

LET'S GO! MOVIES

Area producers lampoon moving making process

BY JOHN MONAGHAN
SPECIAL WRITER

Teachers always urged Arthur and Mark Borman to write about things they knew. It's not surprising that the Birmingham-born brothers' first feature, "... And God Spoke," should be about the behind-the-scenes world of making movies.

"Working on movie sets," said co-producer Mark Borman, "you get to see a lot of money spent very quickly and a lot of mistakes made. We thought this was a good idea for our movie."

Their "mockumentary," which opens tomorrow at the United Artists Theatres at Oakland Mall, follows a low-budget film company as it tries to create a Biblical epic. Soupy Sales (as Moses), "The Brady Bunch's" Eve Plumb (as Mrs. Noah), and "Incredible Hulk" star Lou Ferrigno (as Cain) appear in cameos.

Director Arthur Borman graduated from Cranbrook in 1985, Mark from Sesholm in 1988. After pursuing film careers in college and on Hollywood movie sets, the brothers hooked up again in Chicago a couple of years ago and started kicking around ideas for a feature film.

Much of the movie was shot on the Raleigh Film Studio lot, across the street from Paramount Pictures. They worked with about a half-million dollar's worth of services, many of which they got



Directing: Arthur Borman directs crew in "... And God Spoke," a comedy starring Michael Riley.

for free. "It was a lot less difficult to make and finance the film than it was to distribute it," said Mark. They entered "... And God Spoke" at all the major festivals — Sundance, Toronto, and Cannes among them — before Alive Entertainment, a company primarily devoted to video distribution, decided to release the movie to theaters. A private

screening for family and friends took place this past April in Southfield.

Brookwood Entertainment, the Bormans' production company, is named after the Birmingham street they grew up on and where their parents still reside.

They offer some insight into the growing number of Birmingham/Bloomfield natives (fellow

Seaholm grads Mike Blinder and Tim Allen among them) who have taken Hollywood by storm.

"A lot of people I grew up with now reside in Los Angeles," said Arthur. "They come out of high school saying, 'I could fall back on another trade, but if this is something I really want to do, then I need to be where movies are made.'"

'Clerks' takes revenge on boredom



JOHN MONAGHAN

He should have stayed in bed. Zack (Brian O'Halloran), a convenience store employee, gets a call from his boss asking him to fill in for the morning.

For starters, Zack finds the padlock on the sliding door jammed with gum, unable to open. By the end of "Clerks," a delightfully crude new comedy, Zack will have stomached horrible customers, received a \$500 fine for selling cigarettes to a 4-year-old, and lost not one, but two girlfriends.

All he can say is a pitiful, "I wasn't even supposed to work today."

Filed in black and white for an incredible \$20,000, "Clerks"

■ By the end of "Clerks," a delightfully crude new comedy, Zack will have stomached horrible customers, received a \$500 fine for selling cigarettes to a 4-year-old, and lost not one, but two girlfriends.

has a wacky sensibility and jerky boy charm that should find an audience. It plays exclusively at the Maple Theater.

For someone who isn't proud of his work, Zack takes his responsibilities surprisingly seriously.

His buddy, Bobby (Jeff Anderson), on the other hand, works at the neighborhood video store, but spends most of his time bugging Zack. He shows up late and then locks the video store for any excuse, including driving to a rival store to find a tape to watch while working.

"This job wouldn't be so bad, if

it weren't for the customers," he tells Zack. And he means it.

Anyone who's ever worked in a dead-end customer service job will be appalled at Bobby's behavior, but secretly they'll want to cheer. When an old man walks into the convenience store and starts babbling on and on about a story he read in the "Weekly World News," Bobby spits a mouthful of water at him. No remorse.

A parade of oddballs waits through the store on a given day, including a guy who tries to talk customers out of purchasing cig-

rettes. Later it's revealed that he works for a chewing gum company.

Writer/director Kevin Smith, 23, brings real-life experiences to his first feature. He shot the movie at night at the actual convenience store where he worked. The acting is certainly unpolished; sometimes you can hear the projector motor humming in the background.

With almost no money and a lot of guts, Smith has done the impossible: he's made outrageous the drudgery of working behind a counter.

If you have a comment for John Monaghan, call him at 953-2047, mailbox 1866, on a Touch-Tone phone, or write to him care of Street Scene, Observer & Eccentric Newspapers, 36251 Schoolcraft, Livonia, MI 48150.

Contest offers tickets to 'Swan Princess'

"The Swan Princess" opening Friday, Nov. 18, at metro Detroit movie theaters, is a timeless tale of romance and adventure. A valiant prince battles against the forces of evil to find his one true love, a courageous princess who has been turned into a swan by a ruthless enchanter. With the help of three faithful friends from the

forest, a French frog, a slow, but determined turtle, and a plucky puffin, the Swan Princess and her handsome prince are reunited in a happy ending.

"The Swan Princess" is a children's tale about growing up. Write and tell us what you want to do when you grow up to win tickets to see the movie 7 p.m.

Tuesday, Nov. 16, at the United Artists Theatres at Twelve Oaks Mall in Novi.

The first 25 readers to respond, will receive a family pack of four tickets, along with other mementos from the movie.

All entries will receive a special thank-you gift from the "Swan Princess."

Send or fax entries to Keely Wygonik, Observer & Eccentric Newspapers, 36251 Schoolcraft Road, Livonia, 48150 or fax (313) 591-7279, by Friday, Nov. 11. Winners will be notified by phone.

Call (313) 953-2106 if you have any questions.

Screen Scene

A sampling of what's playing at alternative movie theaters across metro Detroit as reviewed by John Monaghan.

■ **DETROIT FILM THEATRE**
Detroit Institute of Arts, 5200 Woodward Ave., Detroit. Call (313) 833-2323 for information. (\$5)

"Ivan and Abraham" (France — 1993). 7 and 9:30 p.m. Nov. 4-5; 4 and 7 p.m. Nov. 6. The extraordinary tale follows two young boys who run away from a Jewish "ghet" in Eastern Poland in the 1930s.

"Samba Trance" (Burkina Faso — 1992). 7 p.m. Nov. 7. After a robbery that went tragically wrong, a fugitive returns to his village to revitalize it, becoming both benefactor and enemy to his neighbors.

■ **KINOTHEK**
Capitol Theatre and Arts Center, 121 W. University Ave. W., Windsor, Canada. Call (519) 971-5190 for show times. (\$4)

"WR: Mysteries of the Organism" (Yugoslavia/West Germany — 1971). 9 p.m. Nov. 7-8. A mind-blowing attempt to dramatize the late Dr. Wilhelm Reich's theory that stymied sexuality is the root cause of political and social repression. Directed by Dusan Makaveyev.

■ **MAIN ARTS THEATRE**

118 N. Main St. at 11 Mile Road, Royal Oak. Films play through at least Thursday, unless noted otherwise. Call (810) 542-0180 for information and show times. (\$6.50; \$4 students and matinee; \$3 twilight)

"Quis Show" (USA — 1994). Robert Redford's entertaining and poignant look at the quiz show scandal of the 1950s, where the producers of the wildly popular "Twenty One" fed the right answers to contestants.

"Érotique" (USA — 1994). The female sexual psyche is explored in a trio of short works by award-winning filmmakers Lizzie Borden, Monika Treut and Clara Law.

"Bullets Over Broadway" (USA — 1994). Woody Allen's latest, set in the 1920s, finds an ambitious playwright (John Cusack) offered the chance to direct his own play. The only hitch: he has to cast a mobster's girlfriend in an important role.

■ **MAPLE THEATRE**

1135 W. Maple, Bloomfield. All titles play through at least Thursday. Call (810) 855-0090 for information. (\$6; \$2.95 twilight) "Clerks" (USA — 1994). This low-budget comedy depicts an endless day-long shift for

two presently employed slackers. One takes fairly seriously his job at a convenience store, mostly selling cigarettes to the locals. His friend, meanwhile, battles the boredom by heaping every conceivable abuse upon hapless customers. A rude and funny take on life behind the counter, made on a shoestring budget of \$20,000.

"The Shawshank Redemption" (USA — 1994). Tim Robbins and Morgan Freeman star in this drama, based on a novella by Stephen King, about a new arrival and a lifer in a maximum security prison in the 1950s.

"Quis Show" (USA — 1994). See Main Art Theater listing.

■ **MICHIGAN THEATRE**

603 E. Liberty, Ann Arbor. Call (313) 568-8397 for information. (\$5; \$4 students and senior citizens)

Jackie Chan — "Drunken Master II" at 7 p.m.; "Drunken Master I" at 9 p.m. Nov. 7. Two humorous actioners from Hong Kong director and unparalleled stuntman Jackie Chan.

"Clerks" (USA — 1994). Nov. 9-22 (call for show times). See Maple Theater listing.

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