

Daumier featured at Portland Art Museum

By Kristi Blackman
Of The Print

Magdalena Ladd's first and second year French students visited the Portland Art Museum last Tuesday, to view the exhibition of Honore' Daumier.

Daumier's display of artistic impression became well known to many Frenchmen during the 19th century because of the many caricatures he had published in newspapers. By this he was an inspiration to impressionists such as Picasso, Rouault and Monet.

Daumier's talent in lithography began when he was a child, when he started to sketch figures with charcoal. At fourteen years of age Daumier began selling his lithography to local newspapers, it was there he could communicate through caricatures his view of the environment and political figures as he perceived them.

Daumier's technique was relatively new during the 19th century, his works spoke to the audience with such a directness that the viewers fail to have an immediate response.

"You might say he captured the essence of a piece," stated Ladd, regarding Daumier's caricature of slain men, women and children after the building in which they were



PARLEZ-VOUS FRANÇAIS? Feb. 1, French students went to the Portland Art Museum to view the special collection of the caricatures by Honore' Daumier. "Nadar Elevating Photography To The Height of Art," is one of Daumier's most famous prints.

living was stormed by soldiers.

This piece escaped censorship due to its stare in the face realism.

Daumier's masterpiece is the caricature of Nadar, the photographer trying to capture a photo of the city. The drawing is entitled "Nadar elevating photography to the height of art," and was a very real event.

The exposure needed to be ten minutes, so he let people who were on the streets walk out of the picture; the final photo is of a somewhat deserted city.

Daumier was not only a talented artist but a gifted sculptor. While serving a sentence in jail for his graphics of political dignitaries, he sculpted busts of legislators. Later he drew the legislators as they were in session.

He was a man who lived under censorship most his life. He enjoyed sketching and drawing the theater and its spectators, and social commentaries.

This exhibition of some 4,000 pieces of Daumier's work was made possible by the Armand Hammer Foundation.

After having left the museum, students went to the Crepe Faire to try a lunch of French cuisine. One student claimed "It was so rich and so good, I couldn't finish it!"

Film review

Impressive cast accelerates 'Venom's' potency

By Thomas A. Rhodes
Of The Print

Animals running amok have been given a great deal of attention and money from the film industry.

Ever since King Kong made his memorable climb to the top of the Empire State Building in 1933, animals of all sorts have raged war-paths through man's territory. Excluding the Japanese monster films of the 60's, animals such as bears, bats, rats, rabbits, piranhas, tadpoles, alligators, and killer whales have been the prime evil in many films.

At last, a film arrives that makes no attempt to copy "Jaws" or "The Birds," yet remains on its own two feet as a thriller in the same vein.

The film is "Venom." It boasts an enormous amount of talent both behind and in front of the screen. The cast is unlike those previous bits of schlock. A film with a stellar cast including Nicol Williamson, Klaus Kinski, Oliver Reed, Sterling Hayden, Sarah Miles, and Susan George, has an immediate jump on the other killer snake movie, "Ssssssss."

At first, the snake isn't even a walk on (slither on?). The first 20 minutes deal primarily with Howard Anderson (Hayden) and his grandson

Philip (Lance Holcomb). As Philip's mother (Cornelia Sharpe) leaves, the time is at hand for the maid (George) and the chauffeur (Reed) to fulfill their plans, which are to kidnap Philip for a large ransom.

They have first hired a man with international connections (Klaus Kinski) to assist them in the ploy.

The carefully structured plans bust when Grandpa sneaks Philip out to purchase an African House snake for his small zoo. Philip is inadvertently give the wrong snake, an African Black Mamba, which was intended to go to the London zoo. The mamba happens to be aggressive, extremely paranoid, and the deadliest snake in the world.

When Philip arrives home, he is immediately dragged upstairs to pack for his journey. Grandpa, who was tricked to leaving the house, arrives home, only to be taken hostage by the three terrorists, who shoot a constable while trying to leave. During all of this, the crate containing the snake is opened, leaving the prospective kidnapers with two adversaries.

The second adversary is Commander William Bulloch (Williamson), who is notorious for being a cold-blooded killer, himself. The police receive a call from Dr. Marion Stowe

(Miles) who was originally supposed to receive the snake. She informs them of the mix-up. When she arrives to help, Stowe is tricked into becoming a hostage.

What immediately separates "Venom" from "Ssssssss" is pure tenacity and talent. Under Piers Haggard's fleet-footed direction and Michael Bradsell's tight editing, the film moves not unlike the black mamba itself, swift and aggressive.

Another plus is the breathless photography of Gilbert Taylor ("Star Wars" and "Dracula"). The mixture of intense angles and extreme close-ups almost suffocate the viewer. Another plus is the screenplay by Robert Carrington, who adapted "Wait Until Dark" so ingeniously to the screen. Although the second to last shot reeks of contrivance, it harms the film only slightly. But harm it does, as it puts a dent in the overall feel and adds a scent of triteness where none previously existed.

Still the good outweighs the bad as the performances by the highly touted cast are above average. Nicol Williamson, who is now on Broadway in the flawed production of "Macbeth," has always been a joy to listen to. His heavy Welsh accent adds zest to trivial lines such as "I want him (Kinski) to think it's just me and him

alone on the damn moon." His verbage is an additional plus.

The great Klaus Kinski, who has blessed such Warner Herzog films as "Nosferatu" and "Aguirre: Wrath of God," makes a strong impression as the international criminal. The rest of the cast fares well, especially Lance Holcomb, who makes his silver screen

debut at ten. Although born in Hackensack, New Jersey, he has a bright future ahead of him. Holcomb is currently studying at the Lee Strasberg Acting Studio in New York.

Oh, if it weren't for that ending! It really sticks with you in an awful way, which is a real pity. The film is rated R, mostly for the first snake attack.

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