

ARTS WEEK

The Arts and Entertainment Supplement to the *Daily Nexus*, For the Week of October 28-November 3, 1993.

El Día De Los Muertos

THE DEAD
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Cover Story DAY OF THE DEAD

The feel of warm, creamy chocolate going down your throat; beautifully decorated sugar candies dissolving on your tongue; the taste of fresh sweet breads; brilliant orangish-reddish marigolds in extravagant floral arrangements; Rancheras music; dancing skeletons; day-long feasts. These are not ideas Western culture associates with death.

But for centuries, those of Latin American heritage have used these items to celebrate death during a holiday created out of the marriage of Catholic rituals and the traditions of their indigenous ancestors.

El Dia de los Muertos, the Day of the Dead, is born from the Aztec belief that life and death are one and the same.

"This day is celebrated wherever there are Native American peoples," said Chicano Studies Chair Yolanda Broyles-Gonzales. "Death is never viewed in and of itself. In birth is death, in death is birth. It is a transformation, an important concept in Native American philosophy."

"By honoring the dead, it becomes life. They are not opposites; they complement one another. The spirits of the deceased are believed to be a force still at work. We pay tribute to that force that will return

to life through another form at another time. This is the life cycle," she added.

November 1-2 has always been observed by Chicanas/os and Mexicans in the United States as the day to remember those who have left this life and entered a new one. However, the holiday was not recognized in America until Chicano artist collectives used the theme in their work in the early '70s, according to Ramon Favela, associate professor in Art History and Chicano studies.

"In the U.S., El Dia de los Muertos was not instituted or recognized until two Chicano art centers used the idea in 1972 and 1973," Favela said.

In 1972, artists from Galeria de la Raza, based in San Francisco's Mission district, became the first to introduce the celebration of El Dia de los Muertos to the American public. The following year, Self Help Graphics in East Los Angeles once again brought the holiday to the public's attention.

"They had an exhibition where the artists were invited to create ofrendas (offerings), which took the form of installation art," Favela said. "In contemporary art, installations are when the artist comes to the gallery and creates the art right there. The art is installed in the gallery."

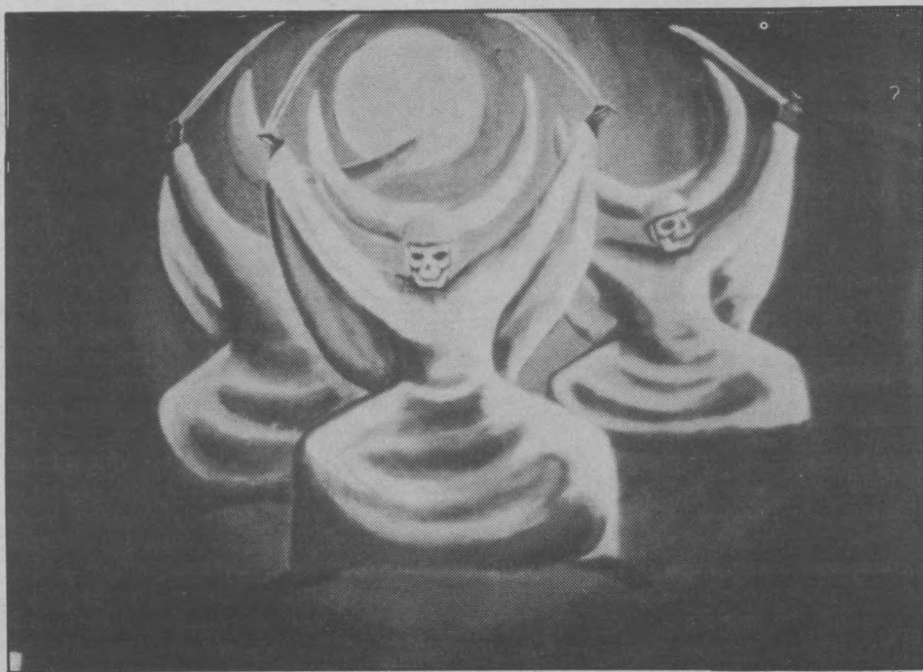
The roots of this celebration are a fusion of pre-Columbian beliefs and rituals about the harvest season and the Catholic holidays of All Saints and All Souls Days, according to Favela.

"Fall in Mexico is associated with the end of the growing season and the beginning of the harvest. It is a period of change and renewal. When Europeans brought All Saints Day, All Souls Day or All Hallows' Eve, it coincided with the ancient rituals already in practice," Favela said.

"The two were conveniently transformed into one celebration by the converted Indians, and the celebration became one of life and rebirth for the peasantry. Today it is a peasant celebration in the modern era."

On Nov. 1, the spirits of the departed children are received by their loved ones. The next day the celebration revolves around meeting up with the spirits of adults. Part of the celebration is to decorate the tombs with candles and flowers of the dead, or cempasuchi, an ancient Mexican name for marigolds that bloom in Mexico this time of year, Favela said.

"They create elaborate ofrendas, and on the evening of Nov. 2, they will spend the entire night at the cemetery in expectation of the returning spir-



GERRY MELENDEZ/Daily Nexus

its. Food is laid out, keepsakes of the dead are laid out. And the next morning there is a feast either at the tomb or at home," Favela said.

The ofrendas, in the form of an altar, become works of art created with floral arrangements, mementos, photographs of the dead, and food. "Things that are special to the person are placed on the altar to honor the dead when they return to their families," he said.

Skulls made out of sugar, or cavaleras, are a large part of the ceremony. They come in the form of individual candies, or are painted on sweet breads — pan dulce — in the form of dancing skeletons who play jokes on one another.

"The candies are made out of sugar. You are eating death. You must eat dead things to sustain life," Broyles-Gonzalez

said. "The skeletons are always moving, laughing, dancing. They are never morbid. The bread is either in the shape of bones or loaves. I have seen loaves (two feet long) with art on it, scenes with candied skeletons painted on them playing jokes and dancing."

According to Favela, in Central Mexico, many bakeries spend the entire day baking bread of the dead with elaborate figures on them. Art, creativity, and ancient rituals and ceremonies go hand in hand, he said.

"It is a visual relation with religion and faith. A relation with the dead, with ancestors, can be expressed in visual terms through the altar and offerings and objects that represent or connect with the deceased," he said. "Art is important to a culture and to religion be-

cause it is a visual and tangible expression of feelings, emotions and ideas. The ceremony of the Day of the Dead is spiritual and emotional. The art that accompanies it makes it tangible."

Over 100 students and community members have worked over the past week and a half to give El Dia de los Muertos the visual aspect needed to help celebrate the dead.

Chicano studies senior Aida Salazar contacted members of Santa Barbara and Los Angeles Chicana/o and Mexican theatre groups, musicians, writers and artists to put on a two-day celebration starting Monday.

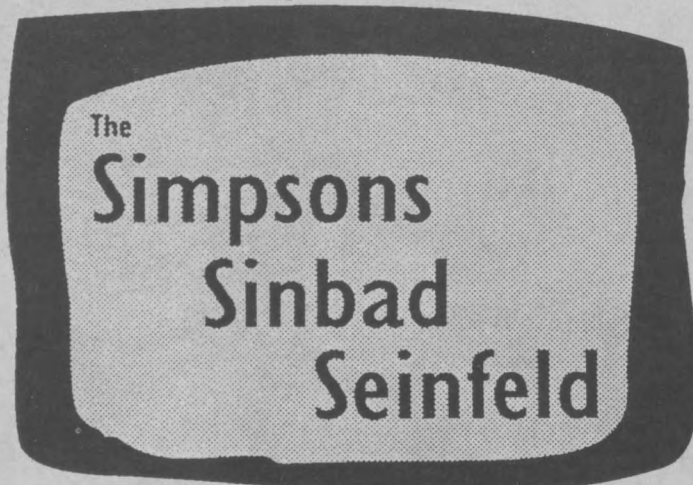
"Every year there is a celebration, but not anything as blown up as this," Salazar said. "We just thought it was time for the

See DEAD, p.7A

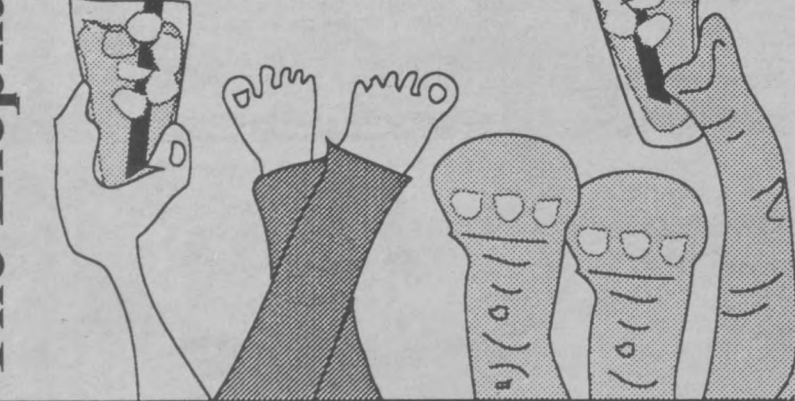
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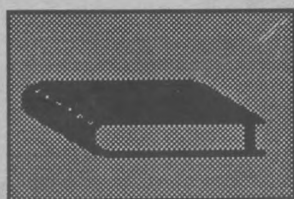
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6:30 a.m. Monday, November 1

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- After 5:00 p.m. Oct. 29, Halloween weekend campus parking permits will cost **\$20.00** and will be available for sale to non-residents of Isla Vista at the east and west entrance kiosks to campus.

The Parking Services Trailer is located at the end of Lot 30 across the street from Harder Stadium. If you have any questions, please stop by or call 893-2346.

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HaRD CRaCK

Krassner Defined Alternative Activism

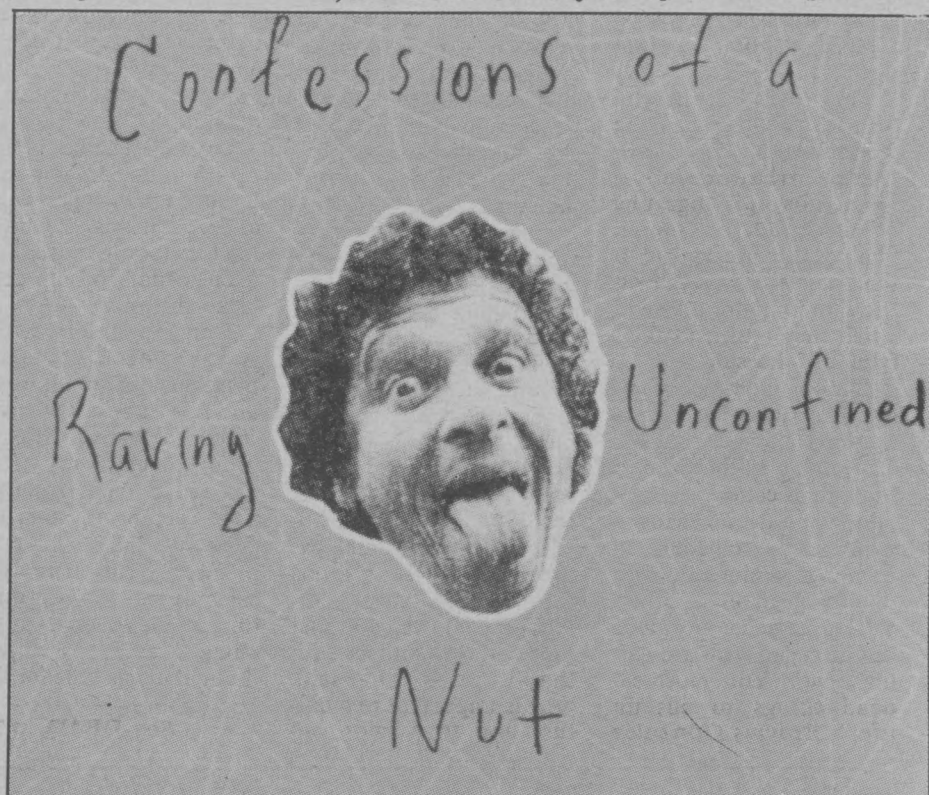
In a time when tie-dye t-shirts can be bought in shopping malls, dancing bears are seen on BMWs and our president has become an incarnation of Bob Roberts, '60s mythology has become very profitable for the wrong people. *Confessions of a Raving, Unconfined Nut* is a timely release which re-historicizes the hippie era through the eyes of one of its most active participants.

more gullible readers.

One of its most provocative pieces was an article entitled "The Parts Left Out of the Kennedy Book," published in the wake of the Kennedy assassination and William Manchester's book *The Death of a President*. Flaunting media censorship and government obscenity laws, the article reported an unsavory exchange between Lyndon Johnson and the body of

native media, *The Realist* became a rallying voice for the emerging counterculture. Along with its satirical pieces it featured interviews with major alternative voices such as Alan Watts, Lenny Bruce, Joseph Heller, Mae Brussell and Norman Mailer.

It was not only a forum for social analysis, but one that often spilled over into political activism. An article on an abortionist sparked an illegal abortion



Operating in the interval between the civil rights movement, the anti-war protests, the stirrings of the feminist movement and the psychedelic explosion, Paul Krassner helped develop a political sensibility which combined a radical social critique with a prankish irreverence.

Starting as a writer for *Mad* magazine in the '50s, Krassner grew disillusioned with its focus on an adolescent audience. Befriending comedian Lenny Bruce, he started a brief career as a stand-up comic. Admiring Bruce's firm stand against censorship, he decided in 1958 to create one of the first satirical magazines for adults, the *Realist*.

Following the tradition of Jonathan Swift's "Modest Proposal," Krassner didn't make an open distinction between editorial journalism and satire, publishing farcical pieces which would be taken as true by the magazine's

JFK en route to the president's funeral. Intended as a piece to "satirize certain things about the assassination — its aftermath, the hypocrisy, the exploitation, the cover-up [and] the quest for power," this prank had thousands of people actually believing that Lyndon Johnson, the new president, was a necrophiliac. Needless to say, this was quite a commentary on the American public's faith in its elected leaders.

The political nature of Krassner's satire influenced and alienated many readers, including the FBI. The title of the book is taken from a poison pen letter that an FBI operative wrote to *Life Magazine* after *The Realist* had been given a favorable review. "To classify Krassner as a 'social rebel' is far too cute. He's a nut, a raving unconfined nut," said the letter.

Published in a time when there was no alter-

referral service which lasted for years.

Krassner's contacts through the *Realist* later became a foundation for the Youth International Party, putting him in contact with Jerry Rubin, a Berkeley anti-war organizer, and Abbie Hoffman. It was Krassner who had come up with the name for the Yippies. The Youth International Party was a play on the word "party," denoting both its political and social meaning. Radical politics didn't have to be somber any longer — revolution and fun would be synonymous.

Confessions of a Raving, Unconfined Nut puts the activism of the '60s in a larger framework of twentieth century protest. Instead of the kitschy sentimentality of recent media representations, Krassner's memoirs depict an active, dada struggle against arbitrary authority and the spirit of gravity.

—Chris Dunlap

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The Poppy Field

By
Kevin
Carhart

If all the country musicians in Nashville were to congregate in the town jail, cry in their beers and listen to the new LP by Mazzy Star, *So Tonight That I Might See*, they would probably learn something.

From some of the vocals and rhythms, the record could probably fit into a country chart somewhere, but it's the "alternative" music fans who have been waiting intently for this album.

And with good reason. It's been years since Mazzy Star debuted on Rough Trade — and since then on Capitol — with the classic *She Hangs Brightly*. Dave Roback and vocalist Hope Sandoval set high standards for themselves with a dangerous, savvy album. It loped through our world on a slide guitar, adopting the twangy sprawl of a '90s dream as much as that of a pioneer stagecoach story.

The expectations have been met. The rumors that Roback had replaced Sandoval were false — her gorgeous voice is on every track, amber with a dusty catch.

The opener "Fade Into You" has more slide guitar than most of the tracks on the album. The vocals are your points of reference in songs about sailing away, with a quavering bass like something from the music to Twin Peaks.

Beside their own landscapes is a cover of "Five String Serenade" by Arthur Lee, presumably originally performed by Lee's legendary '60s group Love. The rendition is acoustic and gentle. But with minor guitar freakouts, pyrotechnics, feedback and slow drones throughout the album, they seem to have a kinship with Love and some of their contemporaries.

A few years ago, Mazzy Star opened for the Cocteau Twins on their "Heaven or Las Vegas" tour. It must have been an overwhelming array of disconcerting lullabies — and now there is a new set of them.

When Nashville has finished its poker game, stopped talking about the bandit in the black hat and is done listening to Mazzy Star in their cells, they should play Robert Forster's album *Calling From a Country Phone*, released in the UK on Beggar's Banquet earlier this year.

Prior to this album and *Danger in the Past* before it, Robert was in the Australian group the Go-Betweens. With singer/songwriter partner Grant McLennan, drummer Lindy Morrison and others at various times, the Go-Betweens harnessed rhythm, melody, poetry and invention to a great degree. Before splitting in 1990, they had twelve years of writing beautiful, dazzling pop songs as well as any of rock's sacred cows.

Beyond Mazzy Star, Robert's new solo album is one of the few pieces of music that deserves to turn Nashville on its head. I'm not sure who his inspirations in the country field are, but Leonard Cohen may be a jumping-off point, since Robert covered Cohen's "Tower of Song" on a recent compilation.

Judging from the slow fiddles, slide guitars and saloon pianos, he's paying tribute to someone or some genre with set parameters, but fortunately, *Calling From a Country Phone* is an album of originals, so he lends his genius to the songwriting.

The musical base is familiar and the lyrics are like no conventional country song. "Everybody's got to shed a little skin," he sings, and the regular bass and "oh oh" sound like soundtrack music for the horse riding off into the sunset.

"I had a bad habit of just letting everything around me slide/The whole town went to the fairground. Guess who had to pay for everybody's ride," he sings.

Grant's latest solo album, *Fireboy*, will be released domestically in the coming months, with a tour including the USA. In the meantime, Robert has added versatility to his already considerable talents.

Ocean Blue

Rippling with imagery of water droplets and rounded, glassy shades of blue, guitar pop combo The Ocean Blue has made three albums' worth of nice, enveloping songs over the years.

Complete with guitar notes (which are droplet-like), smooth, echoed vocals (which are veritable gemstones of clean, shimmering sound) and a generally watery sound (that conjures up the azures, the ceruleans, the turquoises), the band will be at the Ventura Theater next Wednesday.

Touring in conjunction with their new album, *Be-*

neath the Rhythm and Sound, they are sure to continue the melancholy, underwater, sinking, engulfed, reflecting music. When next week comes around, their distinctive, mellow sound is sure to be a good bet.

The Ocean Blue comes to the Ventura Theater on Wednesday, Nov. 3 at 8 p.m. Opening bands *Twelve Stories* and *Ariel* will also perform. The show is presented by Los Angeles radio station KROQ, 106.7 FM. In conjunction with this affiliation, the tickets will be \$10.67. *Imagine.*

—Kevin Carhart



Various Artists
Blank Generation
Rhino Records

Blank Generation is one of nine CDs in Rhino Records' amazing DIY compilation series of Punk, New Wave and 'Power Pop.' Spanning the years 1975-1978, this CD gives a musical history of the New York punk scene. Combining seminal bands like the Ramones and Blondie with less well-known acts like Richard Hell & The Voidoids, the Dictators and The Heartbreakers, this compilation captures both the variety of punk influences and the euphoric feeling of the young movement.

With 13 bands on 19 tracks, Blank Generation is a chaos of different sounds showing the diversity of punk experimentation. Everything from surf rock to glitter, from the noise experiments of the

Rock Turks



Velvet Underground to the wasted crooning of Iggy and the Stooges, can be heard. What was of paramount importance in the two clubs that fostered the scene, Max's Kansas City and CBGB's, was not a unified musical style, but a common attitude and the

sublime unifying voice of teenage lobotomy.

Punk was a state of mind which would only later be codified into a dress style, an ethic and a musical genre. This mindset is evident everywhere.

On every song, absurd

humor and the fake tough pose of '50s rock blend over a musical hodgepodge played at breakneck speed. I have always thought that there was a clear line of descent from Elvis Presley to Joey Ramone. This is classic rock.

—Chris Dunlap



Akinyele
Vagina Diner
Interscope

Are you hungry for some new music? In the mood for a little hip-hop? Well, out in Queens, New York, Akinyele is counting on your patronage for his new *Vagina Diner*.

On the menu are plenty of tight beats and jazzy funk to satisfy your palate. Don't worry; despite the title, the Ak isn't out to diss women — he just has a stupid title.

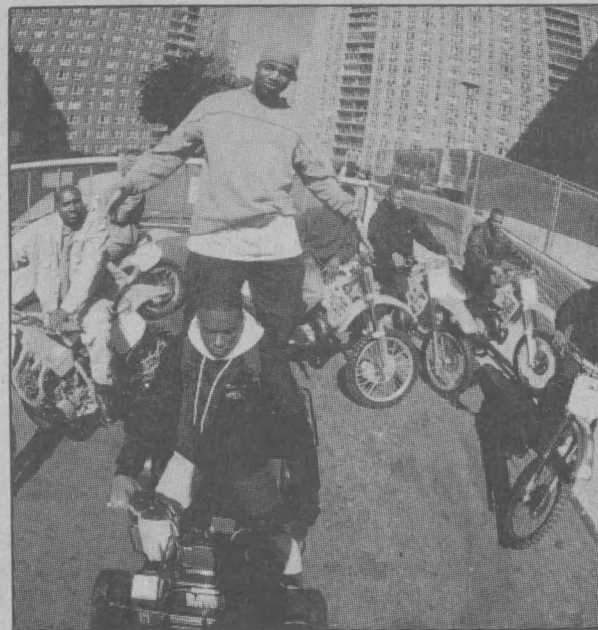
But Akinyele isn't new to the game. He started rapping around the age of twelve and in high school hooked up with Paul Mitchell, a.k.a. the Large Professor, forming a crew along with Nasty Nas and Kool G. Rap. Later, Large Professor did some tracks on Kool G's *Wanted Dead or Alive*, and then hooked up with Nas and the Ak to do "Live at the Barbecue" with his new gig, Main Source.

That's how it started, and now Akinyele has en-

listed the skills of the Large Professor in producing his debut album. As a veteran, the Professor did a solid job of giving the project the framework for a laid-back feel with plenty of tasty samples. The Ak's skills are also tight while he flows over the tracks dropping witty similes and puns like "Akinyele produc'in' more stunning hits/ So call me Ex-Lax 'cause I'm about ready to start running shit."

Akinyele has also developed his trademark "drop," as he lowers his voice and barks the key word in each line.

In spite of the tight producing and rhyme skills, I couldn't help leaving the Diner with a kind of bland taste in my mouth. Some of the first tracks like "Ak Ha Ha! Ak Hoo Hoo?" were dope with plenty of beats, bass hooks and melodic sac samples. However, the Ak kept servin' up the same dish on the B-side. Apparently, Akinyele hasn't spent enough time at the spice rack on this



one because after listening to the entire album you can't help wanting a little more variety.

In today's hip-hop world there are too many talented MCs and groups who are creating innovative rhyme styles and bringing new flavors for anyone to try and pass off a mediocre piece like Anki-

nyele's *Vagina Diner*.

This is not to say that this is a bad album. Maybe a couple of years ago it would have blown up, but not in the nine-try. So if you are easy to please, then by all means gobble this up; but some of us are cringing at the thought of the Ak opening up a chain.

—Matt Turner

• Check It Out •



KCSB 91.9 FM

Top Records
Of The Week

1. KRS One
2. Muzza Chunka
3. The Queers
4. Souls of Mischief
5. Tribe Called Quest
6. Leaders Of The New School
7. De La Soul
8. Revolting Cocks
9. Digital Underground
10. Ultramagnetic M.C.'s

11. Del The Funky Homosapien
12. Coup
13. Masta Ace Inc
14. The Breeders
15. Das Efx
16. Bikini Kill
17. Judgement Night Soundtrack
18. Curve
19. New York Dolls
20. Doughboys

21. Entombed
22. Yo Yo
23. Unrest
24. Dead Can Dance
25. Fudge Tunnel
26. Seaweed
27. Psyclone Rangers
28. Nightblooms
29. Humpers
30. Headcoatees

These Positions Reflect
What Musicians Were
Played The Most On
KCSB This Past Week.



Mutha's Day Out My Soul Is Wet Chrysalis

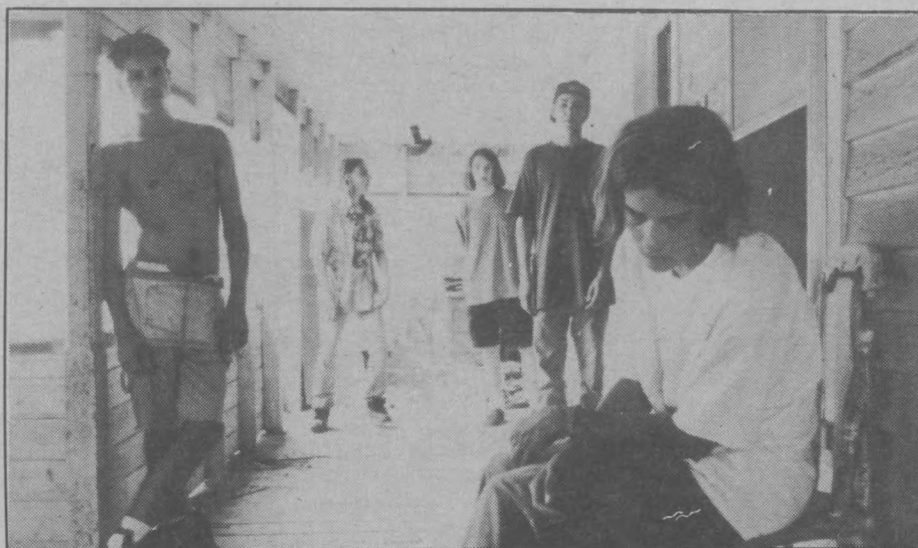
When I think of the southeastern United States, I envision a large cosmic grit wearing overalls and a swell straw hat.

Speaking of stuff that is swell, the band Mutha's Day Out, who are new to the music business, are probably the most powerful thing to come out of the southeast since Uncle Jesse's liver-blasting secret moonshine (the well-protected ingredient being Crazy Cooter's axle grease pepper sauce).

Coming from Batesville, Arkansas, where MTV is banned by religious town leaders and rock radio stations are as scarce as health food stores, these carousing crusaders attack rigidity and creative oppression with squirrel guns a-blazin'.

"I know a lot of people

South Sides



in town don't really like us," claims vocalist Mikal Moore. Unfortunately, this isn't surprising to me, coming from a society that still hasn't figured out the buddy system yet, and still confuses the Pillsbury Dough Boy with the Michelin Man.

Although this group

lacks the experience of most recorded bands, having been together for less than two years, I can see them blossoming into a big musical smorgasbord that delights with every bite.

One thing that this band of self-proclaimed toughs lacks, however, is the intimidation factor of other

"dregs of society" groups. In a dark alley, I'd be more frightened of Richard Simmons with a rubberized mothball cannon than of these guys. Maybe with a few cuss words and some crimes under their belt, though, their situation would improve.

—David Potter

•Concert Notes



I was nervous and shaking because this was my first big interview. Famous people can be intimidating and seen as inhuman, larger-than-life figures.

My job: to force my inquiries upon a band called Smashing Pumpkins, comprised of Billy Corgan (lead vocals, guitar), D'Arcy (bass), Jimmy Chamberlain (drums) and James Iha (lead guitar).

My expectations consisted of getting 10 or 15 minutes with the group and asking them in-depth philosophical questions about their music and the band. My questions were all lined up, like prisoners waiting for the firing squad. However, all I could get was two minutes with an interview-burned-out Corgan after doing a soundcheck, while he walked from the stage to the bus where the band buried themselves.

"I've really done a lot of interviews this year with Rolling Stone, Spin and NME. I'm mentally drained and I really just don't have anything left to say," Corgan commented. "And all they wanted to know was my opinion about other bands like Nirvana."

"I really don't like doing interviews," he said. I told him that he had a very cynical attitude and he replied, "That's why I don't do interviews, because I get myself in trouble."

"What do you think of Santa Barbara and the large college following that the Smashing Pumpkins received?" I asked.

"This is Santa Barbara," Corgan replied. "I've never been here before. I never went to college, so I just can't understand what it's like."

It's terrible — I work for the Nexus, and my tickets were in the upper level, but I realized I had an almost ominous perspective from there.

I didn't make it for the Santa Barbara-based

opening band, Black-worm, and from what I've heard, I didn't miss anything special.

There were some harsh words thrown at the second band, Shudder to Think. Several people in the front were yelling "fuck you!" The lead singer stopped the song abruptly and said to the audience, "OK, everyone get your 'fuck you's' out." They did.

James Iha then strolled out and yelled at the audience, telling them to listen and shut up. I thought they were so bad, I had to ask a fellow listener what she thought.

"They were feeble and kind of weak," said Sue Belding.

As soon as the Pumpkins' first chord was struck, the mosh pit flailed around and up and down as if the body of people absorbed the band's energy directly. For the most part, everyone was dancing in their seats, revelling in what they were seeing.

Smashing Pumpkins' music is unique in that within a given song soft melodic harmonies exist, but then pick up tempo through the raging dynamics of electric guitars and bass.

In other words, it's like grunge meets Toad the Wet Sprocket.

Corgan's voice is very different in that when he speaks it is very low, but when he sings it takes on a tenor quality. When he screams (which is often), it's somewhere in-between.

Many less popular songs were played off of their first album. They excluded the MTV buzz clip "Cherub Rock" and fan favorite "Mayonnaise" from their repertoire, both from the highly successful *Siamese Dream* album. However, Bic lighters sprouted when my favorite song, "Disarm," was played.

—Michael Cadilli



Robert Plant Fate of Nations Atlantic Records

With songs irreverent for the holy and satisfying for anyone who loved Zeppelin, Robert Plant's latest album, *Fate of Nations*, is a serial-style presentation that is actually an attempt by the aging rock star to regain his youth.

There's a problem, however. I consider myself blessed, and I never liked Zeppelin, so Plant's apocalyptic messages were rather wasted on me.

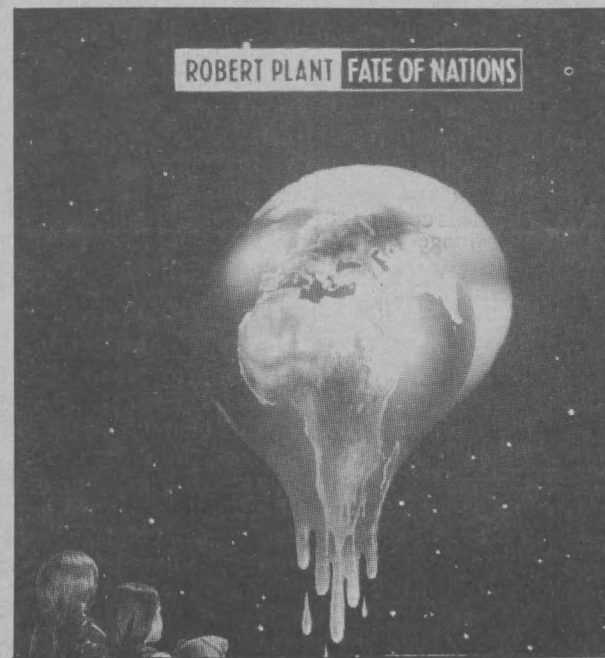
From the cryptic print on the jacket, which is reminiscent of the old Zeppelin covers, to the colorful but dark and eerie representations inside the jacket, which try to explain the social relevance, I assume *Nations* could be considered a blast from the past; though it is one

that would have been better staying right there.

The one pleasing element was the environmental theme, which flowed through — and was the basic framework for — each song. If you bypass the hidden messages, the attempts at falsetto by a man who has destroyed his throat after some 40 years of abuse, and the different attempts by guitarists Kevin Scott McMichael and Oliver Woods to revamp the classical rock guitar (which is the greatest sin of all), the album is somewhat digestible.

Of the 11 songs, the two with the most merit are "Down By The Sea" and "Network News."

"Down By The Sea" is a lyrical walk through the damage that has been done to our seas and waterways by years of pollution, while "Network News" is a spanking on the



butts of the irresponsible media who disregard the truth for the sake of a pound of sterling or the almighty buck.

Accompanied by past

Planters Phil Johnstone, Charlie Jones and Nigel Eaton, Plant would have been better off holding his environmental message.

—Duke Conover

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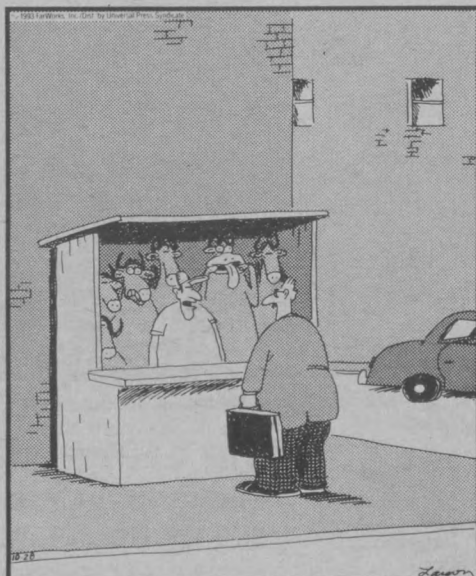
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THE FAR SIDE

By GARY LARSON



"Well, I've got good gnus and I've got bad gnus."

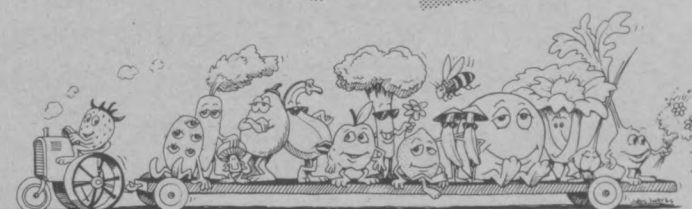
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groups advocating a safe and sane
I.V. Halloween

**Friday, Oct. 29
Storke Plaza
2:00-6:00pm**



Gosh! what an eclectic
blend of I.V.
music!



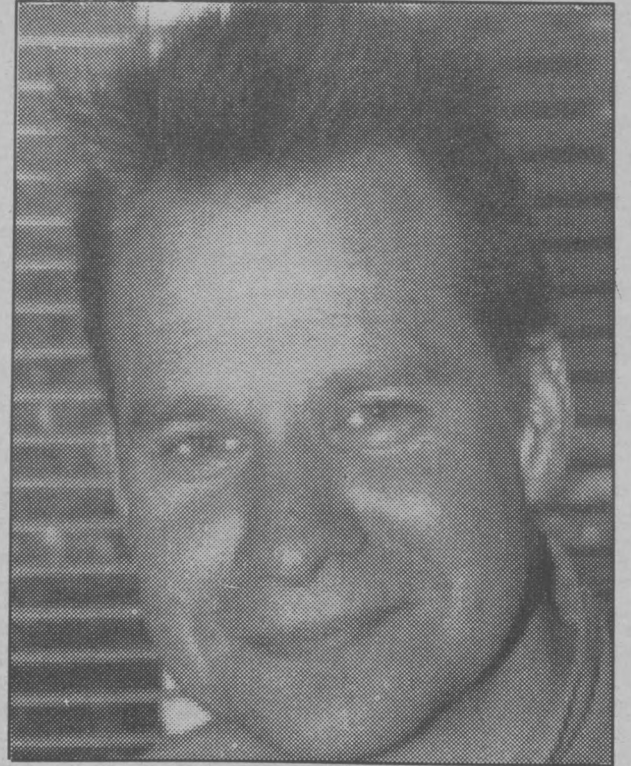
2:00... Know More
3:00... Indica
4:00... Rain

NOT A BORE

The life of a student can often seem quite boring and dull. Although course units can be stimulating, the day-in, day-out task of getting to a classroom on time drains the energy. If you feel lethargic by the time Friday comes, Arts and Lectures has a free event which will send energy down your spine for the coming weekend. Peter Sellars, artistic director of the 1993 L.A. Arts Festival, will be giving a lecture entitled "Multiculturalism: Practice," Friday, Oct. 29 at 4:15 in Lotte Lehmann Concert Hall.

Although Sellars has an extensive background in the arts, his main work currently revolves around the Los Angeles Festival, a large-scale international, intercultural and interdisciplinary civic experiment. The festival is part of a grassroots movement which attempts to realign the distribution of culture in America.

Sellars is one of the top theater, opera and television directors in the world today. His version of Aeschylus' "The Persians" will close out the L.A. Festival later this year, and will travel to Paris and Berlin. The exhibit has caused controversy, as on the preview night when half of the audience walked out of the performance. According to Sellars in the October issue of *The New Yorker*, "controversy" is



crucial to the functioning of a democracy.

Interestingly, the exhibit theme links to the Gulf War and to a contemporary multicultural agenda. The fear of the "other" runs throughout the performances, reflecting the racism which runs through the interaction of people around the world. Sellars finds a new way of telling the story of Aeschylus and includes the idea of censoring in journalism regarding the Gulf War. The play asks why journalists continued the war instead of simply reporting

about it.

It would be magical if the medium of art eventually allowed all cultures to respect and accept one another. Sellars has ideas which will eventually create a culture which exhibits art equally and enlightens Americans about the exotic, the foreign and the unfamiliar. Through listening to Sellars this Friday, you may inspire yourself to get out of I.V. this weekend to expose yourself to the other which our culture has brought us up to ignore.

—Jennifer Borenstein

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Fright Night

Tim Burton is Halloween. His films are repeatedly strange, dark and macabre. Remember *Beetlejuice*, *Edward Scissorhands*, *Batman*.

Then take into consideration the plot of one of his first films, 20 minutes long, entitled *Frankenweenie*, in which a little boy's dog is "reconstructed" and becomes destructive.

Burton's latest effort, *The Nightmare Before Halloween*, appropriately released on the verge of "All Hallows Eve" and only several moons before Good 'ol Saint Nick takes his annual sleigh ride, is a visual wonder with a magical soundtrack by the "pop king" of Halloween, Oingo Boingo's Danny Elfman.

The Nightmare Before Halloween is crawling, oozing, and gurgling with life that haunts your imagination and casts a shadow over virtually any creative

audience member's mind. Animation, claymation and computer-generated effects are combined to create this awe-inspiring visual wonder, budgeted at \$20 million. It'll get you higher than an entire night's loot of tricks and treats. Twisted camera angles and astounding depth within animated and computerized landscapes creates the feeling of being led around the set of *Phantom of the Opera*, or swooping in and around Disneyland's haunted house rather than just sitting in your mechanized chair.

"And since I am dead, I can take off my head, and recite Shakespeare," sings our protagonist Jack Skellington. Disenchanted with being the "Pumpkin King," Jack — the bone daddy of Halloween Land, full of pathos — wanders, singing all the while, into "someplace new," which

is a forest of sorts.

Mesmerized by a door on a large pine that is shaped like a Christmas Tree, Jack opens the door and is transported to "Christmas Town," wherein "Children are throwing snowballs instead of heads."

Brimming to the top of his skull with warm feelings and joy for Christmas, Jack decides to make it his own. He will be the bearer of Christmas cheer, only his presents will be ghoulish equivalents of traditional holiday fare. His coffin-sleigh driven by fabricated Frankenstein-like reindeer is only the beginning of his well-intended but poorly executed perversion of traditional Christmas symbols.

Nightmare gives new meaning to the term 'mise-en-scene.' Every set and character has an unbelievable amount of depth.

Oogie-Boogie, an evildoer in Halloween Land, has a burlap sack for skin which contains his repulsive body, whose structure is made up entirely of various creepy, crawly bugs seething just under his burlap epidermis. The boogie-man grooves out in his vulgar Vegas-like dwelling while torturing Jack's lover, "Patchwork" Sally, the only character who knows the ramifications of Jack's deviation from his true identity.

Nightmare's quality of production is so fiendishly fantastic it's scary. Slasher flicks, modern society's traditional Halloween fare, will hide in the dark recesses of video rental shops and film canisters for shame. And shame on you should you choose to blow seven dollars on a film that doesn't dare to dazzle as well as blow your mind.

—Allison Dunn

DEAD

Continued from p.2A
Chicano community to celebrate its cultural arts more and get out here. No one else does it."

On Nov. 1 at La Casa de la Raza, the celebration will begin at 6 p.m. Throughout the night, Santa Barbara City College Teatro and Teatro de Los Angeles will perform skits. UCSB students and local musicians will per-

form and read poetry, and artwork from students, community members and the Los Angeles Self Help Graphics will be on display.

The highlights of the exhibition will be altars created for the community. Salazar will be working with Mexico City's youngest muralist, Gregorio Escobar, to make an altar for all those who have died. Visiting professor Yreina Cervantez and students in her Chicano art

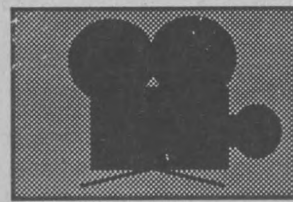
class will dedicate an altar for all those who have died while attempting to cross the U.S. border. An altar for Chicanas/os who have died of AIDS and a memorial for Cesar Chavez will also be presented.

"For me, my art is an avenue to express myself. It is close to me. It is very specific to my culture and my beliefs," said El Congreso Chair Abel Gutierrez, who will submit art for the celebration. "Halloween is very commercialized and

this isn't. It's more than getting fucked up. It's about getting to your religion roots, your cultural roots, your indigenous roots."

On Monday, the festivities will take place at La Casa De La Raza, at 601 East Montecito Street in Santa Barbara. The phone number is 965-8581. The Tuesday activities will occur at El Centro, Building 406. The number for El Centro is 893-4040.

—Anita Miralle



SCARY SCARE

Have you ever laughed so hard you began to choke, gasping for air? Well, *Dead Alive* will leave you choking, on vomit, from the incredibly bloody, nauseous and sometimes comical sequences that run throughout the film.

The premise of the film is that the boy, Lionel Cosgrove (Timothy Balme), has never been allowed to love anyone but his Mum (Elizabeth Moody), even though he is 25 years old.

One day he meets Paquita (Diane Penvalver), a Spanish migrant girl whose family runs a corner shop, and they fall immediately in love.

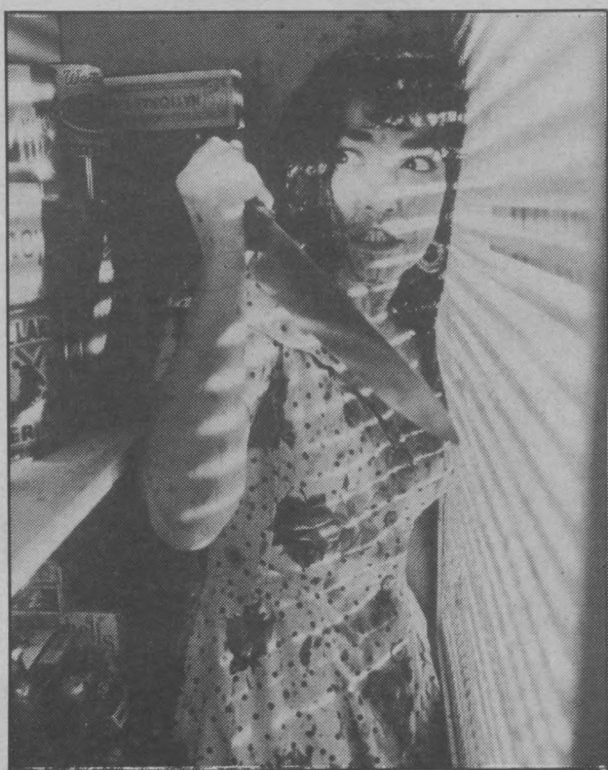
In hope of spending some time away from Mum, the two lovers meet

at a zoo, with Mum in tow, lurking among the bushes.

Hold on now — this is where the plot takes a twist. Mum is bitten by a deadly Sumatran Rat-Monkey. The deadly bite turns into a virus which draws out a new family of raw-meat-eating ghouls, including Mum. Lionel tries hard to keep them penned up in his basement.

There is one literally gut-busting, entrail-spewing scene after another, as the cannibalistic closet zombies try to assimilate to the world of Lionel and Paquita.

This New Zealand offering by director/writer Peter Jackson is incredibly weak on content and production values. But it is



sure to become a cult classic among the cast-iron-stomach contingent of B-rated moviegoers.

Dead Alive makes its Santa Barbara debut at the Isla Vista Theater at 8 and 10 p.m. on Oct. 30 and 31.

—Duke Conover

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"Voices of the Morning"

This video is a meditation on women's roles as defined by orthodox Islamic laws. It is one of the first productions by a rising wave of South Asian women visual artists.

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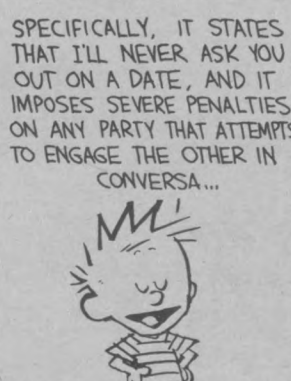
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Good Show



Hail Vern

Life is said to imitate art. And this is especially true in Chen Kaige's award-winning *Farewell my Concubine*, which is in fact built on the blurred borders between "reality" and "representation."

The focal point is the Chinese Opera, a colorful and rigidly codified form of drama that mixes music, acrobatics and melodrama. "Farewell my Concubine" — the opera — revolves around the story of the once-powerful King Chu, defeated by King Han and left with only one horse and his favorite concubine, Yu. Chu releases the horse and tries to free Yu as well. Yu, however, cuts her own throat as King Han is approaching, being faithful to her king unto death.

The opera's cruelty and melodramatic pace set the tone for the movie. The immutable repetition of its traditional forms makes the clash with the radical transformations of this century's China even more dramatic.

Drawn from a novel by Lilian Lee, *Farewell my Concubine* covers 50 years of recent Chinese history, from the "Old Society" of the '20s through dramatic events such as the Japanese invasion in 1937 and the Maoist cultural revolution.

The movie opens with an explicitly political prelude set in 1977, in which

Xiaolou and Dieyi, the two main characters, condemn the cultural revolution and the "Gang of Four," talking to an off-camera voice (which I suspect belongs to Chen Kaige himself). Throughout the half-century span of the story the name of the tyrant changes often enough, but the song remains the same. And yet the powerful changes shake the sheer legitimacy of an art form born in the "old times" for the entertainment of the oppressors of the "laboring masses."

Still, politics does not dominate the movie, which is extremely rich and as thematically colorful as the opera costumes. The chilling first part, in which Xiaolou and Dieyi first meet, is set in the '20s. Here the viewer sees the school where children, traditionally all males, are recruited from the street, among the poorest and the unwanted, and forcefully trained to become part of the opera world.

Selection and preparation for their role is carried to the extreme, to a point at which gender itself is imposed. Gender roles confounded by the representation become even more difficult to bear in real life, and the game of cross-dressing is second only to the continuous cross-referencing of life and stage.

Xiaolou marries Juxian,

a prostitute like Dieyi's mother, and later in the movie she will act for a brief moment as such. And Dieyi anticipates Juxian in giving his "stage brother" and king a son. The unusual jealousy triangle, the theme of the obvious but never consummated homosexual relationship between Xiaolou and Dieyi, is part of this confusion.

The recent trend of exhuming the corpses of old television shows and throwing them up on the big screen as big-budget movies with big stars reached a new low this month with the release of *The Beverly Hillbillies*. There's absolutely no need to beat around the bush here: this movie stinks. Bad.

the original television series 20 years ago.

Gorgeous babe Lea Thompson is the only thing on the screen worth looking at, and like the original series, the only particle of suspense in this movie is how long it will take for Miss Hathaway to get Jethro in the sack.

And how about that Jethro Bodine, the original

dumb. Dumber than dirt. We're talkin' lobotomized yak kind of stupid."

Bader does such a good job in this film that his Jethro shatters the record for movie stupidity previously held by Madonna's character in *Who's That Girl?*, and his incessant smile makes him look like he has been sprayed by that stuff Jack Nicholson killed people with in *Batman*. It is physically painful watching Jethro pop on screen and do his I'm-so-stupid-I-don't-know-my-ass-from-a-hole-in-the-ground routine over and over and over....

The one thing — and be assured that there is only one thing — that almost saves this movie is, believe it or not, the performance of Jim Varney — the "Hey Vern!" guy whose film credits include *Ernest Scared Stupid*.

Varney gives the role of Jed such genuine humanity that while the rest of the hillbillies run around being thoroughly idiotic, Jed remains an honest and dignified man who the audience can't help but be drawn to.

Lily Tomlin is funny as Miss Hathaway and Erika Eleniak is as good an Ellie Mae Clampett as one could be in this movie, but so what? Nothing makes this movie worth it.

—Scott McPherson



Thus it is natural to reconnect to the central ambiguity between opera and reality through the otherwise disarming use of melodramatic gestures and hues.

Farewell my Concubine has won the 1993 Cannes Festival in a tie with the New Zealand movie *The Piano*.

—Paolo A. Gardinali

After quickly fast forwarding through the process of how ol' Jed Clampett became a millionaire (it takes up 15 minutes of screen time between the opening credits to the family's arrival in Beverly Hills), the movie takes the viewer on a brainless and tedious trip through all the culture shock gags that seemed like old jokes on

dumb macho guy? One can only imagine what actor Diedrich Bader was told by the filmmakers as he was preparing himself for the role.

"Be stupid," they must have told him. "Be very, very stupid. Not just some I'm-a-country-bumpkin-that-don't-know-nothin' kind of stupid — we want you to be really, really



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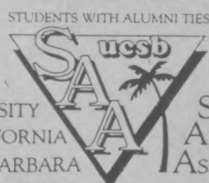
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