

second runs

Hugh Gallagher

"Bear Window" (1954), 8 p.m. Saturday on Ch. 50. Originally 121 minutes. TV time slot: 150 minutes.

This is top-drawer Alfred Hitchcock. A simple plot becomes the basis for a not-so-simple look at voyeurism, murder and courage. James Stewart plays a man confined to his apartment who takes up innocent spying on his neighbors with binoculars, until innocence turns sinister when he sees a murder. Hitchcock handles the confined perspective in such a way that the audience becomes as tense as Stewart. Able support from Grace Kelly, Thelma Ritter and a very unfriendly Raymond Burr make this must seeing.

Rating: \$3.80.

"The Exorcist" (1973), 11:30 p.m. Saturday on Ch. 50. Originally 120 minutes. TV time slot: 120 minutes.

There are some who think this gruesome ditty is a great film. I have some wonderfully bizarre special effects, a surprisingly intelligent performance by Ellen Burstyn and a brutally guttural vocal from Mercedes McCambridge (that is probably edited for television). But this is a rip-off. Its thrill quotient is small compared to the simple-minded treatment it gives to serious theological questions. That might not matter, except that the filmmakers seem to take these questions seriously and then junk them for horror. In very real ways this film is an insult to Catholics. It is, however, considerably better than its sequel, which may be one of the worst films of all time.

Rating: \$2.

"One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest" (1975), 8 p.m. Monday on Ch. 50. Originally 132 minutes. TV time slot: 150 minutes.

An outstanding film version of Ken Kesey's novel about the never-ending conflict between freedom and repression.

Leading European art, history tour

Well known area art professor and consultant, Marilyn Finkel and Gerald Faye will escort an Oakland Community College European Spring Study tour May 1-21.

The tour will be concerned with the art, politics and history of Northern Europe providing the travelers with an

WHAT'S IT WORTH?
A ratings guide to the movies

Bad \$1
Fair \$2
Good \$3
Excellent \$4

Death Wish" (1974), 8 p.m. Thursday on Ch. 50. Originally 93 minutes. TV time slot: 130 minutes.

This is dangerous. This is a well-made movie that almost convinces you that its perverse point of view is acceptable. Charles Bronson plays a man whose wife is raped and killed and his daughter raped by a gang of goons. He sets out to be a one-man vigilante force determined to rid the streets of vermin. This was made many years before Bernard Goez became a public hero, but the mentality is the same. Bronson is a good actor who makes the most of dreadful material. Here the material is better than that and he goes with it. But the message is all wrong and never seriously questioned. An interesting look at urban paranoia, but take with a heavy dose of salt.

Rating: \$3.80.

"Ritual and Incantations" by Hale Smith, was played by the DSO in 1976, two years after its composition by the contemporary American composer.

While this work may convey a message to many people who are more knowledgeable than myself, it failed to evoke any enthusiasm in some of the performance was on my part. One thing that I noticed during the performance was some of the violin players fumbling among the pages, stylized and lifeless. The passion seems empty, the anger trumped up. Even bad productions — and this one is more un-good than bad — are sometimes saved by a sense of shared enthusiasm and shared emanating from the cast. But if it is there, it isn't clearly evident.

Rating: \$2.50.

Schumann symphony sparkles

Many events last week were clouded by the ill-fated Challenger shuttle flight. The Detroit Symphony Orchestra (DSO) concert was dedicated to the memory of the seven crew members who perished on the mission.

This was marked by performing the National Anthem at the beginning of the program. Other than that, all items on the program were performed as scheduled.

The program items ranged from the unfamiliar to the extremely appealing and popular and the impact generated in this performance seems to have been closely matched by their establishment in the repertoire.

The opening work, "Ritual and Incantations" by Hale Smith, was played by the DSO in 1976, two years after its composition by the contemporary American composer.

While this work may convey a message to many people who are more knowledgeable than myself, it failed to evoke any enthusiasm in some of the performance was on my part. One thing that I noticed during the performance was some of the violin players fumbling among the pages,

seemingly unsure of the correct page. But for those who prefer to listen with their eyes closed, this wouldn't have made any difference.

THE SOLO work on the program was the rarely performed Concerto for Cello and Orchestra in D Minor by Lalo. Austrian-born cellist Heinrich Schiff made his DSO debut with this performance. Schiff, who had appeared with leading orchestras in this country and in Europe, is a capable musician both artistically and technically.

The one serious flaw in this performance, however, was the impression that Schiff was in a world unto himself, completely detached from his surroundings. This was primarily caused by the extremely limited intensity and projection of his tone. The work itself, be sure, is not as inspired as the Symphonie Espagnole, the single work for which Lalo is recognized by many.

However, a more convincing performance would have emphasized its strengths, which are numerous. Even though Maestro Herbig kept the orchestra out of the soloist's way to the extent



Avigdor Zoromp

possible, Schiff's approach would have been more suitable for a small chamber setting.

The most impressive part of the program by far was in the Schumann Symphony No. 3, the "Rhenish." While this work was unquestionably the closest to Herbig's "home territory," it also brought forth the best effort on behalf of the orchestra. There was more than technical cleanliness and good coordination. There was an impressively clear depiction of the scenery that inspired the title of the work in the second movement.

BUT EVEN the less prominent pieces got their share of attention. The

meticulous counterpoint in the fourth movement, for example, alerted the listener to its hidden treasures.

In a routine performance, this movement is easily overlooked, which is a main reason that one fails to realize that there are five movements in this symphony, rather than the traditional four. The final movement, performed at a slightly faster tempo than average, proved to be most uplifting.

Herbig will be the conductor this week as well, with a program consisting of works by Britten, Prokofiev and Beethoven. Shimo Mizui will be the soloist in Prokofiev's Violin Concerto No. 2.

Lifeless acting slows 'Picnic'

Performances of William Inge's "Picnic," presented by the Plymouth Theatre Guild and directed by Manfred Heuser, continue at 8 p.m. Friday-Saturday at Central Middle School in Plymouth. For ticket information, call the box office at 455-5263 or 261-2875.

By Gay Zieger
special writer

The Plymouth Theatre Guild's misprinted ticket for its production of "Picnic" did not bother me, I feared. By midway through the evening, I decided that either the playwright was William Inge or the name change was by court order. This is not drama at its apex.

Much of the acting is

stylized and lifeless. The passion seems empty, the anger trumped up. Even bad productions — and this one is more un-good than bad — are sometimes saved by a sense of shared enthusiasm and shared emanating from the cast. But if it is there, it isn't clearly evident.

Despite rather substantial flaws, the production does manage to produce often enough.

Pat Gresock is alarmingly grating as an overbearing mother who tries to orchestrate her children's lives in the

hope that theirs will be better than hers. She doesn't miss a trick — and she gains our sympathy at the end.

As an old-maid schoolteacher, Donna Eno conveys her inner agony well. As her reluctant intended bridegroom, Mike Gresock is plain good. His resignation to his fate affects his face, his stance, his tone of voice.

That the production is not disastrous makes it all the more distressing.

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