

Burial befits King's 'Graveyard Shift'



Jason Reed (Jonathan Emerson) gets a bit startled in Stephen King's "Graveyard Shift."

By Jeffrey Frey
Staff Reporter

For some reason, Stephen King stories never translate well into Stephen King movies. There were a couple of notable exceptions like "The Shin-

movie

ing" in 1980, and "Stand By Me" in 1986.

Other than that, movies based on King's novels have typically been very, very bad.

And now there is another, and this one does nothing to break with the tradition concerning movies based on Stephen King stories.

Based on a short story from the 1978 collection, "Night Shift," the latest Stephen King excursion into horror, "Graveyard Shift," has little to do with horror at all. "Graveyard Shift" is a horror movie without anything squeamish or scary about it. Attempts are made at "grossing out" — these efforts have little effect and

are often funny. Yet after the first few attempts, they become consistently boring.

"Graveyard Shift" concerns Gates Falls, a small, isolated town in Maine (every Stephen King story involves a small town in Maine, in one form or another). The Gates Falls main source of employment is a textile mill — Bachman Mills — which has been reopened with a cluttered, decrepit basement that will have to be cleaned out for the company's expansion.

In the years since the closure of the Bachman Mills, the site has fallen into decay and has become a breeding home for rats. After the mill resumes operations, a group of workers are selected by the mill's tyrannical foreman, Warrick (Stephen Macht), to clean the basement.

One of those chosen is drifter John Hall (David Andrews), who has wandered into Gates Falls looking for employment. He's a quiet, introverted man who says little aside from the

See GRAVE on 14

Asimov's latest delivers; 'Nemesis' intricate classic

By Bryan Peterson
Staff Reporter

"Nemesis"
By Isaac Asimov
Bantam Books

Isaac Asimov's newest novel is the latest in a lengthy line of science fiction classics. "Nemesis" is the first new world created by Asimov since

book

REVIEW

1972's "The Gods Themselves," which won both the Hugo and Nebula awards.

"Nemesis" has garnered much praise from science fiction writers, those in literary circles and even from The Omaha World-Herald.

This is to be expected, as Asimov is America's most prolific author with nearly 450 books spanning a variety of genres to his credit. In 1987, he was named a grand master by the Science Fiction Writers of America, testimony to his great influence upon the world of science fiction.

With such a background, the reader expects much from Asimov's newest, and he delivers. As with the best science fiction, futuristic elements play only one of many parts in the book.

Asimov has presented a number of complex characters and a fine plot

whose several strands are woven together only in the last 20 pages.

If there is a weakness in the book, it is the ending. It is tight and complete, but everything falls together almost too quickly after a nearly 400-page buildup.

"Nemesis" is an intricate work. The geography of the book (involving the planet Erythro which is orbited by a satellite which is itself circled by the colony Rotor) is matched in complexity by its human relations.

Fifteen-year-old Marlene Fisher is at the center of the story. She is a young woman who does not quite read minds, but nearly does so by carefully watching body movements.

Her unyielding revelations of peoples' true intentions play a key role and bind the rest of the characters together: her separated parents, local government figures and an array of scientists and explorers.

All of these people have expectations and plans for Marlene, but she will not be controlled. The planet Erythro turns out to be a living organism with a protective affection for Marlene, whose brain is the only one it can communicate with.

Erythro calls Marlene to its surface and watches over her, and she in

See ASIMOV on 15

Senator's songs show promise, but 'Criminal' nothing special

By Jeffrey Frey
Staff Reporter

Senator Flux
"The Criminal Special"
Emergo Records

From the very start, the members of Senator Flux write good, solid songs while displaying an impressive variety of instruments. The songs that comprise "The Criminal Special" show a great deal of promise on the part of this Washington-based band, but the album as a whole does little to take leaps above mediocrity.

With this project, Senator Flux merely contributes to an already bloated mediocre market. Nevertheless, some of the selections from this album have all of the indications that this band has the potential to carve out a distinctive style.

Senator Flux, while relying a great deal on vocals, uses such instruments such as tenor, C-melody and soprano saxophone as well as oboe and organ, but only as a subtle backdrop for their basic rock 'n' roll sound.

Four of the five band members share the vocal duties, and it's amaz-

ing that none of them can sing. This is the most distinctive drawback to their music. The instruments are played exceptionally well, when they can be heard. For all but two of the 10 songs on "The Criminal Special," the lyrics are composed and arranged by guitarist

SOUNDS

Jeff Turner — somewhat of a metaphysical poet wannabe. The effect is a mixture of intriguing and often comedic lyrics which do what the music often is not allowed: to take charge and make the songs likeable.

On "The Combine," and "Testimonial," saxophonist David Levine owns up to the fact that he can't sing, and instead does an imposing and incessant chant. It's in these two songs that Turner's philosophical observations and his skewed replies are most prominent. However, it's also these two songs which are the most notably lacking of the impressive musical qualities that

Senator Flux is capable of creating.

"Great Sloth Heart," and "Falleness," are catchy, danceable pop songs. The songs are rich with the subtleties of the horn section, while never becoming overpretentious. The guitars and percussion retain the same modesty, but are restrained solely for the purpose of placing emphasis on the vocals.

Other songs on this album have little variation and are often boring. "United States Of Amnesia," "Before The Sun," and "Somnia" are barely discernible from one another; they are composed and performed well, yet there is simply nothing remarkable or fresh about the sound the band has created with these compositions.

"The Criminal Special" is an album that, while being basically average, showcases the promising future of a band with potential. Senator Flux deserves to be listened to because of their musical abilities. Their latest release, however, does not take full advantage of these abilities, and it is only on a few of the songs that the band proves their ability to create a distinctive and likeable sound.

Flashy ZZ Top concert entertaining, refreshing

By Michael Deeds
Senior Editor

With all the live gimmickry — the shades, the beards, the lasers, the matching suits, the MTV babes and the "Recycler" stage setting — Texas titans ZZ Top must have considered the risk of overdoing it on this tour. On the other hand, such worries probably never grace the minds of those so cool.

ZZ Top left no doubt Friday night that they are the coolest band in the world, especially to the 12,000 people crammed into a sold-out Omaha Civic Auditorium.

The performance was as much a show as a concert, and as silly as some of the tricks were, they were incredibly entertaining. And most importantly, the shenanigans never overshadowed the classic music, which was delivered with a slick '90s punch.

From the depths of a junkyard complete with mashed 3-D cars and a giant crane, beard brothers Billy Gibbons and Dusty Hill pranced out

to the beat of beardless Frank Beard. The duo immediately trounced the crowd with synchronized motions

concert

PREVIEW

performed on conveyor belts running in opposite directions. Gibbons and Hill walked toward each other on the treadmills, never moving, then stopped and let the belts carry them to each side of the stage.

Such style dominated the show and drew a constant barrage of cheers from the auditorium crowd. ZZ Top performed about 20 tunes during the 90-minute set, recycling older songs from the "Fandango!" era all the way up to "Recycler" days.

Standards like "Blue Jean Blues" and "Jesus Just Left Chicago" were just as great as ever. Gibbons and Hill have the same vocal soul they were blessed with years ago, and Gibbons' guitar playing accentuates it perfectly. It's no secret that Gibbons has influenced plenty of guitarists today, and he reminded everybody why that is

on Friday with chunky, tearing riffs.

The band cranked out the MTV standards from "Eliminator" — "Sharp Dressed Man," "Legs," "Gimme All Your Lovin'" — which served as a premonition of the models to grace the stage. After a five minute break in which a giant crane picked up Gibbons and Hill, dropped them into a "recycler" and regurgitated them in new red suits, the hard-hatted, short-shorted babes appeared, dancing at the duo's sides.

And, no, this was still not too much. This was a stage show, Texas-style. But the highlights of the night remained the down and dirty tunes, plain and simple. A sing-along of "Tube Snake Boogie" was a friendly gesture from the band, and "I Heard it on the X" and the encore performance of "Tush" couldn't be rivaled.

Ultimately, ZZ Top was a refreshing show. It isn't often a person gets to see such a phenomenal force of blues-rock, and when it's on this size scale, it is truly awesome. About 12,000 Nebraskans probably haven't shaven since Friday.



Amie DeFrain/Daily Nebraskan