

# 'Dead' misses spirit, adds inconsistencies

By John Payne  
Senior Reporter

For hardcore fans of the 1968 black and white version, any remake of George Romero's "Night of the Living Dead" would undoubtedly leave them a little cold.

Digging up and reworking that low-

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budget classic would only lead to "dead head" disenchantment, right? So what reason would producers have to tamper with the original's cult status?

The reason is as plain as the nose dangling from a zombie's face — money. And, with Halloween fast approaching, now is the perfect time to release it.

Shot in color, the new "Night of the Living Dead" retains Romero's basic tale of seven strangers who barricade themselves inside a farmhouse while cannibalistic ghouls stalk the countryside. The dead rise for reasons that are never made completely clear (in '68 it was a meteorite, this time it could be a chemical spill) to wreak havoc on the living.

Like the original, director Tom Savini's movie examines the way people handle themselves in the face of danger. Of course, the running joke through both versions is that the mindless zombies are often more efficient than some of the characters. That's a good theme, and Savini,

who's worked on all the "Dead" sequels, makes good use of his prowess as a makeup master. The flesh-eaters look more ghastly than ever.

The trouble is, the overall, shall we say, spirit of Romero's \$130,000 gem is missing. While the zombies may look scary, the way they stumble around is at times comical.

And there are a lot of inconsistencies that weren't there in '68. While some of the monsters move too slow to be menacing, others look like they could do handsprings.

There have been some liberties taken, as well. The "news footage" that looked so authentic in black and white has been all but left out.

The relationships that form among the seven characters seems a little forced. The antagonism between Ben (Tony Todd), the man thrust into role as leader, and the cowering Harry Cooper (Tom Towles) seems to have no basis.

The heroine, Barbara (Patricia Tallman) is less timid this time around, and consequently, less believable. It doesn't take her long to stop quivering, strip down to a sleeveless T-shirt and sling the ammunition over her shoulder a la Sigourney Weaver. But since the "Alien" flicks were basically patterned after "Night of the Living Dead," maybe that's only fair.

Without giving too much away, suffice to say that this film's revamped ending is equally surprising, but lacks

See DEAD on 11



Courtesy of Columbia Pictures

Zombies get ready to party in "Night of the Living Dead."

## French pianist to take UNL stage

By Sean Green  
Staff Reporter

French pianist Jean-Efflam Bavouzet has no fears of playing alone, but he will bring the Nebraska Chamber Orchestra along for his performance tonight at Kimball Hall.

"I really prefer to perform with an orchestra, rather than solo, because I think the enjoyment of the music multiplies with the number of musicians," Bavouzet said.

The 26-year-old Bavouzet said that tonight's concert will be his first performance in Nebraska and that he is looking forward to the event.

Since 1981 Bavouzet has been

winning awards and playing concert engagements all over the world. He attributes his success, in part, to his background.

"Both of my parents were musi-

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cians and I believe I have been listening to music since I was conceived," Bavouzet said.

"I don't even remember the first time I went to a concert, but I know that music has always been a big part of my life."

One of Bavouzet's first performances in the United States was at the Kennedy Center in New York City.

"One of the things I remember about my visit to New York was staying in a large suite at the Watergate Hotel," Bavouzet said.

"I was impressed by how big my suite was and how extravagant everything was," he said.

However Bavouzet said when he tours he prefers staying in the home of a host or friend, as he has been during his visit to Lincoln.

As for his opinion of America, Bavouzet said he is impressed by the size of everything.

"Everything, like the houses, the cars, the schools, they are all much bigger here, and I am always amazed at how much open space

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## Catalog of secret desires available, but not in store

By Bryan Peterson  
Staff Reporter

"Not Available in Any Store" By Richard Rosen  
Pantheon Books

"I sincerely feel that we're all entitled to be novelists without writing a single word, to include plenty of bran in our diets without actually eating any, and to undergo successful psychotherapy without having to show up week after week . . ."

— Richard Rosen

Finally, America, there is a catalog available which can meet all of our secret, hidden desires. "Not Avail-

able in Any Store" is a guide to some of those products we always would like to have, but could not begin to search for.

Worried that one of your children

## book REVIEW

is more intelligent or comely (or both!) than another? Your best option may be Sibling Equalization Surgery, a "proven method for removing all those traces of individuality in your children that can be the cause of potentially harmful family conflict."

Spend too much time worrying

See BOOK on 11

## Pebbles packs 'Always' with more funk, soul



Courtesy of MCA Records

By William Rudolph  
Staff Reporter

Pebbles  
"Always"  
MCA Records

Two years ago she invited all takers to take a ride in her Mercedes and discover all the things that she could do with her machine.

Now, Pebbles is back with a new collection of the smooth soul and R & B funk that made her debut album a sleeper success.

Since her self-titled 1988 debut, Pebbles has made some changes. For one thing, she's dumped her much-older husband George Smith for current hot producer Antonio "L.A." Reid. In fact, Pebbles co-produced "Always" with Reid and his partner Babyface, resulting in a much more unified album.

What hasn't changed is the formula that makes Pebbles a success, despite the rather silly name and song after song about being in love: a combination of dance and romance, both done with smoothness and precision.

Pebbles (as she calls herself) certainly is no doormat. In "Giving You the Benefit" and "Backyard" she lets all men out there know she's on to

them and not going to put up with a bad relationship—a theme she elaborated on earlier in the hit "Girlfriend."

In fact, "Always" and her current hit "Giving You the Benefit" show Pebbles at her best in each of her two moods. "Giving You the Benefit" is funky, loud, a little rude and very controlled. And it lends itself to shak-



ing one's body down on the dance floor with all sorts of extended remixes — always a bonus. "Always," on the other hand, is lush, romantic and has a gritty chorus that rises above its rather tepid promises of love and devotion.

The rest of the tracks fall somewhere between the groove and the sigh. While such tracks as "Stay With Me," "Good Thang," "Why Do I Believe" and "Give it to Me" may not be that original, they do as a whole possess enough of Pebbles' pouty vocal tricks and Reid and Ba-

byface's smooth packaging to differ from each other in the listener's mind.

Just like in her earlier work, Pebbles borrows established musicians to give her work star quality: Karen White and Johnny Gill add harmonies to "Say a Prayer for Me," while the beautifully smooth "Love Makes Things Happen" teams Pebbles with Babyface (visions of a Sunday night Top 40 dedication from teenage lovers come to mind). "Backyard" gets help with an interior rap by Salt-N-Pepa. And Pebbles' cousin Chelle lends her formidable vocal talents to backing up "Always."

Critics might be tempted to dismiss Pebbles as merely another first-name-only popstress with a pretty face, chic appearance, and a producer calling all the shots.

While its true Pebbles does follow the formula right down to the gushy liner notes that thank everybody under the sun for being so good to her, she did co-produce this album and has even produced other artists' discs. And she can sing, too — which is not always the case with competitors like Paula Abdul.

If Pebbles continues to follow the formula she's set, her new album's title may be an indication her hit-making staying power.