

Rocky (Sylvester Stallone) gets in shape to fight the champ again, with assistance from his aging manager Micky (Burgess Meredith) and trainer (Stuart K. Robinson).



Little excitement in 'Rocky' sequel except for finish

Predictably, Sylvester Stallone returns as the over-the-hill boxer Rocky Balboa who has a second shot at the championship in 'Rocky II' (PG).

Rocky Balboa who has a second shot at the championship in *Rocky II" (PC).

With him are all the principals who gave him trumendous support in the first film. These include Tails Shire, now as his wife Applere, Burt Young as his brother-in-law, Burgess Mercedith as his manager at trainer; and Carl Weathers as Apolio Greed, his formidable opponen:

"Rocky II" picks up at the conclusion of the first 15-round battle between the heavyweight champ (Weathers) and the Italian Stallion (Stallone) and proceeds for an hour and one-half that is rough, if not rocky.

The charisma of the Stallone personality and Rocky character, the rowly of speech and action and the imaginative episodes which vitalized the original (such as Rocky running beside Andrea at the ice-skating rink) are dulled or absent in the sequel.

The major portion of this film is an object lesson (not without merit, sut without sparkle) on how tough it is to get a good job without a high school diploma. Rocky, as befits this simple-minded character, freely spends his winnings from the championship fight. A new home, car, clothes and jewelry quickly bust his bank account. Big Rocky is out of cash just when there is a little Rocky on the way.

The opportunity of big bucks from television commercials fades when Rocky blows his lines because he can barely read. What's a fella to do?

Rocky's reduced to pushing a broom, emptying spit buckets at the

do?

Rocky's reduced to pushing a broom, emptying spit buckets at the gym and praying a lot. He may be down on his luck, but he still has his sweet nature, his religion and his family.

Incidentally, the little sulgegr, a precemie, was born with well-developed facial features and a head of hair that would stop a lawn mower. The sweat-stained scap opera sudses on: Rocky down to the lower depths; Rocky agonizing over his sick wife, Rocky with impaired vision, yet ready to risk his sight in a rematch; Rocky overcome with religious zeal; and finally, the old Rocky we recognize — training once again for the big fight.

zeal; and finally, the old rocky we recognize — usuming once agains the big flight. The last 40 minutes of "Rocky II" are the audience's reward for patience. Apollo and Rocky slug it, out in the ring in a stirring, exciting spectacle of raw force and courage. As before, it's a sequence with the power to grab an audience and evoke cheers and applicates.

But high school dropouts note, it's less painful to learn to read, and

Climpses

NEW RELEASES

ALIEN (B). Hair-raising, sci-fi horror film about alien life form that terrorizes the crew of a space ship.

BUTCH AND SUNDANCE: THE EARLY DAYS (PG). "Prequel" to the successful hit. Tom Berger and William Katt are paired off as the rascally robbers in their salad days.

DAWN OF THE DEAD (Unrated). George Romero's zombies are the ultimate consumers in this gory, satirical sequel to his cult classic "Night of the Living Dead".

THE DEER, HUNTER (R). An emotionally gripping and violent film about the lives of three friends from a small steel town as they are affected by the Vietnam war.

THE DREAMER (PG). Bowling version of the "Rocky" story. About as exciting as watching bowling on TV.

THE FIFTH MUNKETEER (PG). Your average swashbuckling tale with heroes, villains and court intrigue. Beau Bridges deftly handles dual role as nasty king and his noble twin.

HAIR (G). The counter culture musical of the "Sos, directed by Milos Forman, comes to the screen with amazing vitality and musical energy — if a decade late.

Forman, comes to the screen with amazing vitality and musical energy—if a decade late.

THE IN-LAWS (PG). Cornedy with Peter Falk and Alan Arkin as the near-relatives who not only plan a robbery but a couple of safe-cracking jobs as well.

THE LAST EMBRACE (B). Bizarre, tension-filled mystery is stylishly filmed, but burdened with hopelessly complicated plot.

THE LAST WAYE (PG). Offest mystery from Australia when lawyer (Richard Chamberlain) encounters the occult as he delves into aborigine culture.

ine culture.

A LITTLE ROMANCE (PG). Two talented young actors, Diane Land and Thelonios Bernard, in fresh, lighthearted love story set in Paris, Vero-

Thelonics Bernard, in fresh, lighthearted love story set in Paris, Verona and Venice.

LOVE AT FIRST BITE (PC). Dracula goes disco dancing in funny, contemporary version with George Hamilton.

MANHATTAN (R). The inhabitants are somewhat frayed, but the Big Apple looks glorious in Woody Alliers' witty peck at the pairings and partings among New York literati.

NORMA RAE (PC). Sally Field is outstanding in contemporary story of uniton organizing activities in southern textile mills.

MOVIE RATING CUIDE.

G. General audiences admitted.

PG. Parental Guidance suggested. All ages admitted.

R. Teistricted. Adult must accompany person under 18.

X. No one under 18 admitted.



Getting, By ETHEL SIMMONS

Teachers pursues own dream, at last

Many former students of Gene Branstrom, Seaholm High Sednot vocal music teacher, have gone on to exsic teacher, have gone on to exshow business. Two of them were featured in Thursday's Entertainday's Entertainday's Entertainday's Entertainday's Entertainday's Entertainday is a more stopping in a pre-Broaduna delition to a story about Ellen
Maxted, who is opening in a pre-Broadway comedy at the Slar Theatre of
Flint, and Bill Spinning, who is starring
in a musical revue in Reno, the entertainment páges also had a story Thursday about a brand-new musical revue
"The Best of the Best."
Gene Branstrom figures in all these

The lest of the Mest."
Gene Branstrom figures in all these stories. Both Ellen Maxted and Bill Spinning are among his former students. Branstrom still keeps in touch with Spinning.
"In fact, I just talked with Bill by phone this morning, when he called me from Reno," Branstrom said Friday morning.

Ironi, neuv, morning, "I once gave Bill a voice lesson over the phone." He hastily pointed out, "I'm not officially Bill's coach, but when he's in town he may take a voice lesson from me."

from me."

HE RECALLS Ellen Maxted, who was in the choir at Seaholm. "I'm really pleased for them," he said.

Now Branstorm is pursuing his own dream, with "The Best of the Best," a new musical revue he and his partner Richard Snee are showcasing at Vittorio's in Livonia." "I've been wanting to do this for many years," Branstrom said. of the Branstrom-Snee production. The two men have invited agents to see the hour-long showcase, which features music by Irving Berlin, George Gerstwin and Cole Porter.

Ethnic

groups

joined

Arabic, Irish, German, Scandinavian, Italian, Armenian and Greek are only a few of the nationalities which will be represented at this year's International Ethnic Festival as part of the activities of the 1979 Detroit-Windsor International Freedom Festival.

In all 28 fanationalities

Freedom Festival.
In all, 26 nationalities
will participate in the International Ethnic Festival, Friday, June 29Wednesday, July 4, in the
Philip A. Hart Memorial
Plaza on the Detroit
riverfront (at the foot of
Woodward at Jefferson
Avenue).

outstanding student musicians.

The International Ethnic Festival is part of the city of Detroit's summer ethnic festivals program, which is now in its 10th yearname 1979 International Patentials and the control of t

Saturday, June 30 noon-11 p.m. Sunday, July 1 noon-11 p.m. Monday, July 2 noon-11 p.m. Tuesday, July 3 noon-11 p.m. Wednesday, July 4 noon-11 p.m.

Branstrom-Snee hopes than an agent will book the revue at a metropolitan Detroit boation. "This is the first of a series of revues," Branstrom said. "We've got ideas for other things." He said "The Best of the Best" will be presented "in a cabaret-type of situ-ation that is functioning very well in New York and Los Angeles. Ther's nothing much like it here. "We've got dinner theater, but peo-ple may not want dinner."

VITTORIO'S, which has its own dim-ner theater on weekends, is opening its restaurant to Branstrom-Snee especial-ly for "The Best of the Best" at 8 p.m. Wednesday and Thursday, June 27 and 28

Branstrom said the showcase will be priced at \$6 "to pay our people and cover our expenses." Cocktalls may be purchased before, during and after the show. The only food sold will be pizza, which you can order before the show, to be served afterward.

to be served afterward.

"It's like a premiere," Branstrom said. "It's our coming out, to let every-body know we do have a show." Attendance is by reservation only, roil Branstrom at 642-3831 if you wish to attend. "This first show is geared to an older audience," he said. "Our plans for the future are to do things that appeal to all audiences. We hope to work into a situation to give two shows a night."

Both Branstrom and Snee are directing, and Branstrom is the vocal music director. Snee is a former Birmingham resident and a former student of Branstrom. Other former students are east member Alan Brown; local dancer Fred Caducio (who was in the choir),

choreographer; and Bill Swayze, the group's arranger.

BESIDES BROWN and Snee, the cast

BESIDES BROWN and Snee, the cast includes "Rose," a New York performer who goes by her first name only. Rose and Snee worked together at dinner theater in Pennsylvania.

The cast has been rehearsing in the basement of Branstrom's home in Beverly Hills. A family man, Branstrom and his wife have six sons, the oldest 17, who just graduated from Seaholm, and the youngest 18 months.

Donna Watton, who is with the Musicana singers in Florida, is another former student of Branstrom who has gone on to a professional musical

career.

"Many of my former students have continued music in one way or another. Many have become music to other. A lot of them keep in contact, when they go to college, and take lessons to keep in shape."

Branstrom also has been involved with Seabolm student musicals for eight years. He has seen the shows grow from three performances with "South Pacific" to seven performances with "South Pacific To seven performances with

Folktale staged

Cranbrook's Scandinavian heritage of Saarinen architecture and Milles sculpture will be complemented by a Finnish group's theatrical performance at 3 p.m. Sunday, July 1, at Cranbrook Institute of Science in Bloomfield Hills.

"Dumbfounded," a folktale combining ancient lore with contemporary stories, will be presented by a 10-member troupe as part of Detroit's Olympiad 79, an international festival of folk theater celebrating the Year of the Child.

Ing and props from Lahti his southern Fishand, the part of the Child.

play brought internation-al acclaim to the troupe



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Woodward at Jefferson Avenue). The International Eth-nic Festival will feature the foods from each of thh 26 participating nationalities, as well as a Pearl's Garden wide assortment of crafts and gilts representative of each ethnic group. Continuous entertainment will be provided free of charge in the Plaza's amphitheater. The official joint opening exeremonies for the International Freedom Pestival and the International Eversival will take place on Priday, June 29 at 6 p.m in the Hart Plaza. wide assortment of crafts

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renezers; Sightseeing; it: \$300.00 by June 28. Limited number of seats

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