

## The film scene

Despite the closings of several theaters, students can still view obscure films

By Jan Higginbotham  
THE BATTALION

Students can experience culture through the movies. The MSC Film Society and a local movie theater are offering a variety of art movies that expose viewers to multiculturalism and diversity.

The MSC Film Society attempts to bring that culture into students' lives through its Alternative Film Series.

Danny King, chair of the film society and a senior aerospace engineering major, said the series sponsors films that students would ordinarily have to go to Houston, Dallas or Austin to see.

"One of our goals is to provide an opportunity for people to see film as an art," King said. "One goal of the MSC is to give students a chance to experience different cultures. This series kind of combines those two goals."

Film society showed the controversial movie *Priest* in September, a movie about a gay Roman Catholic priest and his struggle with the Catholic Church's doctrine.

The film society is also bringing *Farinelli, The Last Seduction* and *Smoke* as part of the series. Next week, the group is showing *Skin Deep*, a film that brings students — including A&M students — together to discuss racial issues.

"We try to bring something for everybody,"

King said.

Hollywood USA started an art series in May. The theater introduced *Priest* to Bryan-College Station as a part of the series.

Kathy Christian, a film buyer for Cinemark, said the films address more specialized topics that most mainstream movies do not.

"We realized when we opened the Hollywood theater there that the art films needed special attention," Christian said.

"We do this as a service to the community, the students and the staff at A&M. These films are just really good for the community."

Hollywood's art film series is contracted to continue through the end of October, and Christian said the company will continue to schedule for the series.

Students have had positive reactions to the two film series.

Alan Harris, a junior management major, said he has enjoyed the wide variety of movies.

"These art movies have given students an

opportunity to experience other cultures and other views," Harris said. "They give you a lot more to think about than *Die Hard* or *Batman*. These movies deal with real issues from the real world — these are issues that we will all have to deal with at some point in our lives."

The showing of *Priest* in September brought protest from Catholic students at A&M who disapproved of the film being shown on campus.

Harris said he was pleased that Film Society decided to show the film.

"*Priest* dealt with one of the major issues of our time," he said. "It was very educational."

Beth Rogers, a senior education major, said the films are a nice break from the movies ordinarily shown at local movie theaters.

"Too many of the movies we see these days are fluffy movies," Rogers said. "These art movies have real substance. It's great to have this type of culture in our lives."

King said he is often disappointed because Bryan-College Station does not get some movies.

"Mostly what we get here are the mainstream, blockbuster movies," he said. "I'm kind of disappointed that we don't get some movies here, for example, *Showgirls*."

King said the Alternative Film Series is not always a money-maker for the film society.

"We tend to lose money on the Alternative Film Series," he said. "We rely on our Blockbuster Series to make money, but we still think it's important to bring these alternative movies here anyway."

Christian said Cinemark also tends to lose money on the art series.

"This is not a big money-making project for us," she said. "but we feel it's important to continue this service to the community. We know that it will take time for us to develop a crowd for these movies."



Photos by Amy Browning, THE BATTALION  
The Manor East Theater (above) and the Carmike Theater (left) have both shut down, giving movie-goers even fewer choices.

## Television makes a spectacle of the judicial system

Even when more than 160 people were killed in the bombing, television viewers still wanted Simpson coverage.

Al Gore is not Mark Fuhrman.

It seems like it wouldn't be too hard to know the difference between the vice president of the United States and the supposedly racist Los Angeles cop from the O.J. Simpson trial. However, as frightening as it may seem, some people think Gore is Fuhrman.

In a survey conducted by *Dateline NBC* that aired September 27, a *Dateline* anchor went to the streets with pictures of some of the top faces in the Simpson trial and some of the most important faces in the government. Almost every person he talked to knew the names of the people who were major players in the Simpson trial. Not one person mistook Bryan "Kato" Kaelin's mug, and only a few were stumped when they were shown a photo of Rosa Lopez. The people who were shown the photos correctly identified nearly every trial personality. But one woman mistakenly identified a picture of Vice President Gore as one of Fuhrman.

When the *Dateline* correspondent asked the woman what she would think if he told her the picture was actually the vice president of the United States, she responded by saying there was no way that picture was of the vice president. She didn't even recognize Gore as the name of the vice president.

Since the slow-speed Bronco chase last June, television programming has

RACHEL BARRY

COLUMNIST



consumed itself with the Simpson trial to cater to the seemingly insatiable appetite the public has.

David Talley, senior manager of CNN's public relations department in Atlanta, said CNN has shown 909 hours and 31 minutes of Simpson coverage beginning with the Bronco chase. That works out to about the equivalent of 38 days of trial coverage, pretrial hearings, and other major events in the trial. He said there is no way, however, to calculate the amount of time dedicated to additional special programs the all-news network broadcast on the subject. It would be too great to even begin to calculate, he said.

The Simpson phenomena has commanded the attention of television viewers for the duration of the trial. Although the reason behind bringing the trial into the lives and living rooms of people around the globe is hard to understand by some, one thing is apparent — people want the coverage, and they want a lot of it.

After the first few weeks of Simpson news saturating our television sets, people were heard complaining about having enough of the trial and saying they didn't care. However, numbers show that while a few people may have been sincere in expressing these feelings, there were more who couldn't get enough of it.

The Oklahoma City Bombing in April was the only point in the past year when something aside from the bicker-

ing of Marcia Clark and Johnny Cochran was on the news. Even when more than 160 people were killed in the bombing, television viewers still wanted Simpson coverage.

Talley said his department normally receives about 1,200 calls a week asking questions about what is going on with the Simpson trial. The week before the bombing, the department received the normal amount of calls regarding the trial. The week of the bombing, the department received about 3,000 calls asking about the case. The week after the bombing, he said, the department was bombarded with 6,000 calls saying, "Enough Oklahoma, we want O.J. back."

The relative importance placed on the two events seems perverted. It is hard to believe that many people would care more about the soap opera we called a trial than the tragedy of the Oklahoma City bombing. Television has distorted reality and has made a spectacle of the judicial system.

There have been many people who have kept up with the trial almost religiously. A woman from Grosebeck is one of them. Marian Connor with KXAS-TV

in Fort Worth interviewed Pat Cox, a woman who has taped the entire trial and any television show that has had a segment on Simpson.

Connor said the Grosebeck woman has almost 2,000 hours of taped programs and has not turned off her television set, day or night, for four months. Cox eats, sleeps and reads in her bed while she watches the trial.

This woman has become a "bed potato," Connor said.

A "bed potato"? It is discouraging to think these advances in technology that allow television cameras to go anywhere have been made so we can satisfy our hunger for trash.

Sitting in bed for four months, not being able to tell the difference between Fuhrman and Gore and whining to CNN because there's too much about the Oklahoma City bombing and not enough Simpson are signs of a sick society. It isn't funny. It isn't strange. It is demented and shocking, and we should be ashamed that we let it go this far.

Now that the trial is over, Talley said CNN will continue its coverage of what is going on with Simpson for the next few weeks and possibly the next few months. It may be soon that we get off of this O.J. rush and get on with our lives, as we should have done over a year ago.

However, if we ever need an O.J. fix, we won't have to look any farther than Grosebeck to find a copy of the trial.

Rachel Barry is a junior journalism major



Texas A&M University Floriculture-Horticulture Society

presents

### Fall Plant Fair

## 1995

### October 7

### 8:00AM-3:00PM

Horticulture/Forest Science Bldg.  
West Campus

The Fair Features...

- Foliage Plants
- Bedding Plants
- Dorm-sized Houseplants
- Vegetables
- Planter Boxes
- And More!



Best Gun Show the Brazos Valley Has Ever Seen!

### GUN SHOW

October 14th, 9:00 am thru 6:00 pm

October 15th, 9:00 am thru 5:00 pm

Ramada Inn

1502 Texas Ave. S., College Station

Admission \$4.00 or 2 Day Pass \$6.00

HEY AGS! \$1 OFF WITH A&M I.D.

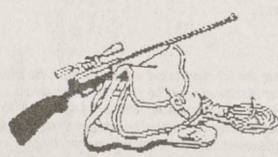
BUY • SELL • TRADE

NEW & USED GUNS

AMMUNITION  
SCOPES & MOUNTS •  
STUN GUNS • NIGHT VISION  
• SURPLUS & MUCH MORE

For More Information Call

409-779-8103



Theater Arts Program  
Presents



Ariel Dorfman's  
Death And The Maiden

Fallout Theater 144 Blocker  
8:00 p.m.

October 5-7, 12-14 & 18-21.

For tickets call 862-2052