

Absurd plot, mistakes foil 'The Siege'

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ates them inside the football stadium, where they have set up a virtual concentration camp. Later, he interrogates, tortures and kills one of them. "The Siege" tries to come across as a "military bad" film, but it really doesn't offer a good guy to counter it.

Despite all his posturing and lecturing, the FBI's tactics come across almost as deplorable as the military's. There are moments in the film where the terrorists' tactics don't come across as any worse than the things our own government does.

A final deathblow is dealt to the film's credibility at the end, however, where, abandoning all pretense of drama, director Ed Zwick takes movie license a little too far and, in the span of 15 minutes, reduces it to almost every action-movie cliché he can find.



COURTESY PHOTO
DENZEL WASHINGTON is FBI Special Agent Anthony "Hub" Hubbard, who is put in charge of the investigation of a series of terrorist bombings in New York.

"The Siege" is entertaining only on the surface. Delving for actual drama opens up a huge can of worms, and therein lies its blemishes.

'Follow Me Home' comes to UNL

Director Peter Bratt to hold film discussion

BY JASON HARDY
Senior staff writer

Since its creation in post-colonial times, the White House has long stood as a symbol of national pride and American strength.

However, for many minorities, it's seen as a symbol of oppression, rooted in the past and still carried out in the present.

It is issues like these that Peter Bratt, writer and director of "Follow Me Home," a film exploring race and identity in America, attempts to deal with. Bratt, who made the film on a tight budget and with only a handful of inexperienced family and friends as his crew, follows his film around the country to conduct discussions following each screening.

Despite winning a number of international film awards, including Official Selection of the 1996 Sundance Film Festival, "Follow Me Home" won't be found in any of the major theaters. It won't even be found at the Ross. Instead it is being shown at various community centers, college campuses and places around the country with Bratt present for each post-screening discussion.

Tonight, Bratt and "Follow Me Home" make the journey to the University of Nebraska-Lincoln for a free showing and discussion session.

The film itself combines racial issues from past and present American Indian, black and Latin cultures by following four artists on a quest across the American landscape.

Sandra Kinoshita, academic counselor and coordinator of multicultural programming, is in part responsible for bringing in Bratt and his film. She selected the film "Follow Me Home"



COURTESY PHOTO
DIRECTOR/WRITER Peter Bratt (right) sits with his brother and co-star in his first film "Follow Me Home," an account of a physical and spiritual journey of minorities in the United States.

because it encompasses a number of different facets of race relations today, including interethnic conflicts, internal and external racism and gender violence.

"I wanted to bring out the issues for discussion and have the movie as a vehicle for further discussion in a productive manner, as well as being entertaining," Kinoshita said.

By addressing these issues, she hopes students will become more aware of their surroundings.

"I hope it gets them thinking about the issues and sort of helps them learn more about themselves and society and the way things run," Kinoshita said. "Hopefully that will get them to think about it further."

The film centers on the spiritual and physical journey of four male friends: Chicano cousins Trudee (Jesse Borrego) and Abel (Benjamin Bratt); Kaz (Calvin Levels), who's black; and Freddy (Steve Reevis), an American Indian. All four are artists who use the decrepit buildings of the inner city as their canvases for colorful murals. Together they hatch an idea to travel from East Los Angeles to Washington,

D.C., to paint a mural on the White House. Along their way they encounter Evey (Alfre Woodard), a black woman traveling alone who joins the group in their trek.

Following the film Bratt will lead a discussion about "Follow Me Home" and garner reactions from its viewers. Kinoshita said the discussion allows for people to draw parallels between the events of the movie and events in real life and to be able to share those experiences with other students.

"It's definitely a discussion; it's not a lecture or anything," Kinoshita said. "From what I hear, the discussion part is sometimes more powerful than the movie because people really get into that."

Tonight's showing starts at 7:30 in the Love Library Auditorium and is free to the public. Because of its wide range of subject matter, Kinoshita said, there is something for everybody in "Follow Me Home."

"It's for anybody, because it's all levels of awareness," Kinoshita said. "There is a lot of symbolism and a lot of in-your-face type of things so that anyone can get something from it."

Whigs experience inspires fan hysteria

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I felt the same way in May 1996, when I traveled to Chi-Town to see the Whigs perform for the first time. And I felt the same way last May, when I drove with two friends to New Orleans for a one-night-only show.

I'd drive farther, if necessary. Come to think of it, maybe I'm worse than those '60s kids in the grip of Beatlemania. Even if I don't cry and

pass out in the face of what I believe to be the world's greatest band, I have a deep-seated desire to go to great lengths to experience as much of the Whigs as I possibly can.

Then again, maybe I'm just like any other music fan.

Pretty much all music fans have one band that they like to call their own. They own every available recording, they travel to concerts, and they plaster their walls with posters.

And the people who do these things have embraced music for what it really is — a personal and eternal gift.

It can speak to you, speak for you

and get you through hard times. And unlike girlfriends or boyfriends, music won't give you any hard times unless you let it.

So maybe my unhealthy obsession with music in general — and the Afghan Whigs in specific — isn't all that unhealthy. Maybe I've just found something that I can use as a center in life. Maybe I can even figure out a way to parlay this love into an economically and emotionally feasible way of life.

Maybe I'm not like those freaked-out teen-aged Beatlemaniacs at all.

But I probably am.

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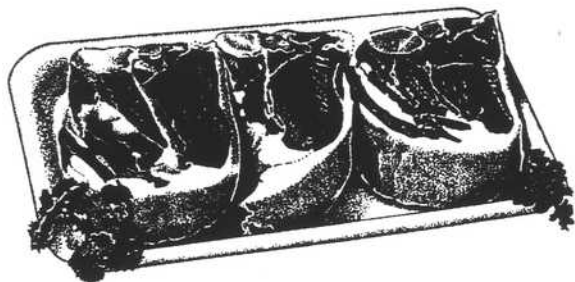
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