

MOVIES

Holiday Movie Roundup

By Michael Gallagher
New York (NC) — "Oh, God! You Devil" (Warners) is the third in the well-received series that five years ago launched George Burns' career as the Divinity with an infinite number of one-liners.

This time, however, Burns' God plays a supporting role to Burns' devil, also known as Harry O. Tophet, superagent: "All the big ones come to me, eventually."

When a struggling singer-songwriter named Bobby Shelton (Ted Wass, a survivor of "Sheena") vows in a moment of desperation that he will sell you-know-what to you-know-who if only he make it big, Harry (who, as might be expected, affects a much flashier dress style than his great antagonist) is soon at his elbow.

The movie is relatively promising up to this point, but then things begin to unravel a bit. Once Bobby succumbs to Harry's wiles, it's not just a matter of his vaulting to success as Bobby Shelton.

No, in a needless bit of complication, Bobby takes over the persona of rock star Billy Wayne (Robert Desiderio) whose contract with Harry has just run out.

Thus Bobby is forced to abandon the pregnant wife whom he dearly loves (Roxanne Hart) and leave her with Wayne, who thinks he's Bobby.

Needless to say, Bobby finds his new fame does not bring him happiness. The

only way to escape from the contract is to go over Harry's head, and the consequent divine intervention takes the not-especially-original form of God's winning Bob's errant soul back in a poker game.

All this is no more than mildly amusing. Andrew Bergman's script seems to have used up its quota of wit in its concept of the devil as an agent, and Paul Bogart's direction allows for some slack sections. What laughs there are come from Burns' mastery of the droll rejoinder.

There are one or two relatively mild sexual references in the dialogue but no rough language. The U.S. Catholic Conference has classified it A-II — adults and adolescents. The Motion Picture Association of America rating is PG — parental guidance suggested.

"Paris, Texas" (Fox) is the much ballyhooed fruit of the collaboration of two extremely overrated talents, German director Wim Wenders and American playwright Sam Shepard.

It was duly awarded the grand prize at the Cannes Film Festival and is now number one at the box office in Paris, France. It has, however, been given far rougher treatment over here where we don't have to depend upon subtitles.

Shepard's plays deal with silent loners. He's usually

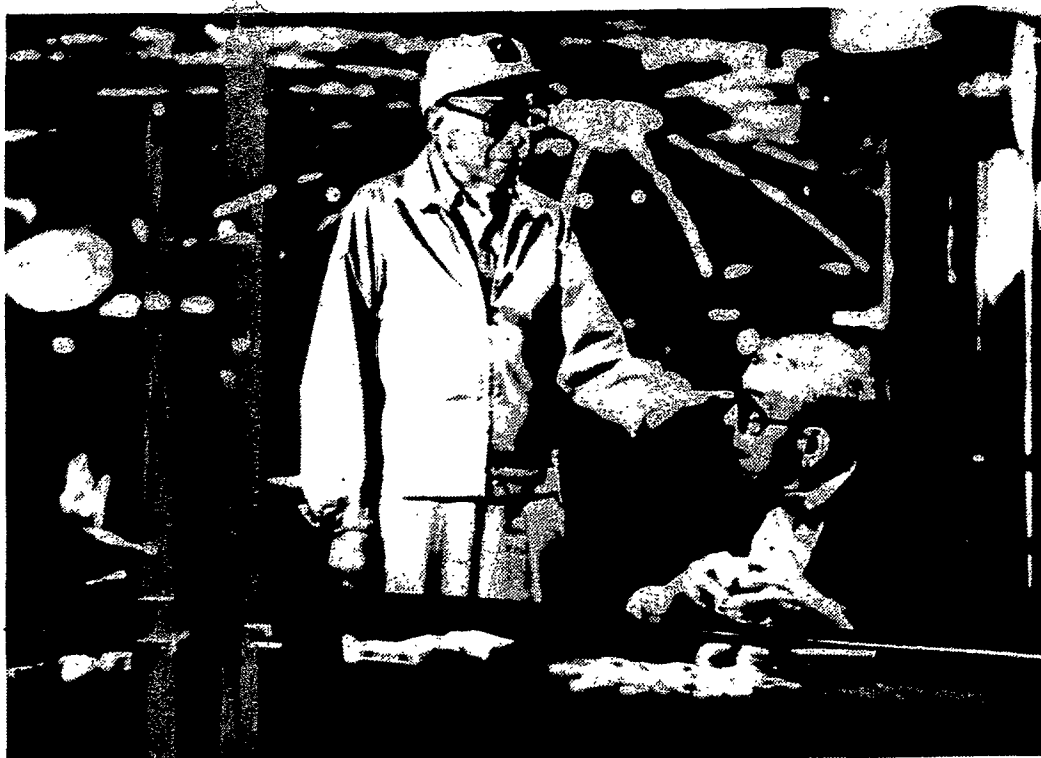
clever enough not to reveal their secrets too soon or too explicitly. But here, whether the fault lies with himself, with Wenders or with L.M. (Kit) Carson, who also has a writing credit, that cleverness is nowhere apparent.

"Paris, Texas" begins with an archetypal Shepard type, Travis (Harry Dean Stanton), plodding determinedly across a Southwestern desert. In due time Travis is gathered up by his brother (Dean Stockwell), who brings him to California for a reunion with the 8-year-old son he abandoned four years before.

The boy doesn't warm up to dear old Dad right away but before long, he readily abandons his uncle's home, where he had been happy, and he and Travis go off to find his mother, Jane. Jane (Natassja Kinski) is working as a prostitute in one of those specialty places in which the women talk to the clients through a one-way mirror.

Here, in two long, long, long monologues — first by Travis, then by Jane (with poor Miss Kinski sounding at times like Karen Black in "Five Easy Pieces" and at times like Tess of the d'Urbervilles) Wenders, Shepard and Carson tell you more than you could possibly want to know about this fun couple. The one secret left unrevealed is where the vagrant Travis gets his money.

"Paris, Texas" is a pretentious, shallow bore, which reveals more about the star-crossed love of European



In his third "God" film, George Burns plays the dual role of God and Satan in "Oh God, You Devil," a Warner Bros. release. (NC Photo).

esthetes for American movies than it does about life as it's lived, whether in Paris, Texas; Paris, France; Moscow, Idaho, or anywhere on this planet.

There's some occasional rough language. The U.S. Catholic Conference has classified it A-II — adults and adolescents. The industry rating is R — restricted.

In the limp, romantic comedy "No Small Affair" (Columbia), a 16-year-old boy (Jon Cryer) gives a boost

to the career of a young singer (Demi Moore) by his native ingenuity and his skill as a photographer. As a reward she takes him to bed just before the final credits roll.

Directed by Jerry Schatzberg and written by Charles Bolt and Terence Mulcahy, "No Small Affair," besides its other failings, gathers together some of the most boring people you'd ever want to meet, and it is a ringing endorsement of sexual promiscuity.

The U.S. Catholic Confer-

ence has classified it O — morally offensive. The industry rating is R — restricted.

"A Nightmare on Elm Street" (New Line), written and directed by Wes Craven, is the latest of the slash and bash genre. A long-dead child killer haunts the dreams of teen-agers. There's violence, blood and gore.

The U.S. Catholic Conference has classified it O — morally offensive. The industry rating is R — restricted.

Recent Movie Ratings

New York (NC) — Here is a list of recent films which the U.S. Catholic Conference Department of Communication has rated on the basis of moral suitability.

The first symbol after each title is the USCC rating. The second symbol is the rating of the Motion Picture Association of America.

These are the USCC symbols and their meanings: A-I — general patronage; A-II — adults and adolescents; A-III — adults; A-IV — adults, with reservations (an A-IV classification designates certain films which, while not morally offensive in themselves, require caution and some analysis and explanation as

a protection to the uninformed against wrong interpretations and false conclusions); O — morally offensive. The word "recommended" appears behind the titles of those films which, according to the USCC, merit such a designation.

Here are the Motion Picture Association of America symbols and their meanings: G — general audiences, all ages admitted; PG — parental guidance suggested, some material may not be suitable for children; PG-13 — parents are strongly cautioned to give special guidance for attendance of children under 13; some material may be inappropriate for young children; R — restricted, under 17 requires ac-

companying parent or adult guardian; X — no one under 17 admitted (age limit may vary in certain areas).

A
 The Adventures of Buckaroo Banzai, A-II (PG)
 All of Me, A-III (PG)
 Amadeus, A-II (PG)
 American Dreamer, O (PG)

B
 Bachelor Party, O (R)
 Body Double, O (R)
 Body Rock, A-III (PG-13)
 The Bostonians, A-II (no rating)
 The Brother from Another Planet, A-III (no rating)

C
 Cal, A-IV (R)
 Careful, He Might Hear You, A-III (no rating)

C.H.U.D., A-III (R)
 Cloak and Dagger, A-II (PG)
 Conan the Destroyer, O (PG)
 Country, A-II (PG)
 Crimes of Passion, O (R)

E
 The Evil that Men Do, O (R)

F
 Firstborn, A-III (PG-13)
 The Family Game, A-II (no rating)

G
 The First Turn-On, O (R)
 Flashpoint, A-III (R)

I
 Garbo Talks, A-III (PG-13)
 Ghostbusters, A-III (PG)
 Gremlins, A-III (PG)
 Impulse, O (R)
 Indiana Jones and the Temple of Doom, A-III (PG)
 Irreconcilable Differences, A-III (PG)

J
 A Joke of Destiny, A-III (PG)

K
 The Karate Kid, A-II (PG)

L
 The Little Drummer Girl, A-III (R)

M
 The Muppets Take Manhattan, A-I (Recommended) (G)

N
 The Natural, A-II (PG)
 The Neverending Story, A-I (PG)

O
 Once Upon a Time in America, O (R)
 Oxford Blues, O (PG-13)

P
 Phar Lap, A-I (Recommended) (PG)
 Places in the Heart, A-II (PG)
 The Prodigal, A-II (PG)

Purple Rain, O (R)

R
 The Razor's Edge, A-II (PG-13)

S
 Red Dawn, A-III (PG-13)
 Revenge of the Nerds, O (R)
 Rhinestone, A-III (PG)
 Romancing the Stone, A-III (PG)

T
 Savage Streets, O (R)
 Sheena, O (PG)
 Sixteen Candles, O (PG)
 A Soldier's Story, A-II (PG)

U
 Teachers, O (R)
 Thief of Hearts, O (R)
 Tightrope, O (R)

W
 Until September, O (R)
 The Wild Life, O (R)
 Windy City, A-III (R)
 The Woman in Red, O (PG-13)

BOOKS

Teresa of Avila, a Woman of Wisdom and Wiles

"Teresa: A Woman," by Victoria Lincoln. State University of New York Press (Albany, N.Y., 1984). 425 pp., \$39.95 cloth, \$14.95 paper.

Reviewed by Father Augustine P. Hennessy CP

Teresa was a mystic, a reformer, an author of pro-

found books, but, above all, a strong and ingenious woman. She walked warily in 16th-century Spain at a time when she was encumbered by three social handicaps: she was of Jewish blood; she experienced rapturous illuminations; and, again above all, she was a woman.

Victoria Lincoln, a successful novelist, devoted 11

years of meticulous and love-filled research in capturing the real personality

Author Lincoln is not afraid to face the seamy side of Teresa's giftedness. Blessed with a high level of affectivity, seductive beauty, and the charm of a woman who could harness her natural gifts in pursuit of a

God-given mission, Teresa is discovered as a strong-minded woman with resourceful commitment to her goal. She knew how to use her wisdom and her wiles.

At a time when the culture engendered slavish fear of satanic influence upon the unwary and a witch-hunting mentality dynamized by the vigilance of powerful inquisi-

tors, it was sometimes necessary for Teresa to give herself a pen name when writing to her spiritual director.

Even with all her discretion, Teresa did not escape the allegation of being a wanton woman who twisted men into conformity to her will by granting them sexual favors.

This study of Teresa's

hitherto unresearched letters required patient scholarship of its author. Consequently, it demands patient willingness to wrestle with the interplay of destinies required to understand the mission of women and men like Teresa and Dona Ana de Mendoza, Gracian and John of the Cross. At times, the details become wearisome.

Rare Flowers Featured

The New York State Museum in Albany has issued two publications of interest to gardeners, naturalists and botanists.

The first is a poster illustrating many of the rare and protected plants of the state. Seventeen color separations were used to print photographs in full and true color to exacting specifications.

The flowers shown are Pinxter, Showy Orchis, Glove-Flower, Pink Ladyslipper, Northern Monk's-Hood, American Bittersweet, Butterfly Weed, Ram's Head Ladyslipper, White Trillium, Wood Lily, Yellow Ladyslipper, Golden-Seal, Painted Trillium, Maidenhair Spleenwort, Wild Pink and Hart's-Tongue Fern.

In addition, the museum has reprinted the richly illustrated and comprehensive publication, "Rare Plants of New York State." First published in 1981, the popular guide represents the subject of endangered plant species for the interested public as well as professionals in botany, conservation and environmental consulting.

The book was authored by Dr. Richard S. Mitchell, state botanist, and Dr. Charles J. Sheviak, the museum's curator of botany. It is described as offering a first step toward improving communication between botanists, agencies, businessmen and private land owners.

The authors consider the rarity of plant communities within existing social and

economic realities and propose common goals, seeking proper land use without high costs while minimizing further destruction of wild places.

The 96-page book contains 54 illustrations with descriptions of species and their habitats and has a full-color cover photo of the rare and beautiful Northern Monk's-Hood. A limited number of copies are available in hardcover.

Included are maps and a discussion of the historical distributions of plant rarities throughout the state, with a survey of specific regions known for their rare plants, and special chapters on rare ferns and local orchids. The authors also discuss the Endangered Species Act of 1983 and

provide a glossary of botanical and technical terms.

The book is \$8 in soft cover, \$12 in hard cover (includes postage and handling). Checks for the book are made out to New York State Library, and orders sent to State Science Service-Publication Sales, 3rd Floor, Cultural Education Center, Albany, N.Y. 12230.

The poster is available for \$5 plus \$1 for postage and handling, or 10 posters for \$25 plus \$1 postage and handling. Checks for the poster are made out to The University of the State of New York, and orders are sent to Museum Operations, New York State Museum, Room 10D59, Albany, N.Y. 12230.