

the arts

Hot I Baltimore, a lesson in slapstick comedy



Photo by Larry Jackson

In this scene of "Hot I Baltimore" a hooker (Lorraine Stenzel) complains to the receptionist (Michael Dangle) of hotel inconveniences. Her latest boyfriend (Mark Forbis) and a local hip girl (Ann Mangan), who's getting the snub treatment, look on.

"Hot I Baltimore," playing at Oswego Community Theatre, is a slapstick comedy about the tenants in a condemned hotel in Baltimore.

This hilarious group is so incongruous that even the simplest actions are funny. The characters include three "hookers": an old man, obnoxious in all ways; a teenage girl; her meek intimidated boyfriend and an overworked, frustrated desk clerk who is trying to manage a hotel that is falling apart. This all leads to an intricate formula for an excellent comedy.

The play will run Thursday through Saturday until Nov. 16. Reservations can be obtained by calling 635-3901.

In review

Frank Zappa . . . stand up and be counted

By Jim Rogers
Cougar Print Editor

Whenever people get into "heavy" discussions on the subject of "rock and roll" references are usually made to the Beatles, the Rolling Stones and other well known bands that are generally recognized as being pioneering influences on the contemporary music scene.

The point of this series of articles is to inform the public of the existence of lesser known but equally important influences in this particular idiom. This week we are devoting space to Frank Zappa and the album, "Freak Out".

Mentioning Frank Zappa's name usually brings visions of a disgusting act he supposedly performed during a concert to prove that he was as gross as his reputation suggested up to that time.

But how many people have ever heard any of his music? How many people are even aware that Zappa's first album was not only a two-record set but also the first "rock and roll" two-record set? The answer to both of these questions is not many.

"Freak Out" should be considered a classic because it was the first rock album to show that "long hair ideas" (in the sense of orchestral music) could be used effectively in the new medium.

"Freak Out" was intended to simulate a trip on LSD. Zappa relied heavily on the use of sound alteration

to achieve this effect. Zappa borrowed ideas from Igor Stravinsky and Edgar Varese and the lyrics used are of the works of Lenny Bruce.

"Freak Out" was the first rock album to show that rock and roll could be more than a showcase for guitars and drums. Zappa employs a wide variety of musical instruments and proves that even the xylophone has a place in rock.

If you decide to get a copy of this album beware of side four. There is only one cut on this side and it is entitled "The Return of the Son of Monster Magnet". This is a collection of tracks recorded at various speeds and requires three separate listenings for those who want to catch everything. It can be played at 16, 33, and 45 revolutions-per-minute.

"Freak Out" was released in 1966 and many of the innovations attributed to the Beatles for "Sergeant Pepper's Lonely Hearts Club Band" can not only be found on this album but they are used far more efficiently and effectively in "Freak Out".

'Marathon Man' handles violence in good taste

By Steve Williams
Staff Writer

"Marathon Man", a motion picture starring Dustin Hoffman and Sir Laurence Olivier, is an example of the conflicts of the big-crime world with government, shown with complete realism.

The film depicts the intricacies of espionage and how innocent people end up as confused and scared victims.

In this particular case, Dustin Hoffman, a graduate student in history at Columbia University and a long distance runner (hence the title), is caught in a vicious crossfire between U.S. governmental and foreign interests.

There does exist an abundance of "blood and gore", but without it, the film would cease to have any verisimilitude of realism.

To those who say that some blood is O.K. but more is "bad taste" I reply that the movie is not controlled by the action but is just a mechanism to let the audience experience and interpret the plot without being subjected to fade-outs and censorship.

I also must admit that some scenes cannot be shown. For example, Dustin Hoffman has his front tooth drilled to the nerve to try to make him talk. The movie wisely did not show this scene but still the sound of what happened was left intact.

The idea of using physical quantities of the movie as just a window on the action lets the audience think and speculate as each event falls into place. The audience never knows more than any particular character does. In other words, the movie gives no potential knowledge to the viewer.

I urge anyone who enjoys the drama and likes to think through a realistic portrayal of a complicated plot to go see "Marathon Man" at the Hollywood Theatre.

But if you are a little queasy about blood or violence or rough language, go see "Marathon Man" anyway. You only to see how a good movie handles blood, violence, and rough language with fast pace and excellent taste.

