



Bruce Campbell as Ash, the hero and sole survivor of the "Evil Dead" saga, is transported back through time to medieval England in the film's latest sequel.

'Evil Dead III: Sam's baaack with his army

By Evelyn Lossa
Special Writer

FANS OF THE "EVIL DEAD" films anxiously awaiting the sequel to the two previous thrillers, rest assured that director Sam Raimi is hard at work. Raimi has been shooting "Army of Darkness" ("Evil Dead III") on Warner Bros. special effects lot. But a warning for those with less than iron nerves: this realistic confrontation with the dark side may cause nerves to melt as it transforms nightmares into reality.

Part three continues where part two left off. After reciting a phrase from the ancient book, bound in human flesh and inked in blood, Ash (Bruce Campbell), the hero and sole survivor of the "Evil Dead" saga, has been transported back through time.

He passes into another dimension — medieval England — when this Great Evil Force last stalked the earth in its search for human souls on which to prey.

King Arthur has his Excalibur. Ash has his chain saw, double-barreled shotgun and a 1973 Olds Delta 88. A blacksmith later assists Ash in replacing his severed hand with a gauntlet. Working together, they make modifications to the Olds, creating the "death coaster." Move over, Batmobile!

The movie doesn't depend on gruesome special effects; Raimi gives us more. He deals with themes that relate to Good versus Evil — power, succession, revenge and deception. To this, Raimi adds a personal touch, his speciality. He takes us over the edge. He creeps into a part of our nightmares we try to avoid — its darkest corner, the Terror Zone.

Director Sam Raimi checks the camera angle of a scene from his second "Evil Dead" sequel, titled "The Army of Darkness."

FORMER MICHIGAN writer/director Raimi has come a long way. His earliest film production days began at age 12, making Super-8 movies to entertain friends in his home. Recently, Raimi reached success with last summer's box office smash, "Darkman."

Raimi's lugubrious wit and unique cinematic style is having an increasing influence on Hollywood's new movies.

Having seen Raimi at work, both in the past and the present, I recall a time, when he filmed a scene in my father's West Bloomfield store. He was instructing one of his friends in the art of properly hanging from a meat hook.

Even back then, Raimi — like Dracula prototype Vlad the Impaler — knew there was an art to inflicting terror. Vlad inflicted terror physically, Raimi psychologically.

Raimi wanted to slither into the darkest corners of the mind, that sacred, unthinkable spot where, under lock and key, we try to forget our scariest nightmares. This technique can't be learned in school. It must be experienced in the mind, by searching our deepest fears and opening those doors of darkness.

WHEN "EVIL DEAD" was released in 1983, its innovative camera angles, gushing blood and exploding limbs helped Raimi gain recognition at film festivals in Chicago, New York and Ann Arbor. Acclaimed at the Cannes Film Festival, the movie won awards for both special effects and horror.

Stephen King called it "the most ferociously original horror film of the year."

Please turn to Page 5

J.C. Whitelaw: A life after Can

By Larry O'Connor
Staff Writer

In the dust of fractured dreams, disintegrated love and the dissolution of a band, John Campbell Whitelaw has made a rather buoyant album.

Which in itself is remarkable feat, considering the Birmingham resident completed "Out of the Ash Can," in a time when most couldn't lift their heads from the pillows in despair.

Not only did his group, Ash Can VanGogh, break up last year, the three-year engagement to his fiancée also dissolved. When conducting his personal inventory, Whitelaw even marvels at it all.

"Here I'd lost my best friends, I'd lost my band and I lost my fiancée," said Whitelaw, 25, who was one of the leaders of Ash Can VanGogh. "It was a real emotional time for me. It was like going into the studio without these (his two hands).

"But I realized not only did I still have my two hands, they were two very big hands."

The composition of "Out of the Ash Can" certainly belies the personal turmoil Whitelaw endured during its recording. Most of the vibrant folk-rock numbers possess an upbeat tingle, relying on a mantle of catchy riffs and indelible hooks.

Upon closer inspection beneath the veneer of Whitelaw's pop sensibilities, though, the hurt is revealed. He carries no torches, nor does he wallow in his misery.

BUT THROUGH lyrical references to abandonment ("Don't Wake Me Up"), broken hearts ("Without It") and stolen souls ("Autumn Has My Heart"), the shards of unfulfillment cut against the rosy soundscapes.

Whitelaw said "Out of the Ash Can" is not so much a testament of his pain, but a cathartic exercise. Though so emotional were some of the numbers, he found himself crying when recording them in his Birmingham studio, "The Barn."

More so, Whitelaw sees the 12-song effort as furthering the musical



For John Campbell Whitelaw, his latest album, "Out of the Ash Can," proves that there can be a life after the demise of Ash Can VanGogh.

vision he shared with Ash Can VanGogh, whose folk-rock sound had made considerable inroads in this area.

"We were three writers (Billy Brandt, Mary McGuire and Whitelaw) who worked really well together," he said. "When it came down to choosing material is where

we had problems. I wanted to go for the big enchilada.

Folk rock is definitely in my heart. I always wanted to make this record with Ash Can. I needed to make this record. I needed to close the door."

Some of the songs were written while Whitelaw was with Ash Can

VanGogh. Brandt and McGuire are given songwriting credits on "Under the Sun," "Twilight's Witch" and "Let it Shine" as well as perform on some of the numbers.

WHITELAW SAID band members still communicate after the break up, which occurred Jan. 11, 1991. "There's a weirdness," he said "but no bitterness."

In the realization he could do it alone, Whitelaw found a new support cast. He credits the production work of Dennis Forbes and mixing done by Gerard Smerek for turning the eight-track production into a viable, seemingly effortless release.

Whitelaw admits there was a bit of trepidation entering the studio a few weeks after the band's demise. Once he cut "Without It" with Jill Jack on back-up vocals, the worries quickly disappeared.

He's always had unshakable faith in his songwriting, which is inspired largely by emotion and somewhat by the peculiar.

On what was behind the soft acoustic instrumental "Roscoe," Whitelaw describes a red, copper like sunset he saw once looking out a window in Scotland. Thinking that was the sole inspiration for the number, he adds that it was the same shade as friend's pasta sauce. The jaunty, hopeful, "Rainbows (The Telegram Song)" came about while sitting in LaGuardia Airport in New York.

THESE LIGHTHEARTED numbers are designed to provide balance to "Out of the Ash Can," which is available at some area record outlets including Sam's Jams. Whitelaw intends to market the independent release to major labels for wider distribution.

"I went through a ton of realization, not only on a personal level, but a musical level and a spiritual level," Whitelaw said. "It was very enlightening. It's like I put a lid on it, put a bow on the package."

John Campbell Whitelaw performs Saturdays at Mr. B's, Woodlawn and Rochester roads. *Top* For information, call 689-6070.

REVIEW

A FIST FULL OF CHAOS — various artists

When coming in contact with a compilation release, there are three things certain to authenticate the effort: A. There will be at least one remarkably produced number that alone will make the release worthwhile; B. Bands will unknowingly betray a wide variety of mainline influences.

"A Fist Full of Chaos" connects on both counts. Some 15 groups burn through 16 songs with unfettered zeal (The Generals get the honors of having two tracks "Goodbye" and "Rock N' Roll All Nite" here).

Although the groups are quite diverse in musical styles (Mellow power pop, rockability and techno are among those represented), they almost all share the bond of having their sounds rever-

berate off the red brick walls of Finney's Pub — a haven for some of the Midwest's more-motivated, creative outfits. Sue Summers of Chaos Network deserves a heap of overdue credit for making it one of the most vibrant scenes in the area.

Where to begin? How about the sensually languid offering from Vavoom, "Detroit"? Angie Hanna's voice oozes with indifference.

"It's a cool place/but it's not as cool as Detroit. It's a scary place/but it's not as scary as Detroit," sings Hanna, a model of apathy. This feeling of corresponds with some scraping guitar and hypnotic bass lines that drip closely to the lurid realm of Iggy and the Stooges' "I Wanna Be Your Dog."

While Vavoom exercise some restraint, others here plow away with laudable amounts of passion. The Culture Bandits, a formidable trio, tear through their track "You're Someone Else" with enough unbridled energy to construct a railroad.

Another threesome by way of Alma, Mich., Instant Zoo checks in with another example of pure rawness succeeding with the alluring "Mile Marker 92."

Those taking a shine to immaculate pop sensibilities will find Trust Fund's contribution, "Try Again," an indelible, compact piece of songwriting while the immediacy of Biggie Than Mass "White Rice on Demand" wants to burst through the speakers — a definite highlight in the package.

Of the techno outfits who contribute cuts here, Skinsore's "Soul at Zero (Water into Wine Mix)" manages to find a happy medium between modern gadgetry and emotional rendering. By contrast, Wrath of Christian delves more towards the darker, ominous realm with "Thrill Me."

If a particular number doesn't impress you, at least the way the band tackle its craft will.

— Larry O'Connor

IN CONCERT

Monday Jan. 27

● **Paradise Valley Jazz Jam Session**
Alvin, 5756 Cass, across from Wayne State University, Detroit.
823-2255

● **Skyles Band**
Rick's Cafe, 611 Church, Ann Arbor.
996-2747

● **Modern Frontier**
Cross Street Station, 511 W. Cross, Ypsilanti.
485-5050

Tuesday Jan. 28

● **Chisel Bros. featuring Thornella Davis**
Alvin, 5756 Cass, across from Wayne State University, Detroit.
823-2255

● **Sineasticks**
With Sinatras at Blind Pig, 208 S. First, Ann Arbor.
996-8355

● **YMI**
Rick's Cafe, 611 Church, Ann Arbor.
996-2747

Wednesday Jan. 29

● **Alex Chilton**
Blind Pig, 208 S. First, Ann Arbor.
996-8355

● **3rd Estate**
Rick's Cafe, 611 Church, Ann Arbor.
996-2747

● **Missionary Stew**
Premier Nightclub, 35970 Vandyke, Sterling Heights.
254-7827

● **Crowbar Hotel**
Sully's, 4758 Greenfield, between Michigan Avenue and Ford Road, Dearborn.
846-1920

Thursday Jan. 30

● **Mutant Press**
Alvin, 5756 Cass, across from Wayne State University, Detroit.
823-2255

● **Tequila Mocking Birds**
Blind Pig, 208 S. First, Ann Arbor.
996-8355

● **The Altie**
Rick's Cafe, 611 Church, Ann Arbor.
996-2747

● **On-XYZ**
Cross Street Station, 511 W. Cross, Ypsilanti.
485-5050

● **Missionary Stew**
With Red C at 3-D Club, 1815 N. Main, Royal Oak.
996-8355

● **Love Hammer**
Paycheck's Lounge, 2932 Canfield, Hamtramck.
874-2254

Friday Jan. 31

● **WAYN Bonelli**
With Hope Orchestra, Red C, Fun Club, Trust Fund, Mrs. Jones and Weeping Rachel at Alvin, 5756 Cass, across from Wayne State University, Detroit.
823-2255

● **Swervedriver**
With Poster Children at St. Andrew's Hall, 431 Congress, Detroit.
961-3117

● **Bootsy X and the Lovemasters**



Poster Children — Jim, Bob, Rose and Rick — will perform with Swervedriver at St. Andrew's Hall in Detroit Friday, Jan. 31.

Paycheck's Lounge, 2932 Canfield, Hamtramck.
874-2254

● **Rare Earth**
Sully's, 4758 Greenfield, Dearborn.
846-1920

● **Deppare and Choosers**
With Mother Superior at Lil's 21, 2930 Jacob, Hamtramck.
875-6353

● **Sun Messengers**
Blind Pig, 208 S. First, Ann Arbor.
996-8355

● **Chisel Brothers**
Moley Dick's, 5452 Schaefer, Dearborn.
581-3650

Please turn to Page 5