**Blood Beach**

Blood Beach, written by Robert Altman and directed by Robby Benson, a Jerry Lewis Repertory release now at the Sack. Sack.

This film falls squarely in the two-word movie category: very bad. My imagery is so vivid that I am unable to... (continues)

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**Popeye: a cartoon starring humans**

Popeye, starring Robin Williams and Shelly Duvall, directed by Robert Altman. music and lyrics by Harry Nilson, screenplay by Jules Feiffer. A Paramount Picture release, now at the Sack. Sack. The premise of Popeye is somehow deranging. Perhaps my dislike for Robin Williams and little grounding in the cartoon version of Popeye (parents went for educational television on a large scale) are contributory, but Robert Altman (Nashville, Three Women) would seem to be the kind of director capable of doing something interesting with anything. Altman's film, however, even with the assistance of screenwriter and humorist Jules Feiffer, leans more towards pathos than humor.

The essential problem is the one that first confronts you: a cartoon with real actors? Despite Altman's grandiose efforts and attention to detail, how can the effect help but be one of freak-show proportions? Cartoon characters are funny because they are far enough outside human reality: there's a suspension of belief that is immediate and natural due to the fact that cartoons are so utterly unreal. The ponderousness that results from Altman's struggle to achieve the same cartoon effect—contradicted by his very use of human characters—is the film's chief flaw.

Popeye has an oppressively disorganised feel to it. Perhaps Altman was trying for the "wacky world" of the comic strip, but his methods are merely distracting. Altman has overdone the ramshackle architecture of Sweethaven (where the film takes place), the gratuitous violence, the peculiarities of the citizens. Shelly Duvall is marginally interesting as Olive Oyl, while Robin Williams seems to have talked himself into becoming a wholly two-dimensional Popeye.

The massive effort and expense involved in producing Popeye inspire only vague sadness. Look for laughs elsewhere.

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