



## 'Exorcist II' one of the worst

The year is only half over, but already we have a bounty of movies sure of a spot among the top 10—the 10 worst films of 1977. My nomination for that infamous list is "Exorcist II—The Heretic" (R).

Here we have a disheartening example of some fantastic photography joined to one of the most insane scripts ever put to film. The plot (I use the term generously) concerns Father Lamont (Richard Burton) trying to validate and carry on the work of Father Merrin (Max von Sydow). Father Merrin died four years ago—in "The Exorcist"—moribund by the demon of young Regan MacNeil (Linda Blair).

Father Lamont wants to save Regan's soul. But Regan is in psychoanalysis with Dr. Tuskin (Louise Fletcher), who wants to save Regan's psyche. Dr. Tuskin works in a modern, dehumanized, electronic and glass clinic that practices things like "synchronous hypnosis."

Naturally, Regan hasn't been helped a bit. Lamont discovers that there is a demon within Regan called a Pazu. Such a discovery might baffle the Surete or Scotland Yard or the FBI but not Father Lamont.

HE KNOWS all about the Pazu. It comes from Africa. When it's just hanging around loose, not inhabiting anyone's body, it takes the shape of a giant locust. At other times, it's a swarm of locusts.

How it got from Africa to Regan in New York and why it assumes such a strange form are puzzling questions. But puzzling in a Donald Duck way, not a Department of Logic way.

Thus it would be futile to dwell on the whys and wherefores of this movie. Trying to rationally explain the irrational only presents an irrational variant.

One wonders why two such fine actors as Richard Burton and Louise Fletcher (Nurse Ratched from "One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest") are in this silly movie. Of course, the pay is good but another consideration is that "The Heretic" requires fine actors. Who else could recite the dialogue without cracking up?

Burton declaims his lines with a stentorian seriousness worthy of Shakespearean drama. As Father Lamont, he requests the cardinal's permission to travel to Africa to seek a holy man who may be able to help him rid Regan of the Pazu.

THE CARDINAL, suspicious that Lamont may be a bit "tetch" in the head, suggests that he go on a retreat. Lamont declines, solemnly proclaiming, "I want to advance, not retreat." Louise Fletcher as Dr. Tuskin suffers the same fate from this merciless script.

The conclusion of the movie compounds the nonsense in one gigantic mishmash in a quiet residential Georgetown neighborhood. Regan, Lamont and Tuskin confront the Pazu.

This encounter results in a car crash, fire, screams, yells, an attack of swarming locusts and a huge truck that explosively tears apart and crashes to the ground. The special effects people are unimpaired.

Does any neighbor go to a window or walk outside to see what all the racket is about? No. The theater audience reels with laughter while the neighborhood remains quiet. Nobody's noticed anything.

Father Lamont emerges from the wreckage, embraces Dr. Tuskin, then walks off into the moonlit night with nymphet Regan. A few neighbors finally appear. Dr. Tuskin looks up with tears in her eyes—undoubtedly, tears of joy that the wretched movie is over—and says, "I understand now." This puts her light-years beyond the rest of the cast, not to mention the audience.

There is one positive aspect of "The Heretic." It makes all other movies look great in comparison.

## Glimpses

**NEW RELEASES**  
**ANNIE HALL** (PG). The best Woody Allen film yet. Truth and comedy go hand in hand in this touching, contemporary love story. Diane Keaton is also at her best as Annie.  
**THE BOATNICKS** (G). Robert Morse is an inept Coast Guard Ensign who foils the bad guys through sheer stupid luck.  
**A BRIDGE TOO FAR** (PG). Crisp World War II drama chronicling major but ill-fated campaign in Holland. Bounty of stars make brief but effective appearances.  
**THE DEEP** (PG). Suspenseful aqua-thriller with exciting underwater action and photography. Jacqueline Bisset, Nick Nolte and Robert Shaw dive for treasure and thrills.  
**EXORCIST II—THE HERETIC** (R). There's not much that can save this imbecile movie although Richard Burton and Louise Fletcher try. How do they keep from laughing?  
**FOR THE LOVE OF BENJI** (G). The lovable mut Benji is foolproof but not fancy free during an accidental excursion through the Greek Islands.  
**THE OTHER SIDE OF MIDNIGHT** (R). Tawdry film of vanity and vengeance. Marie-France Priet wastes her talent in this clinker. More sex and less story and they could have gone for the "Emmanuelle" trade.  
**ROLLERCOASTER** (PG). Suspense thriller about extortionist (Timothy Bottoms) who plants bombs at amusement parks and a safety inspector (George Segal) who doesn't think that's funny.  
**STAR WARS** (PG). Series-comic sci-fi adventure about a rebellion of solar systems in a distant galaxy. Good time movie with laughs and special effects. Two robots steal the show.  
**THREE WOMEN** (PG). Director Robert Altman's strange, provocative study of the marriag relationships of three women and their alienation in a masculine world.

**BACK AGAIN**  
**BLACK SUNDAY** (R). Sick thriller of inflated terrorism from a blimp at the Super Bowl. Robert Shaw and Marthe Keller are the capable adversaries. Fine acting by Bruce Dern as the berserk pilot.  
**YOUNG FRANKENSTEIN** (PG). Mel Brooks' comic classic with Gene Wilder as Dr. F., Marty Feldman as a hunchback with a movable hunch, and Peter Boyle as the monster. Terrifically funny, start to finish.

**MOVIE-RATING GUIDE**  
 G General audiences admitted.  
 PG Parental guidance suggested. All ages admitted.  
 R Restricted. Adult accompaniment required for persons under 18.  
 X No one under 18 admitted.

# Kinks pleases crowd at Knob

By NEILL EISENSTEIN

The Kinks have proved that a band following its own course, without heavy publicity, without a hit single, with all its idiosyncrasies, can still bring the house down.

They did just that in concert Thursday at Pine Knob in Clarkston. The Kinks were one of the first bands to utilize fuzz-tone on their first hit, way back in '64. One of the first bands during the British invasion to feature a dynamic songwriter-performer, Ray Davies, and a sizzling guitarist, his brother Dave.

The Doors even got a number one hit single in 1968 by stealing one of the Kinks' first hits. That's how anonymous the Kinks are, even though they've grown and changed all through the '60s and '70s from another British R&B group to a vision of Old England, all wilderness and music hall traditions—just like the Beatles have grown.

The main difference between the two is that the Kinks never got promotion or yielded to the hit single formula. They just went merrily on their way, while amassing a hard core cult of fans and critics.

BUT, TO BEGIN at the beginning, out at Pine Knob, there was Pierce Arrow, playing the ubiquitous warm-up band. They were a typical congregation of talent; individually okay, their main strength being a cohesive ensemble, everyone sharing the spotlight—little charisma, I thought. But it was alright. They kept their set short, they smiled a lot, they announced the Kinks, everyone had a good time.

And lo, there were the Kinks. Most of them, anyway. They laid down a riff in preparation for Ray's Big En-

## Review

trance. And then he came on, in a pupil-searing orange jacket—Mr. Britania himself straight out of Carnaby Street, 1965. If this was not exactly a night for the Kinks more useful side, it was infused with a certain nostalgia.

Anyway, Of Ray came out and immediately proved that tonight he was gonna be a rock 'n' roller. And a darn good one at that. He camped it up with the female background singers, played the dressed-down stud while posturing like a would-be hip, latter-day Sammy Davis, Jr. Ray was obviously paying his respects to legit show-biz acts; today Pine Knob, tomorrow Las Vegas? Later on, he updated himself by posturing more like Elvis.

Throughout, Brother Dave was a dynamo of energy, as was drummer

Mike Avory. Behind me, someone was making the observation that the members of Pierce Arrow had played with more precision. Perhaps.

BUT THEY HARDLY aroused the kind of excitement that Ray and his backup band were stimulating as they ran through some golden oldies from the '60s: "Tired of Waiting," "Set Me Free," "Sunny Afternoon" (the only time during the night that they tapped their traditions of music hall), and especially "All Day and All Night" (this is the song that the Doors retitled "Hello, I Love You" in '68), which set off a chain of high energy that never let up the rest of the evening.

Following this was a set from their new album "Sleepwalker," which included the obligatory title song "Life Goes On" and "Stormy Sky" and "Full Moon."

Another number "Life on the Road" provided Ray with the means to set a hypnotic lulling effect into motion—pulling the audience alone, clapping

and singing as if of one mind—total performance. Of course, other bands can achieve this, too—Kiss does it with pre-adolescents, through pure hype—but here the Kinks did it with pure talent. And the average age of the audience was mid-20s. No mean feat, to get jaded 21-year olds to do anything.

Ray then proceeded to exhibit his classic bit of theater from the flop 1975 album "Schoolboys in Disgrace." Here, Ray Davies, lean man on the totem pole of adolescent singers, managed to make his voice versatile enough to fit the various characters he played. Shocking, I'd never thought of him as a great-shakes singer before.

After the mini-opera, they went into their classic single "Lola," the one with the is-he-or-isn't-he storyline, which Ray snidely introduced, just as everyone would act the part.

He managed to turn this song into another lulling effect and following up with their ever-running first hit single "You Really Got Me."

# Director named by Adelines

The South Oakland County Chapter of Sweet Adelines, Inc., has appointed Jacki Kaye of Farmington Hills as chorus director.

Ms. Kaye brings a wealth of talent and experience to her new position. Highlights of her Sweet Adelines career include serving as show chairman of SOC chapter's "Vaudeville to Video" show at the Masonic Temple in 1973, serving as director of musical activities for Region 2 (Michigan and eastern Ontario) for three years, singing bass with the 1974 Region 2 Quartet Champions, the Concord Motor Co., and directing the Flint Chapter chorus to second-place honors in the recent Region 2 chorus competition held in London, Ont.

Ms. Kaye will direct the 50-member SOC chapter chorus and 35 Detroit area barbershoppers and Sweet Adelines in "Hats Off to Oklahoma," to be presented Nov. 11-12, 18-19 at Our Lady of Mercy High School auditorium, Farmington Hills. She will be working with show chairwoman Barbara St. Amand of Berkeley, known to barbershop audiences for her shows including the 1975 musical, "A Salute to

Music Man." Rosemary Cusdale of Royal Oak and Del McPherson of Farmington Hills are assistant show chairwomen.

Ms. Kaye and the SOC chapter chorus are seeking women 18 and older who enjoy singing to join them at rehearsals held at the Knights of Columbus Hall, 2989 W. Twelve Mile at Coolidge in Berkeley.

The group will rehearse three or four times during the month of June and on Tuesday evenings during July and August. Call June Budzen at 646-3719 for more information.

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