

STAGE AND SCREEN

'Bad Seed' Gives Audience Chills

By THERESA LOEB CONE, Tribune Drama Editor

A good example of the screen's ability to improve on a play is to be seen at the Fox Oakland in "The Bad Seed," which opened there yesterday. When witnessed on stage this Maxwell Anderson item was capable of raising goose bumps on the most hardened viewer. In the movie, which Mervyn Le Roy directed, the net effect is 10 times more than chilling. However, in order for "The Bad Seed" to be properly frightening to the viewer, some credence must be given to the story's central point—that every so often a person is born with a conscience, in effect being a throwback to early civilization when murder, for example, was frowned upon. This is to say that, despite good environment, there are some persons who inherit the tendency to criminal activity because of being "bad seeds," a situation over which their parents could have had no control.

If you can't accept that kind of theorizing, then your reaction to "The Bad Seed" consists mainly of being sorry for mental turmoil that besets a mother of an 8-year-old murderer. The cause she feels the child has inherited her demoniacal ways from Grandma was by way of being a glorious example of how a pretty, cultured lady can get away with murder.

ALMOST TOO POLITE

In the story, the 8-year-old is one of those almost too polite, too dainty, too agreeable, too true girls. Actually this goodie-goodie facade covers the fact that she is a little heart, who resorts to killing a schoolmate just to get a penmanship award away from him, has in the past pushed an old lady downstairs to speed the receiving of an heirloom and during the course of events is destined to do even more killing. Her straight mother slowly discovers the kind of person her child is. Frightened and filled with need-for-an ending, she receives information to no one. Determined to cover up for the little monster, she feels she can handle the matter. Her efforts to keep the offspring will not continue on the destructive path.

John Lee Mahin's script provides an ending which affords punishment for the youthful, conscienceless killer, but in the original version the young actress, who has died, never receive what society would consider her just deserts. There's a great deal of suspenseful footage in "The Bad Seed," and quantities of good acting, but on the whole the film runs far too long and could have been trimmed down to about a half hour for much more frightening results. As it now stands, there's an awful lot of talk about psychology, Freud, etc., that doesn't advance the plot a bit and certainly takes up too much time.

APPEAR IN ROLES

Most of the players in the movie are from the original Broadway company. They are all marvelously adept. Nancy Kelly's intelligent, worried, nerve-racked mother is the film's best job, while Patty McCormack's playing of the hateful youngster really presents a masterpiece of acting. Henry Jones is magnificently malevolent as the half-crazed janitor who guesses at the child's guilt after several rather horrible discussions, with her. None of the other players have much of chance to make their personalities felt. Paul Fix has a good scene as Miss Kelly's foster father. Eileen Heckert acts the role of a neurotic and drunk woman to a fare-thee-well as she plays the part of the dead boy's mother. Evelyn Varden is shrewdly tactive as a landlady who never does understand the sort of child her neighbor has.

Supposedly to be seen by adults only, this movie is certainly not talk about psychology. Freud, etc., that doesn't advance the plot a bit and certainly takes up too much time. "It's all in the lips, man," answered Satchmo. "Hot can be hot and cool can be hot. Sometimes hot and cool are the same or both. But hot or cool, jazz is jazz." "Three for Jamie Dawn," starring Laraine Day and Richard Carlson is the companion feature. The next attraction for the theater is "The Best Things in Life Are Free," starring Gordon MacRae, Dan Dailey, Ernest Borgnine and Sheree North.

20th Century Fox BROADWAY DANCE ROMANTIC TEAM Dean Martin and Pat Crowley are a romantic team in 'Hallelujah'... 20th Century Fox BROADWAY DANCE ROMANTIC TEAM Dean Martin and Pat Crowley are a romantic team in 'Hallelujah'...



COMEDY PLAYERS—Judy Holliday stops for a conversation with Paul Douglas in a scene from "The Solid Gold Cadillac," coming soon to the Roxie. The Columbia film is made from the Broadway play of the same title.



'Boris' to Be Repeated by S.F. Opera. Moussoorgsky's "Boris Godunov" in the Rimsky-Korsakoff version will be repeated by the San Francisco Opera in War Memorial Opera House at 8 to 10 p.m.

GEARY BILLS MOUSSORGSKY OPERA FILM

A complete version of the Moussoorgsky opera, "Boris Godunov," a color film, will be shown at the Geary for one week starting tomorrow. The opera-film based on Alexander Pushkin's tragedy of the same name will have continuous performances daily. Starting times are 1:30, 3:30, 5:30, 7:30 and 9:30 p.m. No one will be seated during performances. Imported from Russia, the film is being offered by the Bolshoi Opera House and presented by Serge de Touffou. The cast include Alexander Fingov as Boris Godunov, I. Kozlovsky as the Beggar-Saint and L. Avdeyeva as Marina.

Herbert Marshall Gets Major Role

Herbert Marshall has been signed by RKO for a major role in "C'est le Guerre," a story of the Lafayette Escadrille. William Wellman, a decorated member of the famed fighting unit, will direct the romantic drama for Warner Bros. Hunter portrays an American enlistee in the French flying corps whose romantic escapades are still a legend in the Escadrille. The picture is scheduled to get under way.

New War Film Role

L. Q. Jones, who took his name from his screen role in "Battle Cry," plays Kenny, G.I. pal of Robert Wagner in the 20th Century-Fox CinemaScope production, "Between Heaven and Hell." "Between Heaven and Hell" also stars Terry Moore and Broderick Crawford. The story of a company of GIs in World War II, it was produced by David Weisbart with Richard Fleischer directing.

ALAMEDA DRIVE IN AT ALAMEDA JUBILEE 3:30-10:30... THE PROUD & PROFANE... THE LEATHER SKIN... BUFFALO BILL... CRASH DIVE... NEPTUNE... EL REY BURLESQUE... ZAZA AMOUR... ISLAND AUTO MOVIE... 'Fastest Gun Alive'... 'LISBON'... 'Dakota Incident'... 'The King and I'... 'The Bad Seed'...

S.F. Opera Offers

New Italian Work

By CLIFFORD GESSLER

The major novelty of the San Francisco Opera season, last night in War Memorial Opera House, introduced an Italian composer new to most of the audience. It was "Francesca da Rimini" by Riccardo Zandonai. The attractiveness of this opera at first hearing makes one wonder why it has been performed so seldom in this country since its introduction by the New York Metropolitan in 1916. It has a clear and logically proceeding dramatic story and a score which is effective for theater purposes, skillfully and melodiously written for orchestra and with expert regard for coordinating the sense of the music with the sense of the scene. It is a lively, perhaps all it lacks to make it popular is a few, striking old-fashioned arias—which would be incongruous with its early-modern conception.

The performance exhibited another new production and introduced a fascinating new soprano in Leila Gencer of Turkey and European operatic centers. Leo Kerz's settings were marked improvement over those of "Boris Godunov." A stairway at each side, with a bridge construction overhead at the rear, enclosed the scenes of this more intimate opera and made possible attractive and effective groupings of the people on stage.

In keeping with modern theater practice, a single basic set composed of these elements served for all four acts and scenes. It was a lively and handsome in its chaste effect. It is a variegated marble floor, like a kind of proscenium stage. Continuation of this motif of bars by the projection behind and above it presumably suggested a prison-like atmosphere. Miss Gencer's voice was beautiful, with an unusually full and

ALCAZAR MATINEE TODAY 2:30

ALCAZAR MATINEE TODAY 2:30... SEATS NOW FOR ALL PERFS... EASTHAM LORD... ANNIVERSARY WALTZ... CIVIC LIGHT OPERA... BOBBY CLARK... SHERRY O'NEIL... LUX... DAKOTA INCIDENT... ORPHEUM... CINERAMA HOLIDAY... TODAY 3 SHOWS... CINERAMA HOLIDAY... JACK PALANCE-EDDIE ALBERT... Rebel in town... Sid Hoff Dance Band... While the City Sleeps

Dance Theater To Play Curran

The Jose Limon Dance Theater, due at the Curran Theater March 17, replaces actress Judith Anderson on Spencer Barcroft's Celebrity Series. Elizabeth Schwarzkopf, soprano, will open the series at the Curran Nov. 4, at 2:30 p.m., singing early songs, German lieder and songs by Beethoven, Grieg and Tchaikovsky. Series tickets are on sale at Barcroft's office, 2215 Leavenworth St., San Francisco. Single tickets are available at Sherman, Clay box office, beginning next Friday.

Starting Times Today

Starting Times Today... FOX OAKLAND - "The Bad Seed" 12:30, 2:30, 4:30, 6:30, 8:30... GRAND LAKE... Aboulak's Haron... Tower... GLOBE... PARKWAY... The King and I... FOX OAKLAND... "The Bad Seed" IS THE BIG SHOCKER!

Secrets of Reef On Tower Screen

"Secrets of the Reef," documentary drama of life under the sea, is currently playing at the Tower Theater. Shown in the film, in Eastman color, are the subatomic creatures, their wondrous birth and ways of life. Photographed by Lloyd Ritter, Robert Young and Murray Lerner, the film was produced by Alfred Buttsfeld. On the same bill is "Return of Don Camillo," starring French actor Fernandel.

FROM THE SENSATIONAL STAGE SUCCESS!

FROM THE SENSATIONAL STAGE SUCCESS!... Tower... GLOBE... PARKWAY... The King and I... FOX OAKLAND... "The Bad Seed" IS THE BIG SHOCKER!

Tea and Sympathy

Tea and Sympathy... starring Deborah Kerr, John Kerr... CURTAIN TIME: 12:00 - 2:25 - 4:50... PARKWAY... The King and I... FOX OAKLAND... "The Bad Seed" IS THE BIG SHOCKER!

LATE SHOW TOMITE

LATE SHOW TOMITE... TALK ALL YOU WANT ABOUT THE MAN AND THE WOMAN... "THE BAD SEED" IS THE BIG SHOCKER!... FOX OAKLAND... "The Bad Seed" IS THE BIG SHOCKER!