movies...

'The Easy Life' a rare breed of foreign film

By Mona Dassow

'The Easy Life,' at the Exeter Street Theatre, is an unusual Italian comedy. It manages to combine the story faults of most modern foreign films with the cinematic abilities of the better American directors.

The actual story line is expected; Alfredo views life through a microscope; he sees the details and cannot see the complete picture. He is a callous-ficial. Alfredo, a fun-loving rover, ed, sadistic boy who does whatever he pleases in the name of fun.

Alfredo is the amoral. Good, intelligent, sensitive, he easily falls before Alfredo's analysis of life.

The portrayal of these two characters is excellent. Gassman and Trintignan's different personalities with precision and yet are able to mesh the two people so well they seem to be two sides of the same person.

Does this sound like a comedy? It is not. If nothing else it is pathetic in his laughter. Ettore Gia- die, the author, cannot resist the urge to show Italian life "as it really is." Italian films criticize Italian life. French films French life, Swedish films Swedish life. It seems to be an occupational hazard, and there are only so many possible versions of the same faults.

This said, the analysis is done under the guise of comedy, adding nothing to the film. Admittedly, many of the scenes and dialogue are hayek. In most comedy they are an exaggeration of human faults, but the comments are a bit biting, the exaggerations a bit overemphasized.

Alfredo's comments are ob- viously meant to show up the typical Italian he meets. He suc- ceeds only in revealing his own warped screen.

Curiously enough this film is a pleasing surprise to viewers used to the usual foreign film. This one is as sound-track. The scenery is clearly lit, the film consistently exposed. The black and white does not change from gray to brown to lavender and back again. Alfredo's direction is very good, the actors very good. Instead of a fixed point of view, as in "La Dolce Vita" and "Boccaccio 70," the camera moves with the people. This movement produces an empathy between the viewer and the charac- ters that is necessary for any film's "meaning" to be put across. The scenes from Alfredo's spending are especially effective.

Another rare quality is the cast. The film is a very interesting film. If the viewer is looking for a few laughs, the film's unabashed hon- esty provides a lot of comedy.

For one who prefers to get a lesson in moral and modern Italian society, there are many ideas worthy of consideration, if he can stand the repetition.

CINEMA

KENMORE SQ. 262-3799

2:30-4:10, 6:15-8:45 p.m.

"The Easy Life" Directed by Vittorio Gassman

Screened in English at the Boston Street Theatre.

Starring Vittorio Gassmann as Alfredo and Jean-Louis Trintignan as Fredo.

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