



Dave (Dennis Christopher) pretends to be Italian, much to the consternation of his father (Paul Dooley).



'Breaking Away,' about growing up, touches the heart

"Breaking Away" (PG) is about four teenage boys approaching manhood in Bloomington, Ind.; it's about what it feels like to grow up as an outsider in your own home town, and it's about a bicycle race. It's a bright, exhilarating film that will pedal itself right into your hearts.

The story was written by Steve Tesich, an Indiana University graduate who came to Hollywood via Broadway. This probably accounts for the strong sense of place and the feeling of real people expressing themselves in sincere and natural ways.

"Breaking Away" has the advantage of fresh faces in its youthful principals and a fresh locale. The film was shot in and around the campus of Indiana University in Bloomington, with its lush foliage and rolling hills.

The four teenagers — Dave (Dennis Christopher), Mike (Dennis Quaid), Moolcher (Jackie Earle Haley) and Cyril (Daniel Stern) — make a well-meshed ensemble as we see them loafing their way through their first summer as high school graduates.

THEIR CAMERADERIE is reinforced by their resentment of the college students and the campus life from which they are excluded. But the "all for one, one for all" spirit fades as each boy begins to think about himself and what he is going to do with his life. The boys, and here the film focuses on idealistic Dave, also must come to terms with their parents.

Paul Dooley is excellent as Dave's father, bewildered by his son's infatuation with the Italian bicycle racing team. To emulate his idols, Dave Italianizes everything around him. He listens to Italian opera; he changes the cat's name from Jake to Fellini; he persuades his mother (Barbara Barrie) to serve zucchini and pasta for dinner; and he acquires an emotional "Italian" temperament.

All this drives his father crazy and tests his mother's peace-making abilities. "Can't be just a little miserable?" his father asks. "I was miserable when I was his age." The warm, humorous portrayal of Dave's home life, accomplished without patronizing the parents or making them appear stupid, is one of the film's major assets.

Within a wider social context, the most interesting relationship developed in the film is that between the university students and the "townies."

At Bloomington, they are called "cutters," apparently because so many locals worked in the limestone quarries. (University of Michigan has the Indiana limestone — note Angell Hall — but not the cutters. Everybody knows that the townies of Ann Arbor either own apartments or bookstores.)

TENSION ARISES from the schism and hostility between the cutters and the students. The social friction, the flagging unity among the four friends, and the misunderstanding between Dave and his parents are all brought to a head when the boys, representing the town, are invited to participate against the college teams in the Little 500 Bicycle Race, a major sporting event of the academic year.

Peter Yates, who directed the memorable car chase in "Dullitt," demonstrates the same force and vitality in directing the high-gear climax of "Breaking Away," one of the best films of the summer and the year.



Katherine (Robyn Douglass) is a Midwestern coed infatuated with a visiting "Italian" bicyclist.

Virgil Fox lights up J.S. Bach

By JIM WINDELL

Review

Just in case you can't recognize classical organ, or don't know the difference between a Bach fugue and a Joplin rag, you don't have to worry.

At a Virgil Fox concert the words illuminated on the large screen over the organ spelled it out: Heavy Organ.

That meant that the master of the classical organ, the man who got tired of waiting for the populace to come to church to listen to Bach played from the obscurity and dusty safety of an organ loft, was going to be at it again.

What he was at Wednesday night at Meadow Brook Music Festival was basically what he has been at for some 53 years. That is, playing his beloved Johann Sebastian Bach and whatever other classical or non-classical music strikes his melodramatic fancy.

VIRGIL FOX teamed up with David Snyder who manipulates the Revelation light show designed especially for Fox and his organ music. The evening brought out people who could take their classics straight or with a bit of sugar.

Not that Fox's renditions of pieces like Bach's "Passacaglia and Fugue in C Minor" or "Abide With Us Lord Jesus" or even Joplin's "The Entertainer" are not well played. Quite the contrary. Fox remains the impeccable musician who evokes emotion and feeling in the handling of each song touched by his talented hands (and, with the organ,

his feet-also). Even the classical purist must admit this.

A look at the audience that night suggested this is not only the Detroit Symphony crowd. There were people there who normally do not attend the classical concerts. Organ lovers, to be sure, but not your dyed-in-the-wool symphony buff.

The reason is that Virgil Fox is box office. And he travels with a light show. That turns off many people who would otherwise flock to a concert heavy on Bach. But it does bring out the crowds to see this strange superstar.

Somewhere around 1970, Virgil Fox, sound musician and skilled organist, descended from the church organ loft and decided to take the music of J. S. Bach to the people. Adopting techniques used by rock bands, playing in places where Bach had never been heard before and with both unbounded enthusiasm and a humorous sense of theater, Fox proved himself an artful showman. Since then, he has filled concert- and sold album after album.

WITH FLASHY PAISLEY SPOTS

jacket and preachy, almost worshipful spoken introductions to each piece of music, Fox continued his missionary effort to make Bach comprehensible to people at Meadow Brook.

Backed by the swirling and kaleidoscopic colored lights of David Snyder, a nearly all-Bach program featured the intense and flamboyant Fox at a four-manual Allen electronic organ and 600 speakers.

If anyone in the audience doubted Fox's admission for Bach, the secret was out soon after he trotted on stage. "The greatest composer who ever lived!" he loudly and unmistakably proclaimed. He went on to say, letting the folks know some inside dope about the great master, "Bach felt everything."

With that explanation, the "Tocatta and Fugue in D Minor" began the program. Bach's face was projected on the screen, filling the background of the stage. A peaceful deep blue surrounded the portrait and as the music quickened, the color swarmed around, taking on brighter hues, becoming hotter.

Yellows and oranges turned to white. Finally, as the contrapuntal showpiece came to an end, the screen returned to the tranquil blue and Bach was back, apparently approving of the scene. No one knows Bach better than the man

who has just played the famous toccata.

From the toccata, the music ranged from the tender Bach of "Sheep May Safely Graze" to the dramatic Bach of "We Thank You God." In each piece, Fox proved himself more than a capable musician who emphasized the beauty and pulse of the music he played from memory and with graceful ease.

DEBUSSEY'S "Clair de Lune" was given a delicate interpretation that is delightfully attuned and in perfect synchrony with the sensitive light show that helped to free the imagination.

The evening's big production number was Bach's "Passacaglia," which received an introduction from Fox that was nearly as striking as the music: Fox literally pulled out all the stops as he produced a musical gem with exacting counterpoint and an emotional finish. At the end, lights burst on the screen and Virgil Fox and his organ were engulfed in whirling smoke.

That's theater. And it's incongruous. But Fox's people love it. Rising for a standing ovation, they demanded more. Fox quickly changed into a pink iridescent jacket, responded with three encore numbers. The last was "The Star Spangled Banner." That keeps the crowd on its feet.

No matter the theatrics, Virgil Fox means people listen to Johann Sebastian Bach and love it. To take a real entertainer.

Glimpses

NEW RELEASES

AMERICATHON (PG). Wild, but maybe not too wild, tale of giant telethon to erase the national debt as U.S. goes broke in 1928.

BEYOND THE POSEIDON ADVENTURE (PG). Sequel about the upended ship with adventurers after the "spoils" while more passengers are found wandering about. Can you believe it?

BLOODLINE (R). Relatives trying to bump off pharmaceutical heir who constitute a bitter pill in place version of Sydney Sheldon's best seller.

BREAKING AWAY (PG). Bicycle racing occupies four high school pals from Indiana who discover the graduate world in funny, touching story.

THE CONCORDE — AIRPORT '79

(PG). Latest entry in "Airport" series is the silliest yet. All-star cast can't save this.

DRACULA (R). A scary and very sensual remake of "Dracula" with Frank Langella in the title role he played on Broadway.

THE FRISCO KID (PG). Comic adventures of a rabbi (Gene Wilder) and a robber (Harrison Ford) as they cross the West to San Francisco in 1850.

GOLDENGLIM (PG). Susan Anton is a track star after Olympic gold in film that tries too hard with too many themes and finishes last.

JUST YOU AND ME, KID (PG). A comedy mainly tailored for George Burns, with Brooks Shields standing by as half of this young-old duo of delinquents.

MOONRAKER (PG). James Bond (Roger Moore) in space adventure with Lois Chiles for company and Richard Kiel (the metal-mouthed "Jaws") for challenge in most spectacular of the 007 films.

MORE AMERICAN GRAFFITI (PG). George Lucas's very successful continuation of "American Graffiti" examines the lives of seven of the original characters and their problems in the troubled '60s.

THE MUPPET MOVIE (G). Anyone who doesn't like this movie is probably in need of immediate CPR. A host of stars make cameo appearances but none outshines Jim Henson's laughable, lovable muppets as they head for Hollywood.

NORTH DALLAS FORTY (R). Fine performances from Nick Nolte and Mar-Davis as pro-football players in and how they are formed.

At 9 p.m., "Einstein's Universe" explores the noted physicist's great achievements. Pulsars, infra-red galaxies and cosmic rays are examined at 11 p.m. on "The Violent Universe."

Wednesday, Aug. 22 is Movie Night. The pioneer days of filmmaking will be featured at 8 p.m., on "When the Movies Were Young." At 9 p.m., "America at the Movies" looks at the American experience from scores of filmmakers. "Hollywood Musicals" at 11:30 p.m. returns with Gene Kelly and Frank Sinatra in "On the Town," a tale of three sailors on leave in New York City.

The late conductor Arthur Fiedler is

film that takes hard look at the commercialism of the game.

THE VILLAIN (PG). As slapstick as A Real Runner cartoon extended to 90-minute minutes with Ann-Margret, Kirk Douglas and Arnold Schwarzenegger, who is a cartoon.

UNIDENTIFIED FLYING ODDBALL (G). Lagging Disney comedy about Cap Kennedy engineer who gets laurched into Round Table days.

Based on Mark Twain's "A Connecticut Yankee in King Arthur's Court."

MOVIE RATING GUIDE

G General audiences admitted.

PG Parental guidance suggested. All ages admitted.

R Restricted. Adult must accompany person under 18.

X No one under 18 admitted.

TV fund-raiser offers different shows

Every evening offers something different — music, science films, comedy — during "Summerfest," Channel 58's 11-city awareness and fund-raising campaign, Friday, Aug. 7 — Tuesday, Aug. 28.

"Grand Ole Opry" returns to kick off this year's campaign. This two-part show, with stars like Minnie Pearl and Hank Snow, will be shown at 9 p.m. Friday, Aug. 7 and 24.

"Summerfest '79," a series of summer concerts from around the country, will feature the "Newport Jazz Festival at Saratoga" at 9 p.m. Saturday, Aug. 18. Guests include Dave Brubeck, Dizzy Gillespie, George Benson and B. B. King. At 9 p.m. Saturday, Aug. 25, the show features singers Charles

Aznavor and Jane Olivor, taped during their performance at Pine Knob.

More music will be presented on "American Pop: The Great Singers" Tuesday, Aug. 21 at 9 p.m. Host Tony Bennett's guests include Sarah Vaughan, Ethel Merman and Billy Eckstine.

"That Great American Gospel Sound" is featured Sunday, Aug. 19, at 10 p.m., when Tennessee Ernie Ford, Del's Reese and other salute America's gospel music tradition.

THE WONDERS of science are probed and explored on Science Night, Monday, Aug. 20. "The Restless Earth" at 7 p.m. looks at the phenomena of earthquakes, volcanoes and mountains

re-membered with the rebroadcast of "Just Call Me Maestro" Wednesday, Aug. 21, at 8 p.m. It's a candid, behind-the-scenes look at the master showman who mixed classical music with show tunes and brought it to all of the people. Also, Oscar-winning composer Henry Mancini joins Fielder Sunday, Aug. 26, at 8 p.m. in a repeat of "Evening at Pops."

It's wild and zany when the Monty Python gang reunite in the premiere of "The Pythons" Thursday, Aug. 23, at 11 p.m. This hour-long documentary observes the Pythons as they film their latest movie, "The Life of Brian" — a Biblical Epic.

DINING AND ENTERTAINMENT GUIDE

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