

BLUE VELVET

Director: David Lynch

"At the sound of the falling tree, it's 9.30," purrs the DJ on the local radio, as David Lynch's film proceeds to take us through a glass darkly into the heart of Middle America. The idyllic images of Lumberton in the opening

scenes of *Blue Velvet* are descriptive: soon we're plunged into the fetishistic and S&M rituals of Isabella Rossellini and Dennis Hopper. The connecting link between these two extremes of smalltown life is provided by Jeffrey Beaumont (Kyle MacLachlan) when he discovers a severed ear at the local rubbish tip and decides to investigate further.

After the constraints of *Elephant Man* and *Dune*, Lynch is free to create a more elusive film with *Blue Velvet*, a film in which so much lies beneath the surface. It's no accident

that the director seems to be at pains to make the thriller trappings of the plot structure like something out of a trashy television movie: deliberately corny dialogue (the exchanges between MacLachlan and George Buckner's detective, for example); melodramatic musical punctuations, and even the brief appearances of Hope Lange, one of television's archetypal mothers.

Lynch deals instead with the crossover between dreams and reality. There's a dreamlike quality to the Bobby Vinton song which gives

the movie its title, a song which serves as both the centrepiece of Rossellini's nightclub act and the object of Hopper's fetishism. Sandy (Laura Dern) the co-ed virgin and a Shelley Fabares for the 80s, worries about Jeffrey's curiosity ("it sounds like a good daydream, but actually doing it's too weird") and yet confesses her idea of happiness in the form of a dream of fulsome sentimentality.

Other songs extend Lynch's central theme. The young lovers eventually dance to Julee Cruise's 'Mys-

teries of Love' with its references to "mysteries... in the dark." Later in the film, Dean Stockwell's garishly made-up pimp mimes to a recording of Roy Orbison's 'In Dreams', a song which, in this new context, is particularly eerie. The director even offers the faint-hearted a release at the end of the film: when MacLachlan wakes up after dozing in the yard, perhaps the whole thing was a dream... an extended nightmare.

Despite the determination of Frederick Elmes's camera to probe ruthlessly into everything from an underground ants nest to an ear, *Blue Velvet* doesn't give up all its secrets on one viewing. Like Dern who blurs out to MacLachlan at one point, "I don't know whether you're a detective or a pervert," the audience's grasp on any reality is never more than equivocal. Yet, not so equivocal that the film runs into any danger of becoming a thinking man's 9 1/2 Weeks: Hopper attacks MacLachlan with the accusation "You're like me, you fucker," and the wider implications of *Blue Velvet* are suddenly apparent. Like the image of the wind-blown candle which occurs during the film's more heated moments, it is a vision of the permeation of evil into the fabric of American society.

Beautifully played by its cast, from Dern's touching gauche teen queen to Hopper's blistering inferno of hate and violence, *Blue Velvet* is one of the most provocative and disturbing films to come out of America in this decade — an American Dream for the 80s?

William Dart

pain and joy. Most of the film concentrates on the relationship between Patsy and her husband Charlie Dick, whose first words to her are "that bitch sure can sing."

Reisz shows the two lovers backlit by neon dancing to 'Be Bop a Lula' — Charlie is a wild man, but Patsy is attracted to him. The film is about this attraction. In a way this tends to leave out a lot of her life, things just seem to



Patsy Cline

happen. All of a sudden she becomes a star, the classic songs like 'Crazy,' 'Walking After Midnight' just appear with no real buildup. Her many television and Vegas appearances are not shown, the film doesn't really show just how big a star she was, and just how important she was to country music.

Her new agent says to her "You want to be Kitty Wells," Patsy replies, "Hell no, I want to be Hank Williams," and in a way she was. The first to really cross over into the pop charts and the first woman to really succeed as a "woman" in the male dominated world of country music.

Jessica Lange plays Patsy wonderfully, from the very early days honky tonkin' to the Grand Ole Opry and the studio hits with Owen Bradley. Miming perfectly to the original vocals, Lange brings Patsy to life. Also good is Ed Harris as Charlie, a bit wild but also a bit lost in his wife's world.

It's their superb handling of their roles that make this a must-see film, as well as the amazing music, all the hits and her great version of Monroe's 'Blue Moon of Kentucky' and Wills' 'San Antonio Rose.' If you haven't yet warmed to country music this could change your mind.

Kerry Buchanan

Motley Crue
Uncensored (WEA)

"Motley who?" someone asks as the camera peers into the studio where the Crue are meant to have met for interviewing. Forty-five minutes later you know who and what Motley are all about. Singer Vince Neil takes us on a street tour of the Hollywood clubs where they started out, as he shares a spa pool with groupies in the back of his limo (remember he can't drive since the accident in '84 which was fatal for Hanoi Rocks' drummer Razzle). Hilarious T-Bone Tommy Lee rides about on his Harley, making wisecracks and friends along the way, while Mick Mars is content to cruise and chat in Corvette comfort, and Nikki Sixx is kinda all over the place. The music clips are the real hot stuff though, and they really cook on 'Live Wire' and 'Too Young To Fall in Love.' 'Smokin' in the Boys Room' is more a fun thing, while 'Home Sweet Home' visually captures the excitement of a Motley performance. Prudish people and parents should receive guidance before attempting to watch this.

Geoff Dunn

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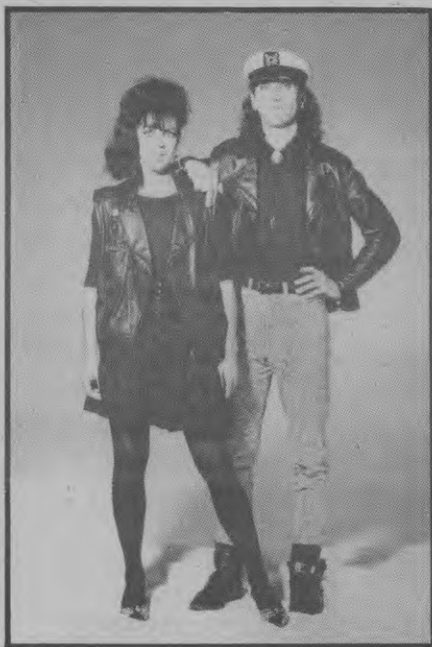
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