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John Carpenter's
ASSAULT ON PRECINCT 13

(1976), from his screenplay, with Austin Stoker, Darwin Joston, and Laurie Zimmer, is one of the most stylishly kinetic independent movies of the '70s. Loosely based on the dynamics of Howard Hawks's *Rio Bravo*, this quirky fable, full of foreboding and redemption, portrays in almost real time a contemporary police station under siege. The compelling, evil marauders are audaciously invisible for the most part—their threat is as magical in its way as the spiritual courage that binds together a gallant, ragtag band of defenders. The crudeness of the ac-

tors actually works in their favor as a means of authenticating their grace under peril. This short, pithy action fantasia is supported by camerawork and a pulsating Carpenter score drenched in exquisitely evocative danger.

Saturday, 3 p.m., Channel 9

A. Savis / T. Allen