

Album goes through motions, fails to inspire

By Matt Burton
Senior Reporter

Scott Merrit
"Violet and Black"
I.R.S.

When most people think of Canadian music, images of Triumph and Bryan Adams plague their brains. Now a new Canadian artist is trying to make his mark on the international music scene.

Scott Merrit, after apparently becoming a fixture in the Great White North market for over a decade, has released his I.R.S. debut, "Violet and Black."

"Violet and Black" is an album inspired by Merrit's hometown of

tional, and as a result, takes himself way too seriously.

Merrit's voice strongly resembles Jackson Browne's voice; the sound makes comparisons even more blatant.

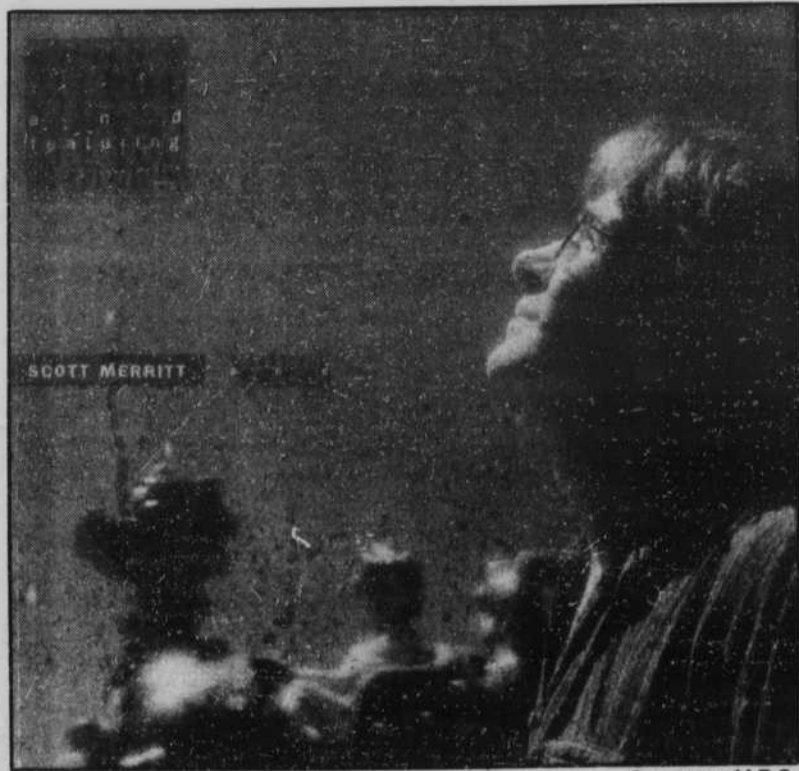
For instance, the album opens with "Burning Train," with an abstract, melodic and slightly spiritual New Age mood.

One of the Brantford experiences that Merrit addresses is the local flooding of the Grand River Valley with "Are You Sending," arguably the most inspirational song on "Violet and Black." The instrumentation is similar to the rest of the album, but creates a much stronger, thoughtfully tighter feel.

Again Merrit takes himself too seriously, on "Sweet Accident" when he continually sings "I am the one."

Good for you, Scott. With all of the songs sounding much the same, listeners who like one tune probably will like the whole album.

Acoustic guitars augmented by slight chordal electric guitars embellished with modern synthesizers create a '90s sound -- and it's all made complete with Merrit's precocious lyrics.



Courtesy of I.R.S.

SOUNDS

Brantford, Ontario. Merrit's songs could be considered folk-rockish and very mainstream. Merrit continually goes through the folk-rock motions, failing to inspire any strong feelings at all.

The songs on "Violet and Black" could be rendered meaningful to someone, but the similarities between each song become tedious to listen to as the album drags on.

Merrit's lyrics fall short of creative intelligence. As Merrit puts his small town experiences to music, listeners can't help but ask "so what?" "Violet and Black" takes no chances. Merrit tries to be very emo-



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Sheldon film plot is difficult to understand, contains bizarre and unimaginative storyline

By John Payne
Staff Reporter

Words like "quirky" or "off-beat" simply do not begin to describe a movie like Fernando Birri's "A Very Old Man With Enormous Wings," which is as bizarre a film as viewers likely are to see. It brings to mind that old adage about "art for art's sake," and while it may be art, it is more often an exercise in pointless filmmaking.

Based on the story by Gabriel

Garcia Marquez, the fable opens in a small Colombian village, as a village peasant named Pelayo (Asdrubal Melendez) discovers a strange creature washed up on the shore during a

movie REVIEW

typhoon. Mystified, he and his wife Elisenda (Daisy Granados) soon realize that the thing actually is a very old man with enormous wings (Birri).

The only thing that Pelayo has ever seen with white feathers are chickens, and so he puts the old man in his chicken coop. The couple tries to communicate with the old man, but he doesn't speak. Nor does he seem to mind being kept in a chicken coop, and when word of the bird/man spreads,

the locals start to come around to take a gander at the being.

Many believe that the old man is in fact an angel, and soon Pelayo and Elisenda begin charging admission to what is at this point an all-out freak show. Blind men, crippled children, lepers, they all come to pray to the "angel" in hopes of a cure for their ailments.

The premise certainly is original, and interesting enough, but the problem with "A Very Old Man" is that it goes in 100 different directions. The only thing more difficult than figuring exactly what is going on in the movie is figuring out why anyone should care.

Things get further muddled when a traveling carnival arrives in the village, setting up a rivalry between their main attraction "The Spider

Woman" and Pelayo's "Angel."

The point that Birri and Marquez are trying to make is clear enough: If a heavenly being was to descend to earth, it would have a relatively insignificant effect on the world.

But the plot simply is too outlandish to successfully convey that point, or make anyone care. Birri's direction is often unimaginative and usually annoying. His attempts at experimental sequencing and shot selection are just too artsy for the movie's own good.

"A Very Old Man With Enormous Wings" plays as part of the five-part film series entitled "Dangerous Loves," which is playing at the Sheldon Film Theater this weekend.

Screening times are at 9 p.m. Thursday and Friday, with two screening times at 3 and 9 p.m. Saturday.

October

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a man that only wants to live in the wilds of Montana, and Arana, as the evil Loganov, is the Soviet cook who'll be damned if he is going to let anyone on the Red October defect.

Putting in commendable performances as well are Courtney B. Vance as Seaman Ronald Jones of the U.S. Navy, Scott Glenn as Capt. Bart

Mancuso of the U.S. Navy and James Earl Jones as Admiral James Greer, the CIA Director of Naval Intelligence.

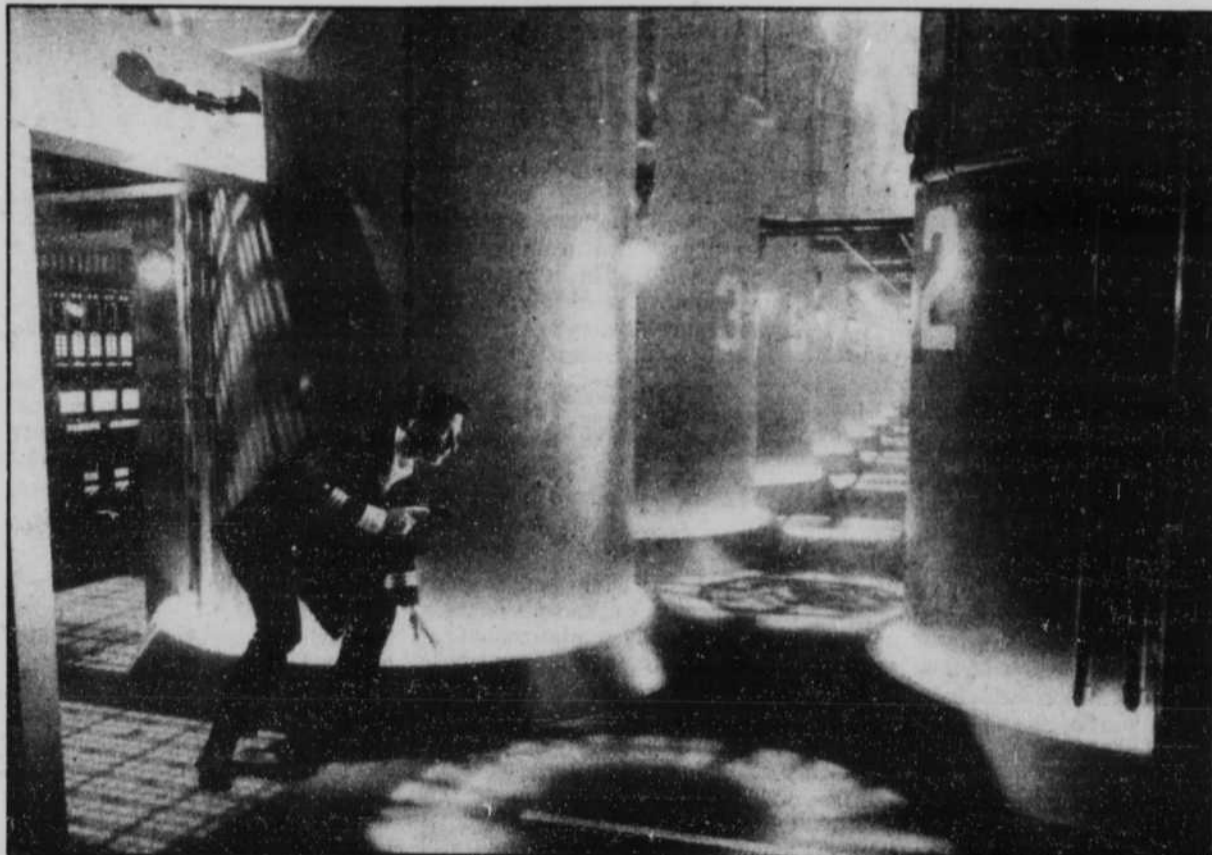
The film was produced with the full cooperation of the U.S. Navy, which helped out on an earlier top-grossing Paramount film, "Top Gun."

Sales of Clancy's book have now topped 6 million copies. It remained on the U.S. best-seller list for more than 100 weeks. It remains an international best-seller.

When Tom Clancy wrote "The Hunt for Red October," many top U.S. Navy officials believed he had somehow gained access to classified materials. The book was that accurate.

The movie is just as accurate, just as compelling, and that is a tribute to the cast and crew that helped put it together.

"The Hunt for Red October" is playing at the Plaza 4 Theatre, 12th and P streets, and at the Edgewood 3 Theatre, 56th St. and Highway 2.



Courtesy of Paramount

Jack Ryan (Alec Baldwin) stalks a KGB agent in the nuclear submarine Red October.

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