

FILM REVIEW

'The Shout'

This brooding film, laced with Aboriginal folk lore, revolves around the bizarre premise that a man can kill with a shout.

Alan Bates is Crossley, a madman who returns to England after living for 18 years with Aborigines who taught him the killer shout.

Dressed in raven black he descends on a young couple, Rachel (Susannah York) and Anthony (John Hurt), and crushes their simplistic lifestyle.

Crossley captivates the bored Rachel and intrigues

the boring Anthony with tales of Aboriginal magic.

In a devastating scene, Crossley demonstrates his powers by doing irrevocable damage to a passing shepherd and his flock of sheep.

Robert Graves wrote the original story, "The Shout," in 1926 after meeting a man who genuinely believed he could kill with a shout.

Director Jerzy Skolimowski and Michael Austin collaborated on the screenplay, which is rather obscure at times.

Although the characters display very human emotion



Alan Bates, Susannah York.

— fear, anger, lust — there is no one among them with whom the audience can identify. Alan Bates seems to be holding back; John Hurt and Miss York at least put life in their roles.

"The Shout," which won the special jury award at the Cannes Film Festival, had Australian Mike Molloy as director of photography.

It is an imaginative and suspenseful film set against the stunning backdrop of North Devon, but it does lack "magic" — which ironically is the central theme. It opens soon in all States.

— GREG FLYNN