

Arts & Entertainment

'A Sunday in The Country' is sad, subtle, nice to look at

By Tom Mockler
Staff Reporter

"A Sunday in The Country," this weekend's feature at the Sheldon Film Theatre is slow, subtle, beautiful and sad.

"A Sunday in The Country," a French film directed by Bertrand Tavernier, is a story of regret, love and aging. Every Sunday or so, Monsieur Ladmiral (Louis

Movie Review

Ducreux), an old painter, has his son Gonzague (Michel Aumont) and his son's family visit his estate outside Paris. Needless to say, they are fairly well off, and in fitting with this, we are given beautiful cinematography by Bruno De Keyzer. The film is lovely to look at.

At the same time, though, it is also quite sad. Ladmiral, a man full of life, is growing old. He complains that the road to the train station has grown longer, and that the trains are coming earlier. He does not want to think he is growing old, but he knows he is. His wife had died, and now the only company he has is his housekeeper and the

weekly visits from his son's family. A painter in the French romantic tradition, he failed to follow the path of his contemporaries, the impressionists, and now in the early days of the 20th century he sits and paints things around his estate. Indeed, the entire film is a bit impressionistic.

His son Gonzague, called Eduard by his wife (Genevieve Mnich) is a faithful son. It is not clear what he does for work, but he provides well for his family.

From time to time Gonzague looks back and wonders if he did the right thing in giving up painting. It was at least partially out of his desire not to compete against his father.

After lunch, just as everyone is falling asleep, the prodigal daughter, Irene (Sabine Azema) shows up. Gonzague is a bit jealous of his sister, as she is a free spirit, and although (and perhaps because) she rarely visits her father, she monopolizes his attention when she does arrive.

The entire tone of the film is rather wistful. Everyone has unfulfilled desires and regrets, but the march of time goes on, and there is nothing to be done about it. That is the way of life.

Flashbacks are used occasionally in the film, but don't take on any over-

whelming significance. Even though Irene seems a bit rabid in relation to the rest of the characters, she is not unsympathetic.

We see her calling Paris repeatedly to contact someone, and when she does get through, it is apparently another tragic love affair. She knows many men, but things never work out.

Probably the most effective device in the film is the voice over by the narrator, reading prose apparently straight from the original text by Pierre Bost.

In one scene, Irene reads her niece's palm and realizes that she is going to die at an early age. The occasional narration gives the story far more power than it would have without it. Because the narrator says she would die at an early age, you believe it. The same girl throws up whenever she travels.

Perhaps one should just read the novel "Monsieur Ladmiral va bientôt mourir." Then again, the movie is so nice to look at.

"A Sunday in The Country" is playing at the Sheldon through Sunday. Screenings are 7 and 9 p.m. nightly, with a 3 p.m. Saturday matinee and a 3 and 5 p.m. Sunday matinee. Admission is \$3.75.



E.T.C. Courtesy E.T.C. Enterprises

Band returns to UNL with 'raw, funky' beat

E.T.C., the seven-member Omaha band, with lead singers Roderick Jones and Gary Williams, will perform today in the Nebraska Union ballroom from 9 p.m. to 2 a.m.

The group has a repertoire of more than 50 songs, 12 of which are originals, including their theme song, "Et Cetera."

E.T.C., an abbreviation for Entertainment with a Touch of Class, calls itself the "King of Pork-and-Beans Funk." Williams said: "E.T.C.'s

music is raw, it's funky, it's flavorful. It feeds that party hunger."

The dance is sponsored by University Program Council and Black Entertainment and Travel. It is the second UNL performance for the group. Last winter, E.T.C. performed at Walpurgisnacht festival.

Tickets can be bought at the information desk in Nebraska Union. Advance price is \$2.50 for students. At the door, students pay \$3, non-students \$3.50.

Weak humor, absurd drama put Sarandon in compromising position

By Tom Mockler
Staff Reporter

Before seeing "Compromising Positions" at the Douglas 3, a friend of mine claimed that "Susan Sarandon would not appear in a bad movie."

At the time I was certain he was wrong, although I had trouble recalling all of her films.

Now I can prove he's wrong.

Movie Review

"Compromising Positions," starring Sarandon and Raul Julia, is one of those films that makes you ask, "Why did anyone bother?"

It is a bad movie. It is a movie dead in the water from square one. The idea for the movie was simply bad.

The first part of the movie and the promos lead us to believe it will be a comedy of sorts: A philandering dentist is murdered, and, as it turns out, the number of concerned parties is large. Oh, how shocking it is, upsetting the tranquility of Nassau County, Long Island in New York.

The humor is extremely lame, to say the least. More sickening, perhaps, than the dull thud of a bad joke are the overripe lives of the characters. Women

are cheating on their husbands out of sheer boredom and it's supposed to be really funny.

The makeup is so thick and lives so shallow, you wonder why they don't crumble under the weight of it.

It seemed as if not a person in the film wasn't having an affair with Bruce Fleckstein, D.D.S! This might be believable if we hadn't been introduced to him at the beginning. The man is a sleazebag. As Sarandon's husband says in the film, "The guy got what he deserved".

I agree. So who cares about him? I certainly didn't.

However, somewhere along the way the movie turns from lame comedy to weak drama, which is actually an improvement. Decent performances are put in by Susan Sarandon as an investigating ex-journalist housewife, Raul Julia as a Nassau County homicide detective and Edward Herrman as Sarandon's husband.

In fact, the acting is fine in the movie. But the script is so poor that I'm surprised a major studio was willing to use it.

The domestic drama in the story is absurd. Only the mediocre detective saga in the latter half of the movie saves it from being a complete disaster. Things that would look elegant in other

films come across as gross in this one. Enough said. The movie is not only not worth paying money to see, it is not worth seeing unless someone is paying you to.

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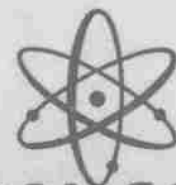
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