



LOUISE SNIDER

Cinderella story—delightful film

"The Slipper and the Rose" (G) is a generously endowed film: Lavish costumes and settings, exterior scenes shot on location in Austria, pleasing (if not immortal) music, smart choreography and a wealth of talent.

Richard Chamberlain sings and dances as The Prince, newcomer Gemma Craven is an appealing, fresh-as-the-dew Cinderella, and a host of excellent British stars including Kenneth More, Dame Edith Evans and Margaret Lockwood, comprise the supporting cast.

This is a delightful family movie. Lest anyone think the Cinderella story too soppy and sentimental, be assured this version has been enlivened with considerable humor and even wit.

Michael Hordern is the candid King who forever is reminding his Chamberlain to speak plain English and stop being such a flatterer. When the King needs to raise money to pay for a great ball, he says he will institute a new tax, "a tax on snobbery."

The effusive Chamberlain quickly begins praising the King's genius, till the King retorts that the new tax will most certainly apply to him.

MARGARET LOCKWOOD is the Stepmother, so mean you just want to hiss every time she appears. In contrast, Annette Crosbie is an amiable Fairy Godmother, a very practical, efficient person who frets that she is being run ragged because there are so many people in the world who need her help.

Moreover, she works in ordinary, everyday clothes, no gossamer and sparkles and wands. After all, she insists, that's "a ridiculous way" for a grown woman to dress.

Almost everyone in this movie has a chance to poke fun at some stereotype and play a role for a few laughs. I was a little concerned that my 10-year-old movie companion, who watches plenty of fast-paced television programs, might be bored with some of the longer song and dance routines, but she wasn't. She found them delightful.

"The Slipper and the Rose" is a welcome change of pace for viewers of any age.



RICHARD CHAMBERLAIN

'Raggedy Ann' too saccharine

"Raggedy Ann and Andy" (G) is mostly an animated movie with some live acting interspersed. The individual characters and sequences were drawn by different artists resulting in wide variations in style and effect.

Many of the animated sequences, especially at the beginning, have a soft, watercolor-like quality which is just too sweet-poo. Indeed the first half-hour is slow and saccharine. It lacks the crispness that many children have become accustomed to from television, whether watching commercials or "Sesame Street."

Called a "musical adventure," there is lots of singing in the movie but nothing really memorable or toe-tapping. The story develops around a collection of dolls in a child's room. When a new French doll, Babette, is added, trouble starts.

The pirate doll, who is entranced by Babette, captures her and sails away. Raggedy Ann and Andy pursue in an attempt to rescue Babette. The pace picks up as we follow their adventures. Preschoolers and children in the early primary grades probably will enjoy these episodes.

THEY MEET a gluttonous Greedy in a Taffy Pit and King Koo in Looney Land. But the most endearing character they encounter is a baggy-kneed camel who chases visions of a dazzling camel caravan in the sky.

When they finally overtake the pirate ship, the movie throws its one bold punch. Instead of a weeping Babette and a barbarous Captain, we find the Captain in tatters and a fiery Babette driving the crew like Captain Bligh.

You know that can't last. Eventually, everyone returns home and the status quo is restored.

GLIMPSES

NEW RELEASES

AIRPORT 77 (PG). A disaster film that combines air and sea operations by crashing a 747 into the ocean and then trying to raise the plane or lower the ocean—something like that.

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 berserk pilot.

DEMON SEED (R). Violent computer violates Julie Christie. A self-starter with its own programming plans, computer runs amok in real time.

THE DOMINO PRINCIPLE (R). Gene Hackman is the trigger man in a nameless organization's attempt at political assassination. Muddled but predictable plot.

THE EAGLE HAS LANDED (PG). World War II suspense-adventure story about a group of German paratroopers who attempt to kidnap Winston Churchill. Michael Caine, Donald Sutherland and Robert Duvall star.

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.

With electronic reservations

Speeding travelers along

By ETHEL SIMMONS

The electronic reservations and ticketing system is the wave of the future for travel agencies. When you want to go on a trip and you talk to a travel agent, you may find the agent talking to a computer.

The Olympia Travel Bureau & Olympia Ticket Service in the Village Knoll Shopping Center is the first agency in the Birmingham area to have the new electronic system, according to Art Whalen, who is vice-president and general manager of Olympia Travel.

Gail Davey, branch manager of Olympia Travel, said, "It is futuristic, but we're a very progressive travel agency."

The advantage to the traveler is that it requires less time for the agent to gather information on flight availability and to make the reservation.

IN FACT an airline ticket can be printed in six seconds with the automatic ticket printer.

Said Whalen, "You have to have the volume to afford this equipment. We decided our volume of business was going great, so we became computerized."

Olympia Travel uses the American Airlines unit, the Sabre system, which is hooked up to computer headquarters in Tulsa, Okla. Other airlines have their own systems; for example, United has Apollo.

The Sabre system, operating through phone lines, is plugged into 152 airlines and also can make reservations for hotels and car rental.

TO DEMONSTRATE Ms. Davey punched the keyboard of the CTR, or terminal, asking the computer which flights were available from Detroit to Los Angeles for a requested departure date.

The information—flight number, seats available, time—appeared instantaneously on the terminal screen. Even a current weather forecast is provided, if requested.

The travel agent can display the flight information and book the reservation over the phone at the same time.

At Olympia Travel, a ticket printer in the back room takes the reservation stored in the computer and prints the ticket in seconds.

Within two minutes, you may make



Gail Davey, branch manager, makes a reservation electronically at Olympia Travel in Birmingham. (Photo by Robert Kaye)

reservations and get a ticket priced automatically.

THE ELECTRONIC system also does currency conversion, translating Italian lire into dollars, for instance.

A record of the flight for the traveler will be stored, along with any special requirements, such as a kosher or vegetarian meal, or a wheelchair.

Another printer, to do invoices and travel itineraries, should be in operation by mid-May at Olympia Travel.

Does the computer system take some of the personalized service away from the customer?

Ms. Davey says no. "We can spend more time personalizing the itinerary and can spend more time investigating the needs of the clientele. Here we have a very demanding clientele."

OLYMPIA TRAVEL Bureau's main office has been located at Detroit's

Olympia Stadium for more than nine years. By May 1, it plans to move all individual and business accounts from that office. The group travel department will stay at the main office.

The branch office in the Village Knoll, at Maple and Lahser, opened in July 1975.

The Olympia Travel Bureau in Detroit operates separately from the stadium box office there, but the suburban branch also handles tickets for Olympia events, as well as for other concerts.

"When we moved out here, we opened the ticket office as a catalyst to get the agency known," Whalen said. "It provides a service for customers."

"People see an ad for Ice Follies and are amazed to see you're a travel agency, too," he added.

Whalen is also assistant manager of Olympia Stadium, which is 50 years old. Olympia is moving from Detroit to Pontiac and a projected new stadium in July 1978.

Business on the rise

A travel business survey, recently taken by the Southeast Michigan Travel and Tourist Association, revealed that business was generally in the increase for the year 1976.

Sidney L. Baker, association president, announced that while the increases in business were modest, generally under 10 per cent, one camping supply company had a remarkable 65 per cent increase in its business for the year.

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