



second runs

Louise
Okrutsky

'La Bamba' rocks

Hunting to the video shack as a diversionary measure yielded a victory, a draw and a tactical error.

Victory came in the form of Lou Diamond Phillips' performance as 1950s' rocker Ritchie Valens in 1986's "La Bamba." He, along with Esai Morales as Valens' ne'er-do-well brother, overcame the dumb lines rife in rock-film biographies.

Anyone who can say, "My dreams are pure rock 'n' roll," without making you choke with laughter on the microwave popcorn deserves some kudos. Phillips plays the Mexican-American Valens as a gentle, straight-arrow type passionate about rock. He overcomes the movie's excesses.

And in the tradition of the rock movie genre, there are excesses. It can't be helped. To an extent, rock 'n' roll is excess. However, the film contains too many references to plane crashes and fear of flying. We know before we see the film that Valens died at 17 in the plane crash that also took the lives of Buddy Holly and the Big Bopper.

WE DON'T need lines like, "Stars don't fall out of the sky, do they?" uttered by Phillips. Birmingham's Marshall Crenshaw, doing a nice turn as doomed Buddy Holly, gets saddled with such dialogue as, "Because the sky belongs to the stars, right?" This uttered moments before the ill-fated plane takes off.

Morales as Valens' half-brother turns a potentially unlikable character into one we may not love but whom we do understand. Bobby is a man not without his own talents, who succumbs to his own demons. Phillips and Morales together also make a striking study of those who easily assimilate into the American mainstream and those who can't.

Muscle remains the heart of this movie and Los Lobos perform Valens' songs with style and spirit. Valens' original recordings were used because the masters were in such poor condition.

SR defines any home viewers to sit still through the performance scenes without getting on their feet and dancing around the living room floor.

It's not great art. It's flawed. But SR gives it a six out of 10. Go ahead, rent it. It's a good time.

NOT SUCH A GOOD time, and just about a draw in the video wars, is "Back to the Beach." Al-

though SR, on principle, generally advises against judging a video by its cover, in this case, it's justified. We're in for some major-league silliness here.

Those old surf/sweeties Frankie Avalon and Annette Funicello poke fun at their movie images. They may be the last people in America to get around to publicly laughing at the beach-party-blanket-wipe-out flicks.

Funicello wears dresses that match her luggage. Her kitchen shelves are stocked with peanut butter, Spam, ketchup and canned soups. Just your average family caught in a '60s time warp. Avalon's character evolves into one used car salesman joke. The kind of guy who buys his suits with reversible vests.

They're not the only ones laughing at their '60s selves. Don Adams delivers lines written expressly so he can use all of the catchphrases he popularized on the "Get Smart" series. They are all here, folks. "Missed by that much." "Would you believe?" And, of course, "Sorry about that."

Other cameo appearances include Connie Stevens, Edd "Kook-ee" Byrnes, Bob Denver and Alan Hale. It's an '80s cult hero that really kicks sand in everyone's face, though. Pee-wee Herman, the Geckmaster himself, gives the movie a much-needed lift with his rendition of "Surfin' Bird." Too bad it comes so close to the end of the film. That's a lot of silliness to wade through to reach an island of stylish humor.

Remember, this is 92 minutes devoted to giggling about beach movies. It would have been funnier if they lopped off about an hour's worth of film.

SR gives it a three out of 10. It has a few tolerable moments. Rent it as background noise for your next get-together. And don't forget — SR warned you.

Just as SR warns you about the video version of last fall's Howdy Doody television anniversary show.

To rent this is to realize the agony of video defeat. Instead of concentrating on showing clips of the beloved kids show, the producers evidently thought it would be cute to have Buffalo Bob stage another, new Howdy Doody Show.

With all due respect to Peanut Gallery alumnae, this is a show that reeks of the '50s. It's a period piece.

Revue keeps Oscar on mind

"An Evening with Oscar" continues through May 11, with two performances Saturdays, at 7:30 and 9:30 p.m., preceded by dinner at 5:30 and 7:30 p.m., at the Novi Hilton.

By Rob McCabe
Staff writer

The recent Academy Award ceremonies are still fresh in many of our minds, which makes the musical revue "An Evening with Oscar" especially timely.

Ensemble to perform

The Detroit Percussive Arts Ensemble will give a concert at 8 p.m. Saturday, April 30, at the Community Arts Auditorium on the Wayne State University campus. The ensemble, founded by Jerry LeDuff of Southfield, is an association of percussionists dedicated to cultivating an awareness of the percussive arts.

Special guest will be Marvin "Doc" Holladay, woodwinds. The ensemble will showcase original compositions and perform on a variety of instruments, including donno, berimbau, steel drums, cuica, timbales, balafon and gongs.

For tickets, \$7, call 684-2780 or write: Storytellers, P.O. Box 15405, Detroit 48215.

High-price auctions up

AP — In the trendy tourist town of Saugatuck, Mich., luxury condominiums with Jacuzzis and private boat slips went on this month in another of an expanding number of upscale real estate auctions.

Long perceived as an effective way to quickly sell foreclosed properties in distressed areas, the real estate auction is gaining momentum as a respected marketing tool for high-priced housing markets.

And though auctions are still most popular among sellers who are hard pressed to move properties fast, it's not uncommon to see luxury homes in desirable areas or attractive commercial properties on the auction block.

Saturday's auction at the East Shore Harbor Club in Saugatuck was the first of a two-part auction in southwest Michigan.

review

Director/producer Michael J. Klier and his company, Theatre Arts Productions Ltd., present this musical tribute to Academy-Award-winning songs, at the Novi Hilton. Klier has assembled some excellent performers for the heartfelt tribute to that ever-elusive gold statuette.

Singers Nancy Kolton, Kathy Blanchard and Paul Marquis are all consummate performers, whether performing as a trio or doing solos. Kolton, a TAP Ltd. regular, has a voice that can be both powerful and yet tender, as when she sings "With a Song in My Heart." She can be brassy, seductive and playful, which is

what makes a great singer.

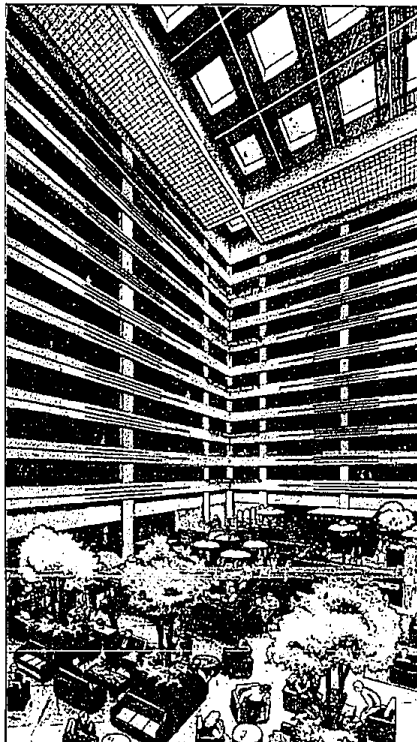
Soprano Kathy Blanchard is a cute, petite redhead whose voice runs the gamut from gentle, as shown in her rendition of "Three Coins in the Fountain," to a smoldering sexiness when performing "Take My Breath Away" from "Top Gun." Blanchard is equally at home sharing the stage with her fellow performers, yet I wish there were more solos for all the performers to sing.

TENOR PAUL MARQUIS' voice has a brilliant clarity in his solos, including "When You Wish Upon a Star" from Walt Disney's "Pinoc-

chio." He is equally at home singing duets or trios, even though paired with such volatile performers as Kolton and Blanchard.

Accompanist "Rebecca" is, as always, the life glue that holds the entire production together. With her expertise, she manages to keep the show flowing from start to finish. All the performers are energetic, trying to get the audience involved in singing along. In the "Name That Tune" section the winner gets free tickets, and in the particularly difficult ball game, participants guess the year a particular song won the Academy Award. The top contestant wins free movie passes and his or her very own Oscar.

Being and getting involved is the name of the game in Klier's past productions, and this one is no exception.



LET'S DO BRUNCH

11 am - 3 pm

Dine with us at Southfield's only Atrium Garden Restaurant. Featuring an array of delicious breakfast, lunch & dinner items plus a surprisingly sweet dessert table.

Reservations Recommended

350-2000

Adults \$11.95
12 & under \$5.95
10% AARP Discount

EMBASSY
SUITES
HOTEL

28100 Franklin Rd.
Southfield, Michigan

DINING & ENTERTAINMENT

On the Town

5 GOOD REASONS WHY YOU SHOULD EAT AT TRINI & CARMENS

1. Independent and family owned.
2. Centuries of knowledge and culture.
3. Serving this area for 25 years. We are now serving the children and grandchildren of our earliest customers.
4. We were the first with our own style Nacho- and copied by many.
5. We serve quality food!



TRINI & CARMENS
1715 N. Telegraph Rd.
332-6851



LA FAMILIA Martinez
848 Woodward Ave.
338-8477



Pearl's Garden

Serving the Finest in
Chinese & American Cuisine

Luncheons • Dinners • Carry Out Orders
Szechuan and Mandarin
Open 7 days a Week

Mon.-Thurs. 11 AM-10 PM • Friday 11 AM-11 PM
Sat. 12-11 PM • Sunday 12-10 PM

469 S. Woodward • Birmingham

644-2913

STAR THEATRE of Flint
WHITING AUDITORIUM, BOX 1509
FLINT, MICHIGAN 48502



Weeks of June 14 and June 28
THE NEW
MITZI GAYNOR
SHOW
SINGERS, DANCERS, FULL ORCHESTRA

Weeks of July 5 through July 17
THE TAP DANCING DELIGHT
42nd STREET
FULL BROADWAY CAST

Weeks of July 19 through July 31
THE BROADWAY MUSICAL ROMP
MY ONE AND ONLY

Weeks of Aug. 2 through Aug. 14
AMITA GILLETTE, JANE KEAN, BOBBY GOODMAN, VIRGINIA GRAHAM, JULIE NEWMAN, VYONNE DE CARLO,
MARIAUX HENRIWAY

The Hilarious Comedy
"THE WOMEN"
35 WOMEN — NO MEN!!!

Weeks of Aug. 16 through Aug. 28
PETER MARSHALL
— in the riotous musical —
La Cage Aux Folles

Weeks of Sept. 6 through Sept. 18
RON RAINES & SUSAN POWELL
in Sigmund Romberg's musical
THE DESERT SONG

SEASON TICKETS
ALL 6 SHOWS... \$62.50
NEW TWO WEEK POLICY
PROVIDES CHOICE LOCATIONS

Performances: Prices:
Tues, Wed, Thurs. All Seats \$17.50
Fri. & Sat. 8:30 pm On Sale April 16
Sun, Eve. 7:30 pm Use VISA or
MasterCard for
Sun. 2:15 pm \$4.00 tickets.

313-239-1464

WYNDHAM BLOSSOMS IN NOVI



The newest bloom in Wyndham's collection of Garden Hotels is now open.

The Wyndham Novi. Come and experience the warm hospitality and landscaped surroundings that have become a Wyndham Garden Hotel hallmark.

Located on the southeast corner of I-96 and Novi Road, the intimate new Wyndham Garden Hotel is designed with the corporate traveler in mind, yet offers a perfect getaway for those seeking a relaxing weekend.

There are 152 beautifully appointed guest rooms including 16 suites and executive parlors, 2,100 square feet of meeting space to accommodate up to 175, and an indoor swimming pool

with sauna and whirlpool. Adjacent to the hotel, all guests enjoy complimentary access to one of the most extensive health club facilities in metropolitan Detroit. For breakfast, lunch or dinner, our cafe restaurant deliciously fits the bill, and our casual lobby bar and library let you relax in comfort and style.



WYNDHAM NOVI

A TRAMMELL CROW GARDEN HOTEL

For reservations call (313) 544-8888
US 800-822-4283 • CANADA 800-651-4283

Wyndham Garden Hotels Atlanta Chicago Dallas Detroit