

Movie Monday's Fifth Anniversary

- Cannery Row - June 15, 1998

This lovely little movie is kind of an allegory - it matches up with Movie Monday pretty well.

First you've got yer studly hunk central figure - well meaning, not always able to make things work out in his small but pitfall-laden world.

Then the lovely love interest, (my long-suffering wife, Laurel), who the Hunk doesn't quite understand, being so distracted by his "science project" and a little thick about interpersonal relationships. But he is starting to get it and she's coming on side.

And a colourful mix of eccentric, colourful regulars, many contributing in their own creative way.

Sometimes grounded in solid conviction, sometimes floating free in a bit of a fantasy, sometimes scrambling around trying to catch the frogs.

Cannery Row was our first show, June 14, 1993. 17 people came. This June 15th we'll be celebrating our 5th anniversary. Since that auspicious start we'll have thrown 275 events, attended by 18,000 people. Now we're often getting full houses, averaging 82 in our 100 seat theatre - even for small titles you have to come early to get a good seat.

We were voted "Best Place To See A Movie" by Monday Magazine. We've been growing and improving but we're still accessible - our pop and popcorn are still 50 cents, admission is still free.

We've put on some ambitious programs and a steady supply of fine entertainment. We're still showing movies people haven't heard of - still taking chances. We've got a corporate sponsor and some funding. We're changing attitudes about mental illness. Still trying to be noticed, still hoping the value of this kind of program will be better recognized by the mental health community.

We've marched in parades, had lots of press, TV and radio coverage. They've heard of us in Margaretville, Nova Scotia; Boston, Mass.; Ringwood in Victoria, Australia; London, England. I've not been hiding this good news under a bushel.

A highlight was a presentation I gave with my friend, Ingrid Olson-Mercer, at an international psycho-social rehab conference in Vancouver a year ago. We gave a workshop about "Being Out About It", the issue of publicly sharing ones journey of recovery from mental illness. There are risks, but in my experience the benefits have been immense.

The 'hero' of the piece is still finding his precarious way through life, still excited about the possibilities.

And hey, 5 years!

Best Regards, Bruce



** I'm the one with the beard...*

