

# “Passage” examines class struggle

By MARCY BASILE  
Movie Reviewer

Have you ever had a day that can only be described with adjectives like terrible, horrible, no good and very bad? (If you said anything closely resembling “no,” I don’t think you are telling the truth.) Maybe it’s karma when everything that could go wrong does.

Last Friday I travelled all the way to Houston intent on seeing the noon showing of “A Passage to India.” I expected a fun time. Well, if I overlook the man who gagged during the entire movie, the tipsy businessmen who had decided to take the rest of the day off to see a movie that had just been nominated for a Golden Globe, the group of little old ladies that shuffled in 30 minutes after the movie started (“Marge. Hey Marge. There’s a good seat over here next to this man who is gagging!”) and a soundman with a hearing aid, I guess I

had an adequately decent fun time.

Now, you may think my experiences in Houston have nothing to do with reviewing a movie, but trust me, I know what I’m doing. (You’ll see. I’m not as ditzy as some might believe.)

Why was “A Passage to India” getting all the rave reviews? The question burned in my mind. I mean, come on, no movie is so good that it is practically nominated before it is even released, right? Wrong.

This one is good enough.

“A Passage to India” delves into the minds and attitudes of those Britons living in India during the pre-Ghandi days. The story centers around two British women, Mrs. Moore (Peggy Ashcroft) and Adele Quested (Judy Davis) and their relationship with Dr. Aziz (Victor Banerjee), an Indian doctor. These women have just come over on the boat and

don’t realize that, as one rather stuffy English matron puts it, “East is East. It’s a matter of culture.” Both learn the rule quickly and just as quickly decide that it’s a stupid rule which shouldn’t apply to them.

Now Adele is not one of God’s most beautiful creatures. Dr. Aziz himself claims that she is one of the homeliest women he’s ever seen. (Wouldn’t you just love to be in Judy Davis’ shoes when that line is said?) Remember that line.

OK. Here’s where my day fits into this story. It matches Dr. Aziz’s. He invites Adele and Mrs. Moore to a picnic at the famed Marabar caves. (Up to this time, no one is quite sure what the caves are famous for but they go anyway.) Dr. Aziz should have slept in that day. Nothing goes right. During the tour of the first cave, Mrs. Moore spazzes and decides to sit out the higher caves. Adele

and Dr. Aziz go in search of the hidden cave secrets. Suddenly, Adele goes berserk and tears out down the mountain side, right through the only thorn thicket around. (No one said homely women had to be smart.)

All seems to be innocent, right? No, no, Nanette. Adele gets picked up by a fellow Briton, effectively spoiling the rest of the outing for Dr. Aziz and Mrs. Moore. What happened in those higher caves that caused Adele to freak and accuse Dr. Aziz of rape? (Now if a terrible, horrible, no-good, very bad day doesn’t describe that day in Dr. Aziz’s life, I don’t know what does.)

One of the best parts of “A Passage to India” is the dangling ending. OK, so you know what the outcome of the trial is, what actually happened to Mrs. Moore and who everyone ends up marrying, but do you really know what happened in that cave so high above the in-

quisitive eyes of Mrs. Moore? I think not. No matter how much you try to read into what happens in the cave, you never really figure out what happens.

Filmed on location in India, “A Passage to India” shows off that country’s wonderful scenery. Director David (“Bridge Over The River Kwai”, “Lawrence of Arabia” and “Doctor Zhivago”) Lean excels in his use of existing landscape. It’s Lean’s first movie since “Doctor Zhivago,” and it’s simply wonderful.

The only part I could find fault with is the ending. Perhaps if Lean had stopped with the outcome of Dr. Aziz’s trial, the ending would have been even more confusing and better. Regardless of this minor detail, a better acted, better written and more beautiful film would be hard to find among the flock of films available in the B-CS area this weekend. ♣

# Music

By WALTER SMITH  
Music Reviewer

EURHYTHMICS  
1984 FOR THE LOVE OF BIG  
BROTHER  
VIRGIN RECORDS

Annie Lennox, the famed gender-bender, and her musical accomplice created a disturbing ripple in the complacency of stoic UK with this album.

Eurythmics originally were contracted to provide the soundtrack to the cinematic version of George Orwell’s “1984.” For their work, they received a tidy sum that reportedly was in excess of the director’s and producer’s wages combined. Annie and Dave secluded themselves in a Caribbean recording studio and emerged a week later wielding these songs.

The film’s executives thought the music was trash, as did Orwell’s estate. Shortly after the movie was released in England, distributors pulled the original version so a new version with a soundtrack of only classical music could be released. They repeated the stunt one more time, but this time the film had a combination of the previous two soundtracks. We’ll have to see what version Americans will get to



see when it’s released here later this year.

But until then, you can listen to the album at least. And listen you should because Eurythmics sound truly inspired on this LP. But I suppose a group really would have to be engrossed with an idea in order to crank out an album’s worth of music in less than a week.

The selections of “1984” range from the elegant and effervescent to the secular and spunky. “Julia” is a largo languishment chock full of piercing pathos. “Sexcrime,” on the other hand, is a torrid tune that just might transform you into a whirling dervish.

Eurythmics concocted a sonic ambience on this LP that is best experienced in the isola-

tion of headphones, but it will still sound great blaring from a car’s decrepit A.M. radio.

MALCOLM MCLAREN  
FANS  
ISLAND RECORDS

If anyone would have told me a few months ago that I soon would be dancing at Studio 54 to an aria from the Puccini opera, “Madam Butterfly,” I just would have laughed in his face. But I haven’t uttered even the slightest chuckle because that is exactly what transpired during the Christmas holidays.

No, Studio 54 hasn’t gone “artsy,” well, at least not in the legitimate sense. But Malcolm McLaren has melded operatic and popular dance music on his latest vinyl endeavor with very intriguing results. While opera purists may take offense to this blasphemous desecration, they actually should praise McLaren for his innovative methods of exposing the masses to “culture.”

Besides “Madam Butterfly,” McLaren revamped sections of Puccini’s “Turandot” and “Gianni Schicchi,” as well as Bizet’s “Carmen.” He retains some of the authenticity of the originals by interspersing his street-wise sounds with actual operatic singing.



McLaren makes this lesson in art easier by updating the messages into the modern lingo and lifestyles of the average unbanite. In his version of “Carmen,” McLaren cast that fickle gypsy as a Time Square hooker. Insightful, perhaps, but I don’t expect this modernizing trend to make its way to the Met.

McLaren always is one to veer off at tangents from the norm. From his early days as producer for the likes of the Sex Pistols and Bow Wow Wow to his recent dabbings in “Double Dutch,” he’s been at the leading edge of the new music scene. Now he throws opera into the works — and just when you thought you knew what New Wave was all about. ♣

## Walter spins 'em

By WALTER SMITH  
Music Reviewer

A segment of our readership probably feels the albums reviewed in this column aren’t truly worthy of even the vinyl used to make the records. Well, you’re certainly encouraged to harbor an opinion, but wouldn’t it be nice if it were based on actual evidence. *Fret no more.* Starting this Sunday, I will broadcast selections from the reviewed albums during my weekly 10 a.m. to noon shift at KANM-cable FM. So all you have to do is tune to 99.9 FM and let your ears decide.

If you choose not to like the music, so be it. At least you gave it a chance. But if you find it to be a welcomed relief to the local mundane airwave offerings, then I congratulate you. By taking the chance and trying something new, you’ve expanded your sphere of experience, and hence you became a better person. The other 166 hours of the week than KANM broadcasts are rumored to produce similar results. ♣