

PAT COSTA
**As I
See It**



"Jack is back," sang out his raspy-voiced announcer Peggy Cass and with that Jack Paar ended his self imposed semi-exile from television. It is semi-exile because he has in the last 10 years or so shown up in various specials but as far as I can recall he has not hosted a TV talk show which he claims he originated and which is his forte.

The "Jack Paar Tonight" Show which will be seen on ABC stations at 11:30 p.m. one week a month is unabashedly an attempt on the part of the network to see if Paar can nudge Johnny Carson from his hold on late night viewers by doing his own thing. It includes a first for national TV, a woman announcer.

At first glance it would appear to be a pitting of supreme egotist against supreme egotist. The analysis doesn't change with a longer look.

Neither man, in spite of years of experience, knows how to conduct an interview. Carson, as far as I know, has never allowed a guest to finish a sentence.

Paar has a chronic case of adjectival ague. This malaise marked by successive hot, cold and sweating fits of hyperbole manifests itself in cloying modifiers.

Goldie Hawn, first guest on the new show, was "enchanting", "darling", "sweet" and "adorable."

She was also "flat chested", a condition which she obviously intended to emphasize by her choice of clothing and which

Paar saw fit to mention seven times.

Jonathan Winters, introduced as a young man in spite of the fact that his chins and graying sideburns made him look older than his host, was only one of many who received the title "One of My Dearest Friends."

He seemed funnier, more spontaneously amusing than I remember him and I suppose that is the clue to Paar's success.

Once we get past Paar's embarrassing admissions about himself, his family and his friends, past his saccharine descriptions, we start to be entertained.

And if we ever make it past the feeling that we are fifth graders' being titillated by the new little boy who hopes to ingratiate himself with some sex-oriented witticism, we could be caught in Paar's web.

His attributes are evident. He is a good story teller. His interviews are limited by his own myopic view of a self-centered world but when he finishes the audience has had a look at the man or woman under the public facade. And his need for contact with others is a plus.

He enjoys the press which says he is candid and controversial. If some of us see him as the menopausal, peevish maiden aunt who always manages to ferret out whether we change our socks every day and whose judgments are seldom valid, we must be forgiven. For we remember him telling us what a nice, but misunderstood man Fidel Castro was.

At Home with the Movies

VERTIGO (1958)
Thursday, Jan. 18 (CBS)
Alfred Hitchcock suspense thriller stars Jimmy Stewart and Kim Novak. Stewart is a retired detective called back for a private investigation of Miss Novak and her seemingly shady connections. Of course they fall in love and land in danger, a la Hitchcock. If you can ignore Stewart's trademark gulping and stammering, and Novak's smoldering, you might find this film a rather suspenseful effort. (A-II)

THE MAN WHO KNEW TOO MUCH (1956)
Friday, Jan. 19 (CBS)
More Hitchcock, more Stewart. This is one of the suspense master's most popular films, but also one of his most contrived, what with an endless supply of plot twists and the distraction of some lush and lovely locales, notably Marrakesh, where it all begins, and London, where it comes to a boil.

Stewart stars with Doris Day as an American tourist couple who witness a "murder." Their son is kidnapped, they become embroiled in a complicated political plot to assassinate a foreign dignitary, and they are forced to do most of the sleuthing on their own. Don't miss Doris' climactic rendition of "Que Sera, Sera." (A-II)

Once Over Briefly

LADY SINGS THE BLUES — Adults, with reservations — The story of Billie Holiday, with everything from Amos 'n' Andy to Superfly.
THE MECHANIC — Adults — First-rate action thriller.
PETE 'N' TILLIE — Adults, with reservations — Awkward serio-comedy.
PLAY IT AS IT LAYS — Adults, with reservations — Existentially how to buy a hamburger.
THE POSEIDON ADVENTURE — Adults — Sinker stinker.
RAGE — Adults — George C. 's hot.
THE RULING CLASS — Adults, with reservations — Pokes a sharp, funny finger at British aristocracy.

HOW THE WEST WAS WON (1962)
Sunday and Monday, Jan. 21 and 22 (ABC)
Marathon, uneven, historically inaccurate celebration of the push West in the mid-1800's. It is not difficult to accept the likes of Lee J. Cobb, John Wayne, Henry Fonda, Gregory Peck, and James Stewart as stalwart men who braved the long trails, rugged terrain and weather conditions, and who fought off hordes of hostile Indians. But it is hard to accept the Indians simply as murderous savages — after all, it was their land to begin with, and it was promises made to them that were being violated. (A-I)

I LOVE MY WIFE (1970)
Monday, Jan. 22 (NBC)
People who only suspect Elliot Gould of being a phenomenon rather than an actor will be utterly confirmed by his hysterical non-performance in this shabby, sputtering drama about a man's failure to love. The vehicle, doubtless sanitized for TV consumption, reeks of sensationalism as it details our hero's simultaneous rise in the medical profession and fall as husband. In the theatrical version there was an emphasis on the doc's frantic sex life, so watch out (B)

1776 — Adults and adolescents — The Singing of the Declaration.
THE SNOWBALL EXPRESS — Everyone — The driven snow.
THEY ONLY KILL THEIR MASTERS — Adults — James Garner sies 'em.
TRAVELS WITH MY AUNT — Adults, with reservations — Film-film frolic.
TRISTANA — Adults — Catherine Deneuve, in Luis Bunuel's superlative film.
ULZANA'S RAID — Adults — Burt Lancaster and Bruce Davison, track down Indians in the Southwest.
UP THE SANDBOX — Not rated — Will the real Barbara S. please stand up?
THE VALACHI PAPERS — Adults, with reservations — The story of one, big, happy family.

The Year in Films

By JOHN E. FITZGERALD
My vote for the dullest paragraphs ever written goes to those introductory paragraphs in which critics annually preface their selections of the Ten Best Films of the Year.

So, without hedging, explaining that the choices are personal, or wasting time and space, let's consider my choices.

The Godfather — the year's blockbuster, managed to win both critical approval (for Marlon Brando's performance, for the excellent acting in minor roles and for director Francis Ford Coppola) and boxoffice success (\$81.5 million in domestic rentals skyrocketing it to the top of Variety's all-time list) in its story (by Mario Puzo) of the Mafia (unmentioned).

Souder — in the "year of the black film" managed to stand out like an onyx in a coal bin. The film dealt with people who were black rather than with fantasy characters aimed at the newly discovered black audience. While most black films cashed in on the daydreams and aggressions of their audience, Producer Robert Radnitz and Director Martin Ritt let their story and actors portray a real segment of the black experience in such a way that it was part of the total human experience we all share. Cicely Tyson was outstanding as the sharecropper mother trying to raise her family against almost insurmountable odds.

1776 — A rousing musical version of the Broadway hit, kept most of the cast of the original, and all of the verve. Based on, but not mired in, fact and history, it was amusing, moving, raucous and even inspiring in its tongue-in-cheek telling of the carping, cussing and compromising which led to 13 colonies declaring their independence.

Cries and Whispers — Once again Swedish director Ingmar Bergman shows his skill in using a camera like a surgeon uses a knife. He's gone from his earlier metaphysical films stressing man's seeking an answer from a silent God, through his occult period to a new humanism which concentrates on people in general and women in particular. He penetrates the soul's privacy, exposes loneliness and sham here through telling this story of two sisters and a servant unwillingly linked through the deathwatch over another sister.

The Emigrants — while Swedish, isn't as most Swedish films seem to be, by Bergman. But although by Jan Troell, who like Bergman, does most of the work on his films, making them personal statements, it's on the level of Bergman's work — which is high praise. The film is based on the novels of Vilhelm Moberg, stars Max Von Sydow and Liv Ullman, and is a beautiful and ennobling story of the meaning of America and also of what it means to be a stranger in a new land.

Cabaret — Director Bob Fosse combines the skills of a good choreographer and a good director and blends reality and fantasy in this acidulously

Mary-Eunice Joins Key '73

Belford, N.J. (RNS) — A Roman Catholic husband and wife team, Mary-Eunice, a Rochester native, and Joseph Spagnola, will join the Key '73 campaign by presenting their programs before a greater number of churches, schools, shrines and monasteries.

The couple, who founded Mary Productions here in 1947 to distribute royalty-free plays dedicated to "the message of Mary," gave an average of three programs per month in 1972, working as "Mary-Eunice" and "Joe Harold."

Spagnola presents lectures, while his wife gives character sketch monologues on the saints.

The Ten Best

sprightly and biting beautiful mingling of the cabaret and political life of Nazi Germany. Liza Minelli and Joel Grey are outstanding.

The Discreet Charm of the Bourgeoisie — is director Luis Bunuel at his wittiest, proving that some skills, like wine, improve with age. Here fact, fantasy, dreams and imaginings mingle in slap-happy social satire exposing the stupidities and hypocrisies of man through dealing with a group at a dinner party.

The Sorrow and the Pity — is an exceptional documentary, longer than most and deeper than most. Running four hours and minutes, this Marcel Ophuls film (written by him and Andre Harris) is an analysis of a national mind in a time of crisis. Through old theatrical films, newsreels and interviews with those who were there, Ophuls has culled a pictorial analysis of Nazi-occupied France

and the human and socio-political significance and effects of those years (1940-44) of tenion.

The Candidate — has Robert Redford as a young man entering the whirlpool of politics. Bright and biting, took us behind the scenes, into the proverbial smoke-filled rooms, and along the campaign trail in a cinematic commentary that, although flawed at times, made up for any faults with its little excellences.

Fellini's Roma — is a masterpiece of cinema, capturing, characterizing and caricaturizing his city, the Eternal City. Warm, witty satire with the compassion behind it we expect of this director.

Ten runnersup worth seeing are Chloé in the Afternoon, Frenzy, Fat City, Traffic, The Heartbreak Kid, The Effect of Gamma Rays on the Man-in-the-Moon Marigolds, Sleuth, Slaughterhouse Five and Marjoe.



'Feather Duster'

Margie Pizzarelli, Mimi Zelter, and Patrice Moll rehearse for Mercy High School's presentation of "The Feather Duster," Jan. 20 and 21 at 2 p.m. The production is based on characters from the fairy tales of Hans Christian Andersen, such as Thumbelina, Little Tin Soldier, Fieldmouse, Cockchafer, and Mole. Tickets are available in advance or at the door.

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