

WNCC



ED WOOD

15



Director	Tim Burton
Producer	Denise Di Novi Tim Burton
Writers	Scott Alexander Larry Karaszewski
Executive Producer	Michael Lehmann
Music	Howard Shore
Cast	
Ed Wood	Johnny Depp
Bela Lugosi	Martin Landau
Dolores Fuller	Sarah Jessica Parker
Kathy O'Hara	Patricia Arquette
Criswell	Jeffrey Jones
Bunny Breckinridge	Bill Murray

Johnny Depp, Bela Lugosi, the 'Worst Director of all time', and Angora Sweaters.

At first glance, I would forgive you for not spotting the link. (If you have, you have either already seen this film, or of a very unusual frame of mind!!!!).

They actually combine to form what has been hailed as Tim Burton's first masterpiece "**Ed Wood**".

More famously recognised for fantasy features "Beetlejuice", "Edward Scissorhands" and "Batman", this latest offering is Burton's most realistic film to date, about one of the least realistic lives ever to appear in Hollywood.

Edward D. Wood Jnr started his infamous career in 1951. Working as a studio hand, he learned of producer George Weiss's plans for a film to capitalise on the news of Christine Jorgensen's sex-change.

With ambitions to be a writer-director-star, Woods pitched for the job to direct, claiming he could relate to the event as he was a transvestite, and could also persuade horror-flick veteran Bela Lugosi to star. The result was his first feature, "Glen or Glenda", in which he cast himself in the title role of the anguished cross-dresser. He also cast his girlfriend Dolores Fuller to play Glen's girlfriend, using the opportunity to reveal to her his fetish for angora sweaters.

When the film went down with far from an enthusiastic response, Wood carried on regardless, obtaining what little cash he could scrape together to make a series of horror films, all with a thematic obsession with monsters and cross-dressers.

In 1956, he began "Plan 9 from Outer Space", which he believed was his bid for Hollywood Stardom. Unfortunately Bela Lugosi died from his drug addiction soon after filming began, and the film was finished using Wood's new wife Kathy O'Hara' chiropractist.

Unsurprisingly, Wood did not receive the acclaim he desired, but still continued tirelessly with his style of feature, later combining soft pornography with his chosen genre, then moving into hard-core pornography. As work became scarce, he descended in to alcoholism, and died in 1978 aged only 54.

Despite Wood's reputation as a talentless but motivated director, and being overwhelmingly selected as "Worst Director of all time" by the Golden Turkey Awards, he now has an enthusiastic cult following, and recognition from critics for his tireless drive and optimism. (A season of his films were shown as the NFT prior to "Ed Wood" release in 1995).



In "Ed Wood" Tim Burton joins forces again with Johnny Depp, (from "Edward Scissorhands"), as the eccentric Wood, depicting the high point of his career in the 50's. The show is stolen though by Martin Landau who deservedly won an Oscar for his performance as the washed-up drug addict Lugosi.

Central to the films plot is the close friendship between Wood and Lugosi, as Wood rescues him from obscurity to star in his films. Landau brilliantly displays a man who lived and died for the industry, tragic in self-destruction.

It is Wood's infectious enthusiasm and determination which gains him a following of misfits, including cameo's from Bill Murray, playing the raging queen 'Bunny' Breckinridge, and Patricia Arquette, as Kathy O'Hara.

Rather than an obvious beginning, middle and end, the film relies on incidents rather than a plot, and filmed in sumptuous black and white, Burton highlights the style of the 50's, and the era of glitz and glamour in Hollywood which Wood so desperately wanted to be recognised in.

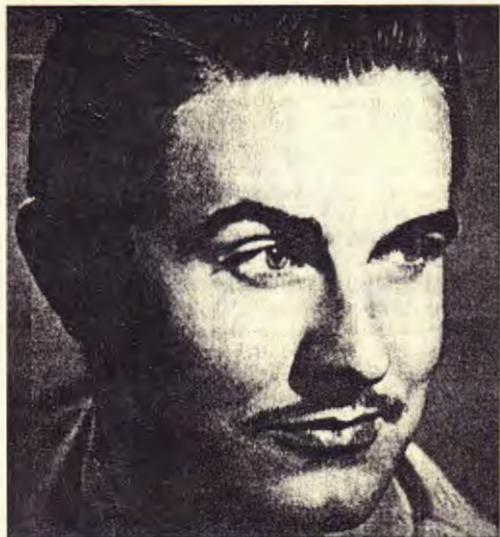
Burton presents us with an affectionate tribute, and a man so brimming with energy nobody could deny his right to be a recognised film maker.

The film does not focus on the sad decline of Wood's career, nor does it ridicule Wood's lack of talent, but displays an admiration for his determination to follow his dream, no matter how unconventional.

It displays the importance of optimism and friendship, shouting 'Its not what you achieve in life that's important, but how you go about it!

P.S. Credit I feel is due to Johnny Depp, who turned down "Speed" and "Interview with a Vampire" to play this role.

There is hope for Hollywood YET!!!!!!



The real Ed Wood Jr



Johnny Depp as Ed Wood

ED WOOD Jr

King (and sometimes Queen) of the Mad Bad 'B's

The jury is back out on Edward D Wood Jr.

Since Michael Medved's 1980 Golden Turkey Awards initiative which resulted in Ed being overwhelmingly selected as the 'worst director of all time', his name has been inextricably linked to that infamous slogan. However a rising number of professional film critics and amateur enthusiasts are disputing the point. They feel that Wood's individualistic vision and tireless optimism give his underfunded films a drive and sense of style that lift them out of the mainstream and make them worthy of more than simple and puerile criticism.

Recently Wood's supporters have been given a boost by the appearance of two well made biographical documentaries, a book on his career and, more spectacularly, Tim Burton's superb *Ed Wood* biopic. This is an ideal time for us to reassess Wood's career and to look at his films in a new light. The renowned wooden acting, wobbly sets, baffling monologues and bizarre plot swerves still provide hilarious moments, but now - knowing more about the man and the stories behind the making of the movies - there's an unexpected poignancy to the viewings. —

DICK FIDDY

(extract from National Film Theatre programme notes)



SUMMER FILMS AT YVONNE ARNAUD THEATRE, GUILDFORD

If you have missed any films in recent months, the Yvonne Arnaud Theatre has announced a summer Film festival from Monday 21 July - Sunday 11 August. The initial films include "Evita"; "Surviving Picasso"; and ... "The Big Sleep"!

The films will be given limited screenings - often only one showing. Tickets cost £5 (4 booked together entitles the purchaser to £1 off the Standard price) Thursday matinees cost £3. The Box Office's telephone number is 01483 440000.

The Student Prince in Old Heideleberg (22/5/97)

28 reactions giving an average score of 7.9

Some of your comments:

Excellent, loved every minute, even the unhappy ending.
Quality amazing for 1927.

A very poignant fairy tale with a thread of reality.

Nice to see that Germans practised penalty taking as early as the 1890's!!

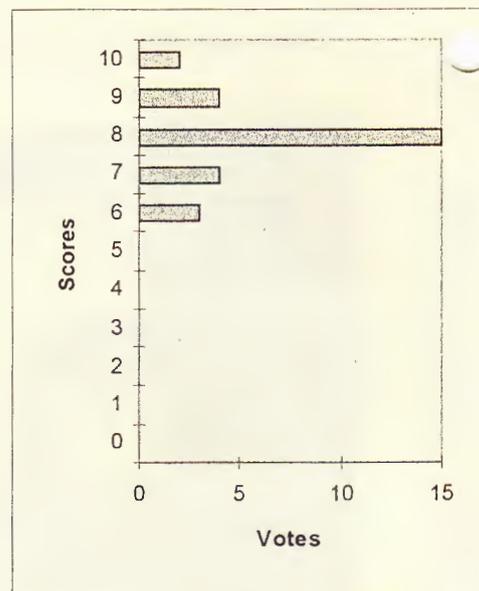
Interesting to note that student pre-occupations remain the same - drink, the opposite sex and no studying!

A very good evening - the print, the introduction and presentation.

Very good acting without the sound.

Aaaaaahh- more arch than a viaduct. Some lovely Lubitschtouches. **Thank you and well done Patrick!**

Helen Sayers



REACTIONS

WNCC 17th Season - Members' Reactions

Pos	Title	(No of Reactions)	Av Score
2	Remains Of The Day	(53)	8.4
9	The Usual Suspects	(46)	6.8
12=	Once Were Warriors	(43)	6.6
9	Anchors Aweigh	(22)	7.2
16	The Round-Up	(18)	5.7
1	Shawshank Redemption	(48)	8.5
8	It Happened One Night	(35)	7.4
3	Il Postino	(53)	8.1
7	Room At The Top	(35)	7.5
5=	Funny Bones	(37)	7.7
12=	Shorts Programme	(38)	6.6
5=	The Big Sleep	(33)	7.7
15	Deliverance	(24)	5.8
14	Shanghai Triad	(30)	6.4
17	Barcelona	(26)	5.3
4	The Student Prince	(28)	7.9

19th June 1997

COMING NEXT

**WNCC
Annual General Meeting,
followed at 9.20 pm by:**

The Great St Trinian's Train Robbery



St Trinian's in colour! In this one, the storyline revolves around the loot from a great train robbery, which happens to be hidden under the stage of the ballroom at St Trinian's new premises. The thieves plot to recover it, but St Trinian's girls are no ordinary schoolgirls... Jokes and gags flow thick and broad, with a hectic mixed-up railway chase as a finale. *UK 1966/Dir's Frank Launder, Sidney Gilliat. With Frankie Howerd, Dora Bryan, George Cole. 94 mins. J-Cert U.*

Finishing at 10:55 pm (approx)

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