

Film captures common man

Reviewed by
ROBERT KIPPER

Portraying a great man on the screen, or at least one with great vision or ambition, is easier than portraying a common man.

Great men are extraordinary and unlike those around them. Actors can play them this way, extending their own talent and individuality to show audiences why the character is special.

Average people—those who would be lost in a crowd—present a different challenge. To prepare for these parts actors must draw from the common parts of their own lives. They can't read "Hamlet" to prepare; they must ride subways or drink in bars or shop during rush hour.

MANY OF the greatest actors have difficulty playing average men, and the explanation is simple. They probably wouldn't be actors if they were like everyone else. Imagine Burton or Tracy or Olivier playing a bus driver or an average soldier.

Part of the problem with the movies is they are preoccupied with the extraordinary and pretty clumsy about showing common people and common problems. Movies are usually just escapism because we usually find just strangers on the screen.

In "The Last Detail," Jack Nicholson plays an average sailor. His triumph is that when he grins or swears or drinks, he grins, swears and drinks like every sailor on leave you have ever known or imagined.

THE MOVIE is good. It was directed by Hal Ashby, whose last film, "Harold and Maude," was overlooked by just about everyone except Detroit-area moviegoers.

The plot is functional. It's about two sailors, escorting a third to military prison, who decide to show their captive a good time before locking him up. The captive is an inexperienced, small town type. He is led through a series of bars and brothels by companions who turn his trip to prison into something of an eye-opening liberty.

But there is really no reason to see "The Last Detail" except for the performance of Nicholson.

NICHOLSON's specialty is the common man. Even his best performance, as Bobby in "Five Easy Pieces," was a common man denying what was special about himself. Among movie chiefs, Nicholson is content and best at being an Indian.

His sailor in "The Last Detail" is watched and appreciated out of recognition. We don't need to get to know him better; we know him too well already.

Whether he's bluffing a bartender, or playing tough guy on the street or telling the same tired joke—we've seen it all before.

"WE AREN'T surprised when he provokes a fight with a group of marines. When he takes off his shirt, we expect to find those stupid tattoos on his chest. And during the party scene, when all he knows to talk about is the navy, that too is predictable and even charming.

The difference is this time we get involved with these actions on the

screen. Nicholson has managed to readjust our focus, to involve us with a simple man and how he reacts in more or less everyday situations.

Best of all, Nicholson never condescends. He plays the sailor honestly, with respect, so the sailor is never the ridiculous overdrawn character that lesser actors might make him.

HIS CHARACTER confronts no

great dilemmas in "The Last Detail." How to rationalize turning a new

found buddy over to prison authorities or how to make him comfortable during his first visit to a brothel are about the deepest things he wrestles in his mind.

Yet Nicholson involves us with these decisions and makes them viable dramatically. It is gratifying that even the Hollywood Academy has recognized his achievement, nominating Nicholson as one of the five best actors of the year.



AROUND TOWN

DINING and ENTERTAINMENT GUIDE

Blues, jazz at gallery

Blues/folk and jazz come to the Strata Concert Gallery when the Kenn Cox Trio and David and Roselyn share a double bill Friday and Saturday.

David and Roselyn both sing and play guitars and rhythm instruments. Their music, which includes original compositions, is predominantly blues-oriented and includes folk, rock and jazz forms.

Kenn Cox, one of the leading piano players in the metropolitan area, is currently featured with the Contemporary Jazz Quintet.

GALLERY HOURS for Friday and Saturday are 9:30 p.m. to 2 a.m. Tickets are available at the door.

The David and Roselyn/Kenn Cox Trio performance is the third in the Jazz in Detroit '74 series, which is a presentation of Allied Artists Association of America (a Michigan non-profit corporation), with the support of the Michigan Council for the Arts.

For further information, contact Krista English at 631-1066 or 865-0537.

SIGN OF EXCELLENCE FOR ELEGANCE IN DINING

The Sussex House

SERVING ONLY U.S.D.A. PRIME BEEF

Gracious Dining & Cocktails in a luxurious Atmosphere

BUSINESSMEN'S LUNCHEONS

FEATURING A FASHION SHOW EVERY FRIDAY AT NOON

MON.-SAT. Your Host: JIMMY B. JARDACK

19701 W. Twelve Mile Road just East of Evergreen, Southfield 352-2233

Shalea Inn

Romantic and Medieval Atmosphere

Specializing in fresh seafood

Wine by bottle or 1/2 bottle

Serving LUNCHEONS, DINNERS, COCKTAILS

Features in FORD TIMES For FAMOUS EATING PLACES in '72 & HOLIDAY MAGAZINE

FASHION SHOW Every Tuesday By CHARISMA 12:15 to 1:45

Reservations: UL 2-3410 3315 Auburn Road Auburn Heights

The Conquistador Lounge

NOW APPEARING

TUES-WED-THURS 6PM to 7PM and 8:30PM to MIDNIGHT

Bob Allison AT THE PIANO

"ASK YOUR NEIGHBOR" HOST

See you tonight at

Holiday Inn OF TROY

I-75 at Rochester Road • 689-7500

Lettermen

WCAR PRESENTS Thurs., March 14 8:00 P.M. FORD AUDITORIUM

Tickets: \$6.50, \$5.00, \$4.50

Available at Ford Auditorium Box Office

FOR MAIL ORDERS: Send certified check or money order with stamped self-addressed envelope to FORD AUDITORIUM BOX OFFICE, 20 Audition Dr., Det., Mich. 48226

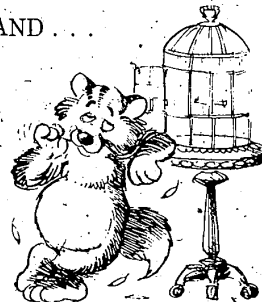
Racism explored

"I am brainwashed," they chant. "I am real, death real, death real." Dressed in black and white, faces painted half black—half white, they represent the harshness and rigidity of race roles in America.

"Brainwash," written, produced, and performed by New Charter College's Experimental Theater, uses dance, dialogue and music to explore the "cyclical nature" of racism.

Oakland University's New Charter College was one of eight college and university theater groups represented in the first annual University of Michigan Invitational Festival of Experimental Theater held in Ann Arbor this past weekend.

ALL OVER OAKLAND



THE PEOPLE WHO GO TO TED'S ARE GETTING PRETTY FED-UP.

They're relaxing, and laughing and making merry seven nights a week with the most delightful entertainment, smoothest cocktails and finest dining around. And Ted's is right near by, where they live. Come on out and get fed up at Ted's.

Ted's

Woodward & Square Lake Road in Bloomfield Hills 644-7764



ORDINARY SAILOR
Jack Nicholson's Oscar-nominated role in "The Last Detail"

Guild hosts fashion show

Mount Carmel Guild will host a fashion show luncheon at 11 a.m. March 13 at the Somerset Inn, Troy.

Guild members will model fashions from the shop of Claire Pearone of Somerset Mall.

Proceeds from the annual luncheon are designated for the new pledge the guild has undertaken. Members have agreed to donate \$100,000 over a five-year period to Mt. Carmel Merch

Hospital, Detroit, for the development of the intensive care facilities of the hospital.

THE GUILD recently has completed a five year commitment to the hospital kidney center with a total donation of \$100,000.

Guests are welcome to attend the luncheon. For reservations contact Mrs. Marie Petters, 864-5563.

Enjoy a family style buffet...

All you can eat at Taylor's Town House

Now open Sundays 1 P.M. to 8 P.M.

\$3.25 includes beverage Children under 7 — \$2.50

For your evening dancing pleasure the TERRY ALAN TRIO Tuesday thru Saturday Taylor's also features an extra host buffet 5:30 p.m. to 8:30 p.m.

Need a place to have a party? Try us.

Taylor's Town House

DINING DANCING COCKTAILS

30843 PLYMOUTH ROAD 2 Blocks E. of Merriam LIVONIA



SUNDAYS WE'RE OPEN

3 p.m.-10 p.m.

A Perfect Time for the Family TO SHARE DINNER

DINNERS from \$3.75

Special Prices for the Children

WHAT MAKES US POPULAR?

SIMPLY... SERVICE & FOOD SECOND TO NONE... A PRETENTIOUS ATMOSPHERE WITH UN- PRETENTIOUS PRICES... ALL YOU CAN EAT SALAD BAR WITH 20 ITEMS (FREE WITH EVERY ENTREE)

Cordoba

7 MILE & MIDDLEBELT

OPEN SUNDAYS • 477-2686

Across From Livonia Mall.

Banquet Facilities up to 200

MICHIGAN BANKAMERICARD

PLUS FOR MAJOR PURCHASES

Charge major household purchases with your present Michigan Bank-Americard!

MICHIGAN NATIONAL BANK

THE SATURDAY BANK. OPEN MON. THRU SAT. 9:30 A.M. TO 4:30 P.M.