

CINEMA

'Subway' is unabashedly fun



Luc Bresson's "Subway" is a hippish little dart with the look and color of "Diva" but with a quirkish sort of charm all its own. The story is nominal: a blonde punk in a tux with distinctively anti-social tendencies eludes a group of pursuers in a "French Connection"-like chase and finds refuge in the catacombs of the Paris subway.

It turns out that punk Fred, played by lanky Christopher Lambert (yes, the same Lambert of "Greystoke"), blew a safe at a ritzy party thrown by a beautiful young socialite named Helena (Isabelle Adjani). Fred stole papers that would cause Helena's rich husband to kill to retrieve.

Meanwhile, as the thugs work to retrieve the papers, Fred finds a colorful subculture (pardon the pun) under the streets of Paris. The inhabitants of this underground community include Rollerskater, a purse snatcher on wheels; Florist, a streetcorner philosopher with plans for a heist that would make the subway cops reel; Drummer, a dude who taps on everything in sight; and Big Bill, a weightlifting hulk who saves Fred more than once from handcuffs.

Add a pair of cops named Batman and Robin and a father figure named Commissioner Gesberg, and you've got the cast for 100 minutes of quirky fun.

Bresson's subway world is a world unto itself, an escape from the outside world seen only in the opening chase and in a later scene where Helena rejects her husband's lifestyle. Helena finds herself more at home in the magical world of the Paris Metro than at the boring dinner par-

ties she must attend with her influential husband. One of the best scenes in the film takes place at such a dinner party, where Helena lets out her dissatisfaction in a particularly vocal manner before leaving to perhaps find a life underneath the streets of Paris with Fred.

Bresson paces his film leisurely, letting the characters slow down enough to let their personalities, as skimpy as they are, entice the viewer. The characters are not complex but they are engaging and the cast members play with their parts enough to exhibit the spunk and spontaneity that makes them fun.

It's Bresson's playful approach to the characters and the visual presentation that makes an otherwise silly story a fun little film. There's an elegance to his style, exemplified in his smooth-as-silk scene-establishing tracking shots and the photography taken from the moving vehicles. The measured quality of these shots establishes the easy pace of the whole film and the surprisingly good generic rock soundtrack adds a solid, uptempo beat.

"Subway" is a lot of fun because it never takes itself seriously. After all, how could a film about an anti-social punk who takes refuge in a Paris subway while forming a rock band (a band that plays hackneyed rock with trite American lyrics, of all things. Oooh, the kitschy fun of it all!) be anything but a lark? It all works because Bresson adds the spice that makes this lark a thoroughly wonderful little movie.

"Subway" starts today at Cinema 7, located in the Atrium Building at West 10th Avenue and Olive Street.

By Sean Axmaker

Computers Continued from Page 2B

What does the future hold for this relatively new artist's tool?

"We really are right at the very beginning. Every year things are changing rapidly," Hickman says.

He sees two directions for computer art in the near future. One of these is the development of more sophisticated systems which will produce even more realistic images.

"Maybe only Hollywood could support this kind of development. It's especially suited for science fiction," says Hickman. He mentions George Lucas' "Star Wars" trilogy as a good example of the computerized image in art.

The other direction Hickman sees is the making of very powerful systems that are affordable for schools and individuals.

"Ten years ago you would not find the

VETRIX system in an art department," Hickman says. "It's very exciting. We'll have these powerful graphics computers in the hands of millions of people, rather than just a few thousand."

Many colleges and universities are introducing computer graphics into their art departments.

"At the U of O the entire department has been clearly the leader in the Northwest," says Hickman. He adds that there has been a cooperative effort of the architecture, allied arts and art education departments to incorporate the use of computers in the classroom. Those departments soon hope to offer minors and majors in computer and design.

The exhibit will run through March 30. WISTEC is open from noon to 5 p.m., Tuesday through Sunday, and is located next to Autzen Stadium at 2300 Centennial Blvd.

Electronic Continued from Page 3B

The EEMC also offers workshops on synthesizer programming and recording techniques for the small studio, but so far none have been held.

"They're designed for high-schools or groups that are interested in electronic music and finding out about what makes it work," Thomas says. "That's something we do offer but so far we haven't had anyone take us up on it...we haven't found the format for getting ourselves invited to do it. My idea is that maybe we should do one somewhere for free."

It has taken the group two years to even approach self-sufficiency. Vernacular says, and each member has invested hundreds of dollars into the project. Yet all four members of the EEMC agree that the rewards reaped from their cooperative have been lucrative, though not in financial terms.

"We've all learned a lot just by doing it, and it's all information that is potentially useful to our careers," Thomas says. "If (Phyllyp) puts out a record of his own music, he now knows who to contact to promote it, to get it distributed and who to send it to, to get it reviewed."

The EEMC is currently compiling a second sampler tape, this time of musicians in the Pacific Oregon Daily Emerald

Northwest. It has already received submissions from some 20 composers of electric music in Oregon, Washington and British Columbia.

"We're shooting pretty high on this one," Vernacular says. "We don't know how far we're gonna get, but we're going for a pretty professional package."

Also, Vernacular says, they are ready to start recruiting new members into their co-op.

"Members have to be composers," he says as he lists the criteria for membership. "If you join this group, you better be prepared to do some work."

"And realize there's no monetary profit," Griffith says dejectedly.

"But of course there is a profit," Thomas says after the chuckling subsides. "You can learn a lot and your music is heard by a lot more people than it would be if you were working on your own."

Tapes of the EEMC sampler, "Free Fall," are available at House of Records and Earth River Records. The group can be contacted by writing to The Eugene Electronic Music Collective, P.O. Box 3219, Eugene 97403.

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Go Ducks!

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