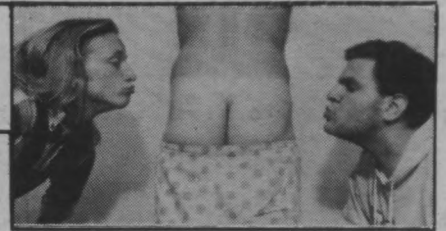


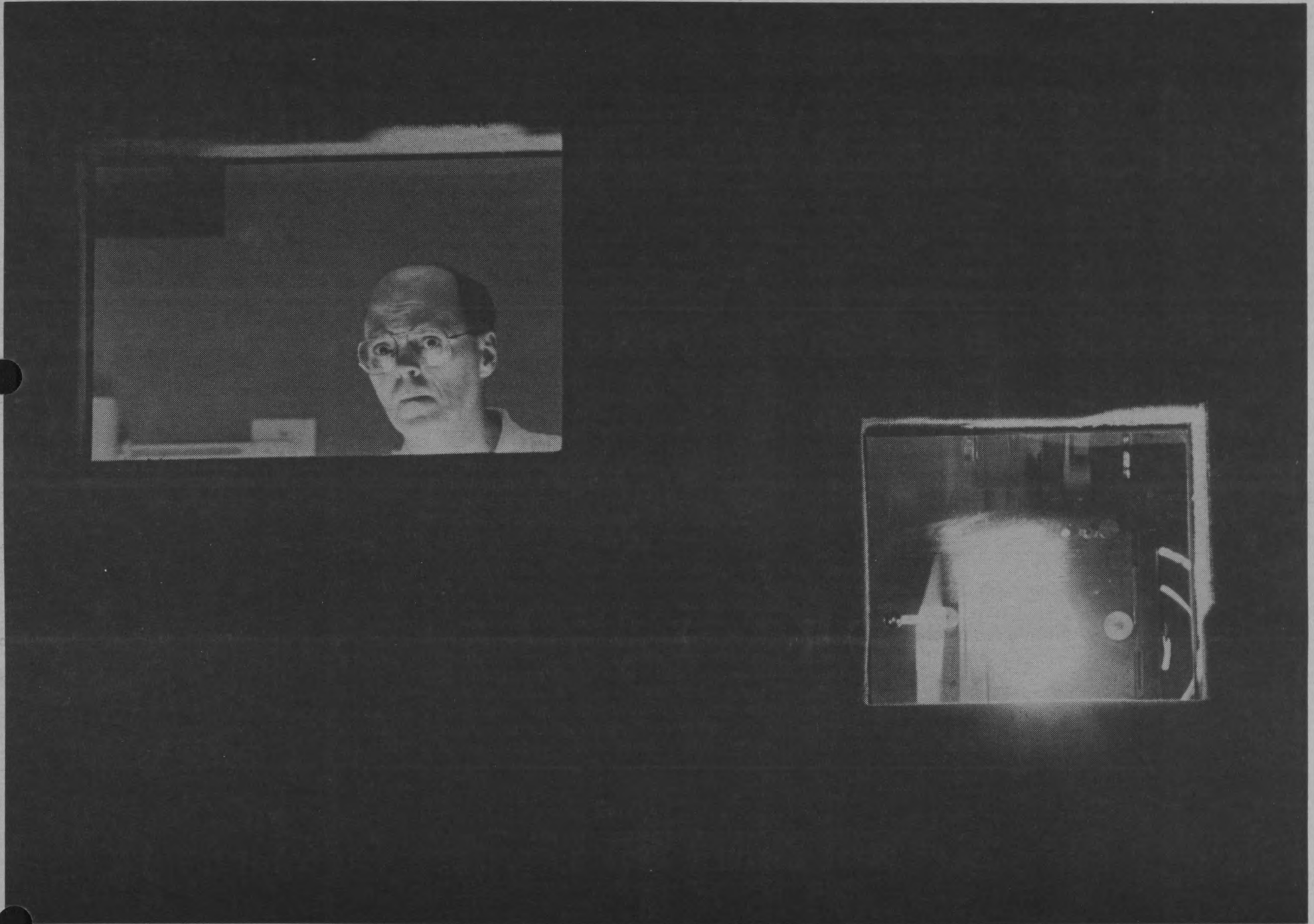
Video Guy: Kiss His Ass Goodbye!.....pg. 3A



ENCORE

THE ARTS AND
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F o r T h e W e e k o f M a y 2 1 , 1 9 9 2



The herculean task that awaits Terry Boyle might smother a man unprepared for the long, difficult road ahead. As the newly instituted manager at MTC's cinema-in-the-hills, Boyle wants to turn the Riviera Theater into an art house.

Yes, an art house.

Never mind the fact that other theaters and previous managers have tried to accomplish the feat, with limited success. There's the Victoria Street Theater, with its combination of small studio releases and animation festivals. But nothing in the area comes close to what Boyle has in mind.

First, there's the new schedule. Under manager Mike Lasini, the Riviera fell into the habit of showing offbeat studio films for several weeks (*Barton Fink* and *Jungle Fever* enjoyed healthy runs). The line between mainstream fare and eclectic attractions became dangerously blurred.

Enter Boyle, who came back to the MTC after a 12-year hiatus. He began by booking some of the theater's films himself, and instituting a "one-week limit" on many of them. Films such as Pedro Almodovar's *High Heels* and Jean Cocteau's 1946 version of *Beauty and the*

The Riviera Theatre's Terry Boyle Projects The Future of Small Films in Santa Barbara

ART HOUSE REVIVAL

Story by Brian Banks • Photos by David Rosen



Beast played to healthy crowds for shortened engagements.

"We're trying to bring a wider variety of films in," Boyle explains as he sits in the middle of his empty theater in midweek. There is a 5 p.m. showing of *Howard's End*, and Boyle is pleased with the response the film has gotten from audiences. But now his mind turns toward the future.

"The theater's had a history of keeping movies too long, playing small movies for five or six or eight weeks," he says. "Generally, we'll play most movies two or three weeks, and a number of them only one week. Our goal is to bring in more films."

"Our regular customers are very appreciative. People are aware that good things are happening here, and that's the initial goal, just to let them know."

The road toward Boyle's art house revival began in Los Angeles. There he spent the three and a half years prior to his Santa Barbara return at a Japanese-language theater, where he organized the most comprehensive Akira Kurosawa retrospective ever in L.A. (A feat he hopes to dupli-

See RIVIERA, p.4A

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"We've definitely got a concept of what we are and what we want to be."

Name Game

Ride Secures Itself Outside UK's One-Word Shoe-Gazers.

Interview by Andy Bailey

The latest musical fad in Britain has been called everything from shoegazing to dream pop to, certainly the most fitting of descriptions, "shoe-core." Musically, this sound has been described as "mesmerizing" and "melodic" by hungry critics who have dumped large amounts of praise on bands that aren't really all that great. Everything by Curve, for instance, sounds the same. Chapterhouse and Lush create lovely pop singles ("Pearl" and "For Love," to name two) but they have yet to put out consistent albums.

Ride, on the other hand, is another story altogether. Formed in 1988, this four-piece band from Oxford has an amazing knack for creating infectious, guitar-driven pop music. Nowhere, the band's 1990 debut, began with a blizzard of guitar feedback and ended with a luxurious jolt of violins. It was the finest debut album in recent memory — a gorgeous, swirling slab of pop tension that elevated Ride to the status of media darlings and arena-fillers in their native England while creating quite a buzz in the U.S.

The group has just released its second LP, *Going Blank Again*, on the Sire label here in the U.S. They'll be at the Anaconda Theater on Tuesday with *Slowdive*, another shoe-core combo whose current album, *Just For A Day*, recalls the Cure's lucid, morose *Pornography* days. It's a fabulous, cheap alternative to *Xanax* and, with *Ride* atop the bill, it should make for a smashing sensory experience.

ENCORE recently spoke to drummer Loz Colbert, while on their United States tour.

ENCORE: How do you set yourselves apart from all the other one-word shoegazer bands like Lush, Curve and Chapterhouse?

Colbert: Every band sees itself as the most important; they've all got a concept of what they are individually. We've definitely got a concept of what we are and what we want to be. We've gotten as far as the second album and that's more than a lot of those bands have done.

ENCORE: Sire is one of the better labels to be on in America in terms of respect and visibility. Do you have a lot of artistic freedom there?

Colbert: Yes, and on the whole they're very good. They



look after us a lot of the time. They're more musical people than business people.

ENCORE: You're used to playing in front of huge, devoted audiences in England. How has it been touring in America, playing in much smaller venues? Does it hurt your pride at all?

Colbert: No, it just hurts your energy level a bit. ... Sometimes it's hard to get the adrenaline level up when no one's really into it. We've had some real bummers, but we've had some good shows as well. With the over-21 shows (in the U.S.), you find that the audience can be quite restrained. The stage-diving thing doesn't seem to be quite understood around here either.

ENCORE: *Going Blank Again* is quite different from *Nowhere*.

Colbert: Yes, what we really wanted to do was to take a big step away from all of that. So there isn't as much introspection and sensitivity (on *Going Blank Again*). It's a lot more melodic and easygoing, with melodies you can reach out and grab.

ENCORE: Like on "Twisterella," your new single. It's happy, it's uplifting, it's a great pop song.

Colbert: We just wanted a cleaner sound ... clear and visible rather than introspective.

ENCORE: Your earlier sound was similar to My Bloody Valentine's — do you consider them influential? Do you use them as a point of reference?

Colbert: No, not at all. That was our reason to be in a band, initially, because we were so into that kind of music that we were just aching to make our own. Before we were in a band, we thought their music was amazing. Now that we're in a band and we understand the mechanics behind it all, we're not so impressed anymore. Our influences go a lot wider. ... It's not that obvious.

Well, excuuuuuse us!!

STAGE REVIEWS

Theater in the Ground

Problems All Around in Area's Two New Plays

The idea of guardian angels kindly directing our fate is one that is constantly returned to in America's popular culture. It's our own modernistic take on Greek and Roman mythology — Lite Spirituality for borderline Christians. Access Theater's production of *Listen for Wings!* uses this world view as its backdrop, and in the end, suffers from it.

The play, written by UCSB graduate Ellen K. Anderson, is essentially a showcase for actress Billie Burke Perkins, a deaf senior citizen whose fierce independence and infectious

personality prompted the playwright to base a work around her life, albeit rather loosely. In *Listen for Wings!* Perkins is Nellie Melba Kelly, a single-minded actress who disrupts the life and office of Walker Smitherman (Rod Lathim), a frazzled producer who is at his wits' end dealing with two productions.

Invisibly interacting with these two are the guardian angels Zoey (UCSB student Val Lamar) and Ajax (John Fink). Also present on stage is Kathryn Voice, who signs all of the play's dialogue to

the deaf members of the audience. Choreographing all these actors on the exceedingly small set is a notable achievement for director Jenny Sullivan.

The problems with the play rest in Anderson's script. As the program suggests, "Nothing short of heavenly intervention can bring these two (Nellie and Walker) together." Indeed, the two angels unintentionally become Brechtian mouthpieces when they start to tell us the characters' emotions ("He is beginning to love her ... and she is beginning to love him," Ajax

intones near the end), instead of letting the dialogue show us this.

It's a shame, really, because this is Perkins' show. She has fantastic comic timing, all the more incredible when one realizes that she cannot hear her co-stars. With the few monologues she is given, Perkins proves that she could hold her own in a one-woman show.

Listen for Wings runs through May 24 at the Center Stage Theater. Call 963-0408 for more information.

—Ted Mills

For anyone seeking refuge from the purposeless low comedy of television and movies, Eric Overmyer's *On the Verge* will not suffice. Though the play has some humorous moments, the audience may be on the verge of sleep more than anything else.

The play involves three 19th century women who magically transport themselves from the jungles of

South America to the snowcapped Himalayas at the drop of a Sherpa, and also manage a trip through time.

Throughout the course of the first act, the characters run into pieces of the future — newspapers, clippings, CDs and other things. The characters' minds are also violated by 20th century concepts, which makes for some semi-humorous

dialogue.

Overmyer seems intent on using the second act for a statement about the broad commercialism of the 20th century in a Vonnegut-like fashion, using the brand names of Burmashave and Cool Whip — but, alas, the end result is nothing but a bad farce.

The performances are not entirely without merit. Scott Lawrence does an excellent

job playing the ensemble characters the three women encounter, from a richly clothed Mr. Coffee to the fortune teller Madame Nhu. In addition, the music is delightful, with special attention paid to the tear-jerking synthesized Bach piece which closes the action.

On the Verge plays May 19 through May 23 at the UCSB Studio Theatre.

—Bill Mathieson

Is He Really Dead?

Do We Really Care? For the Last Time, the Columnist's Fate Dominates Our Attention

This is the last time you will ever see a story written under The Video Guy logo. Depending on who you are, you are now really happy or really sad or really not caring.

The Video Guy was special. Besides touching himself, he touched us. He touched our lives. He touched our children's lives. Actually, he touched our children. For those of us who don't have children, he touched our younger sisters, the cute ones with the nice round bottoms and the pre-pubescent breasts perking against the tight little T-shirts. Ohhhh, yes. Yes.

But I digress. Sometimes he liked to touch little boys also, but he mainly touched little girls. And we loved him for it.

But is he really dead? In a way, he is still all around us.

As you may have noticed, the makers of Keystone have recently released that really great product in bottles. The original slogan for Keystone was, "That great bottled taste, in a can." So what better way to honor the memory of one their biggest customers with the sheer logic of, "That great bottled taste, in a bottle?"

Already there is speculation that The Video Guy isn't really dead, but that he is graduating and trying to figure out some way to finish off the column with a



touch of class. One of the main sources of evidence for this theory is that a closer look at the dental records of The Video Corpse revealed that the set of teeth found in the otherwise unidentifiable body were actually an orange peel, carved to look like a set of teeth. You know, like we all did when we were little and then our Dad would laugh and our Mom would say that it wasn't funny and then our sister would laugh and cottage cheese would come out her nose. You know what I'm talking about.

Already, sightings abound throughout our community. Cleetis Fleming, a UCSB senior, reported seeing The Video Guy at a local video store.

"Yeah, he was really mad because they only had the edited version of *Caligula*," said Fleming.

"And he was naked."

Many have seen him at various eateries around town, eating. One individual even reported seeing

his likeness in the foamy water in the gutter outside of McBurley's.

"He looked so happy," said UCSB senior Gladys Miller. "Like he belongs floating in a sea of stale beer."

But then again, that's probably just a load of dump. Odds are The Video Guy is dead, gone, six feet under and pushing up daisies. In a way, that's good. We don't have to talk behind his back; we can talk right to his face — because he's just a stiff: The Dead Guy! That's okay, some of my best friends are dead.

In any event, maybe this is what he wanted; dying in what he liked to consider his prime. It may just launch him into Pop Icondom — he'll be a dead icon, but an icon nonetheless.

A great man once said, "Be you a king or a street sweeper, we must all one day dance with the Grim Reaper."

Well I don't want to think that way about The Video Guy. I want to believe that The Video Guy is in Heaven or Hell or Nirvana or Valhalla or Ace Hardware with the Grim Reaper, sitting on a big couch, watching *Slave Girls From Beyond Infinity* on a continuous loop and drinking beer, really great beer like Keystone.

Goodbye, Video Guy. I have to stop writing, I'm going to cry now.

On Stage This Week...



Double Bill

Theatergoers have two new choices this week, *Just Visitors* (left) and *The Time of Your Life* (right). *Just Visitors* will play at the University United Methodist Church in I.V. on May 21 and 22. Admission is free. *The Time of Your Life* premieres May 22 and runs through 30.

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