



Klinton Spilsbury and Michael Horse recreate the famous team of the masked man and Tonto in "The Legend of the Lone Ranger."



the movies

Louise Snider

Amateurish acting diminishes legend of Lone Ranger

For Detroiters over 40, "The Legend of the Lone Ranger" (PG) dates back to the masked man's debut on radio station WXYZ in 1933.

For those of any age, the legend calls to mind all the trappings of the Lone Ranger — his trusted Indian friend Tonto, his horse Silver, his mask, silver bullets and dedication to fight for truth, justice and the American way.

But for the filmmakers, the legend refers to the events which prompt a young lawyer, John Reid, to assume the disguise. Consequently, these events take up a disproportionately large share of the movie.

It's a solid hour before we get to the stirring strains of the William Tell Overture and our first glimpse of the Lone Ranger and his "fiery horse with the speed of light."

UNTIL THEN, we learn about Reid's childhood in Texas. He saves the life of an Indian boy, Tonto (Michael Horse), who in turn takes Reid to live with his tribe when Reid's parents are killed by a gang of marauders.

Years later, Reid's older brother takes him away from the tribe and sends him to live with an aunt in Detroit. In the 1860s, Reid returns to Texas after graduating from law school and joins his brother, a Texas Ranger, as the Rangers track an outlaw gang.

The subsequent betrayal and ambush of the Rangers and Reid's rescue by his boyhood friend Tonto lead to his decision to put on a mask, hunt down the gang and bring justice to the West.

All of this seems unduly long, and not just because we are waiting for the Lone Ranger to appear or because we expect more of the story. No one expects a story about the Lone Ranger to be anything more than a simple, entertaining adventure.

However, bad acting is not entertaining, at least not beyond the first three minutes. With the exception of Jason Robards who makes a brief appearance as President Ulysses S. Grant, the acting in this movie is atrocious. As luck would have it, the worst performance is delivered by the principal, Clint Eastwood, who plays the Lone Ranger.

ACCORDING TO the movie's production notes, Spilsbury "comes to the title role with virtually no acting experience." There is no reason to doubt that statement. What is amazing is that at the conclusion of the movie, the statement still holds true.

In contrast, Silver handles his assignments well, even with distinction. Perhaps his trainer could give director William Fraker a few tips.

This laughably amateurish performance, together with the lengthy preamble, mixes "The Legend of the Lone Ranger" for all but the most dedicated Western buffs and the very young.



Jason Robards appears briefly as President Ulysses S. Grant.

Children's showcase auditions announced

Tri Talent Productions, Inc., based in Birmingham, will hold an open audition from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. June 13 at the Michigan Inn in Southfield.

Boys and girls between the ages of 7 1/4 years who are able to sing, dance and act will be selected for a Showcase of Talent to take place during late fall '81.

Finalists will be chosen from the three categories of talent for further evaluation and video/taping from 5-6 p.m. that afternoon. An accompanist and cassette player will be provided for vocal and dance routines. Comfortable clothing should be worn for prelims; costumes are optional for callbacks.

Three Detroit-area people involved with the per-

forming arts are behind Tri Talent Productions.

They are Martha V. Keller, writer/producer, best known for her "Mr. Patches" program on ABC's WXYZ-TV; Eugene Breastrom, musical director at Seaholm High School in Birmingham, who has many years of vocal experience with kindergarten through 12th grades; and Sidney Burrows, project coordinator, whose children are actively involved in local stage, television and radio.

Ms. Burrows said it is the group's intention "to create children's productions which will foster the growth and recognition of Detroit's outstanding talent."

For further information call 846-3591 or 294-1379 between 9 a.m. and 5 p.m.



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