


READER'S Guide to the Silver Screen

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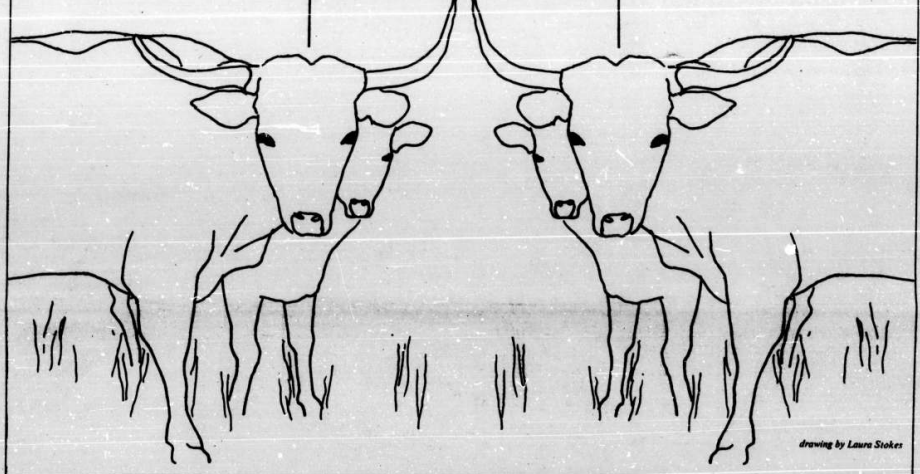
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SAN DIEGO'S FREE WEEKLY May 31, 1973

HOLY COW! HOLY COW!



drawing by Laura Stokes

—Fred Solier-Roi—

Go ahead. T. is the ice man, the candlestick maker, the fruit and vegetable vendor, and even the neighborhood baker. Put them all under one well-lit supermarket roof and seal their wares in polyethylene. It's cheaper that way. More efficient. But whatever you do, don't do the same to my neighborhood butcher.

My neighborhood butcher is a nice, graying, stocky man named Blackie. His service is the only reason for the survival of our neighborhood mom and pop grocery store.

Every time I've gone in for a piece of meat, Blackie gives me another class in the anatomy of the cow. Blackie has taught me about

what he calls the loin section of the cow, reaching behind and rubbing the middle of his back. "Below that's the sirloin and below that's the round, where the leg meets the rump of the cow. This here," Blackie points to the small strip of meat near the backbone in the piece of loin he's holding, "is the tenderloin. This is where the real expensive tender filets come from. 'Course that's not my favorite piece. This here," he taps a shoulder pot roast in the showcase with his knife, "this or the stew meat or the ground meat — they have a lot more flavor than a filet."

What makes Blackie and the other butchers in the other neighborhood grocery stores around town so popular isn't just their friendliness. They take special pride in the meat's taste and

general quality. Not a hard-sell merchant, Blackie smiles and the skin around his eyes folds into a thousand tiny wrinkles. "I age my meat a lot more than the big supermarkets. Usually, I get a side of beef in my locker here and keep it to it's aged three weeks to a month. Years ago, some of the big stores used to age meat locally. Safeway, for example. Now Safeway brings it down already cut up, packed in cardboard boxes at the cutting house in L.A. 'Course these supermarkets can put the meat right on the shelf in clean plastic and the meat's bright red. It looks real good and there's no shrinkage. Why, when I put a hind quarter in my locker here to age it, it loses a pound and a half a day in shrinkage. The meat you get in the supermarkets shrinks when you cook it."

Blackie handles his instruments like an artist with his bush. Quickly, deliberately. He trims the fat and gristle from a piece of round steak and scrapes the waste into a container with a single stroke of his knife. He scoops a spoonful of ground beef and slaps it on a sheet of wax paper on his scale. Exactly a pound, not a hair off.

Another advantage over the big supermarkets that Blackie offers is his ground beef. Blackie says every store's ground beef comes from all parts of the cow, anything that has

muscle tissue (my mind skips back to a vegetarian friend who told me, "yeah, snouts and feet and... everything.") But then Blackie comes closer, lowers his voice and glances from side to side. He gives a little laugh as if he has done something wrong himself. "They — uh — the big supermarkets — fudge a little on the ground beef, you know. Those three categories they use — regular, lean, super lean, or whatever it is — well, the percentages are fudged. If they say 25 percent fat, well, it's probably 30 percent. But you can't catch 'em. It's too hard to figure the percentages out. My ground beef here is leaner than what they call their ground round."

Blackie doesn't put much stock in the cheaper alternatives to his ever more expensive beef. He said he tried horsemeat years ago, that it had a sweet but dry taste to it. "Real stringy, no fat on it." Even if he wanted to sell horsemeat, he is prohibited from doing so by state law. California law says horsemeat can't be sold in the same room as beef. He also poooh-pooos the virtues of Tijuana beef. "Some people tell me you can get filets in Tijuana for 80 or 90 cents a pound. But that's a filet from a Mexican range cow, not a steer. That meat's real tough, no fat on it. I've been everywhere in the world and you can't get beef

anywhere in the world that's better than ours. I went to Argentina several years ago and that beef's supposed to be so good... well, it's not."

Blackie hasn't had a real rush on the rock-bottom parts of the cow, either. Some people buy kidneys, mostly for pet food; some English people like it for kidney stew. He doesn't sell any tripe, but some of the butchers down in heavily black Southeast San Diego do.

Blackie's chauvinism even extends to the state where the beef comes from. "I'm from the Midwest but I don't think their beef is better than California beef. They take their steer who's been out on the range and put him in the feed lot only the last month or so. I get my beef from the feed lots in El Centro. They keep that steer in the feed lot for as much as 120 days before slaughter. He is in a little stall and doesn't get much exercise. He just eats. So he gets real fat and his beef's real tender. You see, it's all that exercise they get on the range that makes the meat less tender."

Usually the lessons last until Blackie finishes wrapping the meat. He smiles and sets the white paper package on the counter. By then there are at least three or four customers waiting in line for their piece of meat and their anatomy lesson. □



WOMAN BEATS MAN—San Diego podiatrist and 1952 Olympic gold medal winner Dr. George Rhoden losing by a chest to 1964 and 1965 Olympic 100 meter champion Wyomia Tyus Simburg in the Battle of the Sexes 60 yard dash.

photograph Richard Pesin

shot put, and runs co-mingled with each other, not separately as advertised, and I realized despite the International Track Association Run-Pacer and wiedo events, that I was at a typical three-ring indoor track meet.

The Post Cereals Mile Run was the showcase event. Pre-race favorites were Jim Ryun of Kansas, Kip Keino of Kenya, and dark-horse Jerome Howe, in a field of six. At the gun, San Diego's Bob Messina blitzed out to a big lead, Kip Keino stutter-stepped his way to the rear, and surprisingly, Jim Ryun held on to a fast second.

Well, Maybe It Looked Better on T.V.

—Alan Pesin—

On April 14, 1912, the White Star liner Titanic, on her maiden voyage, struck an iceberg and sank. On May 6, 1937, the hydrogen inflated Hindenburg, on her first of its 1937 season of North Atlantic crossings, burst into flames and was completely destroyed. And on May 19, 1973, the San Diego Sports Arena hosted the world's first nationally televised professional track meet.

Events at an indoor track meet are as easy to follow as the bouncing ball during a Lithuanian folksong. High jumpers begin their approach to the bar by ducking under orbiting pole vaulters. Record-breaking long jumpers land in the laps of straggling two-mile runners. Shot putters, with their backs to the putting areas, heave sixteen-pound balls to the dismay of oncoming high hurdlers. Decelerating sixty-yard dash contestants disappear down darkened tunnels never to be heard from again. Vaulters carrying their poles are arrested for assault with a deadly weapon. At the PSA Pro Track Classic in San Diego an approaching high jumper was attacked by a wayward shot put; the high jump, long jump, pole vault,

took nine-tenths of a second off the world best indoor 500 meter dash time, and Chris Fisher of Australia broke the world's record for the 1000 meter run. Local track aficionados gave some of the credit for the record times to the Pro West banked track, the only one ever manufactured by Pro West. When it went bankrupt, it considered one of the finest indoor tracks in the world, and many athletes key up for record breaking performances when they see the San Diego Sports Arena on their schedule.

The shot put was won by ex-troverted Brian Oldfield with a three one inch longer than the best throw by introverted Randy Matson. Bob Seagren, big winner in the "Supersars" competition held in Florida, cleared seventeen feet in the pole vault, but came in third on the basis of misses. Warren Edmondson of UCLA won the sixty yard dash over John Carlos, among others. George Young, four time Olympian, set a new pro record in the two mile run. Barbara Ferrell won a race against the lights (the ITA Run-Pacer), and in all the commotion I missed the winners of the high jump, long jump, and a couple of dashes, though I got their names later on from a nuclear physicist who goes to indoor track meets to sharpen his mind.

The wiedo events included an overweight Deacon Jones being crushed by 600-pound leading money winner Brian Oldfield (in the forty yard dash), Dallas Cowboy Bob Hayes nipping Green Bay Packer Willie Buchanan in a forty yard dash, and San Diego podiatrist and 1952 Olympic 400 meter gold medal winner Dr. George Rhoden losing to 1964 and '68 Olympic 100 meter champion Wyomia Tyus Simburg in a photo finish. Next year the ITA is promising an invitational shot put between aging Hollywood movie queens and retired garbage-men.

Two wiedo relay ended the meet and the fans began to disperse. On my right a husband and wife team hurdled the barrier and sprinted after Master of Ceremonies Marty Liquori, hoping for his autograph. The man on my left leaned over to me and asked if what we had just seen "was live or on tape." "The rest of the crowd hurried home to watch the first West Coast, televised, nationally televised, pro track meet ever on ABC's Wide World of Sports. □

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OUT GO THE HEAVY METAL BELCHERS

—Ted Burke—

A lot of inference has been made in the last two years that rock and roll is a dead art. For many, the rock scene has become so dismally entrenched in egocentric bombast that to hear comments like "Shit, I'm finished with Rock music" becomes commonplace. It appears as though the musicians and sundry other super stars have sacrificed their roots for extrapolations into the nether-world of selfless seriousness. Lately, however, we have been blessed with a spate of new album releases that are the best to come along in recent memory. For the moment, out go the symphonic and heavy metal belchers and in come folks who mean business.

Still Alive and Well by Johnny Winter proves, as all his albums do, just how well he can play the blues in so many unorthodox ways. His first album in two years (after he kicked the Heroin habit), his fluid guitar lines attack each song with an admirable vengeance. "Rock Me Baby" supplies enough head-rattling riffs to loosen your bonnet from the back of your skull. The other rockers, "Still Alive and Well," "Can't You Feel It," "Rock and Roll," and a hell-bent version of the Stones' "Let It Bleed" rock well beyond the point of mere satisfaction. Vocally, Winter has never been better. On "All Tore

Down," his sand paper voice achieves a level of blues despair that's emotionally entrancing. Essentially a slow blues, Winter's guitar comes on like a less furred Leslie West. The slow, creeping chord progression prowls throughout with an overbearing bridge amplifying the resolute defiance in Winter's subdued growl. After the bridge, the guitar explodes with notes attacking in rapid-fire clumps, struggling against the intended rigidity of the song, but never contradicting it. It has a mighty, galloping guitar performance. Mark this one up on your list of nominations for Best Album of the Year.

Bob Seger is straight from the heart of engines and visceral punkitude. Detroit City. Though more subdued than his contemporaries (the MC-5, Iggy and the Stooges, Amboy Duke, et al), he nonetheless epitomizes the essence of romanticized greaserism. With his new album, *Back In '72* he refines his pre-heavy metal raunch to a smoother, more commercial style that is still funky and primordially exciting. "Midnight Rider," an Altman Brothers song, is transformed from the trademarked Duane Allman/Dicky Betts guitar harmonies to a sped-up tempo and more aggressive vocal. Seger's abilities as a singer have been legend and here they come into

focus. His vulnerable, soulful rasp displays a desperation which, when at its best, evokes images of hard times in the best blues tradition. Seger takes a free song and again transforms it from its original idea to his experience. Gone is the conditional manneredness, replaced by blistering low-rider eroticism. Next up is a Seger original, "Rosalie," which, in contrast to the over-all American feel to the album, sounds so British that comparison is inevitable. Styled after the Stones, circa 1972 (*Exile On Mainstreet*), it has mightily galloping guitar chords, abetted by discreet slide, subtle horns and female chorus. The guitar break in the middle is the absolute Chuck Berry cum Keith Richards, biting in its fierce sparseness. *Back in '72* is basic rock and roll simplicity used as a means to an end, not an end in itself. Doubtlessly the best thing from Detroit since Mitch Ryder.

Speaking of Free, their latest, *Heartbreaker*, once and for all puts vocalist Paul Rogers in the front ranks of British singers. He sounds like a crossing between Rod Stewart, Steve Marriott, Robert Plant, Terry Reid (who?—more on him later) and any number of others. Sporting a set of pipes capable of infusing even the laziest of songs with a fire, Rogers' prowess proves to be indeed awesome. But even with all that power,



even he cannot enliven the most dead proceedings of *Heartbreaker*. The only song remotely resembling the swager simplicity of yore (a la "All Right Now") is "Wishing Well" (with a gutsy introduction lifted verbatim from Hendrix's "Dolly Dagger"). Too many songs are drabby ballads, weighty blues laments or mucked up slop. Rogers gives moments of pleasurable throughout, but the band's lack of commitment ties matters to the ground. Given that the musicians are new, the lack of spirit is understandable. Consider this a transitional album. What follows should be all meat in comparison.

The less said about *Houses of the Holy* by Led Zeppelin, the better. Suffice to say that the boys made an effort to shed their heavy metal straight jacket at a time when their concern was least focused. Robert Plant seems to have had a vasectomy on his voice. Page's guitar work is annoyingly erratic. The drumming is all over the place but on the beat. Blah.

Thirty Seconds Over Winterland is the best Jefferson Airplane effort since *Volunteers*. Marty Balin's

soaring moan of a voice has been replaced by ex-Quicksilver bassist David Freiberg, and he executes his chores well. Jorma Kaukonen and Jack Cassidy trade some mellow guitar/bass licks on an extended "Feel So Good." "When The Earth Moves Again" sounds like a counter-culture national anthem combined with the patriotic zeal of a Red Chinese opera, only rocking its ass off. Grace Slick's voice no longer contains any hint of psychological innocence, but her singing still connects with the lyrics with the accuracy of a well-placed kick. Papa John Creach's blues violin sounds a limited vocabulary and tends to bump against the other players. His licks are getting a bit tepid. Still, the Airplane rocks with a self-assuredness that resembles down right arrogance. It is arrogance perhaps, a pride on their part for the role they've played in creating the Youth Culture. Yet the straining of age shows even on them. During the "In loyalty to the kind," They cannot tolerate our minds' "Crown of Creation," Grace interjects "I can't either..." Oh, to be Peter Pan.....

CHICAGO SYMPHONY
(continued from page 2)
from the late nineteenth and early twentieth century music he has become famous for. Precise without being dry, warm without being inappropriately romantic, and with all the forces of the reduced orchestra in perfect balance, this was a thoroughly admirable performance of the Jupiter, lacking only a final measure of grace to equal the supreme interpretation of the late Bruno Walter, which still remains matchless.

In the Mahler, however, it is Solti who matches. One cannot conceive of a greater performance of this music, either interpretively or in the sheer skill at handling the complexities of Mahler's score. From the searing glissandi of the strings in the opening movement

and the Adagio to the massed climaxes of the brass in the second movement and at the end, everything was at the almost superhuman limit of emotional expressiveness and yet, at the same time, perfectly articulated and in perfect proportion. Those who know Solti's stunning recording of the Mahler Fifth and who did not have the great good fortune to attend this concert will view with considerable skepticism any

suggestion that the recorded performance is not the last word. I agree that the recording is unsurpassable. But the concert performance surpassed it. Greatness—the real thing—consists in doing the impossible, and the audience that rose to their feet at the end of this performance and applauded their hearts out for ten minutes had not the slightest doubt that what happened, and in their presence.

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