonds through its London embassy in order to finance subversive acts in South America. The British government doesn't want these jewels to reach their intended destination, but they can't very well just walk into the embassy and take them.

So the cunning policeman manages to frame Lassiter, and using the threat of a stiff jail sentence, blackmails him into stealing the diamonds from the embassy. Along the way we meet Lassiter's beautiful girlfriend (Jane Seymour) and a cold-blooded Nazi woman (played well by Lauren Hutton) who lusts after the good-looking Lassiter.

It's not a remarkable plot, but it's not bad either. The film as a whole isn't very weighty, but it is good entertainment. The most interesting thing about the movie is that Tom Selleck proves he can handle the challenges of acting on the big screen. He's not a great actor, but he does have a definite screen presence. He's very convincing as a suave, debonair ladies man who also likes a little danger and excitement just to keep him on his toes. Roger Ebert of *At the Movies* fame compares him to a young Cary Grant. I wouldn't go that far, but I would say Selleck has what it takes to have a successful career as a motion picture star.

If you don't like Tom Selleck then this is a movie you probably wouldn't want to go see. On the other hand, if you like Selleck, *Magnum PI*, Nazi movies, or cat burglars, then you ought to go see it. It probably won't win any Academy awards, but it's a fun movie that will keep you entertained for 90 minutes or so.

Celeste pits her Hope against Hart

In our last episode, presidential candidate Celeste came under fire for receiving the Hope Diamond from British ambassador Cooper Black. She also learned the name of her running mate.

"I still can't understand why they're making so much fuss about my accepting Cooper's money and



Mary Louise Knapp

that lovely little jewel," Celeste complained to her roommates Harley and Otis. "Why, Edwin Meese has been on the government dole for simply epochs!"

"Just get in good with the incumbent, baby, and your transgressions will be forgotten," Harley replied.

"Well, I don't see how that would be possible, since I'm running against him," Celeste said.

"Celeste, my dear, why don't you invite the man to tea?" Addison said.

"Tea?" Celeste inquired. "Addison, you know I never drink anything stronger than . . . well, never mind. I see your point, but can't we have a cocktail party instead? I certainly can't deal with Ronnie on anything less than seven whiskey sours."

"Cocktails will be fine, Celeste," Addison sighed. "But not before 10 in the morning, please. And make sure to have a little prayer — er — moment of meditation — beforehand. It might be good to have a few small children around. Those Lewis twins — they're appropriately pious, aren't they?"

"We could get Huey to sing a hymn, and maybe Sinclair could recite a Bible verse," Otis said.

"We might even say we're running a public school!" Celeste said enthusiastically. "Oh, this is going to be such fun . . . Addison! Who is this flamboyantly-dressed woman coming up the walk? Get her out of here! She'll ruin our image!"

Antoinette Chateaubriand, steak heiress and vice-presidential candidate, floated into view. Although it was only mid-morning, she was dressed in full evening regalia, complete with a beaded bag and emerald tiara. The Hope Diamond, newly polished and set, hung around her neck.

"Addison, darling, how kind of you to invite me to tea," she said in a voice thick with late nights and cigar smoke.

"And is this charming creature our presidential candidate?" Celeste nodded. Antoinette looked at her critically.

"You look so much older in the daylight. Oh well, a little makeup will do wonders. In the meantime, I think it's best that I make all the necessary public appearances from now on."

She settled into a lawn chair and poured herself a bourbon. Celeste threw numerous glances at Addison, who remained unperturbed.

"We were discussing giving a cocktail party for the incumbent, Antoinette," Addison said. "Do you have any ideas on the subject?"

"Cocktails! My dear Addison, you are divine," Antoinette murmured. "But what shall we discuss at this party? The Reagans and we do not exactly see eye-to-eye, you know."

"Speak for yourself," murmured Celeste, who was having serious thoughts about converting to Republicanism.

Addison faltered. "Why — the issues, of course. Isn't that what all politicians talk about?"

Antoinette brightened. "Oh, yes, the issues! How silly of me. Addison, you are a genius."

"The issues sound fine to me, Addison," Celeste said. Harley and Otis nodded. "Now, what shall we have to drink?"

Kiddie Cornhuskers seered in bloody film

Review by Stephanie Zink

The "joys" of living in a small midwestern town are portrayed in *Children of the Corn*, currently at the Plaza 4.

Children of the Corn was originally a short story by Stephen King, one of the masters of horror fiction, and was later adapted into this gruesome film.

In the first few minutes of the movie, pleasantries are quickly dispensed with as the children of the fictional town of Gatlin, Neb., kill all the adults in town by slashing their throats open with knives — not butter knives either. So much for the innocence of youth.

A few years later, Burt (Peter Horton) and Vicky (Linda Hamilton), a young couple on the way to Seattle by car, decide to take a back road and literally run into a young boy. Burt, an intern, gets out of the car and finds the boy's neck viciously slashed. He notices something is not right about finding a bloody boy in the middle of a road from which all you can see are cornfields. He puts the boy in the trunk of the car and stupidly heads towards Gatlin, the closest town.

It seems that these children are involved in a religion which makes them hate all adults, especially outsiders. They voluntarily and happily sacrifice themselves to their god ("the man behind the rows") on their 19th birthdays. They also have an obsession with corn. They are led by Isaac, a demented little squirt who was a preacher at one time, and his right-hand man Malachi, the perfect example of a country bumpkin.

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