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CINEMA

'Blue City' lacks definition

If "Blue City" proves anything, it's that nobody but Walter Hill can direct a Walter Hill film.

Adapted by Hill and Lukas Heller from the Ross MacDonald novel, "Blue City" marks the directoral debut of Michelle Manning and the third pairing of Judd Nelson and Ally Sheedy, a duo that is now wearing thin.

Nelson is Billy Turner, a hell-raiser who left home five years ago and has just returned only to find his father murdered and the killer at large. Sheedy is Annie Raifer, his best friend's kid sister and (surprise!) his new love interest.

Manning starts right in defining the character of Turner. Within his first five minutes home he picks a fight in a bar and spends the rest of the night in jail, only to start back by harrassing the cops. As he explains it, this is an attention getting device he ritually performs so his father the Mayor can bail him out. This time, however, there is no father and no reunion.

Turner decides it's up to him to get the murderer, and police Chief Reynolds (Paul Winfield) gives him a name to start on — Perry Kerch (David Carruso). It turns out that Kerch is quite a guy. Not only does he control the casinos and dog racing just outside the county line, but he sleeps with Turner's mother-in-law and manages her affairs . . . so to speak.

Well, our little Turner decides it's time to get into action so, with a little coaxing, he gets his best friend Joey (Scott Wilson) to join back up with him and together they take on the biggest organization in the county. How they manage to keep alive while firebombing Kerch's car, robbing his dog track and smashing his casino is just one of those glitches in the plot. There are more than a few.

Everthing about "Blue City" marks it as a perfect Walter Hill film, so it's surprising that he didn't take the directoral reigns himself. Under Manning's supervision the film looks more like a sketch or an idea than a finished movie.

Manning has no concept of pacing or of development. Scenes are abnormally abrupt and contain little in the way of characterization, which hurts the film more than anything. Turner comes off as rash, stupid and violent, an overaged

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DRAMA

'Sex' is a very funny show

The new comedy troupe Snafu's "Sex . . . In The Title," is a very funny show, considering it's the group's first revue. In fact, by the end of the program at Edison's Bar in the Factory, my sides ached from laughing so hard.

Technically the show was hard to beat. The set, costumes, pace, and blocking were excellent. The seven-member troop slipped in and out of several characters with ease.

From the high-energy, chorus-line kick-off prompted by the age-old show biz adage "The Show Must Go On," to the grand finale of the Boppin' Bhagwan and his Himalayan Honeys in Las Vegas, the show was tight-knit and believable. The music and cartoon bridges between the skits added continuity and professionalism.

But "Sex" is more than just a hilarious, well-produced series of skits. It deals with experiences about growing up that we all can relate to. Ralph J. Twitt ("that's with two Ts"), a lanky misfit born from the "let's put this marriage back together" baby boom generation of the '50s, led us through the main events of his life.

Twitt, played by John Duncan, took us on a laugh-filled tour that included early adventures like "makin' sumpthin'" with his brother, played by Don Scorby, in the kitchen; puberty, with that special problem that boys have, "When you're 14 you think it's always gonna be that way," as Twitt says, and onward to the single's bar scene.

These skits were followed by more madcap scenes such as an interview with Mr. Guidance Counselor, played by Michael Walker, in which Twitt loses his simpering personality and marionette-like gestures as he fantasizes about becoming a private detective in a world complete with bourbon and handguns along with blondes, brunettes and redheads whose only purpose in life is to be loved and left by Twitt. The skit ends hilariously with the reality that the skit is over.

While Twitt was the thread that held these and other skits together, and provided a logical progression, the members of Snafu all could stand alone in their own right. "Homeroom Class," "Looking For A Doctor," and "The 509th Snafu Airhead Division" provided a total

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