

COLOUR POSTERS: JON BON JOVI, A-HA, WHITNEY HOUSTON, BILLY IDOL

SHAKE!

No. 18 OCT 1987

\$2.75 incl. GST

U2

Interview

BON JOVI

Oz Tour Report

PET SHOP BOYS

Neil Tennant tells all

LA BAMBAA

film & the music

ON SALE
NOW AT
RECORD &
MAGAZINE
STORES

FILM

FULL METAL JACKET

Director: Stanley Kubrick

The opening shots of Stanley Kubrick's latest film — a succession of young recruits having their heads shaved while Johnny Wright's 'Hello Vietnam' twangs on the soundtrack — sets a nicely ironic tone for yet another film about the war that was Vietnam. And the genre continues to flourish in the wake of *Platoon*: there was a trailer for Coppola's *Gardens of Stone* before the Kubrick film was screened.

If we must judge all Vietnam films by *Platoon*, then *Full Metal Jacket* makes a few radical departures. Whereas Oliver Stone's is a personal and rhetorical approach, Kubrick is dispassionate and analytical. While *Platoon* is a rambling saga of horror upon horror, *Full Metal Jacket* underplays the narrative element.

To start with, Kubrick presents his movie in two instalments. The first deals with the training of the Marines in an "eight-week college for phony toughs and crazy braves," as one of the characters describes it. It sounds like *Officer and a Gentleman* territory, but there's no Debra Winger to be seen and Lou Gosset Jr's martinet was a pussycat compared to Lee Ermey's sergeant in *Full Metal Jacket*, streaming sexual and scatological abuse at his charges, punctuating it with the occasional cuff.

The training is an intentional dehumanisation and Kubrick distances us by treating it ritualistically as a series of endurance trials. Conversational dialogue is kept to a minimum and the film generates a real sense of hysteria which culminates in a piece of violence more shocking than anything in the second half of the movie.

The Vietnam portion starts off rather sleepily with life in the journalists' bivouac, until Private Joker (a fine performance from Matthew Modine) makes it to the combat zone to have his bit of this "giant shit sandwich." The final payout is brilliant, as tautly filmed as anything Kubrick has made. The soldiers are in a bombed city, hunting a lethal sniper. She is eventually tracked down and mortally wounded. The overhead shots of the young Vietnamese girl begging to be shot are among the memorable in the movie, an image made all the more moving by the subsequent final scene, with the platoon marching to the Mousketeers' chant, Disney Boys on parade.

William Dart

TIN MEN

Director: Barry Levinson

The setting is Baltimore, a city you might know from either Barry Levinson's earlier *Diner* or John Waters's various Divine epics. The year is 1963, with *The Birds* playing downtown, and the soundtrack is peppered with classics like Gene Pitney's 'Man Who Shot Liberty Valence' and Otis Redding's 'Try a Little Tenderness.' Two of the characters keep returning to a discussion of *Bonanza* and the vagaries of sexual life on the Ponderosa — one of the best running gags of the film.



On paper, *Tin Men*'s plot looks thin. Danny De Vito manages to prang Richard Dreyfuss's new Cadillac as Dreyfuss drives it out of the dealer's yard, setting off a chain of petty revenges which ends up with Dreyfuss stealing De Vito's wife (Barbara Hershey). The real point of the film is not its blow-by-blow account of the pair's grudge match, but rather in Levinson's neatly-drawn observations on the life of tin men, and their ingenious methods for selling aluminium sidings to an unsuspecting public. The various scams to coax customers to sign up are hilarious. Yet the camaraderie between the men is touching: every one of them springs from the script as a real character, particularly John Mahoney's Moe, whose heart attack is the most dramatic moment of the film. They are insulated and in a world of their own — significantly Hershey's character, who turns out to be the main dupe of the film, never really intrudes on their territory.

Although its subject matter may seem offbeat, *Tin Men* is refreshing in its sincerity, its genuine wit, and has some of the best ensemble playing I've seen on screen this year.

William Dart

ANGEL HEART

Director: Alan Parker

Hired by the mysterious and rather sinister Robert De Niro to locate a pop singer of the 30s who owes him a debt, Mickey Rourke's detective sets off on a search that takes him from the back streets of New York to voodoo and satanism on the bayou. Before the film erupts in a succession of grisly killings (Charlotte Rampling has her heart cut out, Brownie McGhee his genitals hacked off and stuffed in his mouth), Parker gives an impressive display of the filmmaker's craft — a veritable textbook of style.

Angel Heart deals with the quirky and bizarre, and Parker has a good eye for detail, from a scene with a middle-aged man biting the heads off rats and obsessively rubbing his crotch on a deserted beach to a gaggle of corpulent Baptists bathing in a Louisiana river. It's to his credit that tension is sustained beautifully, as the mystery becomes darker and darker, piece by piece.

One is so caught up in the whole affair that the ending, with De Niro as the Devil, orange eyes and all, is a bit of a letdown. It's disappointing to be brought down to earth so brutally. Nevertheless, the many details remain, including the opportunity to see Brownie McGhee singing 'Rainy Days' at the Maple Leaf Bar (transformed into the Little Red Rooster Club for the film).

William Dart

GLADSTONE HOTEL
Tues 20th October
Wed 21st October

DIE YUPPIE DIE

the new single on 7" & 12"

THE GLUEPOT

LABOUR WEEKEND

Thurs. 22nd October

Fri 23rd October

Sat 24th October

DOCKERS

PAINTERS &

DOCK
ON!

