"The Name Of The Rose" a film caricature of Umberto Eco's book

THE NAME OF THE ROSE

By JULIAN WEST

Umberto Eco's splendid medieval mystery is faithful in every detail to the original, but not in the deeper matter of spirit. How could it be? The Name of The Rose was about the importance and beauty of books, and was itself a book. This tribute to knowledge cannot survive the translation to film.

The movie version is nothing more than a detective story set in a monastery in 1327. The sleuth is a Franciscan, William of Baskerville, played by Sean Connery. In case moviegoers missed the obvious allusion to another well-known English detective, he adopts a positively didactic manner and drops such lines as, "My dear Adso, it's - elementary."

Unlike the adult novice Watson, William's Adso is a young novice who worships his mentor. The frightened newcomer, Christian Slater plays him, and seems entirely incapable both of speaking and of keeping his mouth closed. His bright, inquiring eyes and open maw reminded me of Reddy McDowell's mask in "Planet of the Apes." As is only proper for a Watson, Adso narrates the film as an old man. The voice of the narrator is not Slater's, and sounds very much like the one in "The Wonderful World of Disney" or "Mutual of Omaha's Wild Kingdom."

The greater mysteries of the film are as abstruse as they were in the book, but the simpler questions are obvious to anyone paying a shred of attention. When William, searching for the hidden library, asks, "Where are the books?" he stops and turns and as the camera frames the library tower in the background.

As for the supporting characters, director Jean-Jacques Annaud has done an amazing job of matching the physical characteristics set out in the books. Which means that they look like imbeciles. These monks were the nerds of their day, but such a minor crew never assembled at MIT.

Two actors who don't fit into that category are F. Murray Abraham, who does a good job as the evil Inquisitor Bernardo Gui, and Valentina Vargas, who plays The Girl. Aside from a few of the supporting monks, she is the only woman in the film. She is, presumably, a good actor, but was given little chance to prove it with lines consisting mostly of grunts and moans.

The sex scene between Slater and Vargas, gratuitous only in its excess, is absurd and indulgent, and completely out of place.

Another box office draw might be the excessive violence, which includes literally buckets of blood, torture devices, and plenty of dead bodies. This gives the makeup and special effects people plenty of opportunity to show off, The special effects crew handled the gore well, atoning for the unlikely sense of pages fluttering intact above the burning library.

The library and sets are worth setting. The interiors were filmed at a monastery in southern Germany, but the exterior was built to be one giant piece on a hill near Rome. It was the largest exterior set to be built in Europe since "Gone With the Wind." But what was bought for all that money was spiced on the props, either, particularly the glorious illuminated pages.

But what was bought for all that money was spiced on the props, either, particularly the glorious illuminated pages.

Recommendaion: read the book first. If the film has closed by the time you finish, so much the better.

The Name Of The Rose is elementary.

Malcolm Bilson and Anner Bylsma shine in all-Beethoven program

MALCOLM BILSON AND ANNER BYLSMA
A Ming Celebrity Series concert.

By JULIE CHANG

Pianist Malcolm Bilson and cellist Anner Bylsma opened Saturday evening in a recital of early Beethoven works. The choice of characters and styles of playing were most compatible. The two musicians ran an interesting program of rarely heard Beethoven chamber works that represented the composer's greatest stylistic range.

The first work, Beethoven's Sonata in G minor, Op. 5, No. 2, was a charming piece of tightly controlled music. Bilson's command of his instrument was excellent, creating a beautiful tone and a wide range of color. Bilson, performing on a fortepiano, emphasized the keyboard instrument of Beethoven's time, and was a bit too timid. His touch was uneven as times and he stumbled through his intonations. Nevertheless, the various moods of the sonata, from its slow, somber introduction to its delighted concluding rondo, were captured quite well.

Next, the duo performed the Sonata in C Major, Op. 102, No. 1. The rich sensi- tive quality of the music clearly indicated Beethoven's move toward the Romantic style. The sonata represented a pivotal point at which Classicism was rejected and a more emotional, free style of music emerged. Bilson and Bylsma's interpretation of this transitional work was very good, keeping elements of both styles in place. Most of the subtleties of the piece were controlled well, though there were a few noticeable times when the two musicians had difficulty seeing eye-to-eye. The musicians' performance of the Seven Variations on the Theme "Weihe Liebe Farhers" from Mozart's Magic Flute was masterful, establishing clearly qualities of musical diversity and unity. Bilson impressively took command of the delicate keyboard intricacies, and Bylsma's playing was equally exciting.

The best performance of the evening was the Sonata in A Major, Op. 69. The duo made the most of the music's strong qualities, particularly bringing out the contrasts of calmness and power. Together, they achieved an effective balance of the lyrical and the tumultuous. They were able to carry the dynamic power of the work by emphasizing its dramatic brilliance. The expression of the entire piece was fascinating, while the piano's key accompaniment was superb.

Throughout the performance, Bilson and Bylsma compensated for each other's strengths and weaknesses quite well. Despite a few minor shortcomings, the recital was an impressive display.

MIT students are invited to meet Honeywell representatives at the Honeywell Open House

Tuesday, October 28
Lobby of Building 13
10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.

together, we can find the answers.

Honeywell