

# 'Gandhi' more for enlightenment than entertainment

By Troy Maben  
Of The Print

"It is possible to live in peace," these words were spoken by one of the biggest most influential political (as well as spiritual) figures of the 20th century, Mahatma Gandhi. He was a small man in his political and military power compared to some of the other world leaders of the time such as Hitler, Stalin, and Roosevelt, but he successfully freed his home country of India from the then strong-rule over his country by the British. He accomplished his homeland's freedom almost single handedly by his stand on "passive resistance."

The life of this extraordinary individual has now been brought to the screen in

## Alumni art on display

A celebration of at by some noted alumni of Clackamas Community College will be presented to the public during a two-week "Alumni Art Show" offered Jan. 10-21 at the College.

Works of sculpture, painting, graphics, ceramics and more will be on display in the Pauling Center Lobby. A 7 p.m. reception will kick off the show on Jan. 10.

Steve Sandstrom, J.D. Perkins, Sylvia Dobbes and Jerry Upchurch will be among the artists displaying their work. The show, and the reception, are free. For more information, contact the art dept., ext. 386.

## Billy Rancher

### Local rocker makes good

By Vicki Archila  
Of The Print

Billy Rancher and the Unreal Gods is the name of a band that plays the Portland rock scene. They have been hailed the next band to break on a national level. Playing upbeat pop, with a strong dance beat, Rancher and Company have established themselves a very loyal following.

Rancher didn't always want to be a rock and roll star. He was much more interested in baseball and his father was a pro-ball player for the Brooklyn Dodgers. He was going to school on a scholarship for baseball when he decided on a musical career.

He got his first influence when a friend turned him on to Bowie and the Rolling Stones. Then in 1976, Rancher won a David Bowie look-a-like contest. The prize was being chauffeur-driven to the show sipping sherry in the back seat, and meeting everyone in the band.

Rancher's first band started in a garage with his brother. "I took a crash course in guitar playing and singing," he said. He played with that band for a year and a half. He then assembled the 'Unreal

the twenty-year endeavor by Sir Richard Attenborough in his cinematic accomplishment of the film titled "Gandhi."

This film really can't be classified as an entertainment movie, and it can't be classified as a biography. It is in a class all by itself, bordering on the form of art. All in all, the film has aspects of all three, entertainment, art, and biography. The entertainment aspect comes from its photography, acting, and story development. The care, research, and time that was put into this film can almost classify it as pure art, a masterpiece of film work. Altogether however, this film is more of a documentary/biography about a man and his struggles to fight for what he believes. The film is so complete, it covers almost every aspect of this man's life, from young lawyer to old man.

Gandhi was a young black Indian lawyer in Africa when he first learned of prejudice. He was traveling on a passenger train in a compartment where blacks were not allowed. His persistence to stay where he was got him literally thrown off the train, and this single incident started his fight for the rights of others.

Gandhi won many rights for Indians in Africa due to his persistence. He then set off to India to continue his fight for the rights of the people in his homeland. During the time of helping Africans with their independence, he became almost hermit-like wearing only white wrap-around robes made from cloth that he himself had spun. This was his testimony to



Photo courtesy of Columbia Pictures

### Ben Kingsley in his role of Gandhi.

others. By putting aside worldly possessions, he could show the world that he was not getting involved in his crusades for his own personal benefit.

In order for his peace efforts to happen, Gandhi went on numerous hunger strikes that almost killed him, and he stayed on the strikes until his

demands for nonviolence were heeded. In addition to nearly starving to death, Gandhi was beaten, imprisoned, and harassed continually.

His escapades and hunger strikes brought him much recognition, and by the time of the second world war he was known throughout his country and around the world. In a public ceremony in his homeland, Gandhi witnessed England replacing the British flag with that of the flag of India. Gandhi's devotion to his lifelong cause had finally paid off; he achieved independence for his country.

Now, as for the movie itself, to say that it was a tremendous production would almost be like saying "Gone With The Wind" was just another movie. For instance: One of the scenes of the film

recreated a funeral procession that incorporated nearly a third of a million people. Can you imagine paying for all of those extras?

The viewer can easily see the care and devotion that went into producing this film. It is superbly photographed in many of the actual places where the real events took place, paying close attention to details and character development.

The film contains such notable actors as Sir John Gielgud, Martin Sheen, Candice Bergen, Trevor Howard, and Ben Kingsley. The most notable performances in this film come from Ben Kingsley in the title role, which could possibly win him an Oscar when the time comes around.

The makeup transformation of the actor (Kingsley) to the leader (Gandhi) is truly fantastic. In the film Kingsley changes from a young lawyer in his twenties to an 89-year-old man. It is nearly impossible to tell the two apart when comparing actual photographs of the once spiritual and political leader to Kingsley in costume. Not since Dustin Hoffman's transformation from a young man to an old Indian Chief in the movie "Little Big Man" has the effect looked so convincing.

The main drawback to this film, if it can be classified as a drawback, is the length, nearly three and a half hours long. There just doesn't seem to be enough action to carry it through that length of time. The viewer might lose interest toward the end. But one must take into account as to why this film was made. It was not made purely for entertainment's sake, but rather a form of art. "Gandhi" might not do so well at the box office, possibly because it's too sophisticated for modern audiences. However, it will be said about this film that it is a creation of contemporary art to pass through the regular run of theatres and the medium of television, to rest upon the stack of classic films.

month. With all this support and loyalty, no wonder Rancher feels "it's the best place on earth to be."

Gods' by choosing other local musicians he had met along the way. He decided on musicians he liked not only musically, but also as people. "If they played good, that was a fringe benefit," Rancher said.

In their year and a half existence, Billy Rancher and the Unreal Gods have not only become Portland's number one band, but have also released an album and a just-released Christmas single on the Boom Chuck record label. Boom Chuck is Rancher's own label, which he hopes to make the biggest independant in the Pacific Northwest.

Rancher does quite a bit of bouncing around between Portland and New York, where he is now working on a new album to be titled "Made in Hong Kong." Also in the works is a video, hoping to coincide with the album's release. Rancher hopes to finish both projects before the Musical Festival in France. If he can do this in time, it could lead to possible tour dates in Europe.

"They offer a little more for the price at the door," Rancher said of the Goddess A Go-Go, two Portland dancers who work with the band. The future of the 'Goddess' is up in the air right now, but Rancher plans to use them in upcoming videos.

Claiming his music is "floating rock and roll, unstylized music," Rancher writes about "whatever happens to pop into their (the audience) minds at the moment," he said. His music is simple and basic, not too serious, which some fans think is a refreshing change from the too serious, political, depression music of today.

Rancher feels he owes quite a bit to the Portland scene, because of all the support given to him, with even a half hour T.V. special aired last

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