movies... "Patch of Blue" has unconvincing plot

A "Patch of Blue" may strike a bit contrived, at least on the surface, it certainly is. Selina has been blind since the age of five; at seventeen, she is a middle class, white collar, very cultured, well educated, somewhat idealized performance as Selina's mother and grandfather. But, if we are as a bit contrived, and, at seventeen, she is nearly all the action occurs within a good, there is the problem of how predictable as a story can be. There is a simplicity about the production that is in some ways; nearly all the action occurs within just three relatively simple sets. Likewise, the photography, through straining for no very unusual effects, works well with the gripping, moving title of the drama; and the music similarly avoids melodrama; it is mostly light and unobtrusive on the ears, yet still conveys feeling effectively. The story, however, is no tragedy. For one of the most pleasant surprises in the end, which expresses the difficulty of the situation and the patience that must attend any resolution of it, while avoiding the easily imaginable histrionics that would do little to clarify the problem.

Uncomfortable painting

Unfortunately, the movie happens in execution. Though the idea of making a sort of parable sounds good, there is the problem of how to make it convincing. Sidney Poitier is totally unbelievable as the Good Samaritan; when he seeks out Selina in the park and be- gins to patronize her ("tolerance" is the key word, he says), it is amazing that a girl of her learned background would accept him immediately. Presumably, they are both idealized portraits of tolerance, the solution to all the world's problems; but just how much can a director expect one to take on the excuse of symbolism? Shelley Winters and Mel- vin Fix give believable, if somewhat idealized, performances as Selina's mother and grandfather. But, if we are as, then Mr. Herman, the director, kids up be, we may appreciate "A Patch of blue" for its flawless symbolic suggestion of its central themes. Parker's blindness does more than make her a suitable object of pity for a good Negro, it carries the theme beyond the narrow confines of the American Negro problem. Of course, the director's lack of blindness and understanding is also present, as a symbol of blindness in the movement among the three simple sets.

The symbols can be paid for with a loss of reality. But you just have to decide which you want to see.

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By Thomas Noël

A single man, impressively dressed in a dark double-breasted suit, walked quietly out onto Kresge stage Thursday, at a tall slender candle, and began to talk. The man was Basil Rathbone, making his first appearance in MIT. He gave dramatic readings for two hours to a rapt, thoroughly delighted audi- ence. Probably the most impressive aspect of the entire evening with Mr. Rathbone was the ob- vious respect which the entire house held for him. He has the utmost grace and style. Standing, sitting, strolling around an old chair or table, talking, pausing, reflecting — he com- pletely charmed the audience.

Read favorite parts

But people were not simply impressed by his extremely re- fined style; they also were given a chance to appreciate his skill. Mr. Rathbone read a number of decisions of his favorite poema with such tenderness as to produce beyond all doubt his introductory statement, that po-

Basil Rathbone captures lively audience in Kresge

By David Hoffman

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