

Sheldon Film Theater

# Movies present alternatives to Lincolnites

By Michael Stock  
Staff Reporter

The Sheldon Film Theater's Film Series offers unique opportunities that appeal to both the mainstream movie fan and the more esoteric.

The films that are shown at Sheldon would not come to Lincoln under normal circumstances.

"They are marginally commercial films. They would probably show in commercial art houses in major metropolitan cities, but Lincoln doesn't have an equivalent," said Dan Ladely, curator of the film theater.

Many of the films shown are first-release foreign films or domestic films not released by larger film studios.

Although the films do not draw the often enormous crowds that the commercial theaters do, the Sheldon Theater does draw sizable crowds.

Business "varies a lot from film to film," Ladely said.

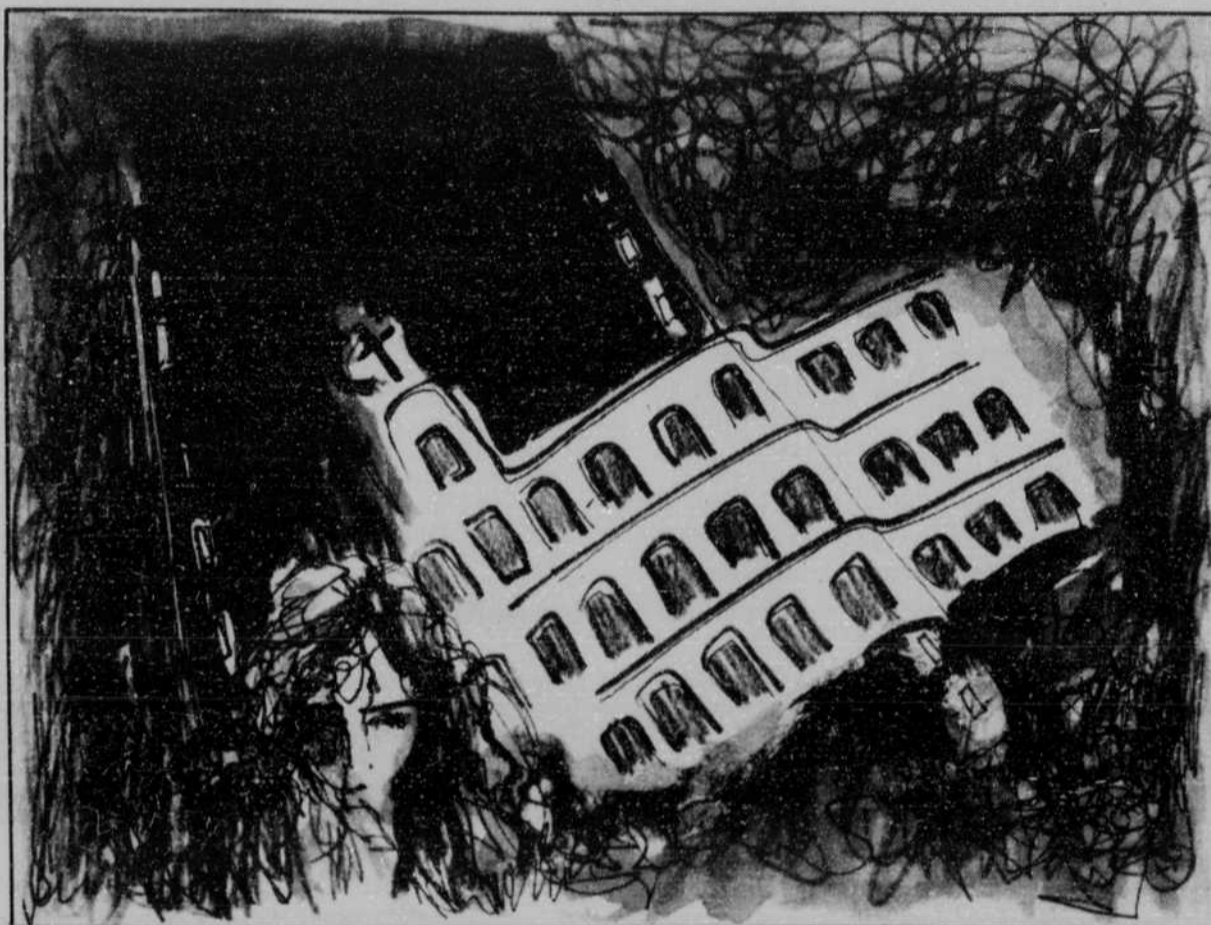
Some of the most popular films shown this year included the animation festivals, "The Handmaid's Tale" and "Longtime Companion," Ladely said.

Many of the movies shown at the Sheldon have received some media attention. Films mentioned or recognized for merit in national magazines or on national television tend to be the films that draw the large crowds.

"The films that are best attended are the ones that have made the national news," Ladely said.

Many of the films shown at the Sheldon, however, are not receiving attention in the national media. Ladely said that it is harder to draw a crowd for these films.

"Those are the kind of films that people come to who are really hard



Hyonae Blankenship/Daily Nebraskan

core . . . film-buffs, and are really interested in film as an art form. This is the audience that we mainly serve," Ladely said.

Films shown at the Sheldon go through a selection process. Ladely and his staff put together a list of a dozen films, including reviews from previous viewings of the film, for

each of the three programs of films — fall, winter/spring and summer.

This list is sent to an advisory committee, which responds by suggesting which films have artistic merit and which are expected to draw a good attendance. Ladely uses the information from this committee to make the ultimate decision about which

films will be shown.

Other factors also enter into the final decision of the choice of films to be shown. One of the most significant factors is which films are available.

Sometimes distributors will not make films available in a community the size of Lincoln. Many times, Ladely said, there simply aren't enough prints

of the film, and distributors want prints available in larger cities first.

This delay in distribution can cause problems for smaller theaters, like the Sheldon's.

"We have to get them (the films) here, for the most part, before they come out on home video, because that usually means that it really cuts down on attendance," Ladely said.

Most films shown at the Sheldon are rented from specialized film distributors in New York and Los Angeles, focusing on first-release foreign films and American independent films.

Nationally renewed interest in censorship affects the Sheldon's film program less than most of the commercial theaters.

"Usually, we don't make our decisions based on ratings, unlike some of the commercial theaters might do. We pick our films with other criteria — mainly artistic merit. The rating system doesn't really affect us too much," Ladely said.

Only about half of the films shown at the Sheldon carry any type of rating.

The ratings system is entirely voluntary, and it costs money for filmmakers to have their film rated. This keeps many films with the smaller budgets from obtaining a rating.

"It's up to every individual distributor to decide if they want their film rated or not — and some of them just can't afford it. So they just don't bother," Ladely said.

Recent price increases haven't affected attendance.

Ladely said the ticket price was increased to "keep our prices concurrent" with the commercial theaters.

See **SHELDON** on 8

## Music, comedians, mind control make Walpurgisnacht festive

By Matt Larsen  
Staff Reporter

A medley of entertainment transformed the Nebraska Union into festival grounds for the 17th annual Walpurgisnacht celebration on Friday night.

Lincoln area folk dancers opened the University of Nebraska-Lincoln's Walpurgisnacht festival before a crowd of about 140. The first Union Ballroom event started at 8 p.m., when the Lincoln East Choir opened for UNL's Scarlet and Cream Singers. Joe Rezac, a junior actuarial science major, called the singers' show a spirited performance.

"There was a lot of variety in the Scarlet and Cream show," Rezac said.

"The crowd was really enthusiastic about their performance."

When the Blues Brothers took the stage at 9:30 p.m., the ballroom was filled to capacity. Kevin Brown, a freshman business major, said he enjoyed the brass and style of the Blues Brothers.

"Those guys were really entertaining," Brown said. "For a while there I thought John Belushi came back to life and was performing in front of me. It's obvious they have seen the movie a few hundred times."

After the Blues Brothers, hypnotist Edwin L. Baron took over the Ballroom for a display of mind control. Union Festivals Committee members Tim Eschelman and Natalie Thompson said the show thrilled the crowd.

"It was a great show. There were a lot of people there," Eschelman said. "It was absolutely hilarious."

"He had about 20 people on stage for a concentration test," Thompson said. "About 10 of the people were hypnotized and did some funny stuff."

Closing out the evening were the comic antics of Ron Osborne and Jent Monk, sponsored by the University Program Council's Best of the Rest Committee. As the "spokescomedian" for Kingsbury non-alcoholic beer, Monk gave away T-shirts, frisbees and hats to crowd members.

Along with the various live entertainment, several promotional booths were set up for Domino's Pizza, Mary Kay Cosmetics, Opulence Hair Care, Subway Sandwiches and Grisanti's Casual Italian Restaurant.

## Hanna haunted by his solitude at the cinema

There comes a time in everyone's life when they want to see a movie alone.

Maybe they need quiet time to be with themselves and wallow in the self-love only solitude can bring. Maybe they want to absorb the meaning of the film without the interference of another person. Or maybe they're simply too embarrassed to ask anyone to go see the Rambo movie they so loudly derided in their poetry class as a senseless glorification of violence.

Whatever the inspiration, there are simply times when you end up seeing a movie all by your lonesome. I recently went to see a movie alone, and I have some personal insights I want to share.

Initially, it's important to note that no matter how much you insist that you want to see a movie alone, most

people will assume you're just a big loser who couldn't find someone to go with you.

And even as you vehemently assure yourself that you are attending this movie alone by choice, there's a nagging little voice in your head reminding you that everyone is looking at you with pity.

"Don't kid yourself, Jim. You don't want to see this movie alone so you can get closer to your inner soul. You just can't find anyone to go with you."

But temporarily, another voice prevails.

"No! You are here alone by choice. You are going to spend some quality time with Jim. This is time for self-realization, self-actualization and self-love."

Actually, it's more like self-flagellation.



Jim  
Hanna

ticket counter. You defiantly walk up to the perky high school part-timer and declare your intentions.

"One for 'Slumber Party Slaughter', please." You surprise yourself at the timidity in your voice.

"What?" queries the sprightly spike-haired sophomore. "Did you say one?"

Out of the corner of your eye, you see those waiting in the lobby turn to look at the poor sap who's seeing a movie alone.

"Yes," you say, trying to sound defiant. "Just one and one alone."

Perhaps you search your brain for

a possible explanation of your solitude.

"I'm meeting someone here."

"My date just died in a car accident."

"I'm seeing it for a class."

But no. You insist to yourself that you are not ashamed to see a movie alone. You plunk down your money and proudly walk away with your ticket.

As you approach the concession counter, you begin to realize that you've made a major timing error. What were you thinking? If you're going to see a movie alone, why did you come to the 7 p.m. showing on a Saturday night?

That's right, the lobby is filled with happy, romantic couples out on a weekend date. They wear their togetherness on their forehead like a neon sign.

"We are a couple, and we are very

much in love. We just finished an amorous candlelight dinner and after this movie, we're going home to make beautiful love 'til dawn," their neon sign silently flashes.

The few couples who saw you buying your ticket alone begin to murmur quietly to one another. Their eyes try to sneak a few looks at you, but their midwestern upbringings remind them that it's not polite to stare at those who are different. Should you happen to make eye contact with them, they instantly will look away.

Still, you're certain that this is what you want to do. You know that if you wanted a date, you could get one. You are here alone by choice.

At the concession stand, the jovial gel-headed junior greets you with the sales pitch her manager requires her

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