

music

Flat out boogie at the fairgrounds

Do Eugeneans know how to rock and roll? With the Friday night appearances of the Elvin Bishop Group at the Lane County Fairgrounds they'll get a chance to prove it.

The group will perform in the Fairgrounds' Agricultural Building at 7 and 10 p.m. that night.

There is no other way to describe Elvin Bishop but flat out boogie! But it is a little more complicated than that. Their music is a soulful, country rock boogie with a good portion of blue thrown in to boot.

The first time I took in the Elvin Bishop Group was a little over a year ago in the Salem Armory. They were performing with It's A Beautiful Day. Elvin Bishop music was a regular at my house but very few had heard of them in Salem. That ignorance ended very soon though. Between sets people came off the floor wiping their brows saying, "Wow, Beautiful Day will have to be something else to keep up with that group. Who were they?" (Isn't it neat to see people get turned on to something that you've been digging?)

Some months later, Elvin Bishop headlined a show with The Sons of Champlin at the armory

turning in another fine performance and a few weeks ago they had one heck of a gig at the Paramount in Portland.

Their hard driving down home sound works an audience into a complete frenzy. I mean, when folks up front can do nothing but hop and shake uncontrollably and chicks are on their old man's shoulders clapping their hands and rolling their heads, that's getting loose. And when things get loose I dig it!

Personnel in the group include the gutsy, soulful voice of organist Steve Miller (this is a different Steve Miller), Kip Maercklein, on the bass, Bill Meeker handling the drums, and a female named Jo Baker, whose voice can keep up with the best. She shares vocal duties with Miller and Bishop.

Then there's Elvin Bishop. Man, can that dude get down on a blues guitar. Whew! For that matter he can play any guitar and do it fantastically. He enjoys himself only when the audience enjoys themselves. In concert he is able to accomplish what few artists are able to do—establish an almost personal relationship with the audience. This wonderful feature is the second half of the show. His music and his attitude enable you to leave his concert feeling good.

The group has turned out two albums on the Epic label, "Feel It" and "Rock My Soul." Cuts from these two LPs that might be done include the theme song from their first album "Don't Fight It (Feel It)," "So Good," "So Fine," "Party Til The Cows Come Home" (they'll probably end the show with a bang on this one), "Hogbottom," and from their second album, "Rock My Soul," "Have A Good Time," "Out Behind The Barn" and "Stomp."

Appearing with Elvin Bishop will be Providence—one of only three groups on the Threshold label, which is owned by the Moody



Blues. I'm told they are similar to the Moody Blues but don't utilize a synthesizer. Hmmm, sounds interesting.

I might add here that Bishop jams with various people and those who accompany him vary. On the last album Delaney Bramlett (of Delaney and Bonnie) got in his licks. So for myself, I'm going to keep this in mind when I attend as the ads out say The Elvin Bishop Group and "friends."

Tickets are \$3 advance at the Sun Shop and Chrystal Ship and \$3.50 at the door—if any remain.

Jim Worlein

films

Frank Capra's films and a leading authority

A student reads the handbill posted on the wall and mutters, "World's leading authority my ass. If this guy's such hot shit why's he coming here in the first place?"

The question requires two answers. First, the "guy" doesn't have to go far to get here, he's a University student. Second, he really is one of the world's foremost authorities in his field.

Lee Poague's field is the study of director Frank Capra. His involvement with Capra isn't based solely on reverence for the man, expediency enters in.

In working on his Ph.D. dissertation in the English department's film and criticism branch, Poague wanted not only to find a subject that interested him, but one that would have a good chance of being published.

"Of all the work done on movies, there isn't one book on Capra," explains Poague. "I figured he deserves something done on him. Besides, he's good and I like him."

"Why do I like him? That's the same as asking why is his work lasting, why are we putting on a Frank Capra film festival here this week-end and next. It can be explained in one word. Comedy. He uses comedy in the form it was meant to be used, as a plot. What happens is the comedy, not just the minute to minute giggles."

Poague explains the form of comedy can be traced back to early fertility rites. He contends sex is the basic premise of comedy and all comical works, whether done by Capra or not, contains this element.

Capra adheres to this formula in nearly all his movies. "The typical Capra movie," says Poague, "is the romantic comedy, people falling in love. Almost all of Capra's movies end with a marriage."

Some of his comedies made use of politics. Because critics considered him just a director of comedies they felt those inclusions were an attempt to make a political flic. And they jumped on him.

"That's been a problem about Capra," said Poague. "The critics didn't fully understand what his comedy was about. They saw his political stuff and thought he was naive."

They thought he was making political flics, not comedy. What he was really doing was making comedies, good comedies, with politics in them.

"The audiences saw them and thought they were comedies. The support was enormous. People laughed when they saw something funny. They felt good when they saw something they were supposed to feel good about."

"That's the way it is today. People see something funny and they laugh. They see something and they feel good about it. There's nothing 'camp' about liking Capra today."

So people like Capra, but no one has written anything of length about his work. Poague hopes to change this and be the first to compile a study of Capra's efforts.

After completing his undergraduate work at San Jose State, Poague came to the University on a fellowship in English. "I came here and was in Victorian novel," says Poague, "But Bill Cadbury sparked my interest in movies. I was in a class of his and he was always talking about movies, telling the class 'You gotta see this movie' or 'You can't miss this one.' So I figured instead of being in drama and knowing something about movies I'd be in movies and know something about drama."

Poague's dissertation work on Capra began at the Library of Congress in Washington, D.C., where he spent three months studying Capra films. He plans to finish his research by August and then has hopes of being published.

One aspect that bothers Poague is that people may doubt he is all that knowledgeable—about Capra when he has been involved in serious work for such a short time. "I've only been at it three months, but I guess that can qualify me as a so-called authority. I don't like to be called that because it

makes me sound egotistical, but the way it is, pure and simple, is that there are very few people into Capra seriously and no one has written a book about him so I guess you can call me an authority. But that 'world's leading' is a bit much."

The Capra festival is being held, in very big part, for Poague's benefit. As Pierre Dunn, manager of the University Film Society, explains, "The film society is set up to help the serious film student. If we can get films that will help him then we bring them to campus. Of course, we try to bring good movies, movies that will entertain the rest of the student body because we have to have their financial support to continue the program."

While more Capra films are in the offing, another Capra festival is not planned.

Having become an authority on Capra films, Poague is now sensitive to charges that cinema is, artistically, not on a level with literature. "I don't agree with that at all. How can those people account for the fact that 'As You Like It' and Capra's 'It Happened One Night' are the same. It has nearly the same basis, boy meets girl and falls in love. Film is the same as literature in that it is a way human beings have of expressing themselves."

"Look, if poems and novels were the art of the 1900's then rock and roll and movies are the art of today."

While Capra's movie-making "career" spanned 1926 through 1951 he did come out of retirement in the 60's. In 1961 he made "Pocketful of Miracles" and was, for a brief time, engaged with a movie of the late 60's "Marooned" at the age of 71.

"It would really have been something to see what Capra would have done with a space movie like 'Marooned,'" says Poague. But he quit the picture when they wouldn't meet his budget of three or four million dollars. Funny thing is, it wound up costing the new producer around eight million to put out."

"I imagine he could have done it for less than eight million. He was a genius at organization. He knew a good script and knew good people. He'd fit somebody to the role he had in mind and when he got that person he wouldn't have to act, he'd just be himself. In Mr. Deeds Goes To Town, Gary Cooper isn't just an actor in a role, he's Mr. Deeds."

Friday and Saturday, 177

Lawrence:

8 p.m. The Strong Man — 1926

9:20 p.m. Long Pants — 1927

10:30 p.m. Lost Horizon — 1937

Friday, Jan. 26 and Saturday, Jan. 27:

8 p.m. The Battle of Russia —

1943

9:45 p.m. Meet John Doe —

1941

Cost: \$1.25 film society members, \$1.75 non-members, \$1 individual tickets.

Tickets can be purchased at door or at noon Jan. 18 and 19 on EMU Terrace.

To say that someone is a world authority on anything in just three months is as presumptuous as thinking all graduates of the Famous Authors School will be Rod Serlings. For all Poague knows there may be some dude in Chugwater, Wyo., whose knowledge of Frank Capra is limitless.

But Poague isn't hiding behind his "title." He'll give lectures on Capra and his films at 6:30 each Saturday prior to the show. He's not worried about any detractors, nor does he see it as challenge to his knowledge.

"I just happen to like Capra's work and am doing my dissertation on him because no one else had." That gives him a fair chance of having it published. Nothing wrong with liking that.

Jim Hunter