

Movie Review

Ratings based on a five-star system.
Five — Excellent; One — Pathetic.

"Blue Velvet"
Directed by David Lynch
Starring Kyle MacLachlan, Isabella Rossellina, Laura Dern and Dennis Hopper
★★★★★

Russian film pioneer Sergi Eisenstein believed the best films were those that hit the viewer over the head with the images of the film. Director David Lynch uses Eisenstein's "Kino-fist" theory to great effect, except he aims for the stomach instead of the head.

Lynch's first film, "Eraserhead," was a total assault on the senses. "Eraserhead" was a stark, nightmarish film that effectively put the audience on the edge of, and in some cases behind, their seats. To this day, I get chills when someone mentions the "E" word.

Next came "The Elephant Man," a stylistic and compassionate portrait of the deformed John Merrick and his struggle to find a place in Victorian England. Then Lynch made his first film in color, an adaptation of Frank Herbert's science fiction epic, "Dune." "Dune" looked fantastic but the acting was too melodramatic and the storyline

was incomprehensibly muddled to those who were not familiar with Herbert's novel. It's worth the effort to rent "Dune" on videotape and watch it with the sound turned down so you can concentrate on the images of the film.

"Blue Velvet," Lynch's newest film, is not your run-of-the-mill Hollywood production. It begins with nice images of small town life — a white picket fence, a rose garden, a dog playing in a yard, a friendly fireman waving as he passes by and a man watering his flowers. We soon learn that everything is not well in this little town when the man has a stroke and the camera zooms into the ground to show us an extreme close-up of insects crawling over each other.

Then, Jeffery Beaumont (Kyle MacLachlan) finds a human ear in a field near his house. After he takes the ear to the police, he learns through Sandy Williams (Laura Dern), a detective's daughter, that the police

think a nightclub singer is somehow involved with the ear.

Beaumont and Williams begin to do a little detective work on their own and spy on the singer, Dorothy Vallens (Isabella Rossellina). Beaumont hides in Vallens' apartment one night and learns she is being blackmailed by the evil Frank Booth (Dennis Hopper). Booth, who is holding her husband and son hostage, forces Vallens to participate in sadistic sex.

In the course of the film, Beaumont falls in love with Vallens and dedicates himself to helping her out of the horrible situation she's trapped in. Love also begins to bloom between Beaumont and William, who represents a more pure form of the emotion. Beaumont also becomes terribly involved in the evil and perverted world of Booth. Booth has to be one of the most horrible villains ever to darken the screen.

MacLachlan, who played Paul in "Dune,"

portrays Beaumont with a great deal of complexity. He seems to be an innocent, clean-cut kid, but he displays slightly sadistic tendencies when he makes love to Vallens. Dern seems to be the perfect image of the nice girl next door in her role as Sandy Williams. Daughter of actor Bruce Dern, she asserted herself in her own right nicely in "Blue Velvet," just as she did in "Mask" last year. Hopper, best known for his role as Peter Fonda's motorcycle buddy in "Easy Rider," which he also directed, is fantastic as pure evil incarnate. Hopper does a good job in his role as a sex pervert, drug dealer, murderer and weirdo.

"Blue Velvet" is a fantastic and intense film. There are images in this movie that are reminiscent of the films of Luis Bunuel and the paintings of Salvador Dali. The nice small town images become twisted into a surrealistic nightmare.

You should make the effort to see "Blue Velvet." It probably won't

win anything so trite as an Oscar, but it is one of the best films to come out of this decade.

It's possible that "Blue Velvet" might make it back into town one of these days. If not, take a road trip to Houston. It's well worth the time.

David Lynch has the most distinctive style of any American director working today, and he proves it again here. "Blue Velvet" is not for the faint of heart, but it shows how effective a film can be if made properly.

— Review by
Karl Pallmeyer

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DAWN of the DEAD

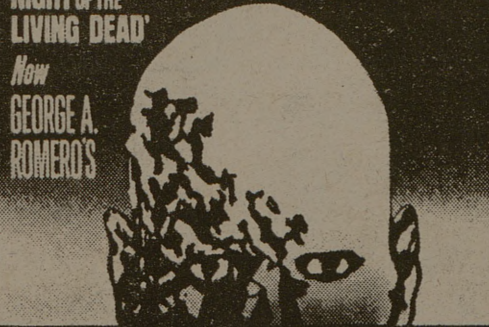
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DAWN OF THE DEAD

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FIX

...it means Special Effects.

Bryan Brown
Brian Dennehy

Illusion and reality violently clash in the stunning suspense Aussie actor Bryan Brown (Breaker Morant) is special effects wizard Rollie Tyler. The Justice Department has asked Tyler to make an underworld witness "disappear." To make the disappearance complete, the government wants Tyler to stage a fake assassination. When murder with special effects becomes real, Tyler needs every trick from every movie he's ever made just to get out alive! The startling special effects will keep you in constant suspense!

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