

Black Widow

Review by Richard Wilen

First she mates and then she kills... ah yes, the *Black Widow*. This is the deliciously evil premise for director Bob Rafelson's (*Five Easy Pieces*) foray into the realm of the murder thriller. The rapacious female in this case (played by Theresa Russell) is a calculating temptress who seduces a string of millionaires and then helps them on to an untimely departure.

But despite her careful precautions, this deadly widow's predations come to the attention of Alex Barnes (Debra Winger), a desk-bound researcher for the Department of Justice. Following a few tantalizing clues, Barnes pursues her quarry with the same obsession that drives the widow to her deadly games.

This is really not a murder mystery in the strict sense. We know from the very beginning who the murderer is and how she operates. Rather than a mystery, we are offered a duel of wits in

which the hunter becomes the hunted. The only real question is how the murderer will be tripped up.

While not quite up to the highest standards of the master of suspense and intrigue, Alfred Hitchcock, *Black Widow* does do justice to his legacy. The film is at its best at the end, the clever climax twisting us around and around until we don't know quite which way is up.

Russell is perfectly cold and devious. Moving through a succession of identities, she casts an alluring spell wherever she goes. With ruthless precision she moves from one victim to the next, shrewdly snatching up the estates of her dearly departed husbands and disappearing into the night. The intensity that Russell injects into her role provides a smoldering fire that keeps the film alive even in its slower moments.

Unfortunately, Winger does not quite keep pace with her co-star.

Her transition from desk-jockey to field operative isn't particularly convincing or stimulating. Her emotional energy just doesn't have the same fire that emanates from Russell. Her occasional outbursts of wisecracking acerbity work well, but they are too few and far between.

A number of fine actors are featured in supporting roles, including Nicol Williamson, Dennis Hopper, and James Hong. The latter gives a particularly good performance as a Chinese private-eye who gets tangled in the widow's web.

Following Russell from millionaire to millionaire, Rafelson somewhat overloads the film with the "life-styles of the rich and infamous." The photography is rich and sumptuous, but after a while one feels bloated, like eating too many truffles. More suspense and drama and less window dressing would have made this film a top-notch thriller.

As it is, *Black Widow* is one of the better entries in the resurgence of the suspense drama. Hitchcock may be gone, but clearly his legacy lives on. Now if only his students had paid more attention in Suspense 101. . . .

THE BIJOU

492 E 13th
686-2458

ENDS THURS. JAN. 26
Fri-Sat 7:15 ONLY Sun-Thurs 6:45 ONLY
"Sweet, funny, charming and even haunting."
- Jack Kroll, Newsweek

Summer
A FILM BY
ERIC ROHMER
R
Gen. Adm. \$4.00 / Students w/ ID \$3.50 / Miser Monday \$3.00 / Free Popcorn Tuesday Nights

STARTS FRI. JAN. 20
EUGENE PREMIERE
The Talking Heads
DAVID BYRNE'S
"TRUE STORIES" is
the most joyous and
inventive rock movie-
musical since the
Beatles scrambled
through "HELLO"
Time Magazine
"TRUE STORIES" had
me on the floor with
laughter. Defin-
itely off-the-wall,
it's very different."
- Sneak Previews

• Separate admission required •



CHINA DELIGHT Restaurant

Lunch, Dinner, Food to Go
OPEN 7 DAYS A WEEK
345-3239 • 453 Willamette
Excellent Vegetarian Dishes

SZECHUAN, CANTONESE and MANDARIN CUISINE



NOBLE DUCK

DELI & ICE CREAM

Classic deli menu of fine food to stay or to go.

- Business meetings catered

Mon-Fri 8:30-5:00
1744 Willamette • 342-5539

CINEMA 7

Attrium Bldg
687-0733

"THIS FILM IS 99% PURE GENIUS KEROUAC."
—ALLEN GINSBERG

WHAT HAPPENED TO KEROUAC?

Featuring WILLIAM BURROUGHS, NEAL CASSADY, GREGORY CORSO, ALLEN GINSBERG, CHARLIE PARKER and GARY SHTOER

Directed by MICHAEL LEHRER and LEON MURKIN
A New Yorker Film Release © 1984
Music by THE LOUDSOME HOME

Feb. 21-27. Shows Sat 7:30 & 9:30. Sun & Mon 7 & 9. Tues thru Thur 8 pm. Sun bar-gain matinee 4:30 pm and all shows Mon \$3.

poppi's

GREEK TAVERNA

Greek Food, Wine and Spirit

675 East 13th • Eugene, Oregon • 343-0846
Closed Tuesdays



The Bon-sai Restaurant & Lounge

BANQUETS - TAKE-OUT
342-6869

WELCOME OREGON LOGGERS
MARK ALAN in the lounge
44 East 7th Avenue

OPEN FOR LUNCH 11:30-5:00 and DINNER 5:00-10:00

favors

343-7155

SPECIAL:
\$5 OFF ANY PERM OR COLOR
\$2 OFF HAIR CUTS

CALL TODAY FOR:
CATHY WEST, WAYNE, ANGELA OR JEAN

848 WILLAMETTE ST.
—Good Until March 19—





Catering

at your service. . .

We provide trays for your special occasions:
Parties
Business Meetings
Weddings
Reunions
Picnics . . . and more

We offer these special features:
Baked goods—cookies, muffins, poundcakes & cheesecakes
Homemade breads, bagels & rolls
Fresh Quiche—a wide variety made to order, each serves 8-12
Specialty salads

2 days advance notice appreciated on small trays, additional notice needed on large trays.
A small deposit is required on your order.
Call Humble Bagel 484-4497, ask for Rhonda or stop by 2435 Hilyard St.

EXCELSIOR GAFE

Our new menu features:

- New Orleans Crab Cakes
- Jalapeno Pasta with Chicken & Avocado
- Grilled Lamb, Southwestern Style
- Grilled Chicken Breast with Tangerine & Ginger
- French Onion Soup
- Hamburgers & Churasco served day & night
- Seafood Specials Daily

Lunch, Dinner, Full Bar

Serving meals until 10 p.m.

Open until midnight



754 East 13th Avenue Eugene, Oregon 342-6963