

music:

At the Pee-Nut Gallery

By Charles Marx

November has marked the opening of a new rock club in Boston, the Pee-Nut Gallery at 1300 Boylston St. It is probably the ideal size and atmosphere for music to be played in; it seats less than 100 people and the sound system is perfectly suited for such an intimate audience. The decor of the rather dimly lit club and bar is somewhat of a cross between an English pub and a corral, minus the Cockney accents and the stench of ale and/or cow dung. It's quite reminiscent of Stonehenge, on the



Jesse Frederick

North Shore in Ipswich.

To help the Pee-Nut Gallery get rolling, both Warner Brothers/Reprise and A&M records have brought in new musicians to debut at the new club. The first to arrive was Jesse Frederick, the second to sign on Albert Grossman's Bearsville WB subsidiary label (the first being Lazarus, who released a fine premiere album last month). This young man from southern Maryland is definitely someone to keep your eye on. His music ranges from solo guitar and voice to a rocking three or four man electric back-up. He has a decidedly interesting voice that grows on you, somewhere between a Joe Cocker and a Randy Newman, with a bit of a Band vocal thrown in. Jesse Frederick is very pleasant listening; "Victoria Lenore" is a simply beautiful number.

A&M followed in with Jim Carroll last week, whose musical scope from simple acoustic to raunchy rock is much the same as Frederick's. His voice is also distinctive, but in a totally different sense. While Frederick's is a deeper husky tone, Carroll's is high pitched, somewhat thin. But at times he uses it most effectively. On *Jim Carroll*, a song such as "Save Me" or "On and On" is made all the more haunting by his voice. Decidedly, Carroll's album is also worth a listen.

At the Pee-Nut Gallery, Jesse Frederick was the more impressive of the two. Both albums suffer from over-orchestration which is mercifully eliminated live. As Frederick leans more heavily on the music, the fact that his backing musicians were very tight and competent only enhanced his set. On the other hand, Carroll is the better lyricist of the two, but live, his band, although featuring guitarist David Spinoza, was poor, and detracted from Carroll and his lyrics.

All in all, Carroll, Frederick, and the Pee-Nut Gallery with their encouraging initial efforts, bode well for the future.

music:

TYA, Fleetwood Mac, ...

By Neal Vitale

November has struck Boston, bringing its usual share of arctic winds and frigid temperatures. But it seems, as if to thaw out the populace, the record companies and promotional agencies have swamped the area with major acts and new record releases to keep those amplifiers and electric guitars and turntables smoldering.

Unfortunately, a deeper chill was thrown on the month by the death of Duane Allman in a motorcycle crash in Macon, Georgia. He was one of the premier musicians in rock, in his capacity as sometime-studio guitarist (he was master of the slide guitar), sometime-Domino with Derek, but mostly as leader of what might have been the best rock band around — the Allman Brothers. The tragedy of his death is all the more poignant in that his group was finally coming into its own with such fine records as *Idlewild South* and *Live At The Fillmore*. Mr. Duane Allman will be missed, and as a tribute, Wednesday's scheduled Allman Brothers concert will instead be a memorial for him (Don't be surprised if one J. Geils and a few other friends show up).

Monday the first, Ten Years After and Mylon trooped into the jammed, smoke-filled hoc-

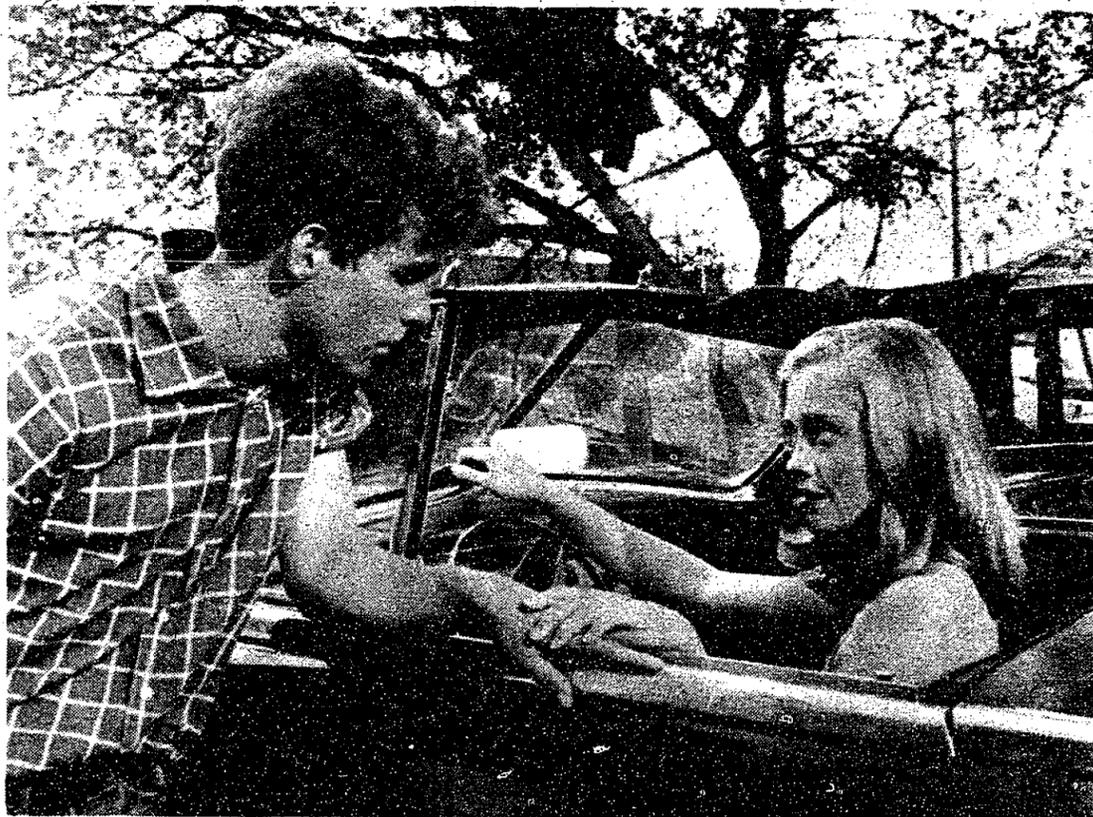
key palace of Boston, the Garden. Mylon and his back-up, Holy Smoke, were worthy of comment only in that they dedicated their set to the late Duane Allman. Ten Years After came on after the usual delays due to crowds rushing the stage and ripping up wires and monitors. Clearly it was not worth the trouble. A few years back, TYA was an interesting blues-rock group. But after playing virtually the same set ever since, they've lost a bit of their interest. Despite all the mythical "changes" and "softening" of the group's sound, Monday's performance differed only slightly (for the worse) from last year's Harvard Stadium show and previous gigs at the Tea Party.

The group's rhythm section of Ric Lee on drums and Leo Lyons on bass has never been much more than passable. Luckily, Lyons was basically inaudible, and Lee was restrained from much more than a single boring drum solo. Chick Churchill has always suffered from underamplification, so his usually quite competent keyboards would be lost amidst Alvin Lee's furious guitar. For a change, though, at a few points on Monday night, he was able to come through with some excellent electric piano work. Even so, Alvin Lee comes across as a

group in himself. He is a very able and extremely fast guitarist, with a mystique of sex much along the lines of Mick Jagger. Generally, it turns out that the difference between any two given TYA songs is how it gets to and from Mr. Lee's solos. As would be expected, the high points of the night were reached when he was left on his own to improvise, and, perchance, Churchill might chime in with some piano licks. These rare moments came during the TYA standards "Good Morning, Little Schoolgirl," a jam-like medley of "I Can't Keep From Crying, Sometimes," "Sunshine of Your Love," and "Cat's Squirrel," "I'm Going Home," and their encore, from *A Space In Time*, "Baby Let Me Rock'n'Roll You."

Ten Years After's medium has become pure rock 'n' roll — their latest attempts at jazz and blues stumble pitifully. If they could improve their rhythm section, become a bit tighter, they could become a major influence over the next few years. But, as it appears now, they'll plod along as another "heavy" English group, bordering on boring, exciting the primordial crowd that flowed into the Garden Monday. It's a charming atmosphere to work in when the (Please turn to page 10)

ARTS



film:

The Last Picture Show

By Emanuel Goldman

At a press conference with Peter Bogdonavitch, *Phoenix* film critic Chuck Kraemer took out a portable tape recorder and placed it on the floor. "Do you mind?" Kraemer asked. "Not at all," replied Bogdonavitch. The conference continued as Kraemer started the tape. Several minutes later, Bogdonavitch stopped in the middle of a sentence and asked, looking at the recorder, "Did I say something wrong?" "No, no," Kraemer explained. "I just haven't got a lot of tape so I have to shut it on and off a lot." "Oh," said Bogdonavitch. "I'm so used to making pictures, you know, it's just like yelling 'cut.' Why bother to keep on talking?"

That's the kind of person Bogdonavitch is: a film person,

through and through. He used to write about film, including several highly respected books and articles on the likes of John Ford, Howard Hawks, Orson Welles (a close friend of Bogdonavitch) and Alfred Hitchcock. But writing is not his first love: "It's too lonely, I'm a social fellow," he explains. Nevertheless, starting in January, he will write a film column for *Esquire*, "on anything but reviews," as he puts it.

His interest in making a movie of the novel *The Last Picture Show* began solely with the title. Soon, the notion of depicting the falling apart, the decay of a town, as reflected by its theatre, also caught his interest. Doing a period picture was somewhat of a challenge, due to the difficulty of obtaining authentic clothes and other items of that time; but it was also, he adds, "a lot of fun, because you're in complete control of everything in the frame, much more so than in a film set in the current time."

Precisely because the film so successfully evokes the early fifties, it has been widely labeled a "period piece." But *The Last Picture Show* transcends its specific setting to become a universal story of growing up, of the pain of experience interspersed with the dullness of daily routine. This is why Bogdonavitch insisted on shooting in black and white, despite the enormous pressure in Hollywood these days to make everything in color. "Color has this tendency to romanticize, to glamorize," Bogdonavitch explains. On the other hand, he adds "Black and white is not reality and so I like it better."

True enough, the film is not reality — it's something more than that: a work of art. Although Bogdonavitch refuses to take sides in the classic aesthetics question as to whether art should imitate reality or reality should imitate art, his film speaks for him.

It is structured as a perfect cycle — beginning and ending with the same series of shots, the same atmosphere, even some of the same lines. And yet, things are not the same in Anarene, Texas. Nature may have come full circle over the course of a year, but the people are irrevocably changed. Some are dead,

some have left, and the protagonist, Sonny, just out of high school, has learned. Just how much he has learned is revealed in a scene with his former mistress, the wife of the high school coach. He had treated her insensitively earlier, but now, in the wake of tragedy, he comes to her. She loses her temper and screams "You shouldn't have come here — it's lost — you lost it." He is unable to speak, but simply takes her hands. She, seeing the expression in his eyes, suddenly realizes that he has caught up to her in his life experience, in his knowledge of the pain of the human condition. "Never you mind. Never you mind," she says quietly.

In addition to the careful structure and characterizations, the film uses symbolism in a highly refined way. One of the boys, Duane, gives his girlfriend an expensive watch as a present. But she, planning to break up with him, forgets that she is wearing it at a skinny dipping party which she went to with a different boy. The watch is ruined by the water. Later, Sonny, who has been rejected by Sam (a surrogate father to the boys) for having been present during a callous trick to a deaf-mute, has snuck into Sam's diner and ordered a cheeseburger. Sam returns just as the food is ready. Sonny starts to leave, but Sam says "Your cheeseburger's getting cold." Sonny sits down to eat, knowing that the food signals his reconciliation with Sam. And finally, the movie theatre itself becomes a symbol of the town's last bit of vitality, of a life force incarnate in Sam, who owns the theatre. When Sam dies, the theatre soon closes down — with obvious implications about the condition of the town.

This is Bogdonavitch's second film. His previous one, *Targets*, with Boris Karloff, is already something of an underground classic among film cultists, and is well worth going out of your way to see when it comes to the film societies or the Cambridge theatres. *The Last Picture Show*, of course, will present no difficulty in being found, for quite some time to come, for it is destined to be regarded as one of the great American films.

—at the Abbey Cinema