

The Daily Nebraskan
Diversions

A preview of arts and entertainment



Courtesy of Sheldon

A scene from Corman's "Little Shop of Horrors."

Corman leaves his B-movies behind

By Charles Lieurance
Senior Reporter

Producer/director Roger Corman began his 36-year career in film as a messenger boy for 20th Century Fox in the '40s. Between this humble position at the bottom of the industry hierarchy and 1970, Corman had directed 45 films and produced 30 more. His career represents the perfect blend of commercial thrift and personal genius.

As part of a retrospective of his own films this weekend, Corman will appear Saturday to discuss his career and field questions from the audience.

Wheeler Dixon, assistant professor of English and art at UNL, and Sheldon Film Theatre Director Dan Ladely were instrumental in arranging the Roger Corman film retrospective and Corman's talk.

"Corman is on the cutting edge between commerce and art," Dixon

said. "Even his B-movies are personal statements."

Corman is most recognized for the films he made in the '60s loosely adapted from Edgar Allen Poe stories. These films, including "Masque of the Red Death," "The Fall of the House of Usher" and "Tomb of Ligeia," were major box-office hits and are still considered to be the pinnacle of horror filmmaking.

Two of these, "Masque of the Red Death" and "The Pit and the

Pendulum" will be shown as part of this retrospective.

Corman also directed a handful of westerns and gangster films, all produced at incredibly low budgets and many of them done for the kingpin studio of exploitation films, American International Pictures.

But Corman is more than just a prolific low budget hack. In 1962, on his trademark shoestring budget culled from his personal finances,

he directed "The Intruder." According to Dixon this film represents Corman at his directorial and executive best. Starring a young William Shatner in what Dixon considers to be his best role, "The Intruder" tells the story of a racist instigator (Shatner) sent to irritate an already tense racial situation. "The Intruder" is also part of the Sheldon retrospective.

See **CORMAN** on 14