



By PATRICIA BEACH SMITH

Without getting deeply into the business about whether or not good theater makes good films, one must say that the American Film Theatre's first presentation of the new season "In Celebration" is not a brilliant piece of motion picture making.

Despite this, it is a successful piece of theater respectfully submitted and transposed onto film for an audience which hopefully will understand this medium of transcription.

The work is a rare study in contrasts among family members, siblings as well as parents and the problems (or lack of) which torment them—all of which surface during a weekend visit by the three sons in celebration of their mother's birthday.

It is phenomenally well written by playwright David Storey.

WHAT APPEARS as a simple North-of-England industrial environment turns out to be one which instead fomented anger, hatred and rejection which still exists in the minds of the three sons.

Alan Bates plays the lawyer son who has switched to art as a vocation.

"Your wife must be worried sick," his worried-sick mother tells him, and his reply is to ask her what she thinks he paints.

"You probably think I paint nude women, or even worse, nude young men," he says.

HE SAYS of his successful brother that he measures England in terms of



the number of motorcars it can make and support. The third brother is silent, introspective and full of unresolved guilt.

The film deals in the sort of honesty (not the smoker kind) which is seldom seen. It is uncomfortable without respite as the sons verbally attack each other and their parents.

It shows base cruelty without any sort of affection and yet, like many family tiffs, when the visit ends, people say good-bye the way they always would have.

Bates plays the antagonist in a play where there is no protagonist. The acting throughout is sincere and splendid

which makes up for any lack in the cinematic areas.

AT ONE POINT Bates says of his and his brothers' work, "The sort of work he's educated us to is nothing more than pastimes—a soulless stirring of the pot."

In this sentence Storey sums up part of the problems the children of the automated age face. His language is precise, cutting, precious and credible in an era when the theater suffers from four-letter-itis.

This film will play Monday and Tuesday only at matinee and evening performances at the Studio 8, Old Orchard, Studio 4, Abbey and Americana Theatres.

The rest of the APT season will include Jean Genet's "The Maids" which will star Glenda Jackson and Susannah York. Maximilian Schell in "The Man in the Glass Booth", Topol in Bertolt Brecht's "Galileo" and Jacques Breil as himself with three others in his "Jacques Breil is Alive and Well and Living in Paris."

The success of this year's APT season seems to be riding on highly successful and literate pieces of theater.

It is possible to believe, from clips that I have seen on the series, that "Galileo" and "Jacques Breil" will transcend their ultimate place in the theater and become good cinema as well.

Only time will tell. Season tickets are still available at participating theaters.

—PAT SMITH



Playboy attraction

The Detroit Playboy Club introduces Linda Clifford & The Encounter to Detroit audiences beginning Monday through Feb. 1. The group is comprised of four musicians and one lead singer. Linda Clifford, Linda was Miss New York State while living in New York. Their instrumentation consists of organ, piano, bass, guitar and drums. Three of the five people sing. They have worked top show rooms from coast to coast including the prestigious Tropicana Hotel in Las Vegas. Linda is now recording on the Custom Record Label with such hit songs as "After Loving You."

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