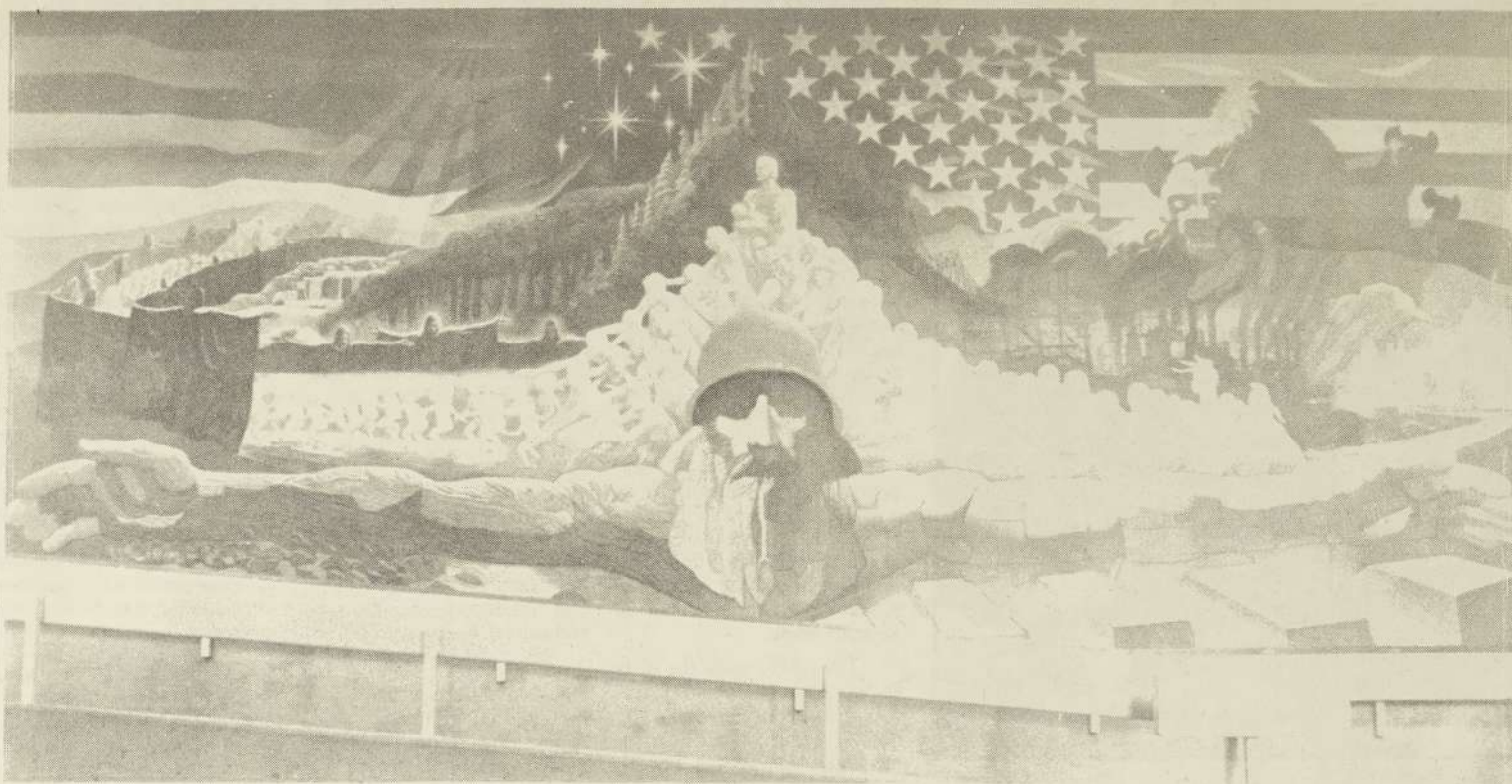




This mural in Barlow Hall is one of the many art pieces that enhance the campus.

Staff photo by Brett Bigham

Streep earns her reputation in 'Sophie's Choice'

By F.T. Morris
Of The Print

Meryl Streep's reputation as a Great Actress was thrust upon her too soon in her career. Her first few performances were quite good—a couple of them were even beautiful—but as she rose to bigger, better roles her talents seemed to fade into a pile of jumbled mannerisms.

In "Still of the Night," released late last year, she managed to turn herself into a cartoon; aside from one super moment when she looked up at Josef Summer with complete happiness, her performance was ghastly. Now, with "Sophie's Choice," Streep finally earns her reputation. This is the kind of performance that people will talk about for years to come.

Taken from William Styron's powerful bestseller,

"Sophie" is the story of one summer (1948) in the lives of three people: Sophie, a survivor of Auschwitz, her lover/tormentor Nathan (Kevin Kline), and the young writer-to-be Stingo (Peter MacNicol); it is also the harrowing story, told in flashback, of Sophie's experiences in the concentration camp.

The novel moved with deliberate leisure, the little mysteries building slowly until they hit an unbelievable crescendo of pain (the choice of the title, which cannot be given away). We are kept slightly off balance, not quite sure how to respond to Sophie—she is enigmatic in the best possible sense—until, in the last section of the book, we are forced to realize the depth of Sophie's pain, masochism and degradation.

The sly shifts from past to present (the 1948 present, anyway) are tricky and don't seem wholly adaptable to the screen, but Alan J. Pakula, who adapted the story as well as directed, has pulled it off admirably. Of course, many of

the details have had to be sacrificed, but its to be expected when dealing with a book of this scope; under Pakula's guiding hand though, the shaving away of texture doesn't seem so awful as if, say, Ken Russell had plowed through it (the thought sort of makes one's skin crawl, doesn't it?). And Nestor Almendros has filmed the movie with a lyrical tenderness. There are times when the photography makes such a visual statement that that's all we need in order to get the point of a scene (and there is a breathtaking shot of the three of them sitting on the roof of their boarding house). In the flashbacks, Almendros flattens everything out to almost (but not quite) black-and-white; occasionally, a strong flash of color, usually red, will break through.

Still, in a movie that relies very much on what is being said, and how it is being said, you had better have gifted actors. "Sophie's Choice" has, at its core, three performances rich in color and thought. Kevin Kline's Nathan is perhaps the least effective of the three, but the fault isn't really Kline's. Nathan is a disturbing character, the embodiment of moodswing, and the viewer isn't meant to really like him very much. Most of the time, that is. In his happy quieter moments, Kline is marvelous to watch—perhaps because he is so bouyant when he is happy, it makes his sudden rages that much harder to shake off.

Peter MacNicol, however, has no trouble ingratiating himself with one. Stingo is one of the best naive characters ever to hit the screen, and his callowness isn't sticky, it's hysterically off-kilter. MacNicol, probably best known as the dragonslayer in the movie of the same name, makes Stingo ever-so-slightly-goofy, and this saves what might have been a disastrous fictional creation.

But the revelation here is Streep. Whether, as Sophie, pushing at her ill-fitting false teeth with her lips or uttering one of the funniest dirty lines in the history of movies (no, it can't be printed here!), she is never anything but true; she transfers Sophie's feelings to the screen without clutter, her

reactions seem spontaneous and realistic. Speaking in fragmented English and in Polish and German her words, whether or not the line is, in itself, any good, are unmistakably human.

It would be hard not to sympathize with a woman like Sophie. The joy is that such a great creation has been put on screen with perception and grace. I know I'm running this performance's beauty into the ground—and I hope that when the reader sees this movie, he or she will not be expecting too much; expecting too much is always a disappointment. Sufficed to say that Meryl Streep does wonders here. Her acting is as close to perfection as anything I can think of. This time.

Annual Big Band Ball to be held at College

No Disco. No punk rock. No rock and roll. Just good old fashioned Glen Miller and big band music.

Of course we are talking about Clackamas Community College's Annual Big Band Ball. This year's dance will have a 12-piece dance band and the option of a Baron of Beef dinner.

"I call it a moldy-olde dance," said Student Activities Director Debbie Baker. "It was started by ASG to give the older students something to participate in."

"Generally the older folks in the community come, but young people have a wonder-

ful time trying to learn big band dance steps," she said.

The dance will be held Sat. Feb. 12 in the Community Center. The dance will be from 9-12 p.m. It will be preceded at 8 p.m. by a dinner. "It's always done very nicely with candles, tablecloths, and silverware," she said.

Reservations for dinner are asked for and you can get these by calling the College at 657-8400 ext. 245. Price is \$11.00 per person for the dinner and dance or \$9.00 per person with the group rate. The dance itself is \$5.00 per person.

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