



# 'Pyx' Falls Flat

"The Pyx," starring Karen Black and Christopher Plummer; directed by Harvey Hart; at the Texas Theater.

By DAVID HENDRICKS  
Texan Staff Writer

A pyx is a small case used to carry the Eucharist to those unable to come to Mass. But that bit of knowledge helps little in understanding the mystery of "The Pyx."

The mystery is how a classy prostitute comes to fall to her death from the penthouse of an apartment building. The prostitute, played by Karen Black, is found with a pyx in one hand and a chain with an upside-down cross around her neck.

The method of uncovering the plot is simple and effective. The movie switches back and forth from scenes of the police investigation to scenes of the day before leading up to the murder (or suicide). So, the audience sees someone die one day, and, in the next scene, sees the same character alive on the day before. However, the climaxes of both levels fail to live up to the suspense they build.

The substance of "The Pyx" is its use of black symbols and violent grotesqueness. The brutality of the policemen (played by Christopher Plummer and Donald Pilon) seems only banal, however, in its repetitiveness. The stiff, black cat stabbed to a door and the bloody, cut throats prove only to be ugly rather than horrifying.

A major plot weakness becomes obvious when the prostitute begs not to do a particular trick. Her "madam" talks her into it though, assuring her that the client is "special." The prostitute's failure to ask how the client is "special" is of dramatic necessity, but still hardly believable.

Miss Black is an excellent actress, but she demonstrated

that in "Portnoy's Complaint," not in "The Pyx," where she is limited mainly to behaving in a strung-out manner. She is not convincing in the Jane Fonda-type role.

The best acting is by Yvette Brind'Amour, who is introduced in "The Pyx" as a lady pimp. Her portrayal of a witching temptress is fine.

The movie is rewarding only in small, perverse ways. For aspiring heroin addicts, there

is a fair demonstration on how to prepare yourself to mainline heroin.

Perhaps the only wholesome parts of "The Pyx" are the songs on the soundtrack, composed and sung by Miss Black. Her singing outshines her acting in this movie. The songs complement the movie well, or does the movie complement the songs?

It's hard to determine.

## television

The nostalgia fad comes to television with the premier of "The Happy Days." Although the new series is based on the 1950s, it borrows much, including the star, from the '60s nostalgia movie "American Graffiti." Ronnie Howard stars as Richie Cunningham, a shy high school youth resplendent in rolled-up jeans, loafers and white socks.

"The Happy Days" also will star Tom Bosley and Marion Ross as Mr. and Mrs. Cunningham. The opening episode centers around Richie's approaching date (relationship) with a young girl whose reputation is a topic of conversation. "The Happy Days" will be broadcast at 7 p.m. on channel 24.

"Mrs. Sundance" also features Robert Foxworth and L.Q. Jones. The Movie of the Week will be presented on channel 24.

- 6:30 p.m. 7 Hee Haw
- 9 News
- 24 1 Dream of Jeannie
- 36 News
- 7 p.m. 9 War and Peace
- 24 The Happy Days
- 36 Adam 12
- 7:30 p.m. 7 Hawaii Five-O
- 24 Movie "Mrs. Sundance"
- 36 Banacek
- 8:30 p.m. 7 NBA All-Star Basketball Game
- 9 p.m. 9 Music from Michigan State
- 24 Marcus Welby, M.D.
- 36 Police Story
- 9:30 p.m. 9 Black Images
- 10 p.m. 9 Consultation
- 24 36 News
- 10:30 p.m. 9 The Advocates
- 24 "The Suicide Club"
- 36 The Tonight Show

**'The Taste of Your Mouth...'**  
An exhibition of photographs by Connie Moore accompanied by the poetry of the late Pablo Neruda will be on display in the Texas Union Art Gallery Tuesday through Friday. Ms. Moore feels that Neruda's earthy, warm images and simple, direct writing lends itself well to photography. Neruda was a Marxist poet who was ambassador to France from Chile during his lifetime. He died one week after the coup in Chile last September. He officially was reported to have died of cancer.

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Tues. - 1/22 **TOLABLE DAVID (1921)**  
directed by Henry King, with Richard Barthelmess. Plus short: THE MUSKETEERS OF PIG ALLEY (1912), directed by D.W. Griffith

Thurs. - 1/24 **THE BIRTH OF A NATION (1915)**  
directed by D.W. Griffith, with Lillian Gish and Mae Marsh. Note special times: 7 and 10:15

Tues. - 1/29 **THE BATTLE OF ALGIERS (1966)**  
directed by Gillo Pontecorvo. Note special times: 7 and 9:15

Thurs. - 1/31 **THE LODGER (1926)**  
directed by Alfred Hitchcock. Plus short: A CORNER IN WHEAT (1909), directed by D.W. Griffith

Tues. - 2/5 **POTEMKIN (1925)**  
directed by Sergei M. Eisenstein. Plus short: CHESS FEVER (1925), directed by V.I. Pudovkin

Thurs. - 2/7 **MISS JULIE (1950)**  
directed by Alf Sjoberg, with Anita Bjork and Ulf Palme

Tues. - 2/12 **THE TRIUMPH OF THE WILL (1934)**  
directed by Leni Riefenstahl. Note special times: 7 and 9:15

Thurs. - 2/14 **Four Great Comedies**  
MAX AND THE STATUE, with Max Under; THE FROZEN NORTH (1922), with Buster Keaton; TWO TARS (1928), with Laurel and Hardy; THE FATAL GLASS OF BEER (1933), with W.C. Fields

Tues. - 2/19 **PANDORA'S BOX (1928)**  
directed by G.W. Pabst, with Louise Brooks, based on the play by Frank Wedekind

Thurs. - 2/21 **CITIZEN KANE (1941)**  
directed by Orson Welles, with Orson Welles and Joseph Cotten. Note special times: 7 and 9:15

Tues. - 2/26 **THE MAGNIFICENT AMBERSONS (1942)**  
directed by Orson Welles, with Joseph Cotten and Anne Baxter, from the novel by Booth Tarkington

Thurs. - 2/28 **YO YO (1964)**  
directed by Pierre Etaix, with Pierre Etaix and Claudine Auger

Tues. - 3/5 **LOVE ME TONIGHT (1932)**  
directed by Rouben Mamoulian, with Maurice Chevalier and Jeanette MacDonald

Thurs. - 3/7 **THREE'S A CROWD (1927)**  
directed by Harry Langdon, with Harry Langdon

Tues. - 3/12 **BELLE DE JOUR (1968)**  
directed by Luis Bunuel, with Catherine Deneuve and Jean Sorel

Thurs. - 3/14 **BEAUTY AND THE BEAST (1946)**  
directed by Jean Cocteau, with Jean Marais and Josette Day

Tues. - 3/19 **RASHOMON (1951)**  
directed by Akira Kurosawa

Thurs. - 3/21 **MARTY (1955)**  
directed by Delbert Mann, with Ernest Borgnine and Betsy Blair, screenplay by Paddy Chayefsky

Tues. - 3/26 **FLOATING WEEDS (1959)**  
directed by Yasujiro Ozu. Note special times: 7 and 9:15

Thurs. - 3/28 **VOYAGE TO THE END OF THE UNIVERSE (1964)**  
directed by Jindrach Polak, screenplay by Jindrach Polak and Pavel Juracek

Tues. - 4/9 **HORIZONS WEST (1952)**  
directed by Budd Boetticher, with Robert Ryan and Julie Adams

Thurs. - 4/11 **OUR AGENT TIGER (1966)**  
directed by Claude Chabrol, with Roger Hanin and Margaret Lee

Tues. - 4/16 **THE SOFT SKIN (1964)**  
directed by Francois Truffaut, with Jean Desailly and Francoise Dorleac. Note special times: 7 and 9:15

Thurs. - 4/18 **SECOND BREATH (1966)**  
directed by Jean-Pierre Melville, with Lina Ventura and Paul Meurisse. Note special times: 7 and 9:15

Tues. - 4/23 **HIS GIRL FRIDAY (1940)**  
directed by Howard Hawks, with Cary Grant and Rosalind Russell

Thurs. - 4/25 **ONLY ANGELS HAVE WINGS (1939)**  
directed by Howard Hawks, with Cary Grant and Jean Arthur. Note special times: 7 and 9:15

Tues. - 4/30 **SULLIVAN'S TRAVELS (1941)**  
directed by Preston Sturges, with Joel McCrea and Veronica Lake

Thurs. - 5/2 **THE BEST YEARS OF OUR LIVES (1946)**  
directed by William Wyler, with Frederic March and Myrna Loy. Note special times: 7 and 10

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