



Get scared with 'Coma'

If you like being scared out of your socks, "Coma" (PG) can do it. However, the cost of the scary thrills is a great deal of unpleasantness. "Coma" is not a movie for the squeamish. Grisly and macabre scenes in operating rooms, pathology labs and hospital morgues assure the viewer of seeing all the things he never wanted to see, and then some.

Based on Dr. Robin Cook's gripping novel, the film, scripted and directed by Michael Crichton, captures some of the horror, but fizzles out at explanations and rationales. At movie's end, we're still left puzzled about how certain things were accomplished and who was involved.

Worse yet, one of the most interesting aspects of the movie in terms of social and economic implications is never pursued. A quick introduction to a computer link-up for worldwide bidding on body organs is all we ever get.

GENEVIEVE BUJOLD, as Dr. Susan Wheeler, is the heroine of the story. When she investigates the circumstances of an irreversible coma in her closest friend, she discovers a mysteriously large number of unexplained comas at the hospital.

Her investigation leads her to a forbidding concrete structure—the Jefferson Institute. There she discovers a frightening and profitable enterprise.

The suspense, with heavy-handed music to announce it, then hinges on whether Dr. Wheeler will survive to reveal the fiendish goings-on. The suspense is heightened by the ambiguous allegiance of her lover, Dr. Mark Bellows (Michael Douglas). He's an opportunist playing the game of hospital politics; thus, we are never certain where his loyalties lie.

Throughout the movie, there's not a shred of humor. And there are hardly any ordinary bits of normal business to relieve the grisly spell. From the very beginning, the characters seem edgy and uptight.

The press releases for "Coma" quote Bujold as saying she is pleased that an important screen role (Dr. Wheeler) is written for a woman, not a man. The role of Dr. Wheeler, however, is not a compliment to either sex. The character's professional competence as a doctor is offset by foolhardy courage, illogical actions and a babbling emotional floodtide.

If this were a Gothic horror story, Bujold would be the plucky heroine. In "Coma," she's the plucky, but ridiculously rash, doctor. That's equality, I guess. No sex has a monopoly on stupidity.

Glimpses

- NEW RELEASES**
- THE BETSY (R)**. Vivid portrait of intrigue and power within the auto industry, based on Harold Robbins' best-selling novel. Many scenes filmed in metropolitan Detroit.
 - CLOSE ENCOUNTERS OF THE THIRD KIND (PG)**. Steven Spielberg's megabuck epic about contact with extraterrestrial beings. Special effects make this another treat for sci-fi fans.
 - EQUUS (R)**. Intense, realistic film of prize-winning play with Richard Burton as the self-doubting psychiatrist treating a boy (Peter Firth) who has blinded six horses.
 - THE GOODBYE GIRL (PG)**. Neil Simon comedy of set-up situation and laughs when an actor (Richard Dreyfuss) moves in with a twice-dumped, actor-hating hooper (Marsha Mason).
 - HIGH ANXIETY (PG)**. Mel Brooks tips his hat to Hitchcock in this lunatic romp at the Psycho-Theoretic Institute for the Very, Very Nervous. Liberal visual "quotations" from Hitchcock in this howler.
 - THE LACEMAKER (R)**. Sensitive love story of beauty shop assistant and university student. Fine acting by Isabelle Huppert. In French with English subtitles.
 - THE MOUSE AND HIS CHILD (G)**. Award-winning full-length cartoon feature with voices of Peter Ustinov and Cloris Leachman.
 - THE ONE AND ONLY (PG)**. Zany romantic comedy with Henry Winkler pursuing Kim Darby and getting gussied up as a wrestler called "The Lover."
 - SATURDAY NIGHT FEVER (R)**. John Travolta of Kottler's sweatshops is the main man in film with plenty of disco action.
 - SEMI-TOUGH (R)**. Self-improvement schemes and football take equal lumps in comic but raunchy film with Burt Reynolds and Kris Kristofferson.

MOVIE RATING GUIDE

- G General audiences admitted.
- PG Parental guidance suggested. All ages admitted.
- R Restricted. Adult must accompany person under 18.
- X No one under 18 admitted.



Laurence Olivier is an auto tycoon in the film version of Harold Robbins' "The Betsy."

March to offer lively events

Opera, ballet, drama, musical comedy, well-known stars and artists rising to stardom—all grace the stages of Michigan during the month of March.

The program runs the full gamut of the arts with offerings for every type of audience, according to the Travel Bureau of the Michigan Department of Commerce.

"The Barber of Seville" opens the program, March 1-3, in Shaw Theatre, Western Michigan University, Kalamazoo, and Nellie Forbush will be "washing that man out of her hair," March 24 and 9-11, in the Civic Theatre's production of "South Pacific," Battle Creek.

The Paul Taylor Dance Company—considered among the national artistic treasures—choreographically explodes across the stage of the Music Hall in Detroit, March 3-4.

For those who are young in years and heart is the Pickwick Puppet Theatre, March 4, Calvin Fine Arts Center, Grand Rapids.

MULTI-TALENTED, Oscar-winning Michel Legrand will be in concert March 5 at the Music Hall, Detroit, featuring his compositions, as well as his genius as a pianist, raconteur and singer.

Artistry in motion might well describe the incredible Jose Greco appearing March 21 in Western Michigan University's Miller Auditorium. The same description could also apply to the Hartford Ballet, March 25, Kellogg Auditorium, Battle Creek.

Lovers of jazz will be able to hear the pure New Orleans variety played by some of the truly grand old musicians who put it together more than 50 years ago. The one and only Preservation Hall Jazz Band comes to the Music Hall, Detroit, March 9.

A hint that spring is on the way is indicated by some of the events on the March agenda such as the Tractor Pull, March 4, in the Silverdome, Pontiac, and the Recreational Vehicle Show, March 6-12, Eastland Mall, Burton.

Travel

A sure sign of the warming season is the Maple Sugaring Weekend, Nature Center, Kalamazoo, March 11-12. Indoor and outdoor displays and demonstrations show how the sap in the trees gets to be syrup on pancakes. There also is an opportunity to taste the sweet nectar.

THE HOME SHOW, March 13-19, will have fresh new ideas for bright-

ening up the old homestead, and the Boat Show, March 20-26, will be tempting landlubbers and seasoned sailors alike to take to the inland seas. Both shows take place at Eastland Mall, Burton.

For the "doing" folk, a Hobby, Arts and Craft Show, is March 10-12, at E. Eight Mile Armory, Detroit. And, for those who prefer the products of years gone by, there are the Spring Antique and Collectible Show/Sale, March 15-19, Light Guard Armory, Detroit, and the Michigan Antiques Show/Sale, Crisler Arena, University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, March 31 to April 2.

Final events of the winter season

include a Speedskating Festival, March 4-5, Midland; International Ski Flying Week and the Ski Flying Tournament, March 2-5, Copper Peak, Ironwood; Michigan 250-150 Sled Dog Endurance Run from Newberry, and Head-to-Head Slalom Ski Races, Caberlae, Cadillac, March 5.

It's a great month for breaking out of your cocoon and starting to get into the spring of things.

A complete rundown of March happenings is included in the free Michigan Calendar of Travel Events. It's available from the Travel Bureau, Michigan Department of Commerce, Box 30226, Lansing 48909.

Vocalists honoring songwriter

"Mister Music—A Salute to Irving Berlin" is the theme of the annual "Harmony in Review" to be presented by the Oakland County Chapter of the Society for the Preservation and Encouragement of Barber Shop Quartet Singing in America, Inc.

The performance will be held at 8 p.m. Friday and Saturday at Athens High School Auditorium in Troy.

The Wolverine Chorus and several quartets from the sponsoring chapter will be featured in the show. Other highlights will be the Pieces of Eight, an international finalist quartet; the Note Wits, a comedy quartet from Maplewood, N. J.; and the Bassi-cally Four, a Sweet Adeline quartet.

Tickets can be obtained by calling 663-8006 or 544-1088.

The SPEBSQSA was founded in April 1938 in Tulsa, Okla. The society is the largest fraternity of singers in the world with more than 38,000 members in 780 chapters throughout the United States and Canada.

The Oakland County Chapter was founded in 1943 and is comprised of more than 100 members.

The Wolverine Chorus, under the direction of Fred McFayden, meets in

rehearsal every Monday at 8 p.m. at the Knights of Columbus Hall, 2299 W. Twelve Mile, Berkley. Further information regarding membership can be obtained by calling Allan McPherson at 477-7078.

Tatum trio to play jazz

The Detroit Historical Society is presenting an evening of jazz history featuring the James Tatum Trio Plus on Friday at 8 p.m. in the Dodge Hall of the Detroit Historical Museum.

James Tatum of Detroit, a music educator, lecturer and performer, is director of fine arts at Murray Wright High School as well as co-director of the St. Aloysius Cultural Renaissance Center. His best known compositions are the "Contemporary Jazz Mass" and "Spiritualista."

In Friday's concert, Tatum and his ensemble will describe the roots of

jazz and its historical development from Africa to America by a blend of instruments, vocals, and narratives.

Advanced reservations are advisable as there will be a limited number of tickets at the door on the night of the concert. For further information call the Detroit Historical Society, 833-7934. This program is being offered as part of an on-going series of events commemorating not only Afro-American history month but also the exhibit, "Detroit's African-American Heritage which will be at the museum until June 11, 1978.

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