

Film

The Return of the Secaucus Seven Directed by John Sayles

If you enjoy light humor seasoned with the salt of life, you'll probably love John Sayles' *The Return of the Secaucus Seven*.

What to say about a movie that is an overwhelming display of respect for humankind as well as for the specific personalities in the film?

The Return of the Secaucus Seven is about the reunion of a group of close friends who, over the years, have sifted through jobs, lovers, ideals, passions and locations. Coming together in rural New England are Mike and Katie, Maura and Jeff, J.T., Frances, Irene and Chip.

Mike and Katie are school teachers, now, still living together. Katie wonders if this is good when Jeff and Maura have already split up. Jeff and Maura seem to have lost the ability to communicate: frustration prevails.

J.T., just about to turn 30, has to deal with his limited musical

talents and his unlimited aspirations. Frances is in med school and pleased with her progress, but doesn't like doctors; and she gets a bit lonely.

Irene's a speech writer for a "liberal" senator whom she wishes would mean the things she wants him to say. Chip's the new member in the group: Insecure, and a true preppy, he supplies the dope that numbs them through the hours at the jail.

Most of the story focuses on the events of the weekend — a bad play, charades, eating, drinking, and recovering. The group interactions within the film are tremendous, and Sayles has truly managed to manipulate his story and cast to the point that they mesh almost unnoticeably into a succinct rhythm and form.

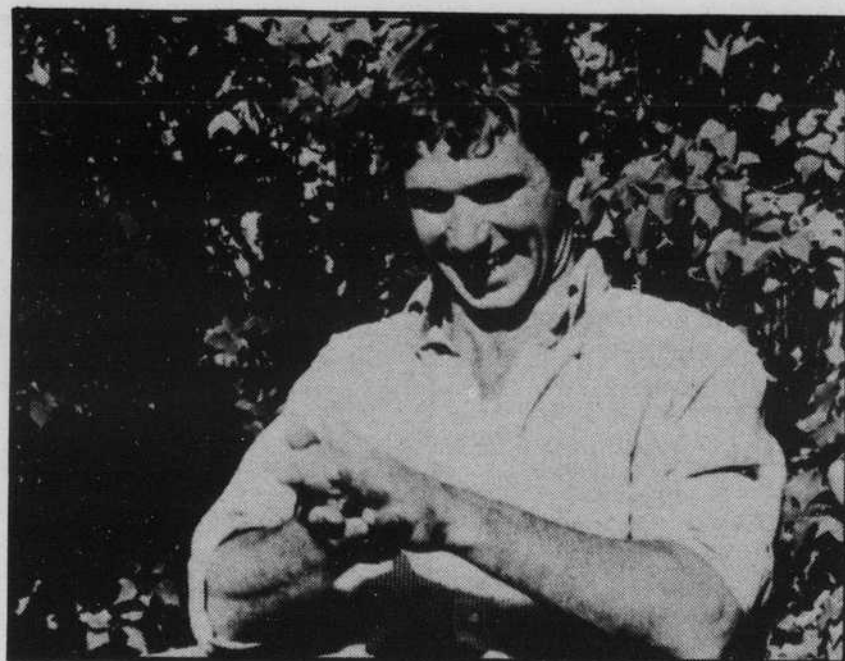
The rhythm of the movie itself reflects the age from which these folks come: a rather laid-back era where you did a lot of sitting around, some self-analyzing (as well as some out-and-out criticizing), intel-

lectualizing and always trying to answer the world's problems.

At the time of the reunion, these people are all, like J.T., edging on 30, somewhat involved with the outside world, and with the help of humor, irony and philosophy, surviving in a still troubled society.

Sayles with his natural actors, a crew, and a limited budget of \$60,000, strings together events and relationships on film that can only lead the viewer to wonder if we'll be like that.

— Erzsi De'ak



LPs

Coconut Telegraph **Jimmy Buffett** ©1980, MCA Records

As he released *Volcano*, Jimmy Buffett was said to be "growing up" — leaving behind "Margaritaville," "Why Don't We Get Drunk (and Screw)" and of course, "Cheesburger in Paradise" for a more settled in, responsible balladeer image. *Volcano* showed evidence of maturity, but the majority of songs were still "Buffett in the Caribbean being Buffett," a style that varies from sincere story-ballads to ingenious representations of what is considered the ordinary side of life.

Coconut Telegraph takes Jimmy Buffett's maturation one step further. It is almost too serious. The majority of *Coconut Telegraph* is sedated — ballads make up the bulwark. And Buffett seems to be moving from his coveted lazy, no-holds-barred island lifestyle to that of a reporter of events. This is, however, not so unusual considering his college days as a journalism major.

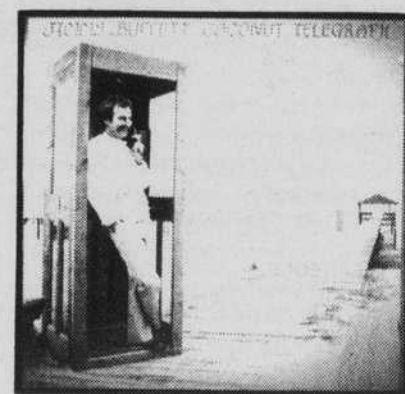
The title tune is true to the Caribbean Buffett style. Its

rock-calypto beat tells of the method of jungle gossip after a hard night's partying, portrayed aptly by headphones with coconuts for speakers.

"The Weather is Here, Wish You Were Beautiful" is a perfect example of Buffett's ability to tell a tale while making you think about your own predicaments in life. Here we meet a well-off, yet neglected male of the species who runs off to, where else, the islands, leaving the woes of city life behind. As the saying goes, "There's no place like home when it's this far away."

Buffett's ballad abilities shine true on "Stars Fell on Alabama" and "Little Miss Magic." The former is a 1934 tune where Buffett croons and the Coral Reefer Band swoons complete with mandolin, upright bass, piano and accordion. "Little Miss Magic" is a Buffett acoustical solo written for his daughter, Savannah Jane, that reinforces the mature, responsible image of a new father.

The remainder of *Coconut Telegraph* includes a tribute to John Wayne ("Incommunicado"), a tribute to Muhammed Ali ("The Good Fight"), a tribute



to working ("It's My Job") and a heavy-on-the-strings, introspective number ironically titled "Island." Although Buffett had ample help from J.D. Souther, Mac McAnally and David Loggins, it seems to have only watered down that Caribbean margarita sound.

Perhaps Jimmy says it best himself in "Growing Older But Not Up." He's getting a bit serious, but the Buffett-Coral Reefer Band sound is still a celebration of a lifestyle that most of us look to for at least one week of the year — "I'd rather die while I'm living than live while I'm dead."

— Jerril Nilson



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Coming events . . .

Welcome back to the cultural gut of Eugene. This week our specialties include . . .

- David Crosby, on a West-Coast club tour, will stop in Eugene next week for two performances.

- Crosby will appear at Grand Illusions on Wednesday, April 15 for concerts at 7:30 and 10:30 p.m. Tickets are \$7 in advance of the show.

- At the music school, the Faculty Artist Series will present the "Earely Musick Players" in Beall Concert Hall tonight at 8 o'clock.

- The group specializes in early music from the 12th through 17th centuries.

- Folksingers Elizabeth Cotten

and Mike Seeger will perform traditional mountain folk music on Friday, April 10 at 7 and 9 p.m. at the Community Center for the Performing Arts.

Tickets are \$5 in advance and \$6 on the day of the show.

- The Harold Pinter drama "Betrayal" will open at the University Arena Theatre on Friday, April 10 at 8 p.m. "Betrayal" will also be performed at 8 p.m. on April 11, and April 15-18 at the first-floor theater in Villard Hall. General admission tickets are \$4.50, \$2.75 for University students and senior citizens and \$3.50 for other students. Call the box office at 686-4191 for reservations.

- Gay Pride Week kicks off

Sunday, April 12 with a "Musical Party" featuring Eugene-area country musician Ashlie Wade at the W.O.W. Hall. Call the Gay Peoples Alliance at 686-3360 for more information.

- Demonstrations of Slavic, Balkan, Turkish and Scandinavian arts and customs will highlight the Shrovetide Festival scheduled Friday through Sunday, April 10-12, at the University. All events will be held in Gerlinger Annex, Rooms 350-354. Admission for the entire festival is \$10 for University students and \$18 for the general public. Single workshop tickets are \$2.50.

For more information, contact Ken Aldrich at 686-3386.

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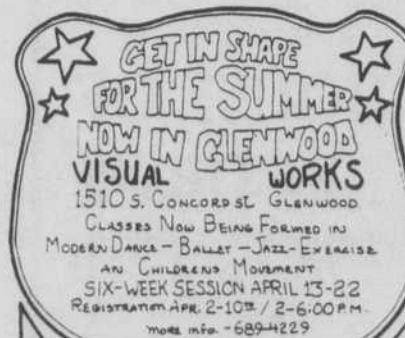
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Thursday, April 9, 1981