

ORIENTAL CINEMA

（俠女游龍）

#9

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THE FEMME FATALES ISSUE!
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 OSHIMA! ANGELA MAO!
 KUMI MIZUNO!
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ORIENTAL CINEMA

#9 - Volume 3

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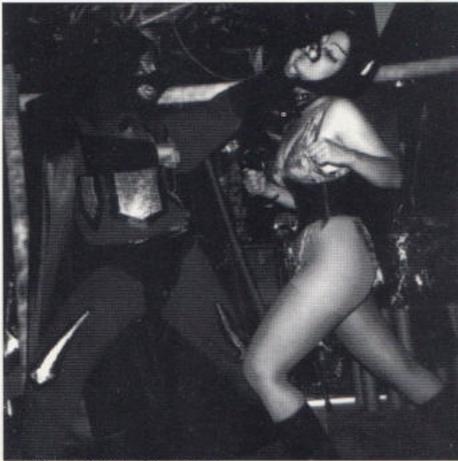
There seems to be an alarming increase in the amount of hate mail I've received from Politically Correct snobs with no sense of humor. While I take only constructive criticism seriously, I do read all the letters received. The nastier the attack, the more it makes me stand up for my beliefs & rights. For example, it's surprising how many males have started whining about the sexy 'girly' shots in OC. There has never been a single letter from any of OC's female readers, complaining about the frequent 'babe' photos. As for those guys who do complain, you would think OC was the only zine which offered an occasional cleavage or bikini shot! Anyway, the point is, I'm doing this "T&A Issue" especially for the uptight, opinionated, clueless, wholier-than-the-rest-of-us art creeps who moan & groan at OC for its daring to cater to the majority of its target audience: Heterosexual males! So to all you yogurt-sucking, cappachino-drinking, Erasure-listening

whiners who consider OC sexist (yeah right! Like I forced these women to pose at gunpoint?! Get real!)- thank you! Your so-called Politically "Correct" (hah!) letters are the reason I've gone overboard on the sleazy photos which seem to traumatize you! Heh heh! This subject matter is an act of rebellion against the annoying snobs, and besides..... Sex sells! If this is truly sexist, well then, Sexism Sells! Hell, at least in my personal life, I practice Safe Sex! Safe Sex Sells! Perhaps I'm a Safe Sexist! Hardy har har, I kill me!

But other than the beautiful women shown through out this issue, OC will, in the name of diversity, offer the usual regular columns on such varied topics as Hong Kong action, Japan's sci-fi superheroes & cartoons, and the obligatory oddities of Korea, India, and the Philippines. So without further delay, let's get on with OC#9 (24th Edition; Volume 3). Send all submissions and comments to me: Damon Foster, P.O. Box 576, Fremont, CA 94537-0576. No, I take that back, I mean, I don't need all comments! I only want the ones pertaining to OC! So if you have comments about your pet dog or the time your uncle Billy got drunk at the office party and xeroxed his dick, don't send it here. On second thought, if the story is really funny, go ahead and send it regardless of subject matter; I could always use a good laugh. After all, I've been entertaining & amusing you people for years-- it's about time for payback.

The issue is dedicated to the memory of Shunji Sato, a friend I never knew I had. He was an expert translator in Tokyo, and a close acquaintance of John & Setsuko Emma, two of OC's most helpful translators. Over the years, much of the rare Japanese info in OC was translated by them, so OC's readers owe them a debt of thanks. Little did I know that when they got stumped during certain complex translations, and when the Japanese-English dictionary didn't help, they turned to the ever helpful Shunji Sato, who helped add rare info to OC more than once-- though I never knew it at the time. I never knew (or even heard of) him before his recent, untimely death (killed in a car accident), but I greatly respect him, and will remember his name; his help is much appreciated. Sayonara, Mr. Sato.

Rarely Sincerely,
Damon (OC founder)
Foster



Above: OC editor DF (left) battles Nina Kempf in an upcoming video.





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BIBLIOGRAPHY:
The following publications were used extensively as research material for this issue: Martial Arts Movies magazine, Cinemart magazine, She magazine, Asian Eye magazine, Martial Arts Movies: From Bruce Lee to the Ninjas book, Cineraider fanzine, Martial Arts Movies Associates fanzine, and Kung Fu Girl fanzine.



I enjoyed your "East vs. West" issue of OC. Though I wish a few of the more negative reviews were a bit more insightful (so people can know specifically what makes these movies so rotten that roadkill is more interesting to watch). I can appreciate the difficulty of wading through that morass (however, watching all 22 Merchant Ivory films might have been worse).

It's a shame that as a genre, most American martial arts films are piss-poor. ENTER THE DRAGON, a 25 year-old movie, is still the high-water mark. I think it's really sad that a movie like MORTAL KOMBAT needs to go back to that film to get its storyline.

You're absolutely right about certain types of storylines that get repeated. This is true of any genre, but American martial arts films in particular seem to be flailing a dead horse. The biggest problem seems to me that these movies are targeted at an undemanding demographic in the videocassette market. People keep renting this crap, sending a clear message to its producers that it sells. Video companies pump out this fodder to meet a (supposed) demand for product. Like bad government, you get the kind of movies you deserve by how you support them. I've seen way too much of this shit, so that's why I'd rather spend my time at my local rep. house watching HK films. Yeah, they produce their share of crap, but even a mediocre HK film has enough energy, imagination, and starpower to fuel any



ten American martial arts movies. Speaking of starpower, I think it's to be expected that stars want to transcend genre limitations and expand their audience. But at the very least they owe their fans a good ride. Van Damme kept remaking his movies early on (BLOODSPORT, KICKBOXER, LIONHEART), before he decided he wanted to be Arnold. Seagal I still don't get. He's unlikable and has absolutely no charisma whatsoever. Apparently, being a stiff, bad-ass poseur is what it takes to generate a presence, these days (and that shot of him cupping his daughter's breasts is just a little creepy). I actually liked Chuck Norris early on in his career, but aside from a few decent pre-CODE OF SILENCE flicks, he can't seem to pick a project to save his life. Critics were favorable toward CODE at the time, but after that his career went straight into the toilet with choices like FIREWALKER. Finally, most of your sidebars focused on actors and actresses, but no directors or producers (though, you did take Roger Corman to



task). If you ever do this again, you could focus on schlocky auteurs like Sam Firstenberg and Albert Pyun. Pyun is one of the main contributors to the glut of bad movies, churning out stuff like back-to-back sequels to NEMESIS. Thanks for listening to the rant, I like your magazine, and look forward to the next.

Greg Espinoza
Northern California

Dear Damon,

How dare you make reference to the almighty God and pretend to be him! /What? You mean you actually believed it? -DF/ Who do you think you are, you ugly, semi-bald, untalented, dung-for-brains, shithead hack! /If all these insults were true, you never would have heard of me. -DF/ Another thing; you brainless bigot; I'm sick of your lewd comments about gays and anime fans! As a gay activist /What a coincidence! I'm a heterosexual inactivist! -DF/ and a friend of anime fans, I find your crude jokes to be unfunny and childish! We are friendly, warm, caring, intelligent human beings /Considering the tone of your equally unfunny & childish letter, I guess you have some strange new definition of "friendly, warm, caring & intelligent". -DF/, not cruel jokes for your infantile humor!

Also, stop making reference to women as sex "sex objects", they too are human beings and deserve whatever respect they can get! How would you like having someone whack off to a photo of you /I wouldn't give a damn! The fact that I'm unattractive to homosexual men like yourself is of absolutely minimal concern to me! -DF/, as if someone had really, really bad taste! /You're hardly in a position to judge taste. -DF/

And as for the handicapped and mentally ill, it takes a really big man /Just who told you I was big? Was it Dougie? He owes me a favor. -DF/ like you to pick on someone who can't walk, talk, or even think straight! They are God's children, and have more class than you'll ever have, you fucking sicko! What have they ever done to you? /Nothing. I've never done anything to them either. In fact whenever possible I help out, I've banded out money to crippled panhandlers, held doors open for them, guided blind people, etc. Besides, by your definition, I too am handicapped! Doesn't "dung-for-brains" and "brainless bigot" qualify as someone who "can't think straight"? With all due respect to gay activists like yourself (I respect anyone who stands up for what they believe in and wants to change the world), I think you're hardly in a position to relate to when somebody thinks 'straight'. -DF/

In closing, I hope you die a slow, painful death and you get to meet God. I hope he kicks your balls in, then rips them out & shoves them down your throat! I hope you watch cartoons & artsy films forever, in the nude & in the fires of Hades!!! /Considering the vicious tone of your letter (which is far from Christian), which makes many of my most vulgar comments seem like nursery rhymes, the same fate will befall you as well. The only difference is, I would probably still be making a successful zine down there called SUBTERANEAN CINEMA, while you read it and whine as though a mere magazine traumatized you. -DF/

I will pray for every night, so that you won't be so disgusting & vulgar to people! God will answer my prayers & you'll change, /What a

relief! I guess you must have been praying for me for years, since, believe it or not, OC was a hell of a lot more vulgar & offensive five years ago.-DF/ for the almighty is all powerful!!!

Unsincerely Not Yours,
Harry Cackeman
New Jersey

Dear Harry (is that descriptive nickname?),

Tell you what; let's make a deal! I'll try to tone down OC's "infantile humor" and the statements you consider to be homophobic, and in turn, could you do a little extra praying for me? I mean, not just to God, but to Allah, Buddha, Jehovah, the Great Green Arkelsnezber, Jesus Christ, Jesus & the Merry Chain, Jesus Jones, Jesus Lizard, G.T. Jesus, and whoever is the great god of the Eskimo religion; The Great White Polar Bear, I believe he's called. You see, since you're trying to make me politically correct & accept everyone (which I actually do! I'm a great guy in person), I think you should accept all the religions & gods worshipped all over the world; which includes greek mythology characters like Zeus, Apollo, Aphrodite, and Vulcan (no, not the one from STAR TREK). So get to work on them prayers, while I get to work on making OC the most clean, predictable, non-biased, non-critical, run-on-the-mill, joke-free, non-humorous, non-offensive, P.C., boring stereotypically technical book in existence!

One last thing Harry. There's a difference between being a homosexual individual and being a faggot- and you, Harry Cackeman, are a faggot.

-DF

Dear Damon,

You've got a great magazine. Keep up the good work.

Steven Taylor
Calif.

Yo Damon,

Keep up the good work and don't lose that sense of humor I always loved!!!!

Martin Sitzwohl
Austria, Europe

Dear Steven & Martin,

My god, I'm so confused! That gay religious fanatic condemns me unless I tone down OC, and now you guys say you like it as it is!!! My brain is starting to hurt as it twists from one opinion to another! Aaaaarghh! -DF

Dear Damon,

I've enjoyed Asian movies and TV since my early youth in late 1960s San Francisco. The fact that a genre magazine like yours exists makes old-time fans like me extremely relieved that someone else still cares about this kind of stuff. To make a long comment short: ORIENTAL CINEMA fucking rocks!!! Anyway, I just wanted to wish you a long run of OC.

My folks re-located to Connecticut in 1972 (when I was 7), and there was simply no Japanese TV except that lame-assed GIGANTOR. About the only stuff for kids were endless reruns of the George Reeves SUPERMAN show (boring motha' fucka!) and stuff like BATMAN and MAGILLA GORILLA. In other words, it was Hell for a kid raised on Godzilla. However, in 1973 the local ABC affiliate began running a Monday-Friday movie show called the

4:30 movie. They would run a week of movies that all revolved around a certain theme (PLANET OF THE APES week, cartoon week, superhero week, etc.) and, since they did them so often, I think the Giant Monster Weeks must have been huge ratings grabbers. The morning after any monster movie played, my grade school was a forum for debate on the merits of Toho and Daiei flicks. Many of us owe most of our knowledge to these films.

To all of your pathetically PC readers-- if you've got a problem with Foster's alleged homophobia, shut the fuck up before I clog your whiny pie-holes with a generous helping of natural born, all-American black man dick!!! If you don't like it, read that rag ASIAN TRASH CINEMA and O.D. on page after page of reviews of rape/bondage fantasy films and other such utterly depressing garbage! The stuff in OC is pure fun and that's what it's all about, god damn it!!! Some friends of mine who love your magazine (and happen to be gay) were not offended by your comments at all and (in some cases) have called you "laugh-out-loud-funny". Thanks to the idiocy of Political Correctness, most people in this country have no sense of humor. I've always felt that nothing is sacred and no target is safe from humor. I've been on the receiving end of all kinds of verbal abuse (and been hurt by some of it) but I can detect no meanspiritedness in you. /Except for the time I gave a child a glass of Palmolive and told him it was Lime flavored Cool-Aid, but I was younger then, this happened well over a week ago. -DF/ By the way, I've only dealt with racial intolerance, but I see homophobia in the same light. I mean, it is so pointless. So what if some dude wants to suck a dick? Let him! Just let me choose the alternative.

Steve Buncho
Marvel Entertainment
New York

Dear Damon Foster,

You are correct to doubt that Action Superheroes's claim that BLOOD ON THE SUN was the first American martial arts movie. What follows is an incomplete checklist of older USA titles of historical interest, most of them aren't interesting for any other reason. You may notice that some of the eras are a bit skimpy, for example there were a lot of Chinese boxers movies from the silent era, but I didn't feel like listing them all. Also, there were titles that I'd have to actually watch to confirm any martial arts content. At least between my check list and your last issue, the listings are more complete than John Corcocan's disappointing Martial Arts Film and Video Guide, in The Martial Arts Source Book, a few of the "reviews" were copied from Leonard Maltin's tome or that Video Hound book. I decided to go easy on more recent titles just in case other know-it-alls flood your mailbox with their own checklists. Hold your nose.

Silent Era Highlights:

JIU-JITSU THE JAPANESE ART OF SELF-DEFENSE (American Mutoscope and Biograph 1901)- Dir: FS. Armitage and Starring J.J. O'Brien. Mr. Armitage made a number of documentaries and trick films.

LADY ATHLETE, OR THE JIU JITSU OWNS THE FOOTPADS (British; 1907)- This was directed by Alf Collins, who was just about as prolific

as Mr. Armitage was in the USA, but then again, who wasn't in those days? The Britishers also had a small number of comedies that featured jiu-jitsu, I know of at least two of them, but they were in an unindexed tome on comedy actors and I didn't feel like looking them up.

JAPANESE WARRIORS IN ANCIENT BATTLE SCENES (Edison; 1904)- I doubt that this has anything other than swordplay, but it makes the silent portion of this checklist more colorful. /DF here, I assume the 'Edison' you mention is Thomas Edison. According to Marilyn D. Mintz book *The Martial Arts Films, the first fight film ever made was of a boxing match between Jim Corbett and Peter Courtney that Thomas Edison filmed in 1894*.-DF/

LESSONS IN JIU JITSU (France; 1918)- Jeez, even the French got excited about this jiu jitsu stuff. **A DANGEROUS AFFAIR** (1919)- Terence Radmond (Herbert Rawlinson) uses jiu jitsu to defeat a man's Japanese servant.

PEGGY DOES HER DARDEST (1919)- Peggy Ensko (May Allison) uses jiu jitsu to best the leader of the Lady Birds.

The Early Soundies

DAUGHTER OF THE DRAGON (1931)- Sesue Hayakawa uses some martial arts in his role as a Chinese detective who is after the daughter of Fu Manchu, played by Anna Mae Wong.

CHINATOWN AFTER DARK (1931)- Carmel Myers plays Madame Ying Su, she might have used some martial arts in her fights. There were a number of silent, and soundies about "tongs" that maybe had martial arts, but I won't bore you with a long list of "maybes".

ACROSS THE PACIFIC (1942)- This was the earliest feature reviewed by Mr. Corcoran in his "guide", it has a "quick mass-judo training segment on shipdeck". It also has Keye Luke. The same "guide" also lists Robin Hood movies!

BEHIND THE SUN (1943)- This has a karate-versus-western-boxing fight, apparently by the Japanese traitor.

BLOOD ON THE SUN (1945)- You already mentioned this title, it has James Cagney do judo. He's suppose to be a real life "judo black belt", according to Mr. Corcoran.

SAMURAI (1944)- This U.S. exploitation quickie sounds promising for historical reasons.

GEISHA GIRL (1951)- There's a good chance that a "theatrical performance" has some martial arts, but I didn't feel like ordering a copy to verify this.

BAD DAY AT BLACK ROCK (1954)- Spencer Tracy is a one-armed man in search of his Japanese-American farmer friend, his brand of martial arts includes flips.

THE INVISIBLE AVENGER (1958)- There's a 1962 version with added travelogue footage known as "Bourban Street Shadows". No, this isn't about a kung fuing invisible man, it's about The Shadow (Richard Derr) and Jagrenda (Mark Daniels), and I don't doubt that they used a few moves in the style of some of the 1950s TV detectives, because this is an unsold plot.

THE CRIMSON KIMONO (1959)- "An early karate scene" in a "poolroom brawl" in Chinatown, according to Mr. Corcoran's guide. I guess Mr. Fuller, the director, couldn't tell a Japanese from a Chinese.

The 1960s

This section is going to be more colorful. It seems anyone with a camera wanted to include martial arts scenes for added flavor.

KARATE, THE HAND OF DEATH (1961)- A WW2

black belt in Tokyo.

FOLLOW THAT DREAM (1962)- Yep, Elvis Presley does karate. Yep. /DF here, an occasional karate fight wasn't uncommon in Elvis Presley's films like 1965's *HARUM SCARUM*.-DF/

THE HORIZONTAL LIEUTENANT (1962)- This has only a spoken reference to karate, but there's a Japanese fencing scene with the participants wearing oni masks, a man in a butterfly costume on a tightrope, and a sword wielding Japanese guy with a cliffside hideout.

NAKED COMPLEX (1963)- A male judo expert is among the nudists.

55 DAYS AT PEKING (1963)- This "epic" was set during the 1900 Boxer Rebellion. Remember, they didn't have a word like kung fu, they called it Chinese Boxing.

BEAUTY AND THE BODY (1963)- In one scene, Kip Behav and Judy Miller watch a karate tournament in California. Dir: Paul Mart.

A STUDY IN TERROR (1965; British)- Sherlock Holmes uses baritsu, just as he did in some of Doyle's original stories. /DF here, according to *The Encyclopedia of Martial Arts Movies* by Ric Myers and Bill & Karen Palmer, "Baritsu" was the first English language literary reference to a martial arts as it appeared in the 1903 Sherlock Holmes story *The Final Problem*. But apparently, the word was invented by the writers, the style is actually jujitsu. I don't know why the novelist changed it to baritsu.-DF/

THE LITTLE NUNS (1965; Italy)- There's a judo contest in this import.

THE SNOW DEVILS (1965; Italy)- Most guides drop the "the" in the title. Some lame karate moves are to be seen.

GIRL FROM S.I.N (1966)- Poontang Plenty, Agent 0069, uses a special karate blow. She goes after Dr. Sexus in Chinatown. No prizes for guessing which character from a James Bond movie is being "spoofed" here, Einsteins everywhere.

TEENAGE GANG DEBS (1966)- Lee Dowell sings "The Black Belt", a karate dance number. It didn't start a craze.

WOMEN OF THE PREHISTORIC PLANET (1966)- One of the astronauts is a karate expert; however, he's a comic relief character and thus his moves look lame.

THE WORST CRIME OF ALL (1966)- Two women use karate to punish a male rapist.

THE PRESIDENT'S ANALYST (1967)- Dr. Sidney Schaefer (James Coburn) and the Quantrell family both use karate.

TO BE A CROOK (1967; France)- Four male criminals learn karate and judo.

DON'T JUST STAND THERE (1969)- Mary Tyler Moore is mistaken for someone else, and uses karate on gangsters.

HELP WANTED: FEMALE (1968)- Jo-Jo is a woman who runs a karate school.

LOVE CAMP SEVEN (1968)- Linda and Grace use judo & karate to break up a nazi orgy. Linda survives the battle and rescues Martha.

THE ANGRY BREED (1969)- Johnny Taylor (Murray McLeod) is a Vietnam vet who uses judo on rapists.

ZETA ONE (1968; British)- Women engage in nude martial arts training on the planet Anigvion. Before you think that the British were studying our sex-and-chops movies, I must state that this was based upon a comic-book story. Even newspaper strips had nudity over there.

No doubt a large number of spy movies and "mondo" movies featured martial arts, but no-

body has bothered to keep track of them all, so I won't. I remember Jerry Lewis movies spoofed martial arts, but a fan will have to supply the titles. As for the upcoming 1970s section, I'm not going to pretend that I'm listing all the titles overlooked in your magazine's survey. Even if the AFI people do get around to releasing a catalogue of 1970s feature films, it's a safe bet that they won't be able to catalogue martial arts in USA movies completely; as my 1960s survey had eight titles that they did not document as having martial arts scenes. The 1970s:

FRANKENSTEIN ON CAMPUS (Canada; 1970)- Brain-control pellets are injected into Tong (Ty Haller), a karate expert whom the professor (Sean Sullivan) sends to murder all who have framed him on a marijuana possession charge. This was actually made some time in the late 1960s.

FLUCTUATIONS (1970)- Harold S. Tropp was "Karate Consultant" for a scene where a teen boy and a nearly nude woman engage in a karate match.

THE GAMBLERS (1970)- A Japanese valet named Kong Yashi (Richard Wood) uses karate on Nona (Anthony Chinn).

ONE MORE TIME (British; 1970)- Jerry Lewis directed, but didn't star in this sequel to SALT AND PEPPER. Sammy Davis Jr. plays Charlie Salt, a tuxedoed martial arts expert.

BROTHER JOHN (1971)- Sidney Poitier plays a black Jesus Christ who is also a karate expert.

DEVIL RIDER! (1970)- A karate teacher goes after the bikers who have kidnapped his gal pal.

GUESS WHAT I LEARNED IN SCHOOL TODAY (1970)- This early sex comedy from Cannon features martial arts poses and costumes on its poster.

BLACK ALLEY CATS (1972)- Actually there are two black women and one white woman who wear masks and jackets with black cat logos, and they are "kung fu" experts. A Jamaican woman they have attacked and stripped at their private school's showers decides to join them.

CANCEL MY RESERVATION (1972)- Mr. Yamamoto (Pat Morita) is the author of *Karate for Lovers and Other Strangers*.

AROUND THE WORLD WITH FANNY HILL (1973)- HK movie making is spoofed in one of a modern day Fanny Hill's many adventures.

THE DYNAMITE BROTHERS (1973)- Al Adamson epic probably went under more than enough titles for some other know-it-all to bore you with, it has a black ghetto street fighter and a kung fu expert from HK (James Hong) team up to fight a Chinese crime lord in Los Angeles.

THE STUDENT TEACHERS (1973)- Chuck Norris is seen teaching karate in a public park.

Charles Floyd Rhodes
Seattle, WA

Dear Charles,

Thanks a lot for the useful data! Actually Charles's filmography went on into the late 1970s, but I figured there's no point in documenting American martial arts films which came out after ENTER THE DRAGON made kung fu a bouebold word. -DF

(continued on inside back cover)

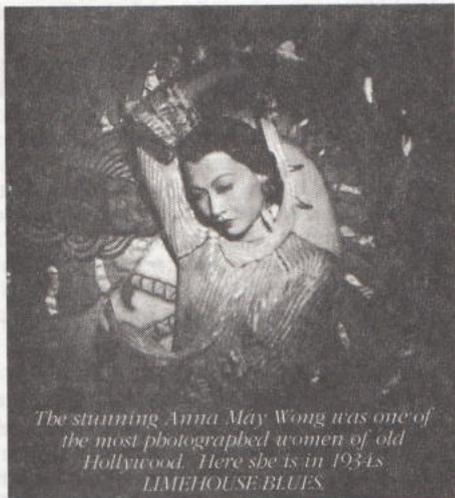
ASIAN BABES

OF FILM AND TV

Before you guys whip out your puds for a little 'wrist exercise', please note that it wasn't intentional that many prominent Asian actresses were no doubt excluded from this issue. There's bound to be a disgruntled fan who will be annoyed that his or her favorite actress got excluded. Let's face it, Asia is a very big place, and the female portion accounts for about half the whole population! So it's just not possible to be even remotely complete, when doing an issue so broadly based (pardon the pun; or don't pardon it-- see if I care!). Though this basic overview of Far Eastern starlets is far from complete, it's as best as we could do under the circumstances (circumstances being: 1. Rapidly approaching deadline. 2. We have lives, jobs & families. 3. This is America, not the orient, making obtaining such research material all the more difficult). Hopefully, this issue of OC will be a good starting point for movie fans intrigued with the women in the Asian film industry, as well as to horny guys obsessed with exotic

Women always seemed to have decent roles in early Chinese films and of course the "Kino Dramas" (Korea's largely of live actors on women were originally played by men. This was an old tradition from the medieval Kabukis had so many ugly-looking actual women), which explains why the Kabukis had so many ugly-looking women! However, the classic Kabuki musicals are important historically because, with the advent of celluloid, them old Kabuki performances segwayed onto film. The first Japanese movie ever made was 1896's silent, B&W drama MAPLE LEAVE FESTIVAL. The original stage-show was written by Tsuruya Nanboku, and this was not only Japan's first movie, but is interesting historically in that it's Japan's first "ghost film" (or "Kaidan", as them Japanese over in Japan call 'em-- "kai" means mysterious, and "dan" means story). The Japanese were in step with the times, since 1896 was the year the horror movie was officially born. France's THE DEVIL'S CASTLE also came out in 1896, but it was only three minutes long (like the Korean Kino Dramas, it too was part of a live act). While movies were coming out in several countries by the year 1900, the Japa-





The stunning Anna May Wong was one of the most photographed women of old Hollywood. Here she is in 1934's *LIMEHOUSE BLUES*.

nese ones (still Kabuki plays shot on film; as though somebody had placed a movie-camera in the audience's front row) continued to lack something that most of the other countries presented in their movies: Females!

For the next 20 years, then Japanese continued to cast men in the roles of women for their kabuki movies, while the Chinese & Koreans, apparently somewhat more liberated & modern, gave equal opportunity in films. Possibly the first lady actress to appear on Japanese screens was Yoshiko Kawada in 1920's *ISLAND WOMAN*. This represented the turning point for Japanese cinema. During the next few years, the Japanese audiences were treated to the pasty-faced (the "geisha look" was still in) beauty of starlets like Kinuyo Tanaka and Sumiko Kurishima, and possibly Japan's first tough heroine was gun-toting Mitsuyo Hara in 1927's *WOLF OF THE RAILS*. Other early actresses of Japanese film's silent era included Yoko Umemura, Sakuko Yanagi, Shizuko Mori, Emiko Yakumo, and Haruko Sawamura. But these revolutionary actresses never left much of an international impression, since most of the movies were, like China's *THIEF IN THE CAR* (1920), *MONKEY FIGHTS GOLDEN LEOPARD* (1926) and *THE BURNING OF RED LOTUS TEMPLE* (1929), basically just filmed stage shows.

According to an issue (March, 1982) of the late, lamented, ahead-of-its-time magazine *Martial Arts Movies Magazine*, many of

l. Shizuko Mori
r. Haruko Sawamura



Japan's most prolific directors (Akira Kurosawa, Hiroshi Inagaki and Ishiro Honda) didn't often use strong female characters in their films. It was these three cinematic innovators who were the most familiar Japanese directors, to western audiences. Akira Kurosawa openly admitted that he wasn't always good at developing powerful woman characters in his films. As for Hiroshi Inagaki, another famed samurai flick director, many of the women in his films were passive and tended to whine, while others were typical damsels-in-distress. Of Japan's more well known directors, the one Americans have come to know for his strong female roles was Kenji Mizoguchi. Though the characters left most of the fighting to the men and were often killed off, they were ladies of depth and character. Fortunately, the more obscure movie-makers in Japan, though lesser known abroad, were more likely to feature important femme characters in their films (though American arthouse crowds weren't always likely to be aware of this, unless they also just happened to live near a Japanese theater like San Fransissy's long-



Above: Yoko Umemura (left) and Sakuko Yanagi (right) Right: Emiko Yakumo.

gone Kokusai Theater; now a Dennys, of all things!).

More historical, "accurate" samurai films seem to lack swordwomen altogether, implying they were a figment of the imagination of adventure, ninja & yakuza farces. Nothing could be further from the truth (except maybe, "maybe Jerry Lewis is a pretty funny guy after all"), since, although not considered "samurais" per se, Japanese history has its share of brave swordwomen like Tomoe Gozen (she assisted Minamoto swordsmen in battle) and Itagaki, who lead armies for the Taira Clan. There was also Hangaku (fully armed & trained to be capable of defending her clan against rival hordes), Moritsuna's daughter, who singlehandedly held off an enemy army at her castle gate, in 1201 (though most historians & films neglect this). The one exception to this sexist aspect of jidai-geki was *THE HUMAN REVOLUTION*, where Raizo Ichikawa plays the young Shogun Nichiren, who's completely controlled by Masoko Hojo, his domineering mother. The film presented her as a master of political manoeuvring & control, though according to history books, she was also a



KUMI MIZUNO

{real name: Maya Igarashi}

Date of Birth: 1/1/36

Definitely the most well known of Japan's sci-fi movie actresses, and one of her first appearances was in the period fantasy *THE THREE TREASURES* (Toho; 1959), directed by Hiroshi Inagaki. Later, she was given a somewhat larger part in Ishiro Honda's *GORATH* (Toho; 1962). One of her sexier, not to mention 'bitchier' roles was as the prick-tease Maimi, in *ATTACK OF THE MUSHROOM PEOPLE* (Toho; 1963), a definite classic, mysterious tale despite the title. A few of her other appearances include *LOST WORLD OF SINBAD*, the samurai adventure *WHIRLWIND*, the camp classic *FRANKENSTIEN CONQUERS THE WORLD* (not to mention an identical role, yet again as an American scientist's assistant in its sequel, *WAR OF THE GARGANTUAS*), and of course, her most famous role was when she played a confused, doomed alien in *MONSTER ZERO*. She probably retired from acting sometime in the late 1980s. She narrated the Toho documentary *TOHO SPFX OUTTAKES COLLECTION* (1986), and at the time of this writing, it's believed her last film was *THIEVING RUBY*, starring Hiroyuki (Henry, Duke, whatever) Sanada.

But of all her roles, my favorite one was that of Dayo, the scantily clad (well, almost) native girl in *GODZILLA VS. THE SEA MONSTER*. Not only did she look great, but the character had enough depth and importance to be a main point in the script. This is not the case with the hilarious *WHAT'S UP TIGER LILLY*, where she only appears briefly in a shower scene.



KIYOKO ENAMI

This 1960s Daiei actress is best known to American fans for her role in GAMERA VS. BARUGON (aka WAR OF THE MONSTERS). But in Japan, she's known for her nostalgic appearances in many yakuza movies and erotic exploitation films. The pretty Enami can be seen in ONNA TOBAKUSHI-AMADERA KAICHO (Dir.: Shigeo Tanaka; 1968) a.k.a. WOMAN GAMBLER AND THE SUN, ONNA TOBAKUSHI- ZETSU ENJO (1968) aka CHAMPION WOMAN GAMBLER, ONNA TOBAKUSHI NORIKOMU (GEISHA THE GAMBLER), ONNA KUMICHO (aka WOMAN BOSS & THE GEISHA FIREFIGHTER; featuring Makoto Sato-- Dir.: Masahiro Makino), 1969's ONNA KOROSHIYA-MESU INU (aka HIT WOMAN-SHE DOG & ART OF ASSASSINATION; Dir.: Yoshio Inoue), 1972's SHOWA ONNA BAKUTO (SHOWA WOMAN GAMBLER), and Seijun Suzuki's DETECTIVE BUREAU 23: BASTARDS GO TO HELL (with Jo Shishido) I also could have sworn I saw her in Toho's DEATHQUAKE, but she wasn't credited so maybe I'm wrong. She's also been in a number of Nikkatsu films, and has often done nude scenes, at times getting typecast as a slut, whore and other weird chicks.



AKEMI NEGISHA

D.O.B.: 3/26/34

First discovered (by western director Joseph Von Sternberg) as a dancer, but was later cast in Joseph Von Sternberg's 1953 movie THE SAGA OF ANATAHAN, which featured the music of Akira Ifukube. She starred in 1954's FAREWELL RABAU (tragic romantic story from Ishiro Honda), but otherwise very little is known about her, as the attractive, exotic starlette only appeared in two Japanese monster movies:

KING KONG VS. GODZILLA- Here she played the lead exotic dancer among a village
(continued on next page..)



Tough golden Mitsuyo Hara in WOLF OF THE RAILS; 1927.

master at swordplay-- an aspect of her charisma completely overlooked in THE HUMAN REVOLUTION. The portrayal of her in the remake (NICHIREN) was even worse, the character had far less power & importance to the script's chain of events. Stereotypes and cliches like this were common in the so-called "realistic" historicals, so from this point on, I'll concentrate only on Japanese movies of the schlockier, more exploitive and/or action-oriented vein. So in the fictional department, gals were placed in five basic types of Japanese film:

1] The Samurai Film. Whether you choose to call them 'Chanbara' or 'Jidai Geki', strong ladies, both villainous & heroic did their share of acting and occasional swordplay as geishas, swordswomen and ninjas. One of the more wellknown serieses was the CRIMSON BAT series, sometimes considered a Zato Ichi ripoff because our heroine Yuko Matsuyama plays a blind character (handicapped swordfighters were always popular; there were also Japanese titles like ONE-EYED ONE-ARMED SWORDSWOMAN and THE LEFTY FENCER-- both starring Michiyo Yasuda). The CRIMSON BAT films also feature co-swordswomen; guest appearances by Chizuki Akai, Kikko Matsuoka and others.

2] Normal, 'domestic' soap opera stuff. Dramas & comedies exist in every country, and Japan is no exception. Japan's romantic movies & musicals weren't a whole lot different than those of any other country, and since they're not exciting enough to be part of OC's subject matter, leave it at that.

3] The sci-fi/monster movies, aka Kaiju Eiga genre. Though the scripts for Toho's earlier kaiju films didn't always rely on important women, they did appear occasionally. At first glance, Momoko Kochi's (now



Possibly the first Japanese actress on screen. Yoshiko Kawada in ISLAND WOMAN; 1920.

63 and has recreated her role as the now elderly Emiko Yamane in the recent GODZILLA VS. DESTROYER) naive young character in GODZILLA, KING OF THE MONSTERS (Toho; 1954) would appear to be just the typical whimpering, helpless damsel seen in so many other 1950s monster movies, but it was her character who indirectly defeated Godzilla when she made known the existence of Serizawa's oxygen destroyer. Likewise for Kumi Mizuno's Namikawa character in MONSTER ZERO, it was she who played a direct role in defeating the villains.

4] The Yakuza flicks. Fuji Junko became the best known of the yakuza actresses, in romantic roles of lady gamblers with tattoos who fight off the baddies with swords, knives, judo and guns. Though OC hasn't yet had the time to seek out & review yakuza movies (female or otherwise), decent examples reportedly include THE WOMAN GAMBLER series, the LADY SCORPION (aka "Scorpion the Prisoner";



Japanese beauties Kinuyo Tayaka (left) and Sumiko Kurishima.

JOSHUU SASORI) 7-part film series, BLOOD SNOW, WEB OF TREACHERY, the RED PEONY series, THE ORPHAN GAMBLER, and TRIALS OF AN OKINAWAN VILLAGE, many of which starred Fuji Junko with her most famous leading man, Ken Takakura. She retired in 1972, but made one last film with Takakura, KANTO HIZAKURA IKKA ("Cherry Blossom Fire Gang").

5] The Superhero programs. It's rare to see a live action program starring a female (though animated stuff like CUTEY HONEY, SAILOR MOON and billions of others had plenty of female protagonists), but co-heroines were never uncommon.

As for Japan's chanbara genre, a subgenre within it exists called the "Kunoichi", or female ninja. Though women always had a 'less-important' role in old Japan than men did (and some of this discrimination still goes on today), original female ninjas were expected to learn all the same skills as the men, including disguise, kendo, shuriken-throwing, camouflage, and in some sects, women were expected to excel



INTIMATE CONFESSIONS OF A CHINESE COURTESAN (1971)

in certain weapons like "naginata" and "tanto" usage by the age of 18 (and many went on to master archery, both on foot and on the back of a running horse). Women ninjas also had to be proficient at "assassination by seduction". In reality, male ninjas had to learn this too (they would pose as "wakashu", aka dandies: male hookers!). They had to engage in "shudo" (literally 'the Way of Youth', we call it homosexuality). Not surprisingly, the male prostitute/assassins were rarely portrayed in the movies (though I personally would find it hilarious to see Shintaro Katsu wear lipstick and blow a kiss & wink at Toshiro Mifune), that was something left to the kunoichi of celluloid. But Ninja Women weren't really seen until the 1950s, but even in Hiroshi Inagaki's YAGYU SECRET SCROLLS (Toho; 1958) and its sequel YAGYU SECRET SCROLLS- FLYING DRAGON SWORD, flicks supposedly all about ninjutsu, Japan's cinema hadn't experimented enough yet to produce the type of action-oriented, swordswomen films we've long since come to know and love. But a later example of classic "Ninja Cinema" is the B&W Daiei drama from 1964, KIRI GA KURE SAIZO ("Mist Saizo, Last of the Ninja"), part of a smash-hit film series which, although it doesn't deal heavily with female characters, is an educational, sometimes exciting example of an early type of movie which would later help form what we would later call Martial Arts Films. This SAIZO series altered the way the ninjas were portrayed in film. From this point on, it wasn't uncommon to see the Kunoichi in Ninja films too. Some were villains (like in FULL MOON SWORDSMAN and them KOZURI OKAMI "Babycart" films). But a milestone film was

Hiroshi Inagaki's late 1960s actioner WHIRLWIND, which I must confess I've not seen in 20 years! As I recall, it starred Toshiro Mifune, Makoto Sato, an extremely young Hiroyuki Kawase as a prince, possibly Akira Kubo, and I believe it was the one and only Kumi Mizuno who played a knife-wielding ninjette (I mean, kunoichi) who accidentally falls in love with her own enemy. As seen in other movies like THE WOMEN NINJA (Toei; 1965), not to be confused with the 1991 video-series under the same basic title KUNOICHI NINPO-CHO, and also MISSION IRON CASTLE (Daiei; 1970-- with Kojiro Hongo and Hiroki Matsukata), the early Kunoichi films, like most other old, B&W Chanbara offered a more atmospheric, film noir technique than all-out action.

Not all female Chanbara stars wore black hoods & tossed shurikens, however. Though a female samurai was an extremely rare occurrence on film (and there were none in real-life), another genre of Japanese swordswoman was the avenging widows of their warrior spouses. A humorous example of a vengeful woman in chanbara is an old lady called Osugi, in MUSASHI THE WARRIOR (yet another version of Japan's famed swordsman Musashi Miyamoto), a six-part film series from the mid-1960s. Though she was too old to do swordfighting, she followed our hero throughout the series hoping for a grudge-match. But for every strong female character in the chanbara genre, there were far more unimportant and/or helpless ones. As stated a few paragraphs ago,

Kenji Mizuguchi gave the babes more screentime, as is evident in his version of "Chushingura" (Japan's most filmed tale, dozens of versions have been made since the silent period), called GENROKU CHUSHINGURA (consisting of two parts). The character wasn't actually much of a fighter though. Then there was Hiroshi Inagaki, who wasn't known for powerful girls on film,



of natives. She's also the lady who just narrowly escapes a storage hut before it's smashed by a giant octopus.

HALF HUMAN- She had a somewhat more important role in this one, as an Ainu villager who rescues Akira Takarada from a Japanese yeti. Though I've never seen an edition to the Kaiju Eiga with a female main hero, this one comes the closest.



AKIKO WAKABAYASHI

D.O.B.: 12/13/39

One of Toho's most attractive, sultry 1960s actresses. She joined Toho in the late 1950s, having tried out for a part in Akira Kurosawa's THE HIDDEN FORTRESS. This led to minor roles in Ishiro Honda's BATTLE IN OUTERSPACE and KING KONG VS. GODZILLA, but her beauty and curvaceousness made her more well known in 1963's THE LOST WORLD OF SINBAD (called SAMURAI PIRATE in Japanese, it's not meant to be a real Sinbad film!). Her mysterious persona was further preserved when she portrayed a sexy diamond thief in Honda's DAGORA THE SPACE MONSTER (Toho; 1964). Other films to her credit include GHIDRAH THE THREE HEADED MONSTER (she's the Martian princess from the Himalayas!), not to mention several comedic spy capers from Toho, though, to the best of my knowledge, the only English dubbed one is WHAT'S UP TIGER LILLY-- however, her international debut, alongside longtime co-star Mie Hama was in Sean Connery's YOU ONLY LIVE TWICE. She, like Hie Hama also showed off some skin in an issue of Playboy promoting the 1960s release of YOU ONLY LIVE TWICE.



CHENG PEI PEI

[Pinyin: Zheng Peipei]
Born: 1949, Shanghai

1963: Joined the Actors' Training Course at the Shaw Bros. Studio (H.K.), and began appearing in movies like:

THE MAGIC LAMP (1963)

THE ROCK (1964)

COME DRINK WITH ME (1965-'66)

GOLDEN SWALLOW

(1968) {later released to the U.S.A.,
(continued on next page..)}

innaccurately titled **GIRL WITH THE THUNDER-BOLT KICK** in 1971}
THE JADE RANSHAK (1968)
LADY HERMIT
DRAGON SWAMP (1969)
THE SHADOW WHIP (1970)
THE LADY HERMIT (1971)
NONE BUT THE BRAVE (1973)
ATTACK OF THE KUNG FU GIRLS (1974)
WHIPLASH! (1974)
 unknown title; Taiwanese period TV-series (1980)
PAINTED FACES (1988)
FLIRTING SCHOLAR (1993)
KUNG FU MISTRESS (1994)
LUNATIC FROG WOMAN (1994)

Cheng Pei Pei, the original queen of HK kung fu cinema first appeared (as a male scholar!) in a movie called **THE MAGIC LAMP** (Shaw Bros.; 1963), and up until 1970, had been in 17 movies involving martial arts, and 20 movies total. Because of **THE ROCK** (Shaw; '64), she was the first oriental actress to win the Golden Knight Award at the International Independent Producers' Association. Her final Shaw film was **THE SHADOW WHIP** (Dir.: Lo Wei). Shortly afterwards, she got married, moved to the U.S.A. and worked as a performer & teacher of dance. She returned to HK in '73 to star in three Golden Harvest films: **NONE BUT THE BRAVE** (Dir.: Lo Wei), **ATTACK OF THE KUNG FU GIRLS** and 1974's **WHIPLASH!** (Dir.: Ding Shanxi). She wasn't given much to do in the 1980s, except for some TV show and a supporting role in 1988's **PAINTED FACES**, and an even smaller appearance in **KUNG FU MISTRESS**.

MIE HAMA

D.O.B.: 11/20/43

Originally a model, she later joined Toho as part of their "Three Pet" contest, and got signed up (along with Yuriko Hoshi) to appear in several films. One of her earlier movies was Hiroshi Inagaki's **THE YOUTH AND HIS AMULET** (Toho; 1961), sort of a comedy/fantasy. However, she's more well known to OC readers as Fumiko, the girl King Kong grabs from the train in **KING KONG VS. GODZILLA** (Toho; 1962). She can also be seen in Hiroshi Inagaki's **LOST WORLD OF SINBAD**, and its sequel **THE ADVENTURES OF TAKLA-MAKAN**. But she's best known as the complex, part villain, part heroine Madame Pihrana, the illfated character from the classic sci-fi thriller **KING KONG ESCAPES** (Toho; 1967). She appeared in numerous spy movies, including **WHAT'S UP TIGER LILLY** and the James Bond film **YOU**
(continued on next page...)



common in HK actioners, where the heroines just want to kick ass. Sure, China has its love stories, musicals and romantic historicals (i.e. **A MADE FROM HEAVEN**, 1960's **THE KINGDOM AND THE BEAUTY**, **THE GRAND SUBSTITUTION**, 1962's **ETERNAL LOVE**, **PRINCESS CHANG PING**, 1962's **THE LAST WOMAN OF SHANG**, **THE PERFUMED ARROW**, 1962's **THE MAGNIFICENT CONCUBINE**, 1971's **INTIMATE CONFESSIONS OF A CHINESE COURTESAN**, 1973's **ILLICIT DESIRE**, and 1973's **LEGENDS OF LUST**), but the heroines in flicks like 1965's **COME DRINK WITH ME** (**DAI ZUI**



Top: Momoko Kacbi with two of her leading men. Middle: **THE LAST WOMAN OF SHANG** (1962). Bottom: **WOMAN PRISON** (1988).



yet he did at least include a weapon-wielding peasant girl in one of the many other versions of "**Chushingura**", his interpretation being **CHUSHINGURA**, **THE LOYAL 47 RONIN**. But these minor characters were as close as "**Chushingura** Film-dom" came to having any main female characters, which again, were presented (though played by men) in the original "**Chushingura**" Kabuki plays. In her article in **Martial Arts Movies Magazine** (March, 1982), Jessica Amanda Salmonson summed it up best when she wrote, "The film has yet to be made which admits the bravery, rather than the suffering, of the wives and sisters of the brave 47." Others were nuns, like traveling Buddhists of the Fuke Sect. They usually wore disguises, wearing thick basket-like hats which covered their faces (these ronin, often called "komuso" consisted of male nomads too). Strangely, in chanbara, the komuso were normally presented as men, though in history, it's believed most were female. This is one area where the original kabuki plays were more accurate, since they, unlike in the movies, presented most komuso as women (though, as mentioned before, suspiciously masculine ones!). There were other Japanese sects of wandering nuns (some carried a sword, ones related to a samurai were permitted to carry two), often going on missions and pilgrimages. Though not at this time available for review, an excellent example of a komuso was in **KARATE KILLER PRIEST**, starring Tomisaburo Wakayama.

One main difference between the Japanese swordswoman films and the Chinese swordswoman films is that the Japanese ones have a far greater tendency to throw in romance, or the stereotypical urge that all woman need marriage-- a cliché less

XIA; Dir.: King Hu), 1965's **TEMPLE OF RED LOTUS**, 1966's **SWORD AND THE LUTE**, **THE TWIN SWORDS**, **ANGEL WITH THE IRON FISTS**, Yen Tung-chu's **THE BLADE SPARES NONE** (starring a sword-wielding Nora Miao Ker-hsiu), **BLOOD FLOWER SWORD**, **BLACK BUTTERFLY**, **THE ONE-EYED SWORDSWOMAN**, **JADE DRAGON**, **LADY WITH A SWORD**, **THAT FIERY GIRL**, and 1968's **GOLDEN SWALLOW** (**JIN YANZI**; Dir.: Chang Cheh), were far more interested in fighting the men than making love to them. There is one mid-1960s film which falls somewhere inbetween, it's the famous, critically acclaimed **A TOUCH OF**

ZEN (1966). Though I have never seen this movie because I refuse to watch an unsubtitled print of a talky film, King Hu's supposed masterpiece is unique in that its heroine is a swordfighter who's allowed to have an active sex life.

Though she still makes an occasional appearance (PAINTED FACES, KUNG FU MISTRESS) in contemporary flicks, Cheng Pei Pei was the leading swordswoman star of 1960s HK, though Li Li Hua, Ivy Ling Po, and Lily Ho tried their best. To western audiences, Cheng Pei Pei is less familiar than Angela Mao Ying, Shih Szu (who deputized

popular culture frequently demands that so many starlets get replaced by about the age of 35. Though the age discrimination thing is less prominent now (hell, just look at Jackie Chan; he's certainly no Spring hatchling-- Lo Lieh & Wu Ma still appear occasionally, and so did Tien Feng, though I imagine he's dead by now), women still seem to get retired from the industry earlier than men.

Someone stupid enough to be unfamiliar with Taiwan's & HK's period-films might be a little surprised to see just how frequently femme fatales have effectively swung swords at male villains. These acrobatic, powerful babes hardly fit the western typecast image of the bounded-feet, menial Chinese servant girls who cater to their male "master's" every whim. Just as the Japanese swordswomen in history remain more obscure than a San Francisco apartment without knee-pads (where they're called "slippers"), few Chinese historians will tell us of factual Chinese heroines like Lieou Chi, Mong Chi, Mu Gui Ying & Yang Pei Feng, all of which were feisty, determined warriors who fought valiantly to protect their dynasties. Then there was Ch'in Chin, a Communist intellectual who also excelled at swordplay, and gave her life for her cause. The female warriors of China were an important historical figure, and have been a source of inspiration for

ONLY LIVE TWICE. She continues acting today, be it movies, TV, and commercials. Alongside Akiko Wakabayashi, she can be seen (probably naked?!) in an old 1960s edition of Playboy I've yet to see (unfortunately) in a pictorial called "The Bond Girls!"



ANGELA MAO

{aka Mao Ying}

DOB: Sept. 20, 1950; Taipei-Taiwan

Born the 3rd of 7 in the Mao family, she enrolled at age five in Taiwan's Fu Shing Academy of ancient, traditional Chinese arts, where she lived and learned acting, singing, martial arts and other aspects of Peking's classical opera. At 12, she went on a world tour with her troupe, which included performances in Japan and America. The following year she joined the prestigious Hoi Kwan theatrical troupe.

Her movie career began in 1969 when she was discovered by director Huang Feng, of the then-new-Golden Harvest. She was 19 when she signed her five year contract. Her first movie was 1970's ANGRY RIVER, followed by the Lo Wei directorial THE INVINCIBLE EIGHT. After these and other period films, usually directed by Huang Feng, she got her first starring role thanks to the chop sockey movement, in LADY WHIRLWIND, and the rest is history-- that is, I mean, the rest is herstory!

Her sudden mastery of the Korean fighting art Hapkido (not part of her childhood) first began during production of ANGRY RIVER. In the early 1970s, during the peak of her kung fu movie career, she so impressed Hapkido master Chi Han Tsai that she was awarded a 2nd degree black belt, only after a few months of studying this vicious kicking art! Last I heard, she retired from from kung fu movies in the late 1970s and started a family or a singing career-- maybe both. At some time in early 1995, she attempted to make a comeback after a 20 year absence from showbiz, and had a minor role playing a ghost in some flick.

Filmography:

- ANGRY RIVER (1970)
- THE INVINCIBLE EIGHT (1970)
- THE THUNDERBOLT (1970)

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Top: Tomoko Ai of TERROR OF MECHAGODZILLA.
Middle: Tomoko Umeda the karate kicker in GODZILLA VS. GIGAN.
Bottom: Mari Nakayama in LATITUDE ZERO.



at age 16, alongside Cheng Pei Pei in 1970's LADY HERMIT), Etsuko Shihomi, and of course, more modern stars like Brigitte Lin, Moon Lee, Sybelle Hu, Yukari Oshima, Maggie Cheung, & Jade Leung, etc. But martial arts cinema didn't penetrate the American mainstream until the kung fu boom of the 1970s, and by that time, Cheng Pei Pei was on the verge of hasbeendom (younger, 'cuter' actresses like the ones mentioned were on the rise), despite an attempt to keep in step with the times in the early 1970s chop sockeyer ATTACK OF THE KUNG FU GIRLS (starring James Tien). It's a bit of a pisser that the 'youth' aspect of



Tan Tunyi



Maggie Cheung's mid wrestling movie

China's theatrical arts for centuries. Just as women were featured as heroines in Japan's kabuki, the same goes for Chinese plays & operas like the Peking Opera and the Acrobats of Canton (but in China, women were played by real women). Typical of the Chinese plays was Young Phoenix Soars, a fact-based story about Yang Pe-Feng and the other swordswomen of the Sung Dynasty. According to the January



1982 issue of Martial Arts Movies Magazine, these female folk heroes have been preserved in Chinese culture; puppets, dolls, fans, etc. of them are available in HK, Burma and Taiwan. The article also mentions Vietnam's Chinese-inspired Hat Boi Opera, and its depiction of the Trung Sisters, patriotic heroines who liberated Vietnam in 40 A.D.

White Snake, a famous Peking Opera play is the basis for such films as WHITE SNAKE GREEN SNAKE, Maggie Cheung's remake

Far left: Ellen Chan. Left: Characters from SPACE SHERIFF GAVAN.

Above
Scenes
from
SPACE SHERIFF GAVAN
Right:
Cathy
Ho
Chi
Mei



VERONICA YIP

{aka Yip Yuk Hing and sometimes 'Ronnie' Yip}

Another singer and actress in HK with decent knockers, who, in recent years has admitted to having anorexia, though by the time you read this she may have been cured or in treatment.

- HIDDEN DESIRE (1991)
- PRETTY WOMAN (1991)
- TAKE ME (1991)
- CALL GIRL '92 (1992)
- CASH ON DELIVERY (1992)
- GIGOLO AND WHORE 2 (1992)
- ROSE (1992)
- BOGUS COPS (1993)
- DONG CHENG XI JU (1993)
- MAN OF THE TIMES (1993)
- ROOF WITH A VIEW (1993)
- ROSE ROSE I LOVE YOU (1993)
- THREE DAYS OF A BLIND GIRL (1993)
- THREE SUMMERS (1993)
- TREASURE ISLAND (1993)
- LOVE AMONG THE TRIAD (1994)
- RED ROSE WHITE ROSE



AMY YIP

{aka Amy Yeh}
[Chinese names: Yip Chi Mei, Yeh Chi Mei]
Born: June 10, 1965

This stunningly curvaceous cutie is certainly no stranger to OC's greasy palmed, heterosexual male readership; and the two reasons why are completely obvious to anyone not blind. Though there's rarely a shortage of photos of this gorgeous beauty, solid information is somewhat harder to find on her. All HK starlets have been, at one time or another, the talk of HK tabloids, which can be really frustrating to people like me who, when translating, are looking for solid info, and not trivia, rumors and nasty gossip. All anyone writes about are her mammoth mammaries, and whether they're natural or implants. She denies her 35" bust line (not bad for a chick weighing only 100 lbs.!) is ar-

(continued on next page)

tificial, but nobody has been fooled.

Yip Chi Mei was a student at the Kau Kam Chow English College. After graduation, she got involved in the entertainment industry. She enrolled in ATV (HK's second biggest TV station) acting training classes and graduated from that in 1985. She later got a career hosting a morning show, which at least got her breasts, I mean, foot in the door. In 1986, she worked heavily in a number of dramatic TV shows including KAU YUET YING FAI, CHU GOT LEUNG, YIN CHI LIU, & HUNG CHUN, but always as a supporting actress. She was a budding TV actress in 1988, and it was at this time that 35 five year old Peter K.L. Chan (a then Bank of America executive at BOA's HK branch) became obsessed with her. Though he himself did not figure prominently in her career, his relationship with her was the source of plenty of tabloid gossip.

At some point, as her career switched from TV to movies (she signed up with Golden Harvest in 1987, resulting in two feature flicks), she became his girlfriend. Having a gorgeous body and a rich boyfriend proved profitable; by this time she owned numerous properties, like her home (a two-thousand square foot luxury villa, costing seven million HK dollars). Controversy kept in early during her movie career, in early 1991, like when she left a sexually explicit phone message for a pay-telephone service.

But on September 10, 1991, during the peak of her film career, Peter Chan was sentenced to 27 months in jail for attempting to improperly transfer \$2.37 million into her account (a lower level employee noted that the transfer document lacked the required 2nd signature so he alerted his supervisor). He had pleaded guilty to a charge of making a fraudulent accounting entry and was sen-

tenced by a HK district court judge. Police said that Chan had been 'obsessed' with Amy Yip, and that her relentless demands for money drove him to commit this crime. HK tabloids & newspapers reported that Peter Chan (who earned \$3,600 a month at his job at B of A) had sold his home and moved his own mother into low income housing so he could finance his relationship with Amy. Not surprisingly, Yip never made herself available for comment.

Though she still made a few films, a number of factors helped kill her career (at least temporarily). One thing was that audiences were tired of her never showing a single nipple (though she came damn close, especially in the infamous "hot tub rape scene" in SEX AND ZEN), yet continually teased us with relentless cleavage shots, padded (to the max!) push-up bras and super skintight clothing. Needless to say, since she never showed any real nudity (upper or lower), she's not really a porno star as some press info (mis)translations, their Category 3 falls somewhere inbetween our R and X ratings) would have us believe. She was featured in countless magazines (more cleavage, no solid nudity; she's still waiting for the right price) in the early 1990s, including Chinese editions of *Penthouse* and *Playboy*. It's also speculated that she retired and left HK (she went to Taiwan in 1991 to start a singing career) to avoid competition with another curvaceous starlette, Veronica Yip (no relation). Amy Yip's singing career resulted in some successful concert touring, though it's been speculated that, with the usual sexy costumes she displayed, the audience was more interested in staring at her tits than listening to her throat.

In 1993, she lived the stereotype of many

other sexy bimbos, got another rich boyfriend, in this case Dr. Lui. With no need to act, work or perform (in the public eye, anyway), she was free to relax, eat & sleep in her lover's mansion. She gained some weight which lead tabloids to suspect she was pregnant. This angered her, leading her to a strict diet and excessive exercise, to get back into top form. Whether or not she'll return to movies or singing remains to be jerked off too, I mean, remains to be seen.

JAILHOUSE EROS (1989)
MR. CANTON AND LADY ROSE (1989)
LETHAL CONTACT (1989)
TO SPY WITH LOVE
EROTIC GHOST STORIES 1 & 2 (1990)
SKINNED GHOST (1990)
INSPECTOR WEARS SKIRTS II (1990)
VAMPIRE KIDS (1990)
TO SPY WITH LOVE (1990)
BLUE JEAN MONSTER (1991)
EASY MONEY (1991)
LOOK OUT, OFFICER (1991)
GHOSTLY VIXEN (1991)
GREAT PRETENDERS (1991)
LETHAL CONTACT (1991)
UNDERGROUND JUDGEMENT
BLUE JEAN MONSTER (1991)
MAGNIFICENT SCOUNDRELS (1991)
RAID ON CASINO MARINE (1991)
ROBOTRIX (1991)
SEX AND ZEN (1991)
GHOST FEVER
TO BE NUMBER 1 (1991)
QUEEN OF THE UNDERWORLD (1992)
MAGNIFICENT SCOUNDRELS (1992)
REQUIEM (1992)
STOOGES IN HONG KONG (1992)
LUCKY WAY (1993)

GREEN SNAKE, STORY OF WHITE SNAKE (supposedly starring Japan's Michiko Nishiwaki, though I don't think it was ever completed), and a Bridgette Lin movie which came out about ten years ago, though I don't know the title off-hand (it doesn't really matter, the "Snake Tale" has probably been filmed more times than people have needed noseplugs using a restroom recently occupied by Rush Limbaugh). The classic tale is also the inspiration for E. Hoffman Price's novel *The Devil Wives of Li Fong* (Ballantine Books; 1980), a book that follows the opera and films fairly faithfully (but yet again, the "fighting femme spirit" is neglected; the novel omits a scene where a wife fights off several gods).

By the early 1970s, both Japan and China were ready to offer film-goers the most fantastic females in action at the time. 1960s starlets of HK, like Cheng Pei Pei updated their techniques from swords to fists as the chop sockey craze took China by storm. In Japan, Etsuko Shihomi made her debut in the outstanding superhero sci-fi series KIKAIER 01 (Toei; 1973), and put her excellent karate skills (taught to her by our main man Sonny Chiba) to good use. Her main Chinese counterpart was of course,

hapkido vixen Angela Mao Ying, who debuted in ANGRY RIVER (1970). In fact, I remember years ago, in the late 1970s or early 1980s, reading in some martial arts magazine that Etsuko Shihomi challenged Angela Mao to a match at some Women's Karate Tournament. Unfortunately, I've heard nothing about it since then, does anybody have a clue? Was it just a rumor? If not, then did Mao Ying accept or decline the challenge? If she accepted, who won? Certainly there's somebody out there who knows the truth behind this. This editor, as well as much of my readership, would appreciate any information.

Getting back to the subject of female fighters in the 1970s, second only to Angela Mao Ying was Shih Szu. This beauty was flexible in that she could perform in a number of different martial roles: The Cheng Pei Pei-style swordswoman of the 1960s, the high-kicking, kung fu kicker (ala Angela Mao), modern characters, and that most rarest of things for a Chinese actress - an Italian superhero (see THREE SUPERMEN AGAINST THE ORIENT, an Italian/Hong Kongese coproduction starring Lo Lieh and Sal Borgese, reviewed in OC#3). But like Cheng Pei Pei, Ivy Ling Po, Hu Yen Ni, Fang Yin, Fanny Fan, Chin Ping, Hsing

Hui, Jing Li, Yi Guang, Lee Ching, Lin Dai, You Min, Ge Lan, Tue Ti, Lin Tsui and Julie Yeh Feng, age means retirement. By 1979, both Angela Mao and Shih Szu (the two top Chinese action stars of the 1970s) seemed to disappear from the spotlight. Exactly where they are now, we may never know. I did hear Angela Mao started a family and tried to have a singing career, and recall an aging Betty Ting Pei interviewed on *Entertainment Tonight*, *Hard Copy* or *A Current Affair* (to talk about the whole Bruce Lee scandal again, and how she's now retired and devoted solely to Buddhism), and perhaps our last glimpse of Nora Miao (she speaks decent English) was an interview in the 1984 documentary BRUCE LEE THE LEGEND. And so the 1970s came to an end, and so did the careers of many 1970s actresses (though many males of that decade continue to make films today). In their place came new generations of HK starlets, but more on them later. In the meantime, the 1970s offered fighting femme films from both China and Japan, including: FOURTEEN AMAZONS, TIGRESS IS COMING, NAKED COMES THE HUNTRESS, LADY PROFESSIONAL, SWORDSWOMAN THREE, DEADLY CHINA DOLL, LADY KUNG FU, DRAGON PRINCESS, SISTER

LADY KUNG FU [aka HAPKIDO]
 WHEN TAE KWON DO STRIKES ('73)
 ENTER THE DRAGON ('73)
 DEADLY CHINA DOLL ('73)
 FATE OF LEE KHAN ('73)
 THE HIMALAYANS ('74)
 STONER (1974)
 NAUGHTY NAUGHTY (1974)
 RETURN OF THE TIGER (1976)
 BACK ALLEY PRINCESS



SHIH SZU

{AKA Lei Chiu-szu, Sue Sue}
 Born: 1953

After being chosen from among 3,000 applicants (part of a recruiting program organized by the Shaw Bros. in Taipei), this former child dancer entered show-business at the age of 16. She quickly became another workaholic kung fu star, appearing in many Shaw Brothers action films.

THE CRIMSON CHARM (1969)
 THE LADY OF THE LAW (1969)
 LADY HERMIT (1960)
 THE RESCUE (1970)
 THE YOUNG AVENGER (1970)
 THUNDERBOLT FIST (1979)
 THREE SUPERMEN AGAINST THE ORIENT (1973)
 THE CHAMPION (1973)
 7 BROTHERS MEET DRACULA (1974)
 THE SHADOW BOXER (1974)
 THE FOUR ASSASSINS (1976)
 THE DEVIL'S MIRROR
 THE VILLAINS
 A DEADLY SECRET

SILVIA CHANG

{aka Chan Chia Ling, Sylvia Chang and "Silvia Channing"}
 DOB: 7/21/53

She made her acting debut at the age of 19, in Jimmy Wang Yu's TATTOOED DRAGON, which also featured an early role by Samuel Hui. Both Silvia Chang and Sam Hui would be reunited in the early 1980s, for the successful ACES GO PLACES comedies. She also holds the distinction of playing the only character ever to get raped by Chuck Norris, in SLAUGHTER IN SAN FRANCISCO (aka YELLOW FACED TIGER). It's also a little known fact that she's tried her hand at directing films including TASHA (1987), SISTERS OF THE WORLD UNITE, and SHAO YI, whatever they are.

TATTOOED DRAGON (1972)
 SLAUGHTER IN SAN FRANCISCO (1974)

(continued on next page...)

STREETFIGHTER, BRUCE AND THE KUNG FU GIRLS, YOGA AND THE KUNG FU GIRL, and countless others.

It's strange that although the Japanese film industry seemed to originally be more sexist against women in the old days, and the Chinese were more openminded, there seems to be a slight reversal these days. Where as 1970s HK starlets seemed to disappear in the 1980s, some of the Japanese ones still either found steady work or made comebacks. A classic example was Etsuko Shihomi. Not only did she appear in several of Sonny Chiba's post-"Streetfighter"-type karate films and Japanese cop & superhero programs of the 1970s, but can be seen in top form in a few 1980s films as well, including ROARING FIRE, LEGEND OF THE EIGHT SAMURAI and SHOGUN'S NINJA. In 1985, I was fortunate enough to see her (in person) in a live stage-play along with Sonny Chiba, Hiroyuki Sanada, and Kenji Ohba. But she too, seemed to retire (?) in the mid-to-late 1980s, and a possible replacement was the younger Japan Action Club (the stunt school formed by Chiba) member called Naomi Morinaga. This attractive, energetic, karate kicking chick debuted on an episode of the superhero program GOGGLE V (Toei; 1982), but would later go on to have more prominent roles in SPACE SHERIFF SHIDER (Toei; 1984) and DIMENSIONAL WARRIOR SPIELVAN (Toei; 1986). Though she's long since "graduated" from the superhero and/or action genre, she is still very active on film - but it's a whole different kind of film. More on that later.

Getting back to Hong Kong, the 1980s. The women changed with the times. Though there were always modern, contemporary female characters in Chinese cinema, the 1980s seemed to bring forth even more western styles and pop culture to Asia. The boom in video, our own MTV's acceptance in the Far East, plus the continued success of American movies (don't ask me why) abroad all may have contributed to this modernization, if you can call it that. The 1960s sword-heroines became even less popular on screens in the 1980s, and the chop-sockey women (Angela Mao, Shih Szu, Shankuan Linfeng, etc.) of the 1970s seemed to disappear from films completely. This is not to say that the 1980s offered no action roles for women - quite the opposite, in fact. But kung fu movies in general had reached a level of obsolescence, and HK audiences wanted a whole new generation of martial arts heroes - and heroines too. Only this time, the babes weren't going to wear turn-of-the-century peasant togs and kung fu uniforms; nor were all of them to have pigtails and that certain innocence and apparent chastity of the kung fu oldies. Old-fashioned tai-chi uniforms and other loose fitting garments were out, mini-skirts and tight pants were in - and at the time of this typing, they seem here to stay.

Trying to obtain actual information on HK's current crop of stunning starlets is

harder than obtaining a Dom DeLouise work-out video. Most of the publications I've used as research were, of course, in Chinese, making such magazines about as useful to me as running shoes are to Jerry's Kids. Aggravating me all the more is that when I finally do actually get somebody to translate an article, such info is usually trivial gossip, like rumors and tabloid junk. Rarely is there solid information relating to their films, and instead I sat through endless throw-away articles and "puff" pieces with topics like: "Why doesn't Yukari Oshima have a boyfriend?" "How are Amy Yip's breasts given extra support during workout sessions?" "Has Cheung Man actually fallen in bed with Steven Chow Sing Chi behind-the-scenes too?" and "What would it take to win Maggie Cheung's heart?" As I alluded to in the previous paragraph, most of HK's actresses were originally from the beauty pageant circuit, with a number of previous Miss HK's, Miss Asia, etc. in current vogue hype. Another re-occurring theme is how every time an actress (anyone from Angela Mao to Michelle





Khan) gets married (almost always to a rich guy, of course), she retires too.

Though lingering traces of 1970s-style films were coming out of HK as late as 1984, the comparatively big-budget 'action films' of the 1980s got their first big boost with the smash hit ACES GO PLACES (Cinema City, 1982). This comedy classic was sort of a combination of LUPIN THE 3rd and Peter Sellers' "Pink Panther" films (plus a touch of James Bond at times), and although its two main stars (Samuel Hui and Carl Mac, aka Karl Maka) were males, a major plus was the supporting female role Ah-Tung, played by Sylvia Chang. Both attractive and feisty, this lady cop seemed to personify the image of many a woman in HK actioners to come. Sylvia Chang's tough yet pretty character was a main character in all but the final film in the ACES series.

Though the ACES GO PLACES (aka "Mad Mission") films placed more emphasis on comedy than action, they were a definite inspiration to HK cinema, for years to come.

In the 1990s, there's a slight trend that for once, actual HK actresses are showing a little nudity (for years it went against their beliefs to do this; they would often hire stand-ins from Singapore, the Philippines, sometimes even Japan, to show whatever nudity the script required). Though I very much doubt we'll ever see the breasts of Amy Yip, Maggie Cheung or Nina Lih Chi, a few lesser-knowns have, amazingly, shown off some skin, including Chingmy Yau, Veronica Yip and Ellen Chan, in Category 3 sleazies.

The content of this article so far, due to me having to take whatever source material is readily available, has been on the actresses of the Far East. This is not to say that women didn't also serve important roles behind the camera too, but info on such individuals is more scarce than an ac-

tive braincell at a football game. Of course we all know of Mona Fong (wife of one of the Shaw Brothers), and her role in producing many Shaw Bros. films, but lesser known are top HK female directors like Anne Hui (SONG OF THE EXILE, BOOK OF LOVE, BOAT PEOPLE, STORY OF WU VIET, SUMMER SNOW and OPIUM WAR), Mable Cheung (AN AUTUMN AFTERNOON, EIGHT TAELS OF GOLD and SUNG DYNASTY FAMILY) and Clara Lau (REINCARNATION OF GOLDEN LOTUS, TEMPTATION OF A MONK and AUTUMN MOON), who is married to Eddie Fong, a famous director in his own right (there are, of course, rumors that Clara's only real success is owed to her prolific husband, which is debatable). Another prolific director, though not considered female in a 'traditional' sense, is Stanley Kwan. Supposedly one of HK's few openly gay directors, he's known for directing stuff that's meant to appeal more to women such as TSU CHING GO WAN SPECIAL (a 1983 TV special), episode #2 ("Two Sisters") of the TV show AFFAIRS OF THE HEART, and movies like LOVE UNTO WASTE (1986), ROUGE (1988), and ACTRESS (aka CENTER STAGE, 1991).

During this whole section on the Far East's femme fatales, we've included sidebars and biographies of several of these beauties. But this is only a single magazine, so it's not possible to include whole pieces on every Asian actress in existence. Naturally, there's bound to be several fans who are disappointed that their favorite oriental gals were excluded from this issue. We tried to be as complete and comprehensive as possible, and it's never our intention to exclude anybody, but space and time is limited, as we slaved away under a rapidly approaching deadline. Additions and corrections are always welcome. Before going into the Film Reviews section, here are a few basic salutes to some of the babes who may have been overlooked in the bio's and sidebars depicted herein.



EROTIC DREAMS OF THE RED CHAMBER (1978)
 ACES GO PLACES (1982)
 ACES GO PLACES 2 (1983)
 SHANGHAI BLUES (1984)
 ACES GO PLACES 3 (1984)
 ACES GO PLACES 4 (1986)
 LUCKY STARS GO PLACES (1986)
 THE BOUNTY
 ALL ABOUT AH-LONG (1989)
 QUEEN OF TEMPLE STREET (1990)
 MISTERS OF THE WORLD UNITE (1991)

ETSUKO SHIOMI

{aka Sue Shihomi}
 D.O.B.: 10/30/55
 Place of Birth: Nishidaiji, in Okayama Prefecture, on the island Honshu.

Other than Sonny Chiba himself, she's the most wellknown Japan Action Club member. As a youngster, she was active in many sports, rather a tomboy. Be the time she was in high school, she had become a fan of Sonny Chiba's action packed performances in movies & TV shows. While in her third year of high school, she wrote many letters to Chiba, asking that he take her as his protege. Eventually, she received a letter from him, suggesting that she take the admission test to be in his then-new Japan Action Club in Ebisu. There were two other women who passed this test also, but only Shiomi remained at J.A.C. The other two dropped out because they were unable to take the rigorous training. Under Sonny Chiba, Shiomi learned karate, gymnastics, acting, stuntwork, and whatever else them JAC dudes were teaching at the time. She became somewhat of a daredevil. One day later in her career she walked on a tightrope stretched from one building to another, 100 feet above the ground. The rope was over 100 feet long. Talking about this stunt, Shiomi said, "I had a lifeline around me of course, but it being the first time for me, I was very tense." It didn't take long to start getting roles in numerous JAC & Toei TV programs like THE BODYGUARDS, GUERRILLAS SEVEN, KIKAIER 01, THE YOUNG DETECTIVE and JACKERS. Her first movie for Toei was 1974's FEMALE ASSASSIN. Additional karate films to her credit include KARATE LADY, 13 STEPS, THE GREAT CHASE, GOLGO 13: THE KOWLOON ASSIGNMENT, THE STREETFIGHTER,

(continued on next page 16)



Momoko Kochi- Best known as Emiko Serizawa from the classic **GODZILLA KING OF THE MONSTERS** (Toho; 1954), but can also be seen in **THE MYSTERIANS** (Toho; 1957). Ironically, she also appears in **GODZILLA VS. THE DESTROYER** (Toho; 1954), reprising her role as the now elderly Emiko Serizawa. Though she's now far from being the type you might whistle at from a car window, she looks decent for someone in her 1960s.

Anjanette Abayari-The Filipino equivalent of Amy Yip-- well, almost. I do consider Abayari to be one of the sexiest women in the Philippines, thanks to roles in films like **DARNA ANG PAGBALIK** and **OBER DA BAKOD- THE MOVIE** (based on the dirt cheap, pathetic Filipino video/TV comedy series, **OBER DA BAKOD**). Another Filipino goddess to watch out for is Priscilla Almeda.

Sally Yeh- Also occasionally translated 'Sally Yip', she was born 9/30/61, and is basically a singer. However, she's been in a number of HK films including: **MR. BOO**, **THE OCCUPANT** (1984), **THE PROTECTOR** (1985), **PINK FORCE** (1985), **WEL-**

COME (1985), **I LOVE MARIA** (1988), **PEKING OPERA BLUES** (1986), and of course **THE KILLER** (1991).

Nannette Medved- Another Filipino cutey, best known for the title role in **DARNA** (Viva



大島由加里
YUKARI OSHIMA おおしまゆかり

YUKARI OSHIMA

{aka Dai-do, Yukari Oushima, Yukari Tsumura, Yukari Tsumora, & Cynthia Luster}

She was born in Fukuoka, Japan. This attractive, skillful martial artist's first claim to fame was playing smaller roles in Japanese TV programs like **DYNAMAN** (just one episode), **SPACE SHERIFF GAVAN** (covered from head to toe, completely unrecognizable), and of course, **SHODENSHI BIOMAN**, where she played Dr. Man's villainous henchwoman, Fara Cat. But her best performances were definitely the many films she made in HK, at a time when the Chinese were finally forgiving the Japanese for atrocities committed in the past. (filmography continued next page)



Above: Maggie Cheung
Right: GODZILLA actress Osava Sayaka (see back cover)

DYNAMAN (1983)
 BIOMAN (1984)
 MILLIONAIRES' EXPRESS (1985)
 A BOOK OF HEROES (1986)
 SUKEBAN DEKKA
 FUNNY FAMILY (1985)
 ANGEL (1987)
 THE ANGELS (1987)
 LUCKY 7 II (1989)
 BURNING AMBITION (1989)
 CLOSE ESCAPE
 BRAVE YOUNG GIRLS (1990)

FRAMED (1990)
 ANGELS MISSION (1990)
 OUTLAW BROTHERS (1990)
 A PUNCH TO REVENGE (1990)
 KUNG FU WONDER CHILD (1990)
 FINAL RUN (1990)
 LUCKY SEVEN II (1990)
 MIDNIGHT ANGEL (1991)
 CLOSE ESCAPE (1991)
 THE STORY OF THE GUN (1991)
 WIN THEM ALL (1991)
 THE DREAM OF REALITY (1991)

SPIRITUALLY A COP
 STORY OF RICKY (1991)
 NEVER SAY REGRET (1991)
 GODFATHER'S DAUGHTER, MAFIA BLUES
 (1990)
 KICKBOXER'S TEARS (1992)
 AVENGING QUARTET (1992)
 BEAUTY INVESTIGATOR (1992)
 ANGEL THE KICKBOXER (1993)
 PROJECT S (1993)
 MAGKASANGA SA BATAS (1993)

Video; 1991).

Yuko Moriyama- This attractive young Japanese lass started out working in commercials but is now hugely popular because of her starring role in the ZERAM films, of which I've only seen the first one. Though I did indeed enjoy it, I feel it's over rated, but Yuko Moriyama is not. Her character in both ZERAM flicks, called Iliya, was well-liked enough so that a series of animated videos were produced & released, based on this heroine. In these cartoon releases, her character becomes "Hyper Iliya", and Yuko Moriyama herself dubs the voice.

Emily Chu- D.O.B.: 10/31/60. Height: 168cm, weight: 52kg. Though raised & educated in Northern California, this model is known for her HK stuff like when she deputed on TV dramas in the early 1980s, and later appeared in a number of Golden Harvest films including 1985's HEART OF THE DRAGON.

Dawn Zulueta- Though I'm not real familiar with this Filipino cutey, she certainly looked good dressed as Wonder Woman at the end of the satirical ALYAS BATMAN EN ROBIN. One thing is for sure, if I were a sexist, I might say something like, "I wish my legs were inbetween hers", but I refuse to stoop to that level.

Yoko Minamoto- As a youngster, she was a star in the SUKEBAN DEKKA series, but is now adult. She's done nude scenes and appeared in several yakuza films.

Regina Kent- Despite her name, she doesn't look very caucasian. Born: 9/4/67 (in Malaysia), and has appeared in FIRE DRAGON (1986) and PROJECT A PT. 2 (1986).

Fumiya Kuroda- 1985 was quite a busy year for Fumiya Kuroda; aside from playing the villainous silver vixen Ahames in Toei's CHANGEMAN, she also did a spread for the Japanese edition of *Playboy*. She can also be seen doing a nude seen in the movie TANPOPO (a goofy, erotic, often gross gangster flick).

Olivia Cheng- Though she was born on 2/14/60, little is known about this one, except that the bulk of her HK films were probably from 1983-1987.

Sayoko Hagiwara- A cute little model

(born Dec. 1, 1962; Tokyo) who starred as Dyna Pink in DYNAMAN (Toei; 1983), and had a supporting role (as a villain) in FLASHMAN. During her stint as Dyna Pink, there was a rumor that she 'turned tricks' behind the scenes, getting a little extra money on the side, and it's been speculated that she got her role by doing a little 'horizontal auditioning'. Ironically, she also worked a lot for some company called Hori Productions! Height: 164 cm tall, bust: 82 cm, waist 58 cm, hips: 85 cm. Earliest claim to fame was when she was Lady 1980 Summer Campaign Girl for Kanebo (replacing 1979's Yuko Asano). She was picked out of twenty-five thousand contestants.

Do Do Cheng- Born 9/9 (year unknown) and she's been in more HK films (TOP LADY, OPERATION CONDOR) than I have time to count.

Kiyomi Tsukata- Born January 9, 1964, this model (from quiz shows) played Maki Hayama in the SEIYUN KAMEN MACHINEMAN series, and also played Anli in JUSPION. Metric vital statistics: 163 cm tall, weight: 47 kg, bust: 80 cm, waist: 58 cm, hips: 84 cm. She's into sports and jazz dancing, and is employed by Toei Central Films.

Deanie Yip- Another heroine of 1980s action pictures who deputed on TV. A few of her flicks include PHANTOM BRIDE (1987), and DRAGONS FOREVER (1987).

Michiko Makino- She joined Toei in 1983, and was Toei's Miss Film Kansai or something or other. Makino played the annoying Katsuragi, Pink 5 in SHODENSHI

BIOMAN (Toei; 1984). She was born Oct. 3, '64, at Saitoma (just north of Tokyo). 150 cm tall, weight: 46 kg, bust: 81 cm, waist: 58 cm, hips: 84 cm. She likes movies, cars, modern ballet, playing piano and some Japanese writing I couldn't read or translate. She also had a record debut for Toshiba EMI, released July 1984.

Pauline Wong- Born in 1962, Pauline was a top model who later got into films like MY FOUR LOVES, MR. VAMPIRE, NEW MR. VAMPIRE, NIGHT CALLER, PHANTOM



STREETFIGHTER'S LAST REVENGE, SISTER STREETFIGHTER, SURE KILL, and ROARING FIRE. She can also be seen in plenty of samurai films (LEGEND OF THE EIGHT SAMURAI, SHOGUN'S NINJA, etc.), not to mention the goofy sci-fi farce MESSAGE FROM SPACE. Making an extensive, complete list of all her films & TV appearances would be as fun as having your dick sucked-- by a mosquito! So I won't even attempt it.



林青霞
Lin Ching Hsia

BRIGITTE LIN

{Bridgette Lin, Brigitte Lam, Venus Lin, Lin Ching-hsia, Lam Ching Hsia, etc.}
DOB: Nov. 3, 1954; Taiwan.

In 1973, Brigitte Lin Ching Hsia was discovered by some talent scout so she left school (at the regret of her parents) to enter the movie biz. So she started as a teenage actress in Taiwan--her first role was a minor one of a schoolgirl in CHUANGWAI, her first film. She left a big enough impression that she got numerous roles in other Taiwanese films, often playing a young student. She became a leading lady in the 1980s, and today is remembered for both nostalgia and is thought of as a fairly current star. Her roles have been varied, as she's been in a variety of types of film: Drama, action, comedy, and fantasy (which most American fans consider to be her main genre, thanks to endless Tsui Hark-style sword/flight farces she's in). She's had the longest career of any Hong Kong starlette, spanning at least 20 years! In 1991, there was even a TV special about her called A PORTRAIT OF LIN CHING HSIA. She maintained a long-term relationship with actor Chin Han (THE WARLORD AND THE ACTRESS), but they never got married. So now it's her turn to retire (this week) from films and marry a clothing manufacturer-- but it's not for a love of clothes; the guy is a multi-

(continued on next page..)



上官靈鳳
Shanghuan Lingfeng
シャンカンリンフオン

BRIDE and plenty more.

Sumiko Tanaka- She likes music, classic ballet and competitive tennis. She joined JAC in 1981, and deputed in SPACE SHERIFF SHARIVAN #44 (Toei; 1983). After Yuki Yajima quit the BIOMAN series after a mere ten episodes, she was replaced by this talented JActress who became Jun Yabuki, the second Yellow 4. Born: June 7, 1964; Nagano Prefecture. 165 cm high, weight 54 kg, bust: 84, waist: 61, wips: 89.

Cecilia Yip- Other than the fact that she was born in 1963, made her acting debut in 1982, has nice legs and was in 1987's TOP LADY, my knowledge of her is as limited as likelihood of Mike Tyson releasing a book called "A Guide to Pageant Etiquette".

Noriko Kojima- Born: Nov. 24, 1963; Shinegawa. She joined JAC in April, 1982 and appeared in a couple samurai TV shows. Best known as one of several female villains from SPACE SHERIFF SHIDER (Toei; 1984), called 'Gal 4- Yoko Komura'. Height: 150 cm, weight: 50 kg, bust: 83 cm, waist 60 cm, hips: 88 cm, into kendo.

May Law- Born: 9/1/66, this HK actress deputed in "Happy Kyonshee 2" ("MR. VAMPIRE 2?"), and also worked for some productions at D&B Films. She's 160 cm tall.

Mari Kono- She displayed not only a gorgeous look, but definite acting skills as Gimira ("Lucy" in the disastrous English dub), the evil, devil-like bitch in DYNAMAN (Toei; 1983).

Ni Shu Chun- She's a Hong Kong and/or

Chinese actress who was born on 1/8/63.

Loletta Lee- Born: 1/8/66, 160 cm. There wasn't much I could translate, but I gather she appeared in a 1984 vampire film which came to Japan as "Happy Kyonshee", so it might or might not be MR. VAMPIRE.

Niho Hara (aka Niho Geshi)- Born Jan. 28 1964; Kyoto. 155 cm high, weight: 45 kg, bust: 80 cm, waist: 50, hips: 85. She likes building modal kits and jazz dancing. She joined JAC in April, 1982. She played Yoko Komura in SPACE SHERIFF SHIDER.

Charine Chan- D.O.B: 11/17/67, 158 cm tall. That's all I know.

Megumi Okawa- She played Miki Momozono (Goggle Pink) on GOGGLE V (Toei; 1982), but first she had to be born, it was on Nov. 6, 1962. She was also a model for commercials and did cover modeling for Uchusen magazine.

Fenny Yuen- Born 9/15/69, and as of 1988 was 165 cm tall. She's been in BULLET IN THE HEAD and other flicks.

Reiko Tajima- The girl who discovered the King Seesar statue in GODZILLA VS. COSMIC MONSTER. She later became a voice actress for cartoons, doing the voice for the main heroine in GALAXY EXPRESS 999.

Cora Miao- Born 8/21/58, she was elected Miss Photogenic in 1976. She made a few movies in the late 1980s, but got her first start in TV, doing drama and variety.

Scenes cut from the American version of GORATH.



Eri Ishida- A curvaceous, extremely nice-looking beauty who starred in *ULTRAMAN 80* (she supplied two of the best things in the show), and would later take off all her clothes in some Japanese romantic movie we've not been able to track down (yet!), unfortunately!

Lydia Sun- Normally, I'm the type who's attracted to full-figured and/or somewhat overweight women, and feel that there's nothing wrong with being fat. All people are entitled to be big, but this ugly, cow-like comedian abuses the privilege.

Nam Kit Ting- Some actress, I guess.

Wong Yukwan- I'm completely unfamiliar with this babe, but she was apparently in *DRAGONS FOREVER*.

Osawa Sayaka- Staggeringly sexy babe who played one of the Cosmo in *GODZILLA VS. MOTHRA & GODZILLA VS. SPACE GODZILLA*, and is a main heroine in *GODZILLA VS. DESTROYER!* This gorgeous, former TV star was born on 11/14/73, and graces the back cover of this issue of OC!!

Betty Wei- Born in 1960, she became a Shaw Brothers actress and appeared in a number of films in the 1970s and 1980s.

Pauline Yeung- Born: 4/17/67. A model and singer, but also an actress in films such as *HOLY VIRGIN VS. THE EVIL DEAD* and *DRAGONS FOREVER*.

Crystal Kwok- Born: 5/13/66. Voted Miss Chinatown when she was in school in UCLA, and had a smaller role when she deputed in Jackie Chan's *DRAGON'S FOREVER* (just how many more times am I gonna' type *DRAGONS FOREVER?* I don't recall it as having that many girls in it).

Isabella Wong- She did TV dramas before appearing in *PROJECT A's 1 & 2*, and was born: 8/19/61.

Annie Ngai- She's got a beautiful face and appears in 1987's *GOLDEN SWALLOW*. Born: 1965, height: 168 cm.

Joyce Godenzi- Half Chinese, half not-so-Chinese, she appeared in numerous action movies (*EASTERN CONDORS*, *SPOOKY SPOOKY*, etc.) until she married Sammo Hung.

Gong Li- A mainland Chinese star, best known for her appearances in art films & historicals like *RED SORGHUM*. She also appeared in the immensely entertaining HK caper, *GOD OF GAMBLERS 3: BACK TO SHANGHAI*.

Lu Hsiu Ling- She's quite a looker, born 1/29/62. If I had a daughter that looked like her, well... I'd be in jail!

Honorable mentions: Aiko Melendez, Gong Ci En, Donna Cruz, Betty Ting Pei, Michiko Nishiwaki, Zeng Hua Oian, Li Mei Xian, Faye Wong, Vina Morales, Teresa Teng, Gretchen Barretto, Pink Lady, Cynthia Rothrock, Yoko Shimada, Leslie Cheung, Hoshi Mai, Yoko Onno, Mrs. Livingston, Lo Wai Kuen, Jacqueline Law, Cathy Chow Hoi Mei, Frances Lee, Yoko Tani, Amy Harlib, Dennis Padilla, Sophia Crawford, Rita Avila, Elizabeth Lee, Alma Concepcion, Michelle Lee, Rosanna Roces, Gloria Yip, Vilma Santos, Karen Sheperd, Margaret Cho, Sharon Cuneta, Debbie Powers, Connie Chung, Kris Aquino, Ruffa Gutierrez, Becca Torez, Chu Yin, Ino Shitika, Vivian Chow, Wu Gian Lian, Charlie Yeung, Linda Wong, Momoe Yamaguchi, Tia Carerra, Nancy Kwan, Chan Ming Chuen, Priscilla Chan, Liu Hao Yi, Hsia Kwang Li, Hilda Lau, etc.

Kaoru Yumi



millionaire, of course.
CHUANGWAI (1973)
GHOST IN THE MIRROR (1974)
LOVE OF THE WHITE SNAKE (mid-1970s)
EROTIC DREAM OF THE RED CHAMBER (1978)
VICTIMS OF THE ASSASSIN (1980s)
ALL THE WRONG SPIES (1983)
ZU, WARRIORS FROM THE MAGIC MOUNTAIN (1983)
FANTASY MISSION FORCE (1983)
GOLDEN QUEEN'S COMMANDO (1984)
DEMON FIGHTER (1984)
THE OTHER SIDE OF GENTLEMAN (1985)
PHOENIX THE RAIDER (1985)
PINK FORCE COMMANDO (1985)
POLICE STORY (1985)
LADY IN BLACK (1986)
DREAM LOVERS (1986)
PEKING OPERA BLUES (1986)
THE 30 MILLION RUSH (1986)
TRUE COLOURS (1986)
DECEPTION (1988)
STARRY IS THE NIGHT (1988)
DECEPTION (1988)
RED DUST (1990)
DRAGON INN (1992)
HANDSOME SIBLINGS (1992)
ROYAL TRAMP (1992)
ROYAL TRAMP 2 (1992)
SWORDSMAN 2: THE EAST IS RED (1992)
DEADFUL MELODY (1992)
THE BRIDE WITH WHITE HAIR (1993)
THE BRIDE WITH WHITE HAIR 2 (1993)
BLACK PANTHER WARRIORS (1993)

SIBELLE HU

{aka Sybelle Hu, Hu Hui-Zhong, Hu Hui Ching, Hu Hui Chung}
 DOB: 5/24/58

She's been in way too many movies to list, especially since she's made so many "cameos" over the last five years, where she's edited into the beginning & ending of films (all her shots look like they're filmed in one day), yet she's given star billing. Definitely an 'exploitation' actress, though not a bad one.
THE MASTER STRIKES BACK (1984)
MY LUCKY STARS (1985)
THE 7TH CURSE (1986)
DEVIL HUNTERS (1989)
LETHAL CONTACT (1989)
THE INSPECTOR WEARS SKIRTS (1989)
TO SPY WITH LOVE
THE INSPECTOR WEARS SKIRTS II (1990)
FIRE PHOENIX (1990)
MAGIC AMETHYST (1990)
THE GAMBLE GODDESS (1990)
RAID ON CASINO MARINE (1990)
EMERGENCY POLICE LADY
BURY ME HIGH (1991)
SLEAZY DIZZY (1991)
LETHAL PANTHER (1991)

(continued on next page 19)





FIGHTING FEMMES A TO Z AN INCOMPLETE FILMOGRAPHY

AMAZONS AND SUPERMEN- An Italian/Hong Kong coproduction from 1974, one which is about as likely as a muzak version of the Dead Kennedys "Holiday in Cambodia". **AMAZONS AND SUPERMEN** unsuccessfully tried to put a little Chinese kung fu & acrobatics in an Italian "sword & sandal" setting. The amazons in the title are villains, and get defeated by charismatic heroes like Nick Jordan (**THE THREE FANTASTIC SUPERMEN**, **TRES SUPERMEN CONTRE IL PADRINO**) and Yue Hua (**THE MONKEY**, **COME DRINK WITH ME**, **WARLORD & THE ACTRESS**, **SWORD AND THE LUTE**, **7 BLOWS OF THE DRAGON**, **LUNG WEI VILLAGE**, **MONKEY KUNG FU**, **IN THE LINE OF DUTY 3**). This humorous adventure/fantasy could have been a real winner, and at times, comes close. Silly yet decent. **1/2 - Damon Foster

ANGEL (1987)- This one seems to be a favorite topic of many a HK movie critic. It's basically a **CHARLIE'S ANGELS** takeoff with gore. A good plot and well executed fights keep things moving. And Yukari Oshima has

never looked better than in the role of lead villainess Madam Yu who takes great pleasure in torturing and maiming prisoners. The climactic duel with Moon Lee is still the single best female battle I've ever seen. Hard hitting stuff. **** -Jeff Goodhartz

ANGEL 2- As long as you don't try to make sense of it, this direct sequel to **ANGEL** is great fun. Sure it doesn't have Yukari Oshima as Madam Yu (that most vicious of villainesses was off'd in a big way, in the original). But it compensates with some incredible battles that feature more hard-edge 'ouching' than usual for HK fare. And of course, Moon Lee is terrific. **** -Jeff Goodhartz

ANGEL ENFORCERS- Though Ti Wei yet again plays the villain (which he's done more times than he's gone to the bathroom), at least this time, his character is allowed to have depth-giving him a chance to actually act before our heroines, the female members of a HK S.W.A.T.-like team, blow him up

黒木永子
EIKO KUROKI



黒木永子 EIKO KUROKI



Top left
Scene
from
JIRAIYA
Right
DYNAMAN'S
Sayoko
Hagihara



MONICA CHAN



l. Pan Dan
r. Pauline
Yeung

at the end. A confusing script with more characters than it needs, but great martial arts and a couple stupendous stunts make this yet another, though run-of-the-mill HK actioner. One amusing standout scene has a bikini-attired, topless lady handcuff a main villain to his boat. He expects some kind of kinky sex with her, but much to his horror, she unleashes a couple homos on him! *** - Damon Foster

ANGELFIST (1993)- An amusing American flick from Roger Corman, about a karate tournament in the Philippines where all the contestants are beautiful woman who's lipstick never gets smeared! It stars the gorgeous Cat Sassoon (daughter of Vidal Sassoon), here billed as the "World Karate Association North American Champion" (what a load of bullshit). Yet she makes obvious use of a stunt double, and seems to fight only slightly better than Melissa Moore, who apparently learned her techniques on the set. It's obvious the many American actresses were added to show breasts (I counted at least three shower scenes), since in reality, their many Filipino opponents could have easily defeated them. While the battles aren't outstanding or even excellent, it's photographed surprisingly well for an American movie; we can actually see what's going on- for what it's worth. * -Damon Foster

ANGEL FORCE- Yet another in the never-ending variations of ANGEL. Though routine as all hell, it does feature nice fights and plenty of action. Cool film despite dime-a-dozen plot. Moon Lee stars again. *** -Jeff Goodhartz

ANGEL OF FURY (aka TRIPLE CROSS)- See review for its English version, LADY DRAGON 2 *1/2 -DF

ANGEL OF VENGEANCE- Yukari Oshima and Conaan Lee star in this dismal film that tries to make rape an indoor sport. It cen-

ters on prostitutes, a blind Tibetan martial arts monk, a villain that flies through the air... oh, who cares? Rate this as one of the worst films ever made and pass by any chance you may inadvertently get to view it. -Ron Murillo

ANGEL'S MISSION- Yet another average HK actioner with Yukari Oshima and Ti Wei uniting against mobsters who like to deal with bad stuff like drugs, prostitutes, smuggled jewels and (gasp!) caucasians! Stock music includes something off some old Throbbing Gristle and/or Chris & Cozey album. Once or twice there's John Woo-esque shoot-outs in slow mo', but most of it is decent fights linked together by a confusing, chaotic plot. Also features Chen Kuan Tai. **1/2 -Damon Foster

ANGEL TERMINATORS (1990)- Violent, gritty, hard-hitting stuff, as HK men &

Lai Gee



womenalike seek to wipe out evil caucasians & yakuza (me assumes they're yakuza because Michiko Nishiwaki cuts her own finger off). Lack of English subtitles doesn't matter much in a spectacular, action-packed, fast-paced kung fu/stunt/gun thriller like this! A talented cast, including but not limited to Carrie Ng, Michiko Nishiwaki, Anthony Houk and genre fave Ti Wei ("Dick Wei" in America). It's so fun it almost made me smile at one point!!! ***** -Damon Foster

ANGEL TERMINATORS 2- Jason Pai Pao and Sybelle Hu as cops trying to keep streetwise troublemakers like Yukari Oshima & Moon Lee out of danger: Local mobsters who deal in prostitution, stealing jewels, and any other crime under the sun. I wish the now elderly Lo Lieh, Jason Pai Pao, and Yukari Oshima hadn't been killed off, but otherwise, this is another HK action masterpiece.

DRUGS AREA (1991)
COMBAT AT HEAVAN GATE (1992)
WAY OF THE LADY BOXERS (1992)
DREAMING THE REALITY (1992)
FIGHTING FIST (1992)
FONG SAI YUK (1993)
MIGHTY GAMBLER
CRYSTAL HUNT
WHO CARES
COMBAT AT HEAVEN'S GATE
CHINA HEAT
THE BIG DEAL
ALL'S WELL THAT ENDS WELL (1992)
DRAGON FIGHTER
QUEEN OF GAMBLE
ANGEL TERMINATORS 2

CHERIE CHUNG

{aka Zhong Chu-Hong}

DOB: 2/16/60

Cherie Chung's first claim to fame was in 1978 when she won a beauty contest (of course), and was recruited by a talent scout from the Shaw Brothers. She made her movie debut in 1979. Her first starring roles included films like WOMEN and WOMAN MAN HEART (note: that's the literal translation of its Chinese title, "Nyu Hzen Shing", it's English title is believed to be A MAN AND A WOMAN, but it's too hard to find on video). Her films include:

HONG KONG PLAYBOY (1979)
TWINKLE TWINKLE LITTLE STAR (1983)
MAYBE IT'S LOVE (1984)
A MAN AND A WOMAN (1984)
WOMEN (1984)
PEKING OPERA BLUES (1986)
SPIRITUAL LOVE (1985)
PHANTOM BRIDE
GOLDEN SWALLOW
FATAL LOVE (1988)
BET ON FIRE (1988)
HONG KONG HONG KONG
WILD SEARCH (1989)
ONCE A THIEF (1991)
PRINCE CHARMING
ZODIAC KILLERS (1992)
CHERIE



ANITA MUI

{aka Mui Yim-fong & Anita Mei}

DOB: Oct. 10, '63; Guangshi Province

The youngest of four (she's got a

(Continued on next page.)

sister and two brothers), Anita Mui began singing and dancing at the early age of six, hoping to help raise money for her family, after her father's untimely death at an early age. Her highest level of education was junior high. Available photos of her in various costumes throughout her childhood indicate she worked hard, and her Golden Voice finally paid off on July 19, 1982 when she won the First HK New Talent Singing Awards (aka HK Amateur Singers Competition), where she sang the song "Season of Love". She later released her first album, "Debt of the Heart" (which, like later albums, went platinum) at about the age of 19. Her career on the rise, she sung theme songs for a number of movies, and her first concert was at the HK Coliseum on Dec. 31, 1985. She's done plenty of concerts and touring since then, and her frequent costume changes gave her the name "Anita of a Hundred Changes". She's released countless albums since then, and has, for better or worse, been called "HK's Madonna" (a comparison Mui doesn't like, yet she seems to try her best to imitate Madonna more than closely) by the muckrakers at HARD COPY. Though her successful singing career continues to flourish today, the topic of this magazine is movies, not love ballads and sappy pop music.

If you've been skimming through the Bios of this edition of OC, it's probably become apparent to you that in HK, often "singer" and "film star" are one in the same. Where as most actors first started out in films before they tried their hand (I mean mouth) at singing, Anita Mui's inevitable cross-over was in the opposite direction-- songs first, celluloid later. Her first movie was something called CRAZY 83, according to *She #3*. To date she's been in over 30 movies, and won several awards for her performances; all the while maintaining a mega-hit singing career with sell-out concerts. She's been in at least 30 movies from 1983 to 1984, and received Best Actress Awards from the 23rd Golden Horse Awards plus the 8th HK Film Awards for her role (as a ghost) in ROUGE. At least a year or so ago, she was one of the highest paid actresses in HK.

In more recent years, there has been serious trouble in her life. By now you've all heard of the famous incident when she was slapped (in public) by her producer (?!?!?!?!?) and as a result, some triad members beat up the guy and later even shot him dead in his hospital room! She testified in court against these mobsters, and had to be placed under witness protection. In 1994, she attempted to immigrate to Canada (supposedly fleeing them HK mobsters), but she botched up the requirements and was refused.

Filmography:

CRAZY 83 (1983)
LET'S MAKE LAUGH (1983)
A WEEK OF PASSION (1983)
FATE (1984)
MUSICAL SINGER (1984)
BEHIND THE YELLOW LINE (1984)

(Continued on next page..)

with stupendous martial arts by Yukari Oshima & Moon Lee. **** -Damon Foster



Tan
Tun
Yi

ANGEL THE KICKBOXER- It's the action packed sister film of the American HONOR AND GLORY. This 1992 H.K. version co-exists simultaneously, in the same dimension as HONOR AND GLORY (two different views of the same situation). There's plenty of Cynthia Rothrock stock-footage from HONOR, as it alternates from America to HK, back & forth. The American footage is of Rothrock and bad-acting Americans, while most of the HK stuff (missing from HONOR) feature Yukari Oshima, Waise Lee & Pauline Chan. The video rental-box would have you believe Oshima & Rothrock star side-by-side, but we never see them in the same shot. Of the two versions, I prefer the Chinese one, since the fights are better (D&B regular Robin Shou gets the spotlight in the HK print, but only has a minor role in the English version), faster and more stunt-ladden-- and Pauline Chan's skintight pants don't hurt either. Great subtitles too, hilarious lines like when Oshima says to the film's HK star Robin Shou: "Call me if you are boring." Another supporting character is Rothrock's attractive sister, a reporter played by Donna Jason. *** -Damon Foster

ANGEL WITH THE IRON FISTS- In the tradition of SUMMONS TO DEATH, BRAIN STEALERS and 1966's OPERATION MACAO comes this enjoyable HK spy caper from them Shaw Brothers! Lily Ho & Tang Chang star in this amusing 1960s farce about Agent 009 (Lily Ho) going undercover to wipe out common thugs (lead by mobster 'Baldhead') and an underground, high-tech arsenal commanded by a squad of sexy femme fatales called the "Devil Girls". There are a couple

car-chases, gunplay, plenty of secret agent gadgets and even the obligatory crude kung fu! While not up to par with 1970s chop sockey stuff, these exciting battles are generally better than your average James Bond karate chops. The music is quite flavorful, plenty of surf, lounge & mambo- typical 1960s secret agent tunes! Much of it is probably taken from other films, in fact for the nice fight in the beauty parlor, they use the same song that would later become the opening theme song for FIVE FINGERS OF DEATH (and all this time, I thought that was an original score!) But ANGEL WITH THE IRON FIST is impossible to watch all in one sitting unless you're paralyzed from the nose down, because it's at least three hours long! Also features Fanny Fan, Ku Feng and Lo Wei, who directed. *** -Damon Foster

ARMED POLICEWOMAN-Carrie Ng headlines this very disappointing movie that doesn't live up to its own poster art. The only thing worth nothing in this laughable excuse for an action comedy is that extremely talented Ng Man Tat plays the bad guy and he plays him like Jean Reno played the hitman in Luc Besson's THE PROFESSIONAL. Roy Cheung also stars. * -Garo Nigoghossian

ATTACK OF THE KUNG FU GIRLS- Standard, average, run-of-the-mill, early 1970s chop sockey stuff (Chinese patriots vs. Japanese invaders again), but Cheng Pei Pei (COME DRINK WITH ME, PAINTED FACES) is the film's only "Kung Fu Girl"! A young, pre-stardom Jackie Chan plays a background henchman who gets quickly beaten up, and other stars include: Ou Wei, James Tien, Jo Shishido, Lo Wei, Han Ying Chieh, Chien Yuet Sun, Tien My, and Cheng Fu-Ching; whoever that is. ** -Damon Foster

AVENGING QUARTET- Chaotically written HK actioner with Chin Ka Loh (FIGHTING FIST, MR. VAMPIRE 4) as a cop protecting Michelle Yeung Lai Ching & Moon Lee Choi Fung, from evil Japanese bitches Yukari Oshima & Michiko Nishiwaki (who battle each other in a health spa, one of the better fights), who also happen to be after some priceless old painting. Throw in a love triangle, brutal torture, melodrama, a little comedy and a variety of action (the usual chases, gun stuff and kung fu), a basically Mainland China setting, and you get something which is so, well AVENGING QUARTET. Also stars Waise Lee Chi Hung. Dir: Siu Wing, Prod: Chan Fan Lung. **1/2 -Damon Foster

BANDIT QUEEN- A violent, sometimes controversial (its frank depiction of India's sexism against women) Indian movie not available for review. Dir: Shekhar Kapur, Starring: Phoolan Devi and Vikram Mallah. -DF

BASIC IMPULSE- More voluptuous babes in this erotic HK love story. Valued only for masturbating to, though it was rather rude of me to do so, as my girlfriend was also in the room. 1/2 -DF

BIG DEAL, THE- Yukari Oshima, Moon Lee and British bad girl Sophia Crawford waste their formidable skills in this lousy excuse for an action comedy that also wastes the talents of ace bad guy Yuen Wah. I can usually forgive lousy stories and lame comedy if they fight scenes are decent, but again we are let down by lackluster fight scenes. Don't bother. 1/2 -Garro Nigoghossian

BLONDE FURY, THE- Rather typical for the 1980s, it's a 1988 HK thriller with cop Cynthia Rothrock and reporter Chen Hsiao Hou using excellent kung fu to track down counterfeiters, climaxing in a gripping rescue from a speeding diesel truck. Roy Chiao is hilarious as the brain-washed judge. The first time I saw this scene, I laughed like a hyena on nitris oxide. *** -Damon Foster

BRAVEFUL POLICE- Kara Hui Ying Hung stars in this very lame (and I mean very lame) action film made in Taiwan, that seems to have been made for bus fare. Avoid. -Garro Nigoghossian

BRAVE YOUNG GIRLS (1990)- Flesh peddling scumbags are eventually stopped by a trio of woman from different backgrounds. If HK flicks with women being forced to drink male urine is your thing, enjoy. I personally can

think of better things to do. Yukari Oshima co-stars, for some reason. * -Jeff Goodhartz

BRIDE WITH WHITE HAIR- A lavish and beautiful 1993 spectacle accented by fine performances by the two leads. As close to five stars as I can think of. Cast: Leslie Cheung, Brigitte Lin, Elaine Lui, Ng Chun Yu, Nam Kit Ying, Joseph Cheng, Law Lok Lam, Pau Fond, Eddie Ko. Dir: Ronnie Yu. **** -Ron Murillo

A SECOND OPINION:

BRIDE WITH WHITE HAIR- Overrated? Hell yeah! A bad movie? Hell no! Though I hate to say anything nice about a film that has been gushed over by every poser wannabe film critic there is, I have to admit

that this is a pretty fine example of classy HK film entertainment. A remake of WOLF DEVIL WOMAN by way of A CHINESE GHOST STORY and it works nicely. Stars Lin Ching Hsia and Leslie Cheung. ***1/2 - Jeff Goodhartz

BRIDE WITH WHITE HAIR 2 (1993)- This sequel might just as well have been entitled BRIDE WITH WHITE HAIR 2: THE NEXT GENERATION. Where as the first fantasy successfully aimed for romantic tragedy, this sequel is much closer in tone to a straight-forward horror film. The predominant imagery of zombie-like spurned/abused females stalking and exacting bloody revenge against their male tormentors often makes this sequel seem like NIGHT OF THE LIVING DEAD as reimagined by Lorena Bobbitt. Dir: David Wu, Cast: Brigitte Lin Ching-Hsia, Chan Kum-hong, Christy Chung. **1/2 -Richard Akiyama

CAT GIRL GAMBLERS series- This Japanese film series consists of a number of Nikkatsu films, including TOBA NO MESU NEKO (1965), TOBA NO MESU NEKO- SU HADA NO TSUBO FURI ("Cat Girl Gamblers- Naked Flesh Paid Into the Pot"), and 1966's TOBA NO MESU NEKO- SHA KIBA NO SHOBU ("Cat Girl Gamblers- Abandoned Fangs of Triumph"). According to an article in Cult Movies written by Chris D, this series of films is probably one of the more violent female yakuza films, full of knives and swordplay. Dir: Haruyasu Noguchi. Cast: Yumiko Nogawa, Hideaki Nitani, Ichiro Sugai, Tatsuya Fuji & Eiji Go. -DF

CHALLENGE ON CHASING GIRLS (1980)- Other than brief, cheap, amusing spoofs of BATMAN and JAWS, this talky comedy about rival guys (a young bafon and a con-niving rich man) vying for Jenny's (Rosamund Kwan) affection is nothing but



SONG AND DANCE (1985)
GOOD LUCK TO YOU (1985)
YOUNG COPS (1985)
WHY, WHY TELL ME WHY (1986)
INSPECTOR CHOCOLATE (1986)
LAST SONG IN PARIS (1986)
100 WAYS TO MURDER YOUR WIFE (1986)
HAPPY DIN DON (1986)
SCARED STIFF (1987)
HAPPY BIGAMIST (1987)
LUCKY DIAMOND (1987)
HAPPY STORIES (1987)
ROUGE (1988)
ONE HUSBAND TOO MANY (1988)
DESTINY (1988)
STAGE DOOR JOHNNY (1988)
THE GREATEST LOVER (1988)
THE EVIL GHOST (1988)
MR. CANTON AND LADY ROSE (1989)
A BETTER TOMORROW 3: LOVE AND DEATH IN SAIGON (1989)
THE FORTUNE CODE (1990)
LAST PRINCESS OF MANCHURIA (1990)
SHANGHAI, SHANGHAI (1990)
TOP BET (1991)
AU REVOIR, MON AMOUR (1991)
THE BANQUET (1991)
SAVIOUR OF THE SOUL (1991)
JUSTICE, MY FOOT (1992)
THE HEROIC TRIO (1993)
THE EXECUTIONERS (1993)
HEROIC TRIO 2 (1993)
FIGHT BACK TO SCHOOL 3 (1993)
MOON WARRIORS (1993)
MAD MONK (1993)
DRUNKEN CRANE (1993)
DRUNKEN MASTER 2 (1994)
HE'S A MAN, SHE'S A WOMAN (1994)
RUMBLE IN THE BRONX (1994)

HUI YING HUNG

She started out at the tail end of the 1970s chop sockey scene, and appeared in a number of 1980s action movies. Around 1979 or 1980, I believe I saw her (or some other actress) interviewed on Evening Magazine (aka P.M. Magazine), on the set of LEGENDARY WEAPONS OF KUNG FU (they showed rare behind the scenes stuff too!), but back then, I had no VCR! In the 1990s, she's still a fairly familiar face in the world of HK kung fu movies, and can be seen in: EMPEROR CHIEN LUNG AND THE BEAUTY (1976)
MAD MONKEY KUNG FU (1979)
KUNG FU WARLORDS (1980)
RETURN OF THE MASTER KILLER (1980)
FISTS OF THE WHITE LOTUS (1980)
MY YOUNG AUNTIE (1981)
INSTRUCTORS OF DEATH (1981)
BUDDHA'S PALM (1982)
THE EMPEROR AND THE MINISTER (1982)
LEGENDARY WEAPONS OF KUNG FU (1982)
LADY IS THE BOSS (1983)
INVINCIBLE POLE FIGHTER (1983)
THREE STOOGES GO UNDER COVER (1984)
FAMILY LIGHT AFFAIR (1984)
THE LONG ROAD TO GALLANTRY (1984)
THE SEVENTH CURSE (1986)

(Continued on next page..)

BRAVE YOUNG GIRLS (1988)
 BURNING AMBITION (1989)
 PRETTY WOMAN AT WAR (1990)
 WIDOW WARRIORS (1990)
 SCARE THE LIVING (1990)
 NAUGHTY BOYS (1992)
 THE REAL ME (1992)
 MADAM CITY HUNTER (1993)
 THAT'S MONEY
 KUNG FU MISTRESS (1994)



YUKI YAJIMA

DOB: 2/11/62; Chiba Prefecture, Nagasaki

She joined JAC in March, 1981, and her first film was BOKENSHA KAMIKAZE ("Kamikaze Avengers"), another thing she was in was called ISAMI. This gorgeous martial artist is unforgettable in the tight spandex pants she wore in the first ten episodes of BIOMAN (Toei; 1984) as the original Yellow 4 (Koizumi Mika), when she got to do the rarely seen, seemingly impossible task of kicking Yukari Oshima's ass! Yuki Yajima also played Helen in several episodes of SPACE SHERIFF SHARIVAN (Toei; 1983) before she retired from the Japan Action Club.

Though I don't know what kind of shape she's in now, at her prime, her height was 160 cm, and her weight was 47 kg (this is all from a Japanese source; they're metric. I don't know what that all amounts to in inches, feet & pounds).

PEARL CHEUNG

She's an exploitation/martial arts starlete who occasionally did some directing too. She's best known for her over-the-top fantasies of the early 1980s.

HEROIC ONES (1982)
 WOLF DEVIL WOMAN (1982)
 DARK LADY OF THE BUTTERFLY (1983)
 VENUS THE WOLF NINJA (1983)
 MIRACULOUS FLOWER (1984)
 FANTASY MISSION FORCE (1984)
 GENERAL INVINCIBLE (1984)
 MY BLADE MY LIFE

Scenes from SPIELVAN, featuring Michiko Nishiwaki



typically stupid slapstick. Quirky, dumb, meandering, it's only claim to fame is that it's probably Rosamund Kwan's first film. -Damon Foster

CHINA DOLLS- Late 1980s, HK film with Amy Yip, Charlie Cho, Wu Ma, Lam Ching Ying. A typical Category 3 sleazie, featuring exploitation, the mob, sleaze, and climaxing in gunplay. ** -Damon Foster

CLUB GIRL- Taiwanese tearjerker with Hsu Hsiao Dan (ROBOTRIX) as a hooker who's real love is painting, until she falls for a rich client. He too goes for her, divorces his wife & daughter and it seems karma sets his (and Hsu Hsiao Dan's) unfortunate fate. There's practically no action in this well acted, interestingly written soap opera which combines romance, drama, a little comedy (at first), alcoholism, cheating on loved ones, obsessive love, and other examples of modern society's ills, in this tragic, riches-to-rags film. We've all seen the pretty Hsu Hsiao Dan naked in ROBOTRIX, but this film offers another (a shower scene), but don't watch it for the sex, nudity and violence, watch it to cry and have pity for the characters. Not bad for a regular drama. ** -Damon Foster

CRIMSON BAT, THE BLIND SWORDSWOMAN- The Japanese know this 1969 Shochiku "female Zato Ichi" film genre as MEKURA NO OICHI, and at least one of its four films, WATCH OUT CRIMSON BAT (MEKURA NO OICHI-JIGOKU HADA) is common on video, even here in America. -DF

CUTE FOSTER SISTER- The pretty Liu Hao Yi (who co-starred with Billy Chong in A FIST FULL OF TALONS) is featured in this otherwise very average kung fu-revenge tale. Adequate fights, but only recommended if you're a fan of hers. ** -Jeff Goodhartz

DANCE OF DEATH- Not that there is anything wrong with Angela Mao's Hapkido

proww (au contraire), but she has never been more dynamic than in this film which was choreographed by Jackie Chan! Angela plays a woman (at least I think so) who disguises herself as a guy to learn kung fu from the "Five Styles School". Her (?) school is attacked and wiped out by Crazy Horse (with a style to match his name) and his gang. Angela is the only one to escape but has no way to avenge her comrades 'til she comes across two old men who have been fighting each other in "friendly duels" for 20 years, in a vain attempt to prove which has the better kung fu style. Mao offers her/his self up as a guinea pig to learn from both with the idea that whoever's style is used the most wins! Angela makes sure she uses equal amounts of both so they are forced to keep training him/her! A very

好き! すき!! 魔女先生



funny movie with great fighting! **** -Robert Mallory

DARNA- Filipino farce (Viva Video; 1991) starring Nanette Medved as the attractive, scantily clad Wonder Woman of Manila. Pathetically cheap by our standards, but about average for [ultra-low] Filipino standards, it manages to occasionally break free from the talky boredom (which punctuate all Fili-films) once or twice, to show our lovely Darna fly, tackle a villain or two and confront an Aswang (Filipino vampire!) and a medusa, called Valentina (a recurring character in DARNA adventures, this snake-wigged bitch battled Darna in Mars Revilo's original comic too). Stupid at times, but I've seen worse. Cast: Nanette Medved, Edu Manzano & Tonton Gutierrez. ** -Damon Foster

DARNA ANG PAGBALIK- Definately one of the best Filipino movies I've ever seen! Considering the quality of their films, this one is great! A couple computer morphing FX, decent chills, and even a couple cool martial arts fights! This time, the curvaceous Darna is portrayed by Anjanette Abayari (the Linda Carter of the Philippines), one of the most gorgeous women in the Philippines! Sure, there are mile wide gaps of pure talking, but otherwise, I really enjoyed this 1994 adventure! A Darna film just wouldn't be a Darna film without her obligatory battles with Valentina (a caucasian lady with snakes in her hair) and Edu Manzano. *** -Damon Foster

DEADFUL MELODY- What would a ripoff of CHINESE GHOST STORY and BRIDE WITH WHITE HAIR BE, without flying maidens, outlandish FX and another role by Lin Ching Hsia? As an over-the-top fantasy, it succeeds, especially if

you're drunk, not trying to follow the plot and the sound is turned down- if nothing else, it's a great party tape, and cheaper than LSD. ** -Damon Foster

DEADLY AND THE BEAUTIFUL, THE- Nancy Kwan as a mad (but not as made as I was, after sitting through this film) scientist who commands a squad of gun-toting, car chasing, high-kicking, curvaceous beauties in this ridiculous American farce from 1973. An exploitive, low budget, James Bond ripoff with hilariously bad martial arts! Just watch it for the cleavage. Filmed in the Philippines and featuring Ross Hagen & Sid Haig. 1/2 -Damon Foster

DEADLY TARGET- The latest Yukari Oshima action vehicle from the Phillipines is actually an improvement over her last three dreadful efforts (ULTRA COP 2000, GUARDIAN ANGEL, ANGEL OF VENGEANCE). Oshima and Sharon Yeung Pan-pan (of ANGEL TERMINATORS) are two vacationing HK cops, who are visiting Manila to see Oshima's cousin, a businessman named Hing,



JOEY WANG
{aka Joey Wong Tsu-hsien, Joey Wong Yo-yin, etc.}
DOB: 1/31/67

Yet another former beauty pagent babe, and one who developed a cult following in U.S. film festivals and the arthouse crowd because of her mystical roles in countless CHINESE GHOST STORY sequels and imitations. Though she's been in more films than there are kneepads in a San Francisco bachelor apartment, there were two concurrent rumors in HK tabloids, about her recent disappearance from HK films-- Numero Uno: She went and sold herself to some millionaire and is waited on hand & foot in a luxurious mansion. And you thought concubines were only in movies (hey don't blame me! I got it from an article by Gere Ladue, who got it from a Taiwan newspaper.)! Numero Two-o: The other has her too wanting to become a Taiwanese singer and she's doing extensive voice practicing, etc.

WHERE'S OFFICER TUBA
WORKING CLASS (1985)
RED AND BLACK (1986)
THE LEGEND OF WISELY (1986)
A CHINESE GHOST STORY trilogy
RE-INCARNATION OF GOLDEN LOTUS
THE BIG HEAT (1988)
FRACTURED FOLLIES (1988)
LEGEND OF WU
PICTURE OF A NYMPH (1988)
DIARY OF A BIG MAN (1988)
DECEPTION (1988)
SPY GAMES (1989)
WEB OF DECEPTION (1989)
DEMONESS FROM THOUSAND YEARS (1990)
GOD OF GAMBLERS (1989)
FOXY SPIRITS
KILLER'S ROMANCE (1990)
CYPRESS TIGER (1990)
HONG KONG GODFATHER
TALE OF THE EAST (1990)
POINT OF NO RETURN (1991)
THE BANQUET (1991)
MOON LEGEND (1991)
MY DREAM IS YOURS
LADY WOLF (1991)
LAKE SPIRIT (1991)
MING GHOST (1991)
BIG SCORE
CITY HUNTER 1992)
GIFT FROM HEAVEN
BUTTERFLY AND SWORD (1992)
FANTASY ROMANCE
CASINO TYCOON (1992)
GIRLS WITHOUT TOMORROW
CASINO TYCOON 2 (1992)
GHOST CATCHERS
PAINTED SKIN (1992)
EAGLE SHOOTING HEROES (1993)
PRINCE OF TEMPLE STREET
THE EAST IS RED (1993)
MY HEART IS THAT ETERNAL ROSE



CARRIE NG

Real Name: Ng Ka Li, aka Wu Ka Lee
 1963: Born in Kowloon Town.
 1981: Joined the TV station TVB.
 1987: Left TVB to appear in theatrical films.
 1993: Won Best Actress at Golden Horse Awards.

Though she's obviously a beautiful actress today, Carrie Ng, like most young teenagers, went through a long awkward stage where it seemed there wasn't enough makeup in the world that could make her look gorgeous. Her semi-homeliness as a youngster was an obstacle to her ambition of becoming a glamorous actress. Amazingly, she was nicknamed "The Ugly Sister" (she has a younger sister, and two brothers). Her family was lower-middle class; her mother was a housewife, and her father wasn't.

She slowly outgrew her awkward phase during her final year in high school back in 1981. It was also at this time that her application was accepted at the biggest studio-network in HK, called TVB. She entered their prestigious acting class and before long was offered chances to audition for various TV shows. At first her father was furious of her plan to drop out of high school in pursuit of a hit-or-miss acting career. For six years, she got mostly minimal roles on TV (in at least 20 different TV programs), and eventually got typecast as a 'mistress' or 'seductress'.

When Carrie Ng was 24, she left TVB, fed up with typecasting, poor pay, producers who still thought she wasn't really attractive (so hit them with their white canes!) and no real chance to give performances with deversity & depth. As was often the case with her disappointing days at TVB, her first movie role (the Ringo Lam, 1987 drama CITY ON FIRE)

(continued on next page...)

They are pulled off their vacation and assigned to team up with a maverick Manila cop to stop an arms smuggler..Hing! Oshima, unlike the cameos in the other three films mentioned, carries this film dramatically and in the action sequences. Although the plot is shallow and most of the characters one-dimensional, Oshima gets a smattering of character to develop and acquits herself well. There is some wire work, especially in the warehouse sequence, but not enough to be overly distracting (as opposed to ULTRA COP 2000, which is almost all wire-work). Look for almost constant shooting, explosions, and fights. ** -Ron Murillo



DEAF AND MUTE HEROINE, THE (1971)- HK or Taiwanese sword-flick produced by Wong Toh, and directed by Wu Ma for StarScope, and stars Helen Ma, but it wasn't available for review. -DF

DRAGON PRINCESS (aka "Sonny Chiba's Dragon Princess")- When ambushed by a rival karate master (both applying for a high level martial arts instructor position) and his evil cronies, Sonny Chiba loses an eye and nearly his life. In a rare show of mercy (because Chiba's little girl is there) the villain spares Chiba's life with the condition that he leaves Japan and never returns. Sonny takes his daughter to America and trains her to his dying day and she returns to avenge him. The "Dragon Princess" is the gorgeous but deadly Etsuko Shiomi who may have bitten off even more than she can chew! And is the mysterious Yasuaki Kurata friend or foe? Great fight scenes, fairly inventive plot twists (and no trampolines) puts this at the top of the Sue Siomi films. *** -Robert Mallory

ELIMINATOR WOMAN- Though this routine American saga of two cops (Karen Sheperd & Jerry Trimble) pursuing criminals (involved in white slavery & other crimes) in Africa is predictable, it's actually quite well done and entertaining. Michel Qissi (main villain) did an excellent job at choreographing these great fights, and beautiful Karen Sheperd isn't shy about her cleavage (I just wish she would have done a handstand). **1/2 -Damon Foster

EMPRESS DOWAGER- Excruciating boredom abounds in this confusing, pointless drama set in 1864 Beijing. In one scene, the empress sucks tit, so I was hoping this movie would be fun- no such luck. Probably based on a novel or historical fact. -Damon Foster

FASTER PUSSYCAT, KILL KILL- Not much of a martial arts film, despite voluptuous Tura Satana's karate chops. An American

effort & cult classic from Russ Myer; it's a wacky, B&W, campy, fun & entertaining film about wild babes on the rampage at some remote desert. It doesn't make a whole lot of sense, but there's arousing cleavage galore. **1/2 -Damon Foster

FEARLESS FEMALE FREEDOM FIGHTERS- Them Troma (TOXIC AVENGER, SURF NAZIS MUST DIE, CLASS OF NUKE 'EM HIGH, STREET TRASH, etc.) exploitation moguls dubbed this Indonesian wrestling movie with some pretty funny dialogue. Parts are hilarious, parts are dull, and some (i.e. the bit about 'moose phlegm', vulgarity isn't always funny on its own) scenes are stupid. Though it can't compare with WHAT'S UP TIGER LILLY, it's about equal to A MAN CALLED RAINBOW (another humorously dubbed film), and stars Indonesian action star Barrie Prima (THE NINJA AND THE WARRIOR). A main running gag seems to be mentioning that the actresses all have under-arm hair. *1/2 -Damon Foster

FEMALE INTERNMENT CAMP (1995)- Absolutely unwatchable women-in-prison yarn set in a Mainland China women's penitentiary. This worthless, shot-on-video drama lacks subtitles and entertainment value alike, and is cheap enough to look like an amateur film. -Damon Foster

FEMALE NEO NINJAS- A disappointing sendup of women superhero films & shows. At least I think it's a satire. It's pretty stupid



and nobody can really fight for shit. Not bad overall, but I would have rather watched SUKEBAN DEKA again, instead. At least that series made up for inadequate fighting with large doses of good old-fashioned charm. ** -Jeff Goodhartz

FEMALE NINJAS: IN BED WITH THE ENEMY- Enjoyable Japanese soft-core adventure, featuring a clan of ninja babes who use every part of their bodies to defeat the enemy. The swordplay is below average, but no one will be interested in seeing this flick for "that" reason. *** -Jeff Goodhartz

FIST OF STEEL (1991)- American movie where Apollo Cook and HK's Cynthia Khan trek across a MAD MAX-like wasteland, fighting everyone they come across. Barebones plot as an excuse for pitfights add nauseam, guaranteed to induce sleep. Film's saving grace is its dark-comic tone, which makes it more bearable than if played straight-faced. Especially fun are the extraloud old-style sound effects. Original title: ETERNAL FIST.

Dir: Irvin Johnson *1/2 -William Wiggins

GIGOLO AND WHORE- Carina Lau & Simon Yam in an interesting 1991 drama-comedy. A little eroticism, a little romance, a little VCR scanning. This story of a Mainland China woman (Carina Lau) coming to HK and becoming a real knockout, with help from Simon Yam is somewhat intriguing, and almost funny at times. I don't normally go for timid soap operas, but this one managed to maintain my interest-- though the illogical ending (at the last minute they shove off to Japan to work at some sushi restaurant) made no sense. A smaller supporting role has Sophia Crawford as some sort of sex-therapist or dominatrix. ** -Damon Foster

GINJO series- Elusive Toei movies from the early 1970s, about a female yakuza seeking revenge. -DF

GIRL WITH THE DIAMOND SLIPPER (aka MODERN CINDERELLA)- Maggie Cheung's performance is delightful in this 1985 Shaw Bros. (yes they still make an occasional film; or rather finance them, about once a year) comedy, despite plenty of boring scenes in this romp about bumbling thieves who hide a diamond in Cheung's shoe, thereby making her a target of local villain Wang Lung Wei. Not really an action film until the kick-filled finale, where several characters get involved in typically HK '80s-style kung fu and stunts



Pauline Chan

(plenty of stunt doubles go flying into walls, full force!). *** -Damon Foster

GHOSTLY VIXEN- Average Hong Kongese horror/fantasy/comedy from 1989. Voluptuous Amy Yip (who's film roles must benefit HK's Vaseline industry), looking as stunning & full-figured as ever, gets the title role as the lady spirit who goes around killing men via fatal blowjobs! Not perfect, not a masterpiece, not a classic, but its combination of fantasy, wackiness and Yip's sensational curves make enjoyable, none-the-less. Also stars Sandra Ng, Fung Shui On and Fiong Tsui Feng. ** -Damon Foster

GODDESS OF MERCY- Pro-Budhist drama (and semi-fantasy) from the Shaw Brothers in the 1960s, with Li Li Hua leading a Buddhist crusade to help slaves, prisoners and abused townfolk escape from her nasty father, a cruel warlord. Despite a few intriguing plot twists in this well-acted soap opera, this is an average costume drama with stolen stock music (i.e. Akira Ifukube's Japanese sci-fi themes) and only a little action. I kinda' liked it though. *** -Damon Foster

GODFATHER'S DAUGHTER, MAFIA BLUES- Don't be put off by this 1992 HK actioner's ridiculous title, this is an all-out, 1980s-style action/kung fu epic, in the post Jackie Chan tradition! The fights are outstanding, as are the stunts! This movie also features one of the most convincing stabs I've ever seen (if the actor wasn't a wellknown guy who still makes movies, I'd have thought this was a snuff film) at the climax when a sword is thrown into his chest! A realistic effect! Also check out the ingenious scene of our two heroes doing 'defensive driving', or rather, 'defensive hit & run', as they wipe out Yakuza henchmen! Strangely, lead actress Yukari Oshima plays a Chinese heroine while recognizably Chinese actors play Japanese villains. This tale of "righteous Chinese triad vs. evil Japanese yakuza" also features Alex Man, Ti Wei, and the guy who

was a smaller role, upstaged by main character Chow Yun Fat (who also got his first big break through TVB). After this point, it was like a domino effect-- the film roles became a lot more frequent, and her parts got more complex and had more screentime, as producers finally began to associate her rising name with box office profits. But yet again, she fell into the same sleazy yet sultry stereotype of "scarlet ladies".

After the likes of CITY ON FIRE, GUNMEN and THE FIRST TIME IS THE LAST TIME (a women-in-prison movie), she tried to combat the typecasted image the public considered her to be, by appearing in comedies like A FISHY STORY and Samo Hung's SKINNY TIGER FATTY DRAGON. But her biggest success to date was of course in Wong Jing's erotic thriller THE NAKED KILLER (starring Chingmy Yau), a Category III film which was a box office hit. Sure, it was more slutty typecasting, but it made her career a success, and her new popularity gave her the chance to choose other roles too, and today, she's been in over 40 movies.

Incomplete Filmography:

CITY ON FIRE (1987)
YOU'RE OKAY, I'M OKAY (1987)
TO ERR IS HUMANE (1987)
GIRLS WITHOUT TOMORROW (1988)
FURY (1988)
HE WHO CHASES AFTER THE WIND (1988)
MISTAKEN IDENTITY (1988)
GUNMEN (1988)
FIRST TIME IS THE LAST TIME (1988)
MISSING MAN (1988)
A FISHY STORY (1989)
SENTENCED TO HANG (1989)
FIGHT TO SURVIVE (1989)
THE NOBLES (1989)
SKINNY TIGER, FATTY DRAGON (1990)
THE DRAGON FROM RUSSIA (1990)
THE FIRE PHOENIX (1990)
QUEEN'S BENCH 3 (1990)
BIG BROTHER (1990)
FORSAKEN COP (1990)
BLOODSTAINED TRADEWINDS (1990)
FAMILY DAY (1990)
RETURN ENGAGEMENT (1990)
THE DRAGON FIGHTER (1990)
THE SPIRITUAL FAMILY (1991)
WEAKNESS OF MAN (1991)
SEX AND ZEN (1991)
AU LEVOIR MON AMOUR (1991)
THE TWILIGHT OF THE FORBIDDEN CITY (1992)
CHANGING PARTNER (1992)
BEST OF THE BEST (1992) {Not the U.S. film.}
GUN 'N ROSE (1992)
JUSTICE MY FOOT (1992)
CALL GIRL '92 (1992)
ANGEL TERMINATORS (1992)
MOUNTAIN WARRIORS (1992)
MY AMERICANIZED WIFE (1992)
SEX AND CURSE (1992)
TAKING MANHATTEN (1992)
CRYSTAL HUNT (1992)
CHEETAH ON FIRE (1992)
THE NAKED KILLER (1992)

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HERO DREAM (1992)
 LADIES KILLER (1992)
 ANGEL HUNTER (1992)
 MISTY (1992)
 THE INCORRUPTIBLES (1992)
 DAYS OF TOMORROW (1993)
 REMAINS OF A WOMAN (1993)
 YOUNG WISELY 1 (1993)
 THRILLING STORY (1993)
 MISSION OF JUSTICE (1993)
 BLACK PANTHER WARRIORS (1993)
 NEVER ENDING LOVE (1993)
 THE STORY OF PEI-LI (1994)



**M A G G I E
 CHEUNG**

{aka Cheung Man-yuk}
 Born: Sept. 20, 1964
 Height: 170 Inches

A simple glance is all it takes to see why she won the 1983 Miss Asian Beauty Contest in HK. She was also awarded "Miss Photogenic",

before she went on to star in countless movies, often alongside such leading men as Jackie Chan and Samuel Hui.

It's rumored that she had cosmetic surgery early in her career, some sort of "eye job". According to an article (by Gere LaDue) in CINERAIDER#2 (1994), there was another tabloid rumor that Joan Chen made some cracks about her acquiring breasts. Maggie Cheung speaks excellent English (her accent sounds more British than Chinese!) because of her years in U.K. boarding schools, and of course speaks Cantonese, but not Mandarin. She's a longtime friend & co-star of Jackie Chan (there are inevitable rumors of them being romantically involved, which wouldn't surprise me-- though Jackie has been rumored to be linked with almost every HK actress at one time or another; the lucky bastard). The tabloids have speculated on her having flings with several co-stars, including Jacky Cheung of Steven Chow Sing Chi

She's probably the busiest actress in HK, averaging at least 10 films a year! She's worked constantly, to perfect herself from a pageant babe to a well-respected actress, and in 1993, won the Hong Kong Film Award for the film CENTER STAGE.

Filmography:

THE FROG PRINCE (1984)
 THE GIRL WITH THE DIAMOND SLIPPER (1985)
 POLICE STORY's 1-3
 CHRISTMAS ROMANCE (1985)
 STORY OF ROSE (1986)
 HAPPY GHOST (1986)
 THE SEVENTH CURSE (1986)
 HEAVENLY FATE (1987)
 HEARTBEAT 100 (1987)
 CHASING GIRLS (1987)
 DRAGON FROM RUSSIA
 PROJECT A pt. 2 (1987)

(continued on next page..)



played the deaf mute ("Aba, aba!") in PO-LICE STORY 2. ****1/2 -Damon Foster

GOLDEN QUEEN'S COMMANDO- This film, starting off as a women-in-prison exploitation before turning into a female spaghetti western, makes no sense. It's 100% craziness from beginning to end. And that's exactly why I give it a full five stars. Director Chu Yen Ping has made some clunkers (ISLAND WARRIORS, ISLAND OF FIRE), but here he has created an absolute masterpiece of insane entertainment. The cast of lovelies includes Lin Ching Hsia, Sally Yeh and Hilda Lau. **** -Jeff Goodhartz

GUARDIAN ANGEL (1993)- Quirky, well-written, American Cynthia Rothrock vehicle involves a cop-killing psycho chick, a rich playboy, and a depressed Private Eye. Fresh premise could have used a little intensity; winds up being an unsatisfying, disappointing flick despite good stunts and fights. No relation to the Asian film of the same title. Cast includes Ken McLeod, Dale Jacoby, Art Camacho. ** -William Wiggins

GUARDIAN ANGEL- A transitional HK/Filipino crossover flick for Yukari Oshima, probably one of her last Chinese films and also one of her first Filipino ones. But this fragmented, disjointed confusion may very well be two different movies edited together; it awkwardly alternates from Taiwan to the Philippines, back & forth. The Filipino footage has Oshima with a mostly Filipino cast, seeking local criminals. The Taiwanese footage is a ripoff of NIKITA, and the only connection [to the Fili-shots] is that a female assassin (Rosa Mina, a cute Cherie Chung look-alike) keeps saying she wants to return to the Philippines and be with Robin (Yukari's cop partner) again. This dialogue is the only link, Taiwanese & Filipino actors never meet in person. I prefer the more dominant Tai stuff, because it's got cameos by Ti Wei, oldtimer Chi Kuan Chun (FIVE MASTERS OF DEATH, YOGA AND THE



KUNG FU GIRL), and I think maybe even John Liu. Sexy ladies abound in GUARDIAN ANGEL, and the fights & guns suffice. **1/2 -Damon Foster

HER FATAL WAYS (aka MY DEAR SISTER-IN-LAW)- Damn it, no subtitles on the print I ended up sleeping through! Though its talky storyline had me dreaming about an infinite number of monkeys who wanted me to go over a script for "Hamlet" they had written, there are a couple cool action shots and a couple genuinely funny gags in this comedy/actioner about two Red China cops sent to HK to help locate some bad guys. It stars Do Do Cheng and I think one of the Tony Leungs. 1/2 -Damon Foster

HEROINE, THE- Other than a young Jackie Chan appearing in this elusive, 1973 kung fu flick, little is known about it. It's harder to find than tampon in a retirement home. -DF

HIBOTAN BAKUTO series- Meaning "Woman Gambler" series, also called the "Red Peony Gambler" series (of which there are endless titles) the first film (1968's HIBOTAN BAKUTO) featured Junko, Fuji, Ken Takakura, Tomisaburo Wakayama, Minoru



Oki, and Kyosuke Machida. Other installments of this series (sorry, I couldn't locate any tapes, so much for critical opinions) included were inspired by Daiei's ONNA TOBAKUSHI (aka "Woman Yakuza"). -DF

HIROKO ONNO RO- Literally a Japanese "Women's Prison series", the first of which came out in 1968. Supposedly, the elusive series of films took place from 1860-1900, and dealt with erotica and some S&M. Movies in this series include HIROKO ONNA RO ("Secrets from a Woman's Prison", ZOKU HIROKU ONNE RO ("Woman's Cell", HIROKU ONNA GURA ("Secrets of a Pleasure Quarter Brothel"), and several others-- though at this time, not all are believed to be available on video. -DF

HONOR AND GLORY (1992)- Bottom-of-the-barrel American junk with the indiscriminating Cynthia Rothrock (in a very small despite her top billing) as an FBI agent attempting to stop a black market nuclear arms deal. Major roles are played by obvious nonactors... only Chuck Jeffreys comes out unscathed in his supporting part. * -William Wiggins

I HAVE A DATE WITH SYLVIA- David Wu and other familiar faces in some crappy HK musical/romance/drama/comedy etc. Not my cup of tea. -Damon Foster

I LOVE MARIA- A 1988 HK movie with Sally Yeh, John Sham, Tsui Hark, and Lam Ching Ying, also known as **ROBOT FORCE**. However, I know of it as a piece of crap. Darkly lit, bad continuity and a nonsensical plot confuse what could have been somewhat entertaining. Sally Yeh plays a female Robocop-type character, and tackles robots & villains. A worthwhile effort, with amusing moments, and plenty of room for improvement. * -Damon Foster

INCREDIBLE KUNG FU LEGS (aka THE LEG FIGHTERS)- As you would expect, there's some unbelievable kicks in this flick. Tan Tao Liang is great as always, but it is the incredible Hsia Kwang Li who is the highlight. Once you've seen this tall beauty throw kicks behind her head, you'll get hooked. I know I did. Whatever became of her? *** -Jeff Goodhartz

ISLAND WARRIORS- An island populated by an all-female warrior tribe battles pirates. Nowhere near as much fun as it sounds. It's definitely high camp as only director Cho Yen Ping can deliver, but somehow, it just isn't any fun. * -Jeff Goodhartz

JITTEMAI ("Death Shadows")- 1985 samurai stuff directed by Hideo Gosha, not that I've seen it yet. -DF

KANTO ONNA YAKUZA series- More unavailable Japanese films starting in 1968. They're also called the "Kanto Woman Yakuza" series, consisting of farces like: **KANTO ONNA GOKUDO ("Badge of Guts");** Dir: Kazuo Mori), **KANTO ONNA AKUMYO ("The Lone Avebnger";** Dir: Kazuo Mori), and at least three others. -DF

KEKKO KAMEN ("Kekko Mask")- The title of this Japanese film trilogy obviously spoofs **GEKKO KAMEN**, but this is a sleazy, nearly pornographic superhero series that wasn't available for review. -DF

KILLER ANGELS- Probably the best of the many **ANGEL** ripoffs. Moon Lee does some major ass kicking and the film benefits from strong characterizations; particularly Liu Chia (**MASTER KILLER**) Hui as the troubled assassin. Some good gory action in this one as well. ***1/2 -Jeff Goodhartz

KUNG FU GIRLS, THE- Cheap 1970s crap about a team of fighting females in China's old times. This ridiculous fantasy/comedy only has a few fights (and they're lame), including a stupid confrontation with a giant frog (a quick-buck, plastic prop, clumsily dangling from a string). The ending battle with some "devilish" wizards is mildly amusing at times, but the only wellknown person in this slapstick mess is Yue Hua (**THE MONKEY, COME DRINK WITH ME, WARRIOR & THE ACTRESS, SWORD AND THE LUTE, 7 BLOWS OF THE DRAGON, AMAZONS AND SUPERMEN, LUNG WEI VILAGE, MONKEY KUNG FU, IN THE LINE**

OF DUTY 3) who somehow manages to maintain a straight face throughout. 1/2 -Damon Foster

KUNG FU MAMA- A classic of kung foolishness. My tape of this silly yet mildly fun film was in Chinese without English subtitles so I don't know much about the plot, but I'm not sure it really mattered. Co-stars Jimmy Wang Yu. ** -Jeff Goodhartz

KUNG FU MISTRESS- No subtitles on this shot-on-video, HK production, and the emphasis is more on comedy & drama than kung fu. But still, for once the obligatory scene of a woman impersonating a man is convincing (at first) because she has fake [though convincing] facial hair. The story has our kung fu heroine (Hui Ying Hung of **THAT'S MONEY**) pretending she's a guy so she can join a Ching Dynasty police force; and later, when she falls in love must reveal to her "pal" she's really a woman. Throw in a few nice martial arts scenes and a "kung fu/Football" match (ala **DRAGON LORD**) and you end up with **KUNG FU MISTRESS**, which is almost watchable at times. Features Cheng Pei Pei and Melvin Wong.* -Damon Foster

KUNOICHI NINPO series- I've yet to see these early 1990s films with titles like "Women Ninjas", "Female Black Magic Ninjas", "Woman Ninjas 3" and "Woman Ninjas 5". Dir: Katsu Tsushima. -DF

LADIES KILLER- Chung Fa plays a drug-addicted cut throat, Melvin Wong plays a police detective, and Carrie Ng doesn't. As a typical HK Category 3 thriller, there's enough female nudity to cause a tree to grow in your lap, and maybe a brief kung fu fight or two, but otherwise, this drama/erotic/thriller etc. is predictable and unmemorable. Certain lengthy scenes (I take it the character speaks a dialect the subtitle maker

Gong Li



CALL GIRL '88 (1988)
SOLDIER OF LOVE (1988)
PAPER MARRIAGE (1988)
HAPPY FAT NEW YEAR (1988)
AS TEARS GO BY (1988)
NORTH AND SOUTH MAMAS (1988)
SUN, MOON AND STAR (1988)
THE LOVE ARMY (1988)
THE GAME THEY CALLED SEX (1988)
FAT CAT (1988)
GOLDEN YEARS (1988)
BACHELOR'S SWAN SONG (1989)
DOUBLES CAUSE TROUBLES (1989)
MY DEAR SON (1989)
ICEMAN COMETH (1989)
A FISHY STORY (1989)
A YOUNG WOMAN'S HEART (1989)
INBETWEEN LOVES (1989)
HEART TO HEARTS (1990)
FULL MOON IN NEW YORK (1990)
SONG OF THE EXILE (1990)
THE DRAGON FROM RUSSIA (1990)
RED DUST (1990)
FAREWELL CHINA (1990)
DAYS OF BEING WILD (1990-'91)
THE PERFECT MATCH (1991)
ALAN & ERIC: BETWEEN HELLO AND GOODBYE (1991)
WILL OF IRON (1991)
TODAY'S HERO (1991)
THE BANQUET (1991)
ALL'S WELL ENDS WELL (1992)
THE TWIN DRAGONS (1992)
ACTRESS (1992)
WHAT A HERO! (1992)
DRAGON INN (1992)
ROSE (1992)
TRUE LOVE (1992)
THE MOON WARRIORS (1992)
THE HEROIC TRIO (1992)
MILLIONAIRE COP (1993)
THE BARE-FOOTED KID (1993)
FLYING DAGGER (1993)
HOLY WEAPON (1993)
THE ENIGMA OF LOVE (1993)
THE EAGLE SHOOTING HEROES (1993)
FIRST SHOT (1993)
BOYS ARE EASY (1993)
MAD MONK (1993)
HEROIC TRO 2 (1993)
GREEN SNAKE (1993)
IN-BETWEEN (1994)
SUNG DYNASTY FAMILY (1995)

ANITA YUEN

{aka Yuen Wing-Yee}

Though she too was a Miss HK, she still strikes me as being somewhat plain-looking, compared to the competition. I'm not really familiar with her, she otherwise just seemed to pop out of the woodwork. She did, however win a Best Actress Award at the 1994 HK Film Awards, so obviously, somebody liked her work in the film **C'EST LA VIE MON CHERI** (no, it's not a French film, it's Hong Kongese). Anita Yuen's sudden rise to fame supposedly annoyed veterans like Maggie Cheung, Carina Lau and other actresses who don't think Anita has earned her dues.
HE AND SHE (1993)

(continued on next page..)

I WILL WAIT FOR YOU (1993)
 C'EST LA VEI MON CHERI (1994)
 CRYSTAL FORTUNE RUN (1994)
 STORY OF KILLING AND ROMANCE
 FROM BEIJING WITH LOVE (1994)
 THUNDERBOLT (1995)



NAOMI MORINAGA

Born: 3/12/64, Kanagawa.

At her high point (the early-to-mid-1980s; she joined JAC in April 1981), she was 164 cm tall, and weighed 52 kg, whatever that is. That was then, this is now. She's gotten a little bigger, and according to a more current Japanese book, her current vital statistics are this: Bust: 86 cm, waist: 56 cm, hips: 89 cm, 167 cm tall, weighing in at 56 kg. This beautiful martial artist from Sonny Chiba's JAC (Japan Action Club) did some outstanding martial arts and stunts in TV shows like SPACE SHERIFF SHIDER (as co-hero Annie, who stole the show!) and DIMENSIONAL WARRIOR SPIELVAN, and had lesser roles in SUN VULCAN, GOGGLE V, and KAMEN RIDER ZETO. She was also in a "pirate adventure" play called YU KAINA KAIZOKU DAI BOKEN. Her first movie was IGA NO KABAMARU ("Kaba Knight of the Iga Clan"). In 1985, she gave singing a try, and released an album (for Columbia Records' Japan branch) on June 21st, consisting of SHIDER hit songs, including one based on her character in the series, called "Annie to the Rescue".

In the 1990s, her career took a different turn-- to say the least! Plenty of nude shots (yep, full frontal nudity) in magazines and films. Unfortunately, I don't think she's voluptuous enough for this, and still prefer her in the old days when she'd wear tight, skimpy skirts and spandex pants, to help accentuate her curves. But whether it be in superhero TV shows from JAC, sleazy magazine spreads or equally sleazy adult films meant to jack off to, she's got talents & looks that will make at least a part of you stand up and take notice. Among other things, she's in some S&M erotic thriller called TORIKO.

couldn't figure out) omit subtitles from entire conversations. Then for the next scene, the subtitles abruptly return. Not that it matters, there's not a lot of important points made in this derivative, dull, sometimes stupid farce. -Damon Foster

LADY BATTLE COP (1991)- The actual Japanese title is ONNA BATORU KOPPU. Toei's most blatant, seemingly vengeful ripoff of ROBOCOP to date! This made-for-video movie, about a female cyborg (Asuzu Nakamura) cleaning up the streets of Tokyo is valued as an unintentional comedy only! Masashi Ishibashi stars as a villain in this god-awful, Japanese romp. Better fun to be had beating off to a photo of Margaret Thatcher. -Damon Foster

LADY DETECTIVE IN EDO (actual Japanese title JIRAIYA KOBAN)- A samurai (Toei; 1958) film directed by Kinoshita Azuma. But it's not currently available for review, so little is known about it, except that it features Hibari Misora & Chiyanosuke Azuma. -DF

LADY DRAGON- In 1992, Cynthia Rothrock goes to the Philippines to avenge her husband's death against savage rapist Richard Norton. At first, there's a brisk pace in this American-made karate film, until Rothrock undergoes typical training scenes, taught by some old man in the woods. At times the utter excitement rivals that of staring at a common brick. There are also minor continuity & editing flaws. Regardless, the fights are good (especially her climactic, gripping duel with Norton), there's also a little gunplay and a car chase. ** -Damon Foster

LADY DRAGON 2 (aka ANGEL OF FURY & TRIPLE CROSS) - Average yet violent 1993 American yarn where Cynthia Rothrock gets revenge in Jakarta, Indonesia, for the death of her dorky husband, a Soccer player with a Keith Partridge hairdo. Billy Drago as the eerie, ugly diamond thief who killed the guy. Talky, pretentious at times, and the numerous fights aren't Cynthia's best, but there are worse ways to spend time (i.e. being cut up and having salt sprinkled in the cuts, being French-kissed by your grandmother,

listening to George Michaels' music, etc.). *1/2 -Damon Foster

LADY KUNG FU (1972)- Also known as HAPKIDO, this average chop sockey mess is made all the more amusing by ridiculous voice dubbing. But still, any film where Chinese kung fu & hapkido masters tackle Corrupt Japanese in the early 1900s is fine by me, especially if it stars Angela Mao Ying, Carter Wang, Pai Ying, Ji Han Jae, Nancy Sit, Wei Ping Ao, Teruo Yamane, Samo Hung and Wang Ing Sik. It's so average that it's-uh, well, very average.** -Damon Foster

LADY SNOWBLOOD- Wow! I had heard it was good, but I wasn't quite expecting this. An extraordinary female samurai/revenge tale written by no less than Kazuo ("Lone Wolf and Cub") Koike. One of the best. Seek this one out or else! ***** -Jeff Goodhartz

LADY TERMINATOR (Indonesia; 1989)- Okay, not an exact remake of America's TERMINATOR, but imagine the original with a female who likes to strip off her clothes, and then substitute black magic for the sci-fi angle. That's all you need to make movies in Indonesia; steal an idea, but switch the sexes and origins. If you've seen TERMINATOR and any black magic/spell movie like REVENGE OF THE ZOMBIES, you know the plot. You can find this in the action section of video stores that don't seem to have any discrimination in what they stock. While there's not a single shred of creativity in this film, by no means avoid it. Watch it and enjoy, because when was the last time you saw an action packed horror film from Indonesia? ** -Colin Geddes

LADY WHIRLWIND (aka DEEP THRUST)- Though considered a classic by kung fu aficionados, I don't consider this Angela Mao Ying flick to be one of her best. Her presence is strong and the fights are cool, but there's way too much back & forth arguing and complaining (I guess it was the director's way of portraying drama) for my taste. **1/2 -Jeff Goodhartz

LAST ARISTOCRATS, THE- A bunch of Chinese ladies go to Venice in this incredibly dull, romantic soap opera. Don't bother- I





LETHAL PANTHER- Hong Kongese & Filipino co-production which at times tries to be sort of a female version of John Woo's **THE KILLER**. While the frequent gunplay is somewhat entertaining, as are performances by Sybelle Hu, Maria Jo, Yoko Miyamoto, Alex Fong, Harold Low, Raymond Wong, this is a confusing, nonoriginal mess about hitwomen on the loose in the Philippines. There's a movie called **LETHAL PANTHER II**, which is actually more Filipino than Hong Kongese. *1/2 -Damon Foster

LETHAL PANTHER II- Despite a similar setting, this 1993 actioner has nothing to do with the first film in the series. While I've not seen this here Hong Kongese dub, I did review its original Filipino version, **MAGKASANGGA SA BATAS**. *** -Damon Foster

MADAM CITY HUNTER- The laser disc calls this **IN THE LINE OF DUTY 5**, but that is a fallacy. It is more a comedy with some action sequences. The trouble is that it is an annoying comedy. It has some fair fight sequences and Cynthia Khan is beautiful to watch, but she is sleeping through this obnoxious 1993 production. Also features Hui Ying Hung. ** -Ron Murillo

MADAM THE GREAT- Or is it called "Madam the General"? It's hard to tell, the title on this HK video was too small to read. Regardless, these daredevil HK thrill-a-minute gods are at it again, as this modern action, kung fu, stunt (and maybe an outrageous "wire leap" and/or "wire climb" or two) proves quite beautifully! In the tradition of **POLICE STORY 3: THE SUPER COP**, HK detectives venture into Mainland China in search of villains- in this case, a group of nasty drug-traffickers who enjoy beating up women (perhaps I should give these guys the address of my ex-girlfriend). Tragedy, romance, revenge, some bloodshed and heroines riding into the sunset. This action classic proves why we suck and them Hong Kongese rule! Features Sybelle Hu, Carter Wang and Jeff Falcon. ****1/2-Damon Foster

MAGKASANGGA SA BATAS (aka "Lethal Panther 2", for some reason)-Yukari Oshima, under the stage name Cynthia Luster, tracks a yakuza gang into the Philippines. Though the main star of this Filipino crime drama is

obviously Edu Manzano (**DARNA**, **DUGU NG PANDAY**, **DARNA ANG PAGBALIK** and countless other Filipino flicks), at least all of Oshima's roles are dubbed in English! Her part should have been bigger, and the total English content of the dialogue is about 35% (most of the other characters speak Filipino), which is just barely enough to follow the story. Them Filipinos did an excellent job at attempting to immitate the Hong Kongese way of action, and it's great that Yukari/Cynthia maintains the same action quality as in her HK movies! **MAGKASANGGA SA BATAS** may have slow moments, but its gunplay, car chases, martial arts & expoding cars are all pretty good for a Filipino film, and comes close to reaching HK levels at times. Great fun, despite obligatory production problems (occasional poor acting and less-than-perfect cinematography) common on rushed Filipino farces. Though Yukari Oshima (aka Cynthia Luster, as she's known in this movie) does the best fighting, its Edu Manzano's performance (he's trying to be the Filipino Chow Yun Fat) which stands out, he's pissed that his loved ones were gunned down by mobsters. *** -Damon Foster

MARTIAL LAW (1990)- Enjoyable for an American film, it pairs Cynthia Rothrock and Chad McQueen as kung fu cops on the trail of a kung fu killer. David Carradine is the heavy, and gets to use his martial arts skills /*What martial arts skills?! -DF*/ a little bit. McQueen (Steve's son) is surprisingly good; Rothrock is Rothrock. **1/2-William Wiggins

MARTIAL LAW II: UNDERCOVER (1991)- The unimpressive Chad McQueen from the first **MARTIAL LAW** is replaced by the impressive Jeff Wincott as Cynthia Rothrock's partner, Sean Thompson. Cynthia plays Billie Black who as part of the elite police force called "Martial Law" works undercover at a nightclub involved in the death of their colleague. Great fighting on everyone's part but Cynthia is getting stereotyped as a "Karate Cop" in these films (besides, she's a kung fu stylist). ** -Robert Mallory

MEKURA NO OICHI JIGOKUHADA ("Trapped, Crimson Bat")- Dir: Teiji Matsuda, 1969. With: Yoko Matsuyama, Yasunori Irikawa. -DF

MIRACLE BUNNY- Made for video, shot-on-video nonsense about some sort of Japanese Playboy Bunny-type bimbo (Eiko Kuroki) who battles alien pineapples. Yes, it's as stupid as it sounds. I've only seen episode two (all chapters are 30 minutes long), and although pretty Eiko Kuroki looks delicious in a bathing suit, this comedy looks more like home videos of her vacation in Guam (they try to pass it off at Hawaii, but anybody who's been to Hawaii won't be fooled). Staggeringly stupid, if you want to beat off to Eiko Kuroki, check out **STAR VIRGIN** instead. -Damon Foster

MISS MAGIC- Yet another typically fun, HK

{aka Sharla Cheung Man, Cheung Mihn}

Long time co-star of Stephen Chow (aka Steve Chow, Chau Sing Chi, etc.), their cinematic roles go back as far as the speculative rumors of their actual romance (it's not unlikely, since male HK's celebrities offer keep their romantic lives a secret, thinking it will make their females fans keep coming to see their movies). Supposedly, Cheung Man was also the girlfriend of a skummy producer, and the high point of her career seemed to be from 1990 to 1992. Little else is known about this tantalizing beauty.

DEVIL'S VENDETTA (1986)

STORY OF ROSE (1986)

BET ON FIRE (1988)

OPERATION PINK SQUAD 2 (1989)

GOD OF GAMBLERS (1990)

GOD OF GAMBLERS II (1990)

ALL FOR THE WINNER (1990)

SWORDSMAN (1990)

GOD OF GAMBLERS III (1991)

DANCES WITH THE DRAGON (1991)

FIGHT BACK TO SCHOOL (1991)

FIGHT BACK TO SCHOOL 2 (1992)

MOON LEGEND (1991)

FIST OF FURY 1991 (1991)

GANGLAND ODYSSEY (1991)

DEADLY DREAM WOMAN (1992)

RHYTHM OF DESTINY (1992)

ROYAL TRAMP (1992)

CHEETAH ON FIRE

HANDSOME SIBLINGS (1992)

STORY OF KENNEDY TOWN

FLYING DAGGER (1993)

SWORDSMAN 3: EAST IS RED (1993)

THE SWORD OF MANY LOVES (1993)

NINA LI CHIH

{aka Li Zhi, Nina Lih Chi}

Born: Shanghai, 1965

Her father was an actor too. After graduating from junior high school, she went straight on to Shanghai Art University but failed, so never mind. In 1981 she moved to HK, and later even

San Francisco where she was a student. After her return to China, she won some beauty contest and entered the movie industry. Though small compared to Amy Yip (her successor in the 'bounce' category), she was originally best known for her curvaceous figure. Last I heard she retired from films and owns a hotel somewhere.

Partial Filmography:

DRAGON FROM RUSSIA (1990)

THE CRIMINAL HUNTER (1987)

MY FOUR LOVES

PROFILES IN PLEASURE (1988)

(continued on next page...)



TIGER ON BEAT (1988)
 PEDDYCAB DRIVER (1988)
 ACES GO PLACES 5 (1988)
 TO SPY WITH LOVE
 DRAGON FROM RUSSIA (1990)
 A CHINESE GHOST STORY 3 (1991)
 A KID FROM TIBET (1992)
 TWIN DRAGONS (1992)
 STONE AGE WARRIORS (1991)

PAULINE CHAN

Born: 1975; Shanghai

This beautiful young starlette was raised in Shanghai, and at 17, she got her first taste of potential fame when she entered ATV's (HK's 2nd biggest TV network, the first being TVB) Miss Asia Pageant. Though she didn't win, it did get her foot in the door of showbiz, though it was part of the low-budget, sleazy Category III film scene (in fact, she's considered part of its second wave, it's first being that of Amy & Veronica Yip, etc.). She was in several exploitation films (with titles like THE GIRLS FROM CHINA, EROTIC GHOST STORY 3, and ESCAPE FROM BROTHEL), but also can be seen briefly in Yukari Oshima's ANGEL THE KICKBOXER (the American print of this film, called HONOR AND GLORY, omits Pauline Chan's smaller clips and pads it out with Cynthia Rothrock).

But the angle of showbiz that had enfatuated her since she was a child wasn't necessarily acting, but singing. Having studied under prestigious singer Chan Kit Ling, she was ready to give her singing career a try, and signed a recording contract (with a Mainland China company) in May, '92. She became much in demand in the showbiz world, between more slutty flicks and concerts; she sang not only in HK and Mainland China, but Taiwan and even portions of the U.S. with large Chinese communities.

According to the magazine SHE #2 (available through Draculina Publishing, see ad elsewhere), she experienced unfortunate carelessness brought on by her 'workaholic' scheduling (she even starred in and produced 1992's A SUDDEN LOVE in the Philippines), she neglected to remove her contact lenses (often colored ones, so if you see a movie starring a blue-eyed Chinese girl, that's probably her) and developed an eye infection. A different time, Chan took more than a month to go see a doctor about an ear problem.

1993 was not a good year for Pauline Chan. Potential deals to release her songs on CD fell through, her cellular phone was stolen and the thief spent over \$2,000 (HK) dollars on phone calls, and a "friend" snatched her wallet and took the liberty of getting "200,000 (HK) bucks off her credit card! Though Chan wasn't held guilty of these charges and both robbers were caught, the stress of all this was a bit too much to handle. She retired from HK's celebrity spotlight in April 1993, and returned to Shanghai to start over fresh. Meanwhile, back in HK, dishonest producers obtained incomplete footage of her, often

(continued on next page...)

Danny Lee with Bettie Ting and Pei.



MISS MAGIC- Yet another typically fun, HK '80s comedy/fantasy/horror romp not unlike ABRAKADABRA, complete with an avenging female ghost (stalking her irresponsible husband, an actor in period flicks) dressed like Little Red Riding Hood, laughs, a little kung fu, Taoist wizards, a vampire hoax and okay special effects sprinkled here & there. The setting is modern and the cast includes Chung Fa, Norman Chu and Bill Tung Pui. *** -Damon Foster

MR. CANTON & LADY ROSE- Anita Mui's Lady Rose is only a supporting part compared to Jackie Chan's Mr. Canton role. This HK comedy is talky and way too long, but at least it's funny. Jackie Chan plays a mobster leader who sometimes fights other mobsters. The fights (though few) are nice and the stunts are... well... witty. Actually a remake of Frank Capra's POCKET FULL OF MIRACLES, whatever that is. **1/2 -Damon Foster

MS. BUTTERFLY- There were no English subtitles on the version I saw, the only English sentences were uttered during a sex scene. I'm afraid "Fuck me!" and "I'm cumming" just aren't enough to translate this boring, super-talky, worthless drama with Lau Wai Gun (aka Jacqueline Law) as an ex-carjacker trying to go straight. Seems her old mob, lead by Wong Ching (TIL DEATH DO WE SCARE, star of EAGLE'S SHADOW FIST) isn't happy that she now prefers to dress like a drag-racer and work at some car fixer-upper place. So once in a while, the triad raids the garage, so in one scene, she rigs up a trap in one of the villain's cars. The action is brief & terrible in this weak HK film, even the final car chase sucks. I never wanna' sit through this dull drama again, I would rather floss my teeth with Art Linkletter's public hair. -Damon Foster

MY FLYING WIFE- Samo Hung, known only as "Boss", gets chased down the street by a plastic wrapped gang that looks like Devo. He's shot six times and it turns out, when you die you have to steal a reincarnation pearl from a fresh body so your ghost can reincarnate back into the normal world of the living. After two angel/demons (?) escort Samo away from his corpse, a loitering ghost snags his pearl. Luckily, it's only a dream. Then there's a woman that Samo had premarital sex with centuries earlier. The woman was purposely drowned for being pregnant & unmarried. Her ghost is still trying to find a pearl for her son in present times. She looks the same, but somehow her formerly unborn sun has aged about 7 or 8 years. This flick is sort of a BEETLEGUISE remake. A Long Shong Pictures Release; 1991, Cast: Samo Hung, Yu Li, Fok Shu Wah, Cheung Yiu Yeung, Yuen Kit Ying & Wong Kwang Leung. **1/2 -Doug Weldon

NOBURI RYU series- I means "Rising Dragon", for what it's worth, I mean info isn't of much use when such flicks aren't around to check out. It's a Japanese movie series lasting from 1969 to 1970, consisting of titles like: NOBURI RYU TEKKA HEDDA (aka "The Friendly Killer" and "Rising Dragon's Iron Flesh") and KAIDAN NOBURI RYU (aka "The Tattooed Swordswoman", & "Blind Woman's Curse"). -DF

NIHON JOKYODEN SERIES- Something to do with female yakuza starring Junko Fuji, not that I've seen them. -DF

OCHO series- Yet again Toei makes some apparently exciting, early 1970s actioners which, to the best of my knowledge aren't available on video. -DF

ONNA NO TOBA- It means "Gambling Woman", but that's all I know about this 1966 Shigeo Tanaka directorial. -DF

ONNA RO HISHO SERIES- Whatever. -DF

ONNA SAZEN series- The first of this Japanese film series meaning "One-Armed Swordswoman" came out in 1968, from Daiei. Like its sequel, 1969's ONNA SAZEN-NURETSUBAME KATATE FIRI ("Woman Sazen: Wet With Blood From One Armed Sword-Style), I ain't seen it. -DF

ONNA TOSEININ ("Orphan Gambler" series)- These 1971-72 Toei films weren't available at the time of this writing-- I mean typing. -DF

OTHER SIDE OF THE SEA- Michelle Lee plays a hitwoman on the run in this lackluster action/melodrama. The action scenes are nicely staged and are the only highlight in this snooze fest. Wille Lee, star of BURNING PARADISE and DRUNKEN MASTER 3 also stars. * -Garro Nigoghossian

PINK FORCE COMMANDO- The female cast of **GOLDEN QUEEN'S COMMANDO** return in different roles (though acting like the same characters despite being killed off in the previous film... didja' follow that?). Equally entertaining and even more insane than the prequel. Any attempt at plot description would be futile. Just sit back and be dumbfounded. ***** Jeff Goodhartz

POLICE ANGEL- Nonsubtitled Chinese comedy that falls somewhere inbetween **POLICE ACADEMY** and **CHARLIE'S ANGELS**. A nice looking lady or two and a couple chuckles (i.e. a fat lady-- I'm sorry, I mean 'a horizontally challenged female', to be politically correct, who can't fit in a car and must be transported in a farmer's truck-- inside a cage full of live pigs), but otherwise it's an uneven hodgepodge of slapstick, a little bloodshed, and Scottish bagpipe music of all things. Poor action, boredom abounds. Better fun to be had being on the receiving end of a blowjob from a chipped-toothed Jefferey Dahmer who hasn't eaten in a few days. -Damon Foster

PRETTY WOMAN AT WAR- Chinese-made bullshit taking place in Japan. Our lead heroine is occasionally helped by Ainu (Japan's indigenous natives) who still dress like savages despite this lame film's modern setting. Despite adequate action scenes and a brief scene involving a topless dancer/wrestler (I'd really like to plug this woman), this nonsubtitled mess is a talky bore. 1/2 -Damon Foster

PRINCESS MADAM (aka **UNDER POLICE PROTECTION**)- More modern HK (1989) thrills, featuring a little erotic nudity (and for some reason, vengeful slut Michiko Nishiwaki likes biting & stalking Moon Lee's boyfriend), and of course, action: Gunplay, motorcycles, explosions, martial arts, swords, hand grenades, cars, etc. Unfortunately, my tape lacked subtitles, so I never knew what the hell Moon Lee, Michiko Nishiwaki, Yueh Hua and other familiar faces were fighting for. ** -Damon Foster

PUSHED TO THE LIMIT (1992)- Pro wrestler Mimi ("Magnificent Mimi") Lesseos tried to make like Hulk Hogan with this poor American effort; unlike Hogan, she starred in, produced and wrote the film. Mimi is pretty but can't act, and the dumb pitfight setting of the flick is uninteresting. Don't bother. * -William Wiggins

QUEEN OF FIST- Apparently a sequel (or alternate titling of?) to or prequel to **KUNG FU MAMA**, and is absolutely action packed, Hong Kongese chop-sockey fun from 1973! Despite a couple ballads and a lot of characters, this cheap yet fun thriller is 99% fights!!! Not the greatest kung fu, but it's being in Chinese with absolutely no translation didn't matter-- there's infinitely more fighting than talking! Strangely, Jimmy Wang Yu makes a 1, possibly 2 second cameo; I believe they clipped brief shots of him in from some other film (perhaps from **KUNG FU MAMA**, where his role may have been bigger). This immensely entertaining kung fu film has nifty music and the plot deals with the adventures of a family of traveling acrobats who fight off all comers: Mobsters, Japanese, gamblers, Persians, Thai Boxers, etc. The main heroin is an elderly lady, and she's surprisingly tough for her age! **** -Damon Foster

QUEEN OF GAMBLE- Do Do Cheng on a winning streak in gambling, horse-race betting and mar-jong. A couple amusing moments don't add much life to this tedious comedy. Also stars Alex Man, Simon Yam, Ng Man Dat and Sybelle Hu, who at least fires a gun and does a kick or two (the remainder of this HK film is lame humor and boring drama). But if Sybelle Hu keeps



outtakes from previous films, or shots never used, and spliced them into a string of Category III films, the type she had tried to retire from. As is often the case in controversial situations like this, the HK tabloids hounded her as a hypocrite.

At the time of this writing (I mean typing), it seems that her singing career hasn't really picked up, though she's returned to the movie scene, including a decent role as a bionic villain in Steven Chow Sing Che's **FROM BEIJING WITH LOVE**.

Some Pauline Chan flicks:

- EROTIC GHOST STORY 3 (1991)
- ANGEL THE KICKBOXER (1992)
- GIRLS FROM CHINA (1992)
- ESCAPE FROM BROTHEL (1992)
- ROGUES FROM THE NORTH (1992)
- A WILD PARTY (1992)
- BEHIND THE PINK DOOR (1992)
- A SUDDEN LOVE (1992)
- LADIES FROM SHANGHAI (1992)
- FLYING DAGGER (1993)
- GIRLS WITHOUT TOMORROW (1993)
- SLAVE OF THE SWORD (1993)
- A WILD PARTY (1993)
- SEX FOR SALE (1993)
- SPIDER FORCE (1993)
- HE-BORN TO KILL (1993)
- HAUNTING EVIL SPIRIT (1993)
- WHO CARES (1993)
- DEVIL OF RAPE (1993)
- FROM BEIJING WITH LOVE (1994)



CHINGMY YAU

{Aliases & alternate spellings: Chingny Yau, Chingy Yau and Cho Su Chien}
Chinese name: Yau Suk-ching

Another beautiful Category 3 actress of the 1990s. She's also a successful model, and one of her more well known movies is the hardhitting, erotic thriller **RAPED BY AN ANGEL** (aka "Naked Killer 2" and **HO FA CHANG JEN**, which means "Amazing Crime Stories: Legal Rape"). She was originally discovered by director Wong Jing, but seems to be moving away from the Category 3 exploitation stuff like **RAPED BY AN ANGEL** and **NAKED KILLER**.

SHE STARTS FIRE (1992)

(continued on next page...)

DEADLY DREAM WOMAN (1992)
CASINO TYCOON (1992)
NAKED KILLER (1993)
LEGEND OF LIQUID SWORD
RAPED BY AN ANGEL (1993)
GHOST LANTERN
BOYS ARE EASY 1993)
MONEY MAKER
PSYCHO KILLER (1993)
MILLIONAIRE COP
CITY HUNTER (1993)

ROSAMUND KWAN

dob: 9/24/62
PROJECT A (1984)
MILLIONAIRES' EXPRESS (1986)
HEAD HUNTER (1986)
ARMOUR OF GOD (1987)
VENGEANCE IS MIND (1988)
CASINO RAIDERS (1989)
UNDECLARED WAR (1990)
GHOST FEVER (1990)
THE BANQUET (1991)
ONCE UPON A TIME IN CHINA (1991)
ONCE UPON A TIME IN CHINA II (1992)
SWORDSMAN II (1992)
WITH OR WITHOUT YOU (1992)
NO MORE LOVE NO MORE DEATH (1993)
ONCE UPON A TIME IN CHINA III (1993)
THE MAGIC CRANE (1993)
PRINCE CHARMING

MICHELLE KHAN

{aka Yeoh Chu Kheng, Michelle Yeoh, Michelle Keng, Michelle Kheng, Michelle King}
Born: 1964, Malaysia

Miss Malaysia, and also a dancer at one point, but is best known to us gweilos as an aceptional star of HK action films.

One of her earlier films was 1985's IN THE LINE OF DUTY: THE SUPER COPS (aka YES MADAM and POLICE ASSASSINS 2), notable for its being Cynthia Rothrock's first HK film. Supposedly, Rothrock and Khan (her English impeccable, nobody else on the set spoke it) hung around together on the set. Khan was impressed by Rothrock's film martial arts techniques, but Cynthia would never show her any moves when the camera wasn't running. For whatever reason, Michelle Khan refused to appear in a later film project with Rothrock. Another early Khan film was YES MADAM, where she did a climactic, hazardous stunt (she injured her head while jumping over a bannister, crashing through glass and grabbing the legs of two villains), the likes of which she says she'll never do again - understandably. Even worse was a ruptured artery & internal bleeding she suffered on the set of MAGNIFICENT WARRIORS, when her opponent kept kicking her shin over & over, take after take!

She married D&B Films owner (and producer-- and a rich one) Dickson Poon in 1988, causing her obligatory retirement from films. But she divorced him (and I don't think poor Dickson thought to have her sign a 'pre-nup'!) and came back to films in 1992, starting with POLICE STORY 3: THE SUPER COP, though

(continued on next page...)

appearing in dumb dramas like this, people will begin calling her "Sybelle Who?". 1/2 - Damon Foster

QUEEN OF GAMBLER- Dreadful, low key talker with cameos by Ti Wei and Ku Feng (as a hopeless drug addict). Just another routine HK gambling movie, with suspense, gambling, romance, mobsters, drama and a little action. This utter boredom has a couple pretty girls, and about an equal number of fights. Something to do with a female gambler who kicks ass (both in gambling & kung fu) and wears disguises to evade the triads. Subplot: Man & woman cop team trying to shut down a casino (s), I think. The ending fight on the beach is okay, unlike QUEEN OF GAMBLER itself. Stear clear of this one unless you've more time on your hands than an inmate in Solitary Confinement. 1/2 - Damon Foster

QUEEN OF UNDERWORLD- Not even Amy Yip's ample assets can save this long, talky, incredibly dull HK tale (set in the 1960s & 1970s) of a waitress who gets 'promoted' to the position of hooker, marries into the mob until her husband cheats on her and then she becomes the leading Madam. Supposedly a 'fact-based' Big Timer movie, yet the climax is typically fabricated revenge as she and 'hench-whores' club the main villain to death. Though the hookers appear nude once or twice, sleaze-tease Amy Yip is almost completely covered throughout, not so much as a bikini or lingerie scene. A Yip film without a tantalizing cleavage shot makes as much sense as pizza without crust, a gun without bullets, or an Islamic fundamentalist without hatred! A couple scenes of blood (i.e. suicidal people blowing their brains out), and torture (Yip beaten & tied up) don't make up for a dull story. 1/2 - Damon Foster

QUEEN'S HIGH (1990)- Although affiliated with the IN THE LINE OF DUTY series, this film is far from it. Instead of a policewoman, Cynthia Khan is the daughter of a triad boss. When her father is murdered, her brother (Simon Yam) takes vengeance. This leads to a massacre of her family on her wedding day (the sight of Cynthia Khan with a machine gun in her wedding dress shooting hired assassins is unusual, to say the least). Cynthia assumes control, much to the dismay of her stepbrother who is in league with the Japanese crime boss responsible for the slaughter. Actually, not bad for what it is, a high-octane crime melodrama. Cynthia Khan is not her usual "restrained professional" character, but is given more an opportunity to show range, as well as display her athletic abilities in a knock-down, drag-out climax in a waterfront warehouse. Simon Yam is good as her ill-fated brother. **1/2 -Ron Murillo

RAGE AND HONOR (1992)- Quirky and uneven starring vehicle for Cynthia Rothrock and Richard Norton. Pair seeks to nail the drug lord via an incriminating home

video. This American film suffers from odd mixture of wacky one-liners and melodramatic monologues. Neither a fun action flick nor the intense affair the title implies, but well-filmed and watchable. Dir: Terence H. Winkless ** -William Wiggins

ROBOTRIX- An entertaining sci-fi/trash thriller from 1991, a co-production between Japan's Shochiku films and HK's Golden Harvest! Curvaceous cuties like Amy Yip and Chikako Aoyama as gorgeous robots helping scientist Hsu Hsiao Dan and detective David Wu go after a brutal, vicious cyborg. Not perfect or great, but with enough action and T&A to make it a lot of fun. ** -Damon Foster

ROMANCE OF THE WHITE HAIR MAIDEN- More human yo-yos in period times, complete with the usual rival sects and corny characters. A little different than THE BRIDE WITH WHITE HAIR though, because it has different actors. 1/2 -Damon Foster

ROSE (1992) [aka BLUE VALENTINE]- A stylishly directed love story starring Maggie Cheung as an insurance agent who saves the life of a triad member (Roy Cheung) and then falls in love with him. Not much in the way of action, but very well acted and engaging. Veronica Yip co-stars. *** -Richard Akiyama

SCOUNDREL WOMAN (aka BATTLE OF THE GREATEST)- This 1990 directorial from Kosaku Yamashita wasn't available. -DF

SEVEN PRINCESSES OF KUNG FU (aka HOLY WEAPON)- A kick-ass female cast is ruined by Wong Jing's direction and Dicky Cheung's stupid Steven Chow impression. Open a letter to Dicky Cheung: You are not Steven Chow, your will never be Steven Chow, so stop acting like him and get your own fucking personality. Michelle Yeoh, Cheung Man, and Maggie Cheung all keep their dignity but Sandra Ng should never be allowed to act in another film after her horribly overdone performance. Ng Man Dat is a highlight as the Ghost Doctor. The action scenes are cool though, and those are courtesy of Ching Sui Tung. 1/2 -Garro Nigoghossian

SHAOLIN INVINCIBLES- Though it's Carter Wang and Tan Tao Liang who steal this 1970s chop sockey flick, the two main heroes are females: Chia Ling and Lung Chun Erh. Chen Hung Lieh (so that's his name! Now I finally know) from SNAKEFIST FIGHTER and RAPE OF THE SWORD plays the villain in this exciting unintentional comedy full of swordplay, acrobatics, kung fu, but still's (I counted six), long tongued wizards (one is white, one is black), some ragged old man with a bad eye that sticks out of his head, and last and certainly least: Cheap gorillas trained in kung fu! If you can suspend your disbelief, SHAOLIN INVINCIBLES is a lot of fun! *** -Damon Foster

SHEMAN, MISTRESS OF THE UNIVERSE- Tony Reyes directed this pathetic, 1988 Filipino comey about a heroic transvestite (Joey De Leon). Though it's long, talky (and untranslated), and bewilderingly low, low budget, the brief scene of Sheman battling a badly animated skeleton (a salute to JASON AND THE ARGONAUTS or 7TH VOYAGE OF SINBAD) is worth checking out-almost. -Damon Foster

SHE SHOOTS STRAIGHT (1990)- Action packed tale about a family of female cops targeted for assassination by a Vietnamese gang. Joyce Godenzi, Tony Leung Ka Fei, Samo Hung, Yuen Wah. **** -Marvin Quan

SHE STARTS FIRE- I suppose this 1992 comedy would have had me laughing if I'd seen a subtitled print. It's probably amusing, but other than a catchy, quirky score and a couple shots of lead star Chingmy Yau (as a girl blessed with telekinises or some such ability) in skintight, pint hot-pants, I'd say SHE STARTS FIRE really sucks, steer clear. -Damon Foster

SHURA YUKIHIME series- A swordwielding babe avenges her parents death in this 1970s Shochiko series which means "Lady Snow blood". Not here to review-- yet! -DF

SISTER STREETFIGHTER- Etsuko 'Sue' Shiomi plays Tina Long, a female martial artist trying to find her narcotics agent brother who has disappeared while on an undercover assignment. Along the way she is helped by Sonny Hibaki (Sonny Chiba), a master of Shorinji kenpo, but make no mistake, this is Sue Shiomi's movie. Ms. Shiomi is one of the most beautiful ladies to grace any screen which serves to emphasize the particularly vicious, non-elegant but decidedly effective fighting style she employs (Sue's a real life protegee of Sonny Chiba). The only thing that really hurts this movie is the use of a trampoline offscreen for prodigious leaps (rare in a Japanese film, as opposed to HK fare). Despite the title, this is not part of the old Sonny Chiba "Streetfighter" films. *1/2 -Robert Mallory

A SECOND OPINION:

SISTER STREETFIGHTER- A silly, but enjoyable companion film to Sonny Chiba's "Streetfighter" series. The karate battles are great and Sue Shiomi (at center stage, finally!) is always pleasant on the eyes. But that utter screech of a scream she gives off is so loud and high pitched that it could probably shatter glass! *** -Jeff Goodhartz

SPIDER WOMAN NEXT DOOR- I get the impression some of them Hong Kongese (not to mention bad actors & actresses) have a lot of time on their hands. Avoid this staggeringly dull TV-made video, it has no subtitles and no lighting! One of the very worst videos I've ever slept through; just a talky

drama that never ends and once or twice it tries to rip off THE HAND THAT ROCKS THE CRADLE. Complete and utter trash. -Damon Foster

STAR VIRGIN- An entertaining, 1989 low budget farce from Japan. But it's entertaining, thanks largely to the beauty & quirkiness of star Eiko Kuroki. This amateur cheapie isn't a masterpiece, but the pace is decent, there are a number of amusing monsters, and any comedy about a sword-wielding, bikini-attired super heroine is okay by me. Dir.: Ichiro Ohmono. Cameo by Isao Sasaki. *** -Damon Foster

TATTOO GIRL- A HK (or Taiwanese? Same thing, spelled differently) film having something to do with a group of attractive women who wear masks and have tattoos on their backs. A little action, a little gambling, a little sleaze. Watchable for the fights (great, as always, despite obvious use of a male stunt double), but lack of subtitles kept this one from being all that it could be. *1/2 -Damon Foster

THREE FEMALE RACKETEERS- Other than its real title being OJO SANDO GASA, and that it stars Tazuko Niki, Matasaburo Tamba, little is known about this comedy (Daiei, 1960). Dir.: Kimiyoshi Yasuda. Not available for review. -DF

TIGER CLAWS (1991)- Probably Cynthia Rothrock's best American movie is this modern day martial arts mystery. Cynthia is a female police detective who is unwillingly teamed up with Jalal Merhi, a martial artist that used to train in the Tiger Style 'til he felt himself becoming murderous! Only someone else trained in Tiger Style is killing well known martial artists (one is a tournament winner, another is known for re-vamping the original Chinese styles, etc.) and he has to go undercover and undergo the training again. Cynthia gets to show what she can do (which is considerable) and has some of her best acting in this movie, but it is as much a Jalal Merhi film as it's hers. *1/2 -Robert Mallory

TO SPY WITH LOVE- Any HK flick with Sybelle Hu, Nina Li Chih and Amy Yip has got to be big fun-- that is, unless it's a stupid, talky, subtitle-free caper such as TO SPY WITH LOVE. Amy Yip's part is quite small, so as not to out-do the similarly sexy Nina Li Chih. This quirky secret agent comedy has something to do with the quest for some microfilm and how a manager (Teddy Robin Kwan) of a girls' rock & roll band unwittingly stumbles upon this dangerous situation. This boring romp is only worthwhile (almost) for its hard rock music and the climax where Nina Li Chih wears an arousing leotard as she battles Sybelle Hu. Also features Shing Fui On. -Damon Foster

ULTRACOP 2000- Another disaster from the Phillipines, this time Yukari Oshima is part of a futuristic team that encounters a pair

it's rumored that Jackie Chan and Michelle Khan didn't really like working with each other; though both have only spoke highly of each other-- in public, anyway. But it's just a rumor, since she did go visit Jackie in Vancouver on the set of RUMBLE IN THE BRONX. Though she did look a bit older during her 1992 return, her martial arts skills are still quite good, as seen in more recent efforts like PROJECT S and WING CHUN. Another rumor is that she met with Oliver Stone when he was in HK, about they're both working on a film (she has, in fact, made one U.S. film, FIST OF STEEL). It was also rumored at one point that she was being considered for the role in the American movie STREET FIGHTER (but they chose THE JOY LUCK CLUB's Ming-na Wen instead).

In other Michelle Khan related news, she hurt her knee while skiing in Europe a couple years back, and was undergoing therapy in New York with the same doctor who doctors the N.Y. Knicks, and ended up meeting several team members. She showed them a videotaped compiled of her various stunts and fights, and won them over-- they won her over too, she's been an NBA fan ever since (and likes hockey playoffs as well). According to Jeff Connor, Khan's English is flawless, and that she can't actually even read Chinese! Her real voice was heard in only two films: POLICE STORY 3 and its direct-sequel PROJECT S.

YES MADAM (1985)

ROYAL WARRIORS (1986)

EASY MONEY

TWINKLE TWINKLE LUCKY STARS (1985)

MAGNIFICENT WARRIORS (1986)

POLICE STORY 3 (1992)

PROJECT S (1992)

THE DRAGON GATE INN (1992)

WING CHUN (1993)

HEROIC TRIO (1993)

FIST OF STEEL (1993)

HOLY WEAPON (1993)

HEROIC TRIO 2 (1994)

SUNG DYNASTY FAMILY (1995)

WU CHIEN LIEN

{Woo Chien Lien, Ng Sien-lien, Ng Sin-lin, and so on}

D.O.B.: July 3, 1968

This comparatively obscure actress took a summer vacation from her studying at Tai Pei University, and in HK, despite limited showbiz experience, got cast in 1990's A MOMENT OF ROMANCE (Dir.: Benny Chan). This hit paved the way for additional film roles, like CASINO RAIDERS 2, and a string of successful film roles followed. Naturally, the next step was to do what so many actresses do, and segway into a singing career, her debut CD came out earlier this year.

A MOMENT OF ROMANCE (1990)

THE ROYAL SCOUNDREL (1991)

CASINO RAIDERS 2 (1991)

THREE SUMMERS (1993)

THE BARE-FOOT KID (1993)

A MOMENT OF ROMANCE 2 (1993)

(continued on next page...)

IN BETWEEN (1994)
TREASURE HUNTER (1994)
HOW DEEP IS YOUR LOVE (1994)
LOVE AND THE CITY (1994)
THE RETURNING (1994)
LIVE AND DIE IN TSMISHATSUI (1994)
EAT DRINK MAN WOMAN (1994)
BEGINNER'S LUCK (1994)

CARINA LAU

{aka Carina Liu, Lau Ka Ling}

Born: 1964

Better looking from the neck down, but a decent actress none-the-less. Not an action star, her roles are limited to drama and occasional comedy.

MY FOUR LOVES

EVIL CAT (1986)

PROJECT A pt. 2 (1987)

PROFILES OF PLEASURE (1988)

DAYS OF BEING WILD (1991)

SAVIOUR OF THE SOUL (1991)

ROSE (1992)

LADY SUPER COP (1993)

NO MORE LOVE, NO MORE DEATH (1993)

THE EAGLE SHOOTING HEROES (1993)

HOLY WEAPON (1993)

MOON LEE

DOB: 2/14/65

This cute little thing is a definite favorite for fans of martial arts and action films. Her fighting skills are superb, and she's one of those perky little actresses who makes movies worth watching for her appearance alone, and Moon Lee can be considered the Angela Mao of the 1980s.

ZU: WARRIORS FROM MAGIC MOUNTAIN (1983)

TWINKLE TWINKLE LUCKY STARS (1985)

NEW KIDS IN TOWN (1985)

THE PROTECTOR (1986)

MR. VAMPIRE (1986)

MR. VAMPIRE II (1987)

ANGEL (1987)

ANGEL II (1988)

ANGEL III (1989)

DEVIL HUNTERS (1989)

FATAL TERMINATION (1989)

KILLER ANGELS (1989)

PRINCESS MADAM (1989)

REVENGE OF ANGEL (1990)

ANGEL FORCE (1991)

THE NOCTURNAL DEMON (1991)

BURY ME HIGH (1991)

MISSION OF THE CONDOR (1991)

NEW KIDS IN TOWN (1991)

DREAMING THE REALITY (1992)

MISSION OF JUSTICE (1992)

KICKBOXER'S TEARS (1992)

AVENGING QUARTET (1992)

BEAUTY INVESTIGATOR (1992)

A SERIOUS SHOCK: YES MADAM 2 (1992)

INSPECTOR WEARS SKIRTS 4

DEMON INTRUDER

MISSION OF JUSTICE

CASCADING FEELING

of battling swordsmen from outer space. If the stupidity of the script is not enough to cause you to stop watching, the grossly overt anti-gay meanness of the film should offend moderate sensibilities (Examples: To battle the alien, they lock him in a box with a gay man who has been wounded, the entire station is wearing plastic uniforms and helmets so as not to catch AIDS). The fight scenes are mostly all wirework and the acting is terrible. Forget the script. Hell, forget the movie. -Ron Murillo

WARLORD AND THE ACTRESS, THE- An old Shaw Brothers drama from the 1960s, starring Julie Yeh Feih. This tale of WWII period China is interesting historically, and intriguing at times- just don't expect a lot of action. ** -Damon Foster

WATCH OUT, CRIMSON BAT- Japanese samurai fun from Shochiku, with Yoko Matsuyama as a blind swordswoman escorting a scroll that every local villain wants. Likeable characters, slick music and exciting swordplay make this one oodles of fun. The English dubbing has at least four "but still"s, and the climax has our heroic Oichi (Yoko Matsuyama) and two male swordsmen wasting dozens of villains who manufacture gunpowder. A very fun finale! ***1/2 -Damon Foster

WHORE AND POLICE WOMAN- It starts off with a brutal rape & murder of a sexy babe, so I thought I'd gotten stuck with one of those Category III flicks, but the remainder is more of an action drama with Michiko Nishiwaki as a cop protecting some busty hooker from a rich, prestigious villain. The big-titted whore is a witness with incriminating evidence in this average HK kung fu actioner. *** -Damon Foster

WOLF DEVIL WOMAN- Based, I believe, on a well-known Chinese novel (not that I'd know). I have yet to fully read a novel from China (or America or anywhere else). What I do know is that this is an entertaining low budget adventure about a girl, raised by wolves, who grows up to have supernatural powers. Sort of remade as BRIDE WITH WHITE HAIR. *** -Jeff Goodhartz

YAKUZA LADIES (aka SCOUNDREL WOMAN and GOKUDO NO ONNATACHI)- Dir: Hideo Gosha, 1986. With Shima Iwashita, Mikio Narita, Kei Sato, Rino Katase. Not available for review. -DF

YES MADAM: A SERIOUS SHOCK- Moon Lee breaks from her nice girl image to play a psychopathic cop who kills the fiancée of her partner (Cynthia Khan), who was once Lee's lover. She then frames Khan for the killing, but the resourceful police woman escapes and utilizes a car thief (Yukari Oshima) as a reluctant ally in her desperate attempt to clear herself. This film is rougher in context than any of the other action vehicles that star Lee, Khan, and Oshima. The murder of Khan's fiancée is a bloody and

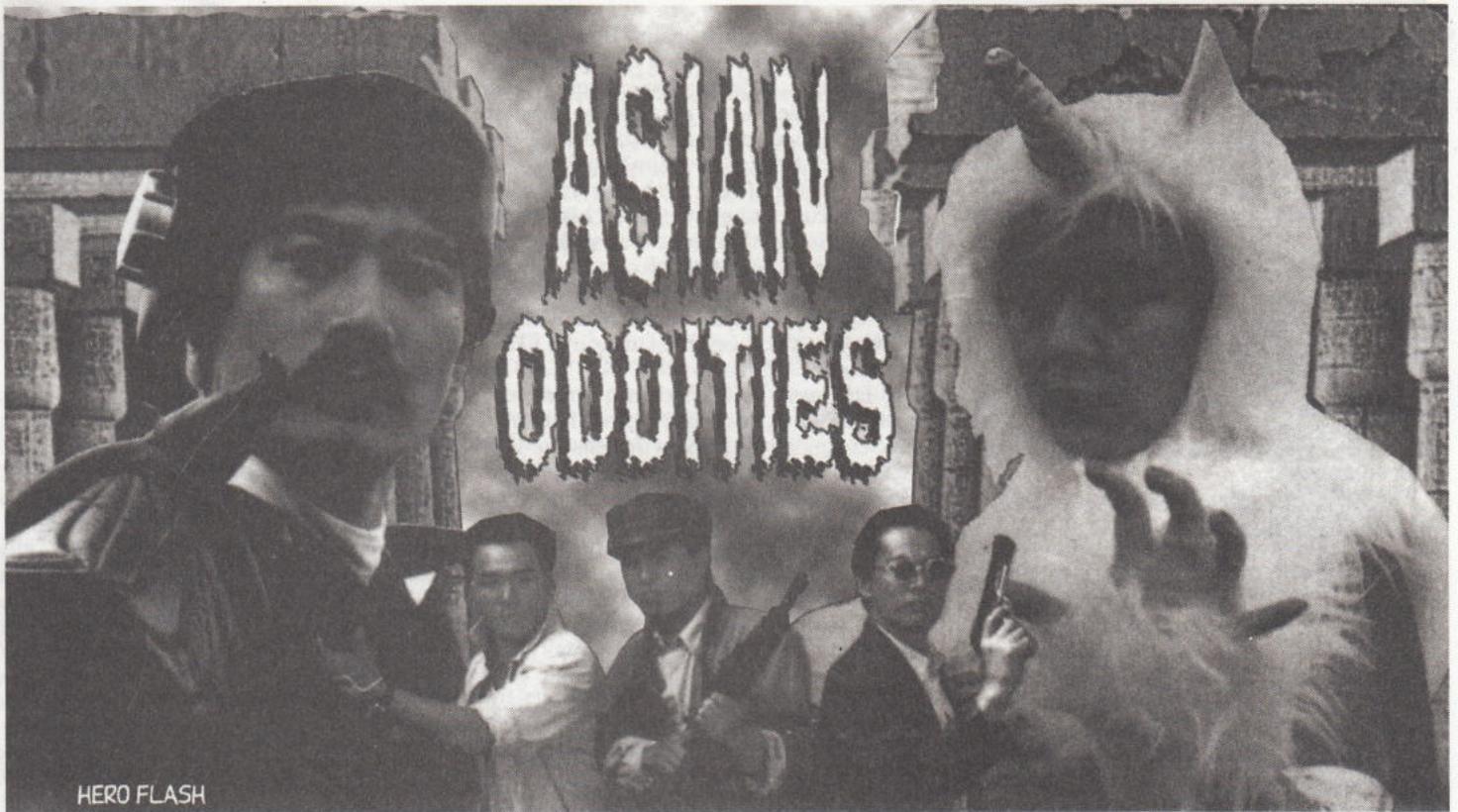
drawn-out affair and Lee's stabbing of her rogue policeman ally/lover in the mouth to frame Oshima is a jolt. Although Khan doesn't overstep her usual range, playing her part straight and determined, Lee chews up the scenery as the demented villain, infusing her character with a kind of maniacal energy not found in her heroine roles. But it is Yukari Oshima who steals the show in a supporting part of a tough street girl caught in the crossfire between the battling policewomen. She plays her part with a flip, indifferent air, until she becomes more involved with saving Khan's life and we learn the tragic past of Oshima's character. Violent, suspenseful, with a surprise ending, this film is worth watching once, but its disturbing nature will probably refrain you from seeing it again. **1/2 -Ron Murillo

YES MADAM: IN THE LINE OF DUTY (aka IN THE LINE OF DUTY 2: THE SUPER COPS)- Michelle Yeoh and Cynthia Rothrock in the same film is enough to give this film a classic rating, since it is the only time these two superstars were ever paired, but it also has other things going for it, like Tsui Hark as a master forger, Sammo Hung and Richard Ng in cameos as old men, and some of the best action sequences on film, starting with Yeoh singlehandedly breaking up a robbery and culminating in a knockdown, dragout fight that pits Yeoh & Rothrock against a team of thugs, led by chief henchman Dick Wei. The plot revolves around the search for a missing bit of microfilm that falls in Hark's hands. Yeoh is investigating the murder of her friend, who had possessed the film, and Rothrock is a FBI agent sent to aid her, though their styles cause them to clash early on. Definitely a must-see! ***** -Ron Murillo

YOGA AND THE KUNG FU GIRL- Phoenix Chan's great limberness & yoga don't elevate this routine, derivative, HK chop sockey tale (1970s) up to average. Chi Kuan Chun stars, as do the obligatories: Gambling, sexual harrassment scenes, 1920s setting, training scenes, a drunken master/bum, and revenge. I guess Pai Ying plays a villain in this stupid, irritating flick. I was more impressed by the commercial interruptions. * -Damon Foster

YOEN DOKUFUDEN series- Yet another batch of hard-to-find Japanese movies also known as the "Quick Draw Okatsu series". Unavailable films include 1968's YOEN DOKUFUDEN- HAN NYA NO HYAKU ("Poisonous Story of a Beautiful Witch: 100 Prayers of the Demoness"), and 1969's YOEN DOKUFUDEN- HITOKIRI OKATSU ("Story of a Beautiful Witch- Okatsu the Killer"). Scarce info indicates these and whatever other films came out combine samurai/yakuza action with ghostly themes. -DF

ZOKU HIROKU ONNARO ("Womens' Cell")- Released on Nov. 16, 1968, this was the second of several Daiei women-in-prison flicks not available for review. Dir: Kimiyoshi Yasuda, Music: Takeo Watanabe, Cast: Michiyo Yasuda, Sanae Nakahara. -DF



HERO FLASH

From India:

DAK BANGLA

1987, Written by Kumar Ramsay, Directed by Keshu Ramsay

With Rajan Sippy, Swapna, Aaloka,

Mazhar Khan, Ranjit, Marc Zuber, Reviewed by Pete Tombs /DF here, this movie was already reviewed last issue, but since reviews of Indian flicks are so hard to come by, I'm presenting an alternate view point of this film. -DF/

This fun and funky Indian horror movie starts like one of those 'Old Dark House' mysteries from the 30s or 40s. A motley cast of characters gather at an out of season hotel where strange deeds are afoot. The period feel of the piece is underlined by things like an evil hunchbacked servant, tackier than usual dance numbers and a bunch of the oldest looking "teenagers" ever. Add a sort of Charley's Aunt subplot, where one of the guys has to dress as a very unconvincing woman, and you have a real mixed movie, just as they like 'em down Bombay way.

There's a secret chamber in the house with a bed and a strange blood-spattered portrait. The teens discover the room and read in an old book of the hideous goings on that took place there years before. These scenes are among the best in the movie. With ever present thunder on the soundtrack and heavy use of blue and red filters, they reminded me of '60's Italian gothic horrors like MILL OF THE STONE WOMEN or THE

WHIP AND THE FLESH.

In a flashback we see an evil wizard with a giant skull altar and a hulking assistant who's foolish enough to grope a busty princess he sees rolling in the grass. The king's men capture him and there's a graphic whipping scene culminating in the decapitation and dismemberment of the big guy. The wizard gathers up the body parts and sews them back together again. I'm pretty squeamish and this scene was shown in graphic detail. I could feel that needle going through the leathery skin. The wizard wraps the corpse up in bandages like a mummy and then brings it back to life by squeezing his hand over it until blood pours out of the tips of the fingers.

DAK BANGLA is fairly short for Indian movies, clocking in at two hours. Even so, the monster is introduced gradually and only really makes an appearance halfway through. But from there on, it's non-stop mayhem, with the special effects guys throwing in everything they've got. The storm rages, leaves fly about, lightning flashes, blue and red lights pop on and off without warning and the mummy-like monster with its lumpy-porridge face attacks anything that moves. It seems to have telepathic powers and can make heads explode. In one devious scene a bad guy is raping a girl. He covers her mouth so she can't scream. Which means she can't warn him as the monster looms up from behind and kills him by squeezing his head like a ripe tomato.

The violence and sex in this movie will surprise anyone who hasn't seen many recent Indian films. Although there's nothing explicit, there's lots of sexy dancing, including one babe in shiny PVC hot pants, and several semi-naked bedroom scenes. Even-

tually, using one of the girls as bait, the guys manage to draw the creature into a trap. Hanging it on a hook, they heave it up through the roof of the building. Exposed to the light, it explodes in a flurry of flying bandages accompanied by gruesome screams.

DAK BANGLA was directed by Keshu Ramsay, one of the younger members of the big Ramsay family, India's foremost horror specialists. This is pretty typical of their work, which also includes BANDH DARWAZA, India's first Dracula-style vampire movie, and MAHAKAAL, an Indian Freddy Krueger. DAK BANGLA is superb entertainment with no pretensions of being anything else. If you're interested in investigating Indian horror movies, this is the perfect place to start. ***1/2 -Pete Tombs

From Japan:

MOKUYO NO KAIKAN

["Thursday Ghost

Stories"] Fuji TV; Thursdays 7:30 - 9:00 P.M.

Introductory Episode Starring: Hideyaki Takizawa, Tomoko Oshima, Akira Takarada, Goro Inagaki, Mami Ozawa, Maki Mizuno, Yoshihiko Hakamada, Reviewed by John Emma

Well, after three years of game shows, cooking shows, talk shows, and the ever present quiz shows, Japanese TV is finally starting a new trend, supernatural or ghost stories commonly called kaidan (aka "kaidan"). This is Fuji's entry, and it's a good one. The first episode is made up of three short stories, one of which will be a recur-



ring adventure.

The first story, *Kaiki Club*, features a popular children's mythical character with an interesting plot twist. The story begins with a young boy finding a rock which fell from the sky. When his sister asks what he has, he hides the rock and says nothing. A few days later, the children at his school start seeing a character called "Toire no Hanakosan". This means Hanako The Bathroom Ghost, and is similar to our "boogie man" or the "sweet 16" ghosts of the 1950s. It's something to scare little kids with. After a few days of sightings, a group of friends, the *Kaiki Club*, decides to investigate. Their first attempt turns up an angry teacher in the bathroom. But sneaking into the school at night, the next attempt turns up Hanakochan. This ghost is dressed like a school girl, but she has no eyes. After a few scary moments she begins to glow, and so does the mysterious rock. One of the older boys takes the rock and hands it to Hanako, who was reaching for it. The surprise comes when she and the rock merge into one and she flies into space. The rock was really a spacecraft and Hanako an alien!

The next story, "Gozen Reiji no Chi" (Blood at Midnight), is the best of the three. It opens with a man cutting his arm with a big katana, the blood drips, and cut to... a couple looking at a new apartment. The young wife finds a strange little room with a section of peeling wallpaper. This does not deter our heroes, and soon they have a welcoming party. While the party is in progress, the wife's pet bird mysteriously ups and dies. She's heartbroken until the next day when, visiting the little room, she peels that wallpaper and finds a spell. And the bird returns to life! It just takes a little blood. But the bird's nature changed. It's no longer friendly, and when the husband puts his finger near, the bird bites him, drawing more blood. (Does this sound a little familiar? I seem to have read a story by Steven something a few years ago a lot like this.) As the story progresses, the young wife is killed in a traffic accident, and the husband, of course, decides to bring her back to life. He steals her body, and starts practicing to be a sushi chef on himself, while we read on the wall "Don't try this on people!" (At home, or anywhere, I guess). Finally, in a fit of selfless love, he slits his throat, bleeds all over

her, and she wakes up again. By this time, her sister bursts in, realizing her brother-in-law is acting a little strangely lately. Well, big sister also decides to become a sushi chef and slices & dices baby sister to death. Now the husband (remember him?), didn't do a great job of slicing his throat (where's Toshiro Mifune when we need him?) and after watching all this, let's wifey suck a little more of his blood. And of course, he dispatches her a second time, and has "the big one!" And in a typical cliché ending, little sister wakes up to keep the fun going. (This really sounds familiar?)

The last story is kind of an anti-climax but still good. It's called "Nanasei Futatabi" (Nanasei Again) and my wife tells me it is based on an old short story of 20 years ago by sci-fi writer Yasutaka Tsutsui. This covers another popular theme here, ESPers. It starts with a young woman on a train who keeps "seeing" a train-wreck. She is an esper with the power to read minds. Also in the train is a young boy with the same ability, a rapist who wants her body (he shows good taste), and the source of the woman's vision, a man who can see the future. These two finally meet, and he predicts they will be the only survivors. But she insists on trying to save the others. During the course of her efforts, she discovers the young boy and his talent, the boy's stepmother abuses him because of it, and she has to deal with the rapist. That's a neat scene. She starts out cowering in fear (do women really do that?) but then uses her powers to scare the shit out of him. She does this by repeating every thought she has (nobody likes a mindreader). Soon he is a quivering pile of shit on the floor, crying, while she walks away laughing. A satisfying rape scene for once. Finally, she escapes the train, with the boy, thereby changing the future. Her future boyfriend is surprised by this (he also had a vision of fucking his brains out), and to his horror, discovers she and the boy are both mind readers! That's too much for him, so off he goes. No lay, but like I said, nobody likes a mind reader. The last scene finds the boy and girl gushing "We'll never be alone again."

Well, although these are all old ideas, they are all well done. And they sure as hell beat cooking shows. I give this one 4 stars and hope it lasts. If you can see, do. **** - John Emma



From Mainland China:

RAISE THE RED LANTERN

Era International (H.K.) Ltd., 1991, A China Film Co-Production Corporation, Producer: Chiu Fu-sheng, Executive Producer: Hou Hsiao-hsien & Zhang Wenze, Prod. Supervisor: Ma Dehe, Prod. Manager: Feng Yiting, Starring: Gong Li, Ma Jingwu, Jin Shuyan, Reviewed by Damon Foster

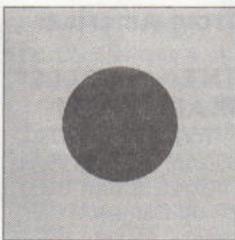
So are Hong Kong movies gonna' be as

lame as this, once them commie bastards take over in 1997? I sure hope not! RAISE THE RED LANTERN had basically the same effect on me as did RED SORGHUM (see OC#4); at times I was a little confused, at times I was more than a little bored, and for probably about ten minutes, I was asleep--the best part! RAISE THE RED LANTERN got critical acclaim and wide releasing on American TV, video and theaters, so obviously, there are plenty of people out there who liked it and will be upset if I trash it too badly. So I'll try to be nice; in other words, I'll try to lie.

Okay, so the story has an interesting premise, even if, at times, it seems too much like RED SORGHUM. But what's actually a fairly simple story which could be told in 45, possibly 30 minutes is dragged & stretched out endlessly-- its two-hour running time is a bit much. Oops, I forgot, this is suppose to be my "nice" paragraph. Okay, so like I said, the script offers some intriguing moments and interesting characters. I'm gritting my teeth and clenching my fists to try and stay positive. Let's see, I was also impressed by the photography, lighting, cinematography, some of the acting performances and over-all production values (the whole thing is set at some castle; not a whole lot of need for a big budget). There, you pseudo intellectuals happy now? I've been fair toward a flick I didn't care for! I've established that for what it is, RAISE THE RED LANTERN is a decent little film-- it's a little educational, a little arty, and a little interesting. It's based on some old novel about concubines.

But come on! You know me, an action fan! Why the hell do historical art films like this get such big releases (I watched it on HBO) and yet it's so hard to find a decent Jackie Chan, MR. VAMPIRE, or Monkey King flick without going out of our ways to seek them out at some hidden Chinese videostore?! Hell, I would rather watch one of those low budget chop-sockey farces from the 1970s five times, than sit through this slow-paced talker again. I'll be fair, and give RAISE THE RED LANTERN a whopping two stars (**) for the effort involved; it's wellmade, for what it is. It's just a drama, and no worse than average for a drama.

Gong Li plays one of four concubines at a palace in this depressing tale of the sexist ways of some rich Chinese guy during the turn of the century. The red lanterns [shown through out] represent status, as do foot massages and giving birth to boys (daughters are considered useless-- until they're old enough to screw, that is). But this grim story isn't the type of script I should go in depth on. It's not that type of film, there's no point in me telling you everything else that happens, just in case you decide to sit through it yourself-- it's best you not know what happens from scene-to-scene in this gloomy soap opera. So the best way I can tell you the story without giving too much away is to quote from the TV GUIDE: "The wives of a Chinese Patriarch court his favor." ** - Damon Foster



From India:

**K H O O N I
DRACULA**

["Bloody Dracula"]
India; 1993, Dir.:
Harinam Singh, Star-
ring: Harinam Singh,
Sonia Thakur,

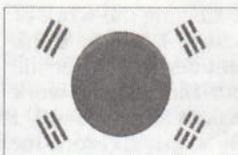
Kaushal Singh, Reviewed by Massimo Lavagnini

Dracula goes to India. The famous vampire is a sorry figure in this trash, so awful, it almost qualifies as one of the worst films ever made. KHOONI DRACULA proves that Ed Wood was just an amateur, when it came to making trash.

The Count, who sleeps lying down on the grass (everybody knows the coffins are very expensive in India!), is apparently in order of a gangster who wants to kill some girls. I'm saying "apparently" because it's impossible to relate the plot of a movie edited in an incomprehensible way! We see the same sequences repeated no less than three times,



with no logic in the succession of the events. The poor Dracula is portrayed by Harinam Singh. There's no classic black cape, instead he looks much more shabby: Long dark hair and a ridiculous top hat! His victims, all actresses with abdomens deformed by cellulitis, seem to be really frightened by the vampire, a living dead in decomposition with a red seal on his forehead and he wattles like a turkey! -Massimo Lavagnini



From Korea:

HERO FLASH

["JIGU BAN WI-DEI:
YON GU HURESHI"]

Producer: Mun Ya
Sung, Dir.: Kung Yong Gu, Cast: Kang Lam
Kir, Che He Yang, Che Yong Ho, Pak Ming
Hi, Released on Video by Ace Production
Co. Ltd., on 9/2/90, Reviewed by Damon



Foster

If there's anybody in the sci-fi zine fandom who should understand Korean movies, it should be me. By now, it seems like I would be able to figure these Koreans out. Then comes an uneven flick like 1990's HERO FLASH, which has even me baffled; somebody who's reviewed many a Korean film in the pages of Oriental Cinema and Heroes on Film. Though HERO FLASH has a few cool scenes, it makes me feel new and strangely alien to the world of Korean science fiction. HERO FLASH makes about as much sense as that Nirvana song where Kurt Cobain sang, "And I don't have a gun." But this movie's illogical, no-continuity-approach doesn't make it completely suck; I mean, it's got its share of action and there aren't a lot of boring scenes, even to Korean-language impaired dudes like myself (as always in Korean pictures, there are no subtitles).

Okay, let's see if I can figure this one out - As is obvious by the costumes of both the heroes and a few of the villains, this is an absolutely blatant ripoff of Japan's FLASHMAN (Toei; 1986) TV series. Even the title uses the word "flash", I just don't get it! There's nothing subtle about this shameless imitation; it's as though them Koreans are begging Toei to sue them!!! The Korean 'Hero Flashes' look damn near identical to Japan's 'Flashmen', except that the costumes aren't as well made. At first I thought maybe these really were Flashman costumes that they dug up out of Toei's dumpster after the end of FLASHMAN's Tokyo run in 1987. But the colors are a little different; there's one Green hero (who we don't see until the final seconds of the movie), two Yellow females, and two men who's costumes appear to be either Orange or Pink- me thinks they were originally meant to be Red, but they accidentally got faded or bleached before filming

started!

One thing is for damn sure; this is one cheap production! One of the villains wears costume accessories of a Halloween unicorn costume (you can find them at Sears, Wallgreens, K Mart, etc., around Halloween time), and common props at an amusement park supply much of the thrills for the tale's first half hour! It's so stupid, our two main heroes (the other three don't appear until the film's end) go on some rides, and we sit through all of it, in detail! In all fairness, the rides do look like fun! There's a neat Haunted Cave ride that includes an awesome dragon prop; if only Korea put as much effort into their movies as they do their amusement park rides. Another thing adding to the low budget look is the severe continuity problems: In one scene, the "Yellow Korean Ranger" has no belt and a decent pair of knockers. Later, she has a belt, but the voluptuous curves are gone. In other scenes, male stunt-doubles are painfully obvious. The most annoying thing, aside from a pointless, ten-minute chase [that seems much longer] are the obligatory animated inserts:

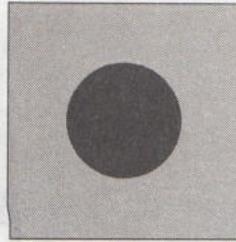
Let's face it, even generally live action movies of Korea were influenced by Japan's Go Nagai. In this one, the cartoon sequences (totalling about 20 minutes of HERO FLASH's running time) appear to be flashbacks (or rather, 'hero flashbacks'), as our lead hero & his female sidekick flee (in a forest) from the villains. During the course of this seemingly-endless chase through the wilderness, the righteous duo seems to recall how they came to Earth, or remember some other sort of adventures set in outerspace. One of these one-dimensional interruptions has our main man in cartoon form on a space station, fleeing from some octopus monster. Since there's minimal dialogue, anyone, even the most ardent Japanimation fans could be

fooled into thinking this is a Japanese cartoon. The art & animation is really no different than Japan's early 1970s stuff like MAZINGA or DEVILMAN. The second, much longer anime insert deals more with spaceships and Transformer-style robots, so SPACE CRUISER YAMATO and all that DUNBINE crap comes to mind. It's pretty obvious that the only reason these outerspace/adventure sequences are cartoons is because them Koreans hadn't the budget to construct all the necessary sets, props, explosions & costumes required. While the cartoon portions are okay, it gets distracting when it abruptly (seemingly at random, continuity sucks!) switches from real flesh & blood actors to RAIDEEN-wannabe cartoons.

But despite its many flaws, I can still recommend HERO FLASH because I'm an action fan, which I assume you know by now. This unintended comedy at least has great martial arts! The script is paced very well, and it's two or three fights make this romp's flaws forgivable. These wild taekwon do duels blow away most of the action seen in the original Japanese predecessor! Plenty of spinning back kicks are in these great confrontations, while its Japanese originator was comparatively lackluster in the action department. As an over-all production, the Japanese TV show is of course superior-- at least it has a budget, sets, monsters, decent editing, continuity, coherent logic and miniatures; HERO FLASH doesn't. If only HERO FLASH's martial arts choreographers had worked with the Japanese, they could have taken the best from both worlds! Perhaps the Koreans are close enough to the Chinese that the whole "kung fu chop sockey"-style is in their blood, or better yet, an explanation could be that Korean taekwon do is simply more exciting on screen than many Japanese martial arts like judo & kendo.

I'm just guessing, of course, but I suspect HERO FLASH is about two superheroes on the run from alien kidnapers who hang out at amusement parks to snatch unsuspecting kiddies. The story would appear to start out with the villains pursuing the two Flash Heroes, and nothing really changes from there. There are a couple immensely fun duels as our 'Red' (?) hero and his Yellow female helper tangle with the dime-store villains (including an excellent battle on a bridge), but unfortunately, much of the latter half involves a tedious chase scene made all the more nauseating by the "we've-ripped-off-FLASHMAN-so-now-let's-rip-off-STARBLAZERS" cartoon footage. Eventually, after our mighty duo has wasted most of the baddies, it's revealed that secretly, three of the main villains were originally Flash Heroes themselves, but were apparently hypnotized to be evil. They don't regress back to their Hero Flash forms until the very end of the movie. Despite an entertaining beginning & middle, the climax is anything but climactic. The villains become heroes, so for once they look like a traditional, pre-Power Rangers, five-team group; but it's too

late! They never fight anyone, because all the villains are dead. This tale ends where it should start; with all five heroes battling villains. Hopefully there's a sequel where all five get in on the action. *** -Damon Foster



From India:

DAHSHAT

["Scared"] India; 1981, Dir.: Tulsi Ramsay & Shyam Ramsay, Starring: Navin Nischol, Sarika, Om Shivpuri, Nadira,

Reviewed by Massimo Lavagnini



It's an older film from the Ramsay Bros. factory, DASHAT already reveals the great talent of the "Kings of Hindu Horror". Great vocational training, the service provided by producing this interesting Z-movie.

A shady character, his face covered by a hood, is stealing the corpses exhumed from a little cemetery in the open country, away from Bombay. The young doctor Samir finds himself an improvised detective, finds out that the purchaser of the bodies is an old doctor a remote village, who's doing secret experiments on the animals in his laboratory. The wife [of the old doctor], discovers her husband is unfaithful and loses her temper. She decides to take revenge, injecting him (with a serum which will gradually change the poor guy into a revolting snake-man; an irreversible transformation) during his sleep. *** -Massimo Lavagnini



From America:

THE ROLLER BLADE SEVEN

York Pictures; 1992, A Film by Donald G. Jackson, Starring: Scott Shaw, Joe Esteves, Don Stroud, Karen Black, William Smith, Reviewed by Damon Foster

Yeecouch! Writing this absolutely scathing review is gonna' hurt! When I trash an amateur film like this, I feel like a hypocrite and a traitor. As a one time producer/director/actor of no-budget productions myself, I can understand & appreciate all the effort, time, money, blood, sweat & tears it takes to complete even the lamest, most pointless, unwatchable fiascos-- which is exactly what THE ROLLER BLADE SEVEN is! It's a sequel to the 1980s stinker ROLLER BLADE (reviewed in OC#8), and amazingly, manages to be just as bad!!! How is this possible? Worse than ROLLER BLADE? It's as though they're going out of their way to make something as unwatchable, non-entertaining, pretentious, claustrophobic and BORING as is humanly possible! I just don't get it, it seems they want their production to get trashed mercilessly, and I'm not too happy to oblige.

Again, I've made my share of loser films & videos myself, and have had to endure nasty, negative attacks from critics and fanzines alike, so I know how it feels to have my work (and myself) panned, gutted, chewed up and spit back out. With this disillusioning feeling in mind, I'm trying (unsuccessfully) to think of nice things to say about THE ROLLER BLADE SEVEN. Okay, here goes: 1. A little of the rock music is okay at times. 2. There are a couple of sexy girls. 3. The fact that they managed to get so many enthusiastic people in front of a camera is a major accomplishment in itself.

But that's it! I hate to be such a back-stabber against a fellow independent filmmaker-- but what can I say? I loathed this slow-paced, phenomenally dull, artsy-fartsy piece of crap! The acting, script writing, editing, sound quality and action staging all just plain stink! Much of the music is inappropriate, like "happy"-sounding banjo music (sounding like reject tunes from THE BEVERLY HILLBILLIES) meant to "highlight" (hah!) a battle scene. Not that the battle scene is worth a damn. This god-awful production has some truly poor martial arts. While it becomes apparent that a few of these actors actually do know how to fight, and are capable of nice action and stunts, the style of editing, long pans, endless long shots, and other horrid gimmicks ruin what little action THE ROLLER BLADE SEVEN has to offer.

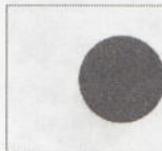
Another reason I hate bashing the work of nonprofessionals is because I like to think each of us has a different aesthetic. For me to trash another amateur filmmaker's work is like telling them to make videos the way I do. So I try to accept these guys' visions for what they are-- but I must admit, I was bored and despised every moment of THE ROLLER BLADE SEVEN. I'm not claiming that my videos are any better, but I have a simple and basic philosophy: To entertain. I don't try to

make arty, realistic, necessarily well-acted flicks. I don't try to make them serious, blazingly original or professional-looking. My only goal when doing a video is to make something that people will consistently enjoy (whether I've succeeded or not is up to the individual), and later watch again. It doesn't seem that these are the goals of the writers & producers of *ROLLER BLADE SEVEN?* I guess there are all types of people out there, and *THE ROLLER BLADE SEVEN* simply proves that there are those whom I can never understand!

I look at it this way: When producing an independent film or video, it's important to realize and analyze our strengths. Though several disagree, I consider two of my strengths to be action and comedy; so naturally I cram that into my videos. If the producers & writers of *THE ROLLER BLADE SEVEN* have any strengths, I personally couldn't see it. Better luck next time, guys! Don't worry, I have faith in you, and know you'll improve.

For what it's worth, the setting is some futuristic, post-apocalyptic wasteland where everyone rides rollerskates. Some pretentious, sword-wielding martial artist (who's full of himself) called Hawk is off to rescue his sister from a gang of road warriors. If this sounds even remotely exciting, I apologize. -Damon Foster

From Japan:



KINDAICHI'S YOUTHFUL DETECTIVE ADVENTURES

Produced by:
people in Japan,
Directed by: person (in

Japan), Featuring: Rie Tomosaka (in Japan),
Reviewed by John Emma (in Japan too!)

This time, I can really say something good about something I've watched here in Japan. But first, a little background. As you may know, the Japanese film industry is dying. The reason is most of their films have a very dark, negative feel to them. The Japanese prefer American flicks, but the film industry here keeps putting out the same old crap. It's also in the nature of the Japanese to look for the cloud to go with the silver lining. They've got a real negative side to them. But it is really an effective element of this series.

Kindaichi is a teenaged boy who seems to always be involved in supernatural detective adventures. Using the dark feeling adds to the supernatural element. I'll give you two episodes as example...

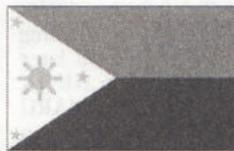
The opener finds four seemingly unrelated people dying mysteriously at the same time. A reporter notices this oddity, and he and Kindaichi investigate. The killer is a videotape made by a troubled young woman who disappeared some years earlier. In the course of the show, they investigate her life. Among other things, her mother was a psychic who killed herself, she was having sex with her own father, and the real shocker—she's a hermaphrodite who was killed by the man she

loved. Of course, we get to see the video; it's reminiscent of the ending scenes in *TETSURO THE IRON MAN*. And the last words on the tape are: "If You Watched this, You'll be Dead in Seven Days."

The final episode was also a good one. Ten people are invited to a haunted house/mystery weekend by Dr. Redrum (I know, it sounds like Steven King; it's suppose to). Kindaichi and his girlfriend (Rie Tomosaka, a current *teken* star, and the only star of note in the series) are among the guests. This is getting long, so I'll quick cut here. Guests are all trapped, Redrum is a crazy killer, guests find wax mannequins of themselves all posed in grisly deaths and the guests themselves are killed the same way! One of the guests is a blond gaijin who feats she's a vampire because she likes to lick blood. And the ending, Redrum is an actress (one of the guests) seeking revenge on the others for killing her collage lover. She commits suicide, and the real badguy, the only one left, is killed by the gaijin vampire to save the others.

The stories sound lame /*And unintelligible!* "Redrum is an actress seeking revenge for the death of her collage lover?" *Hub? -DF?* on paper, but they're interesting as you watch them. Especially since I don't speak Japanese. Oh yeah, Kindaichi solves all the crimes. ***
-John Emma

From the Philippines:



OKAY KA FAIRY KO PART 2

Presented by Viva
Video & M-Zet Films
in 1993, Dir.: Tony
Reyes, Dir. of Photog-

raphy: Sergio Lobo, Assoc. Prod.: Christabel Y. Galsim, Sound Supervisor: Gaudencio Barreda, Musical Dir.: Homer Florez, Prod. Designers: Rolly Bernardo & Ramon Nicdao, Creatures, Special Make-Up, Prosthetics & Visual Effects by: "Visual Illusion", Editor: Eduardo Boy Jarlego, Starring: Vic Sotto, Aiza Seguerra, Tweetie De Leon, Larry Silva, Ruby Rodriguez, Jinky Oda, Tetchie Agbayani, Reviewed by Damon Foster

It's been a long time since I tolerated any movie starring that anorexic Steven Chow of the Philippines, Vic Sotto. This Filipino pop idol annoyed the hell out of me in ridiculous farces like *ROCKEY + V*, *CROCODILE JONES: SON OF INDIANA DUNDEE*, and even the first *OKAY KA FAIRY KO: THE MOVIE*. Having incredibly low expectations from the start, I was actually caught off guard when I found myself actually enjoying (while sober!) portions of *OKAY KA FAIRY KO* (whatever the hell that means) *PART 2!* Young comedian Vic Sotto is actually allowed to be genuinely funny once or twice in this decent little Filipino fantasy! Not only that, but he gets into a fist fight (though a rather lame one; hell, I could fight better than that when I was seven years old! I wish I still could!) less than ten minutes into the film, when he tackles a gang of bikers hassling a store clerk.

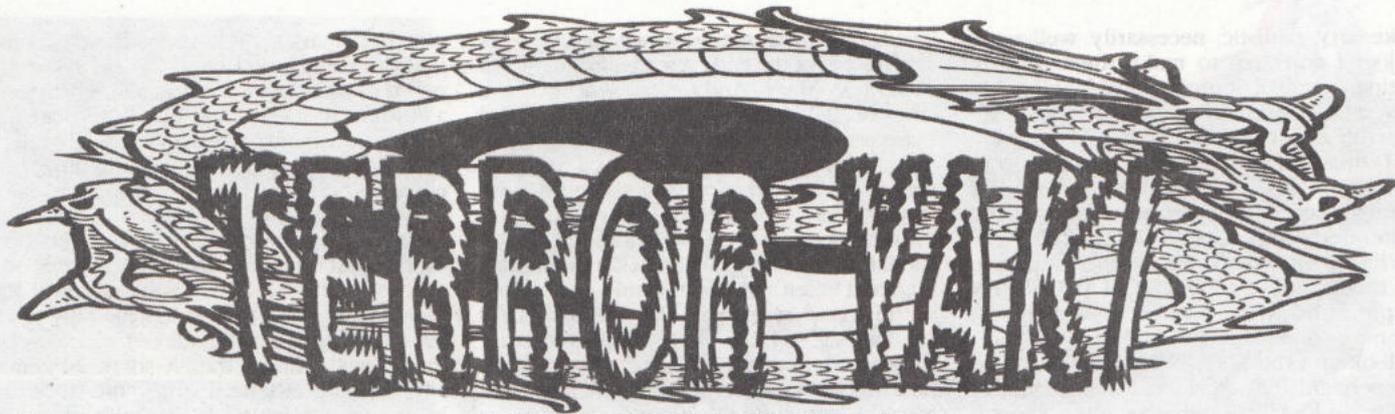
Despite the usual limited budget (the Fili-

pino trademark!), this farce managed to come up with some enjoyable FX gags: Super-imposed fire, lasers & other visuals (which look a little crude & cartoonish, but do suffice), not to mention monstrous snakes, bats, spiders, ravens, a quicksand rescue, a little time traveling, and even a couple amusing scenes of some fat guy being changed into a turtle and literally a human sprinkler (to put out a forest fire)! At times, I almost expected this otherwise laid-back, talky movie to burst at the seams like one of them totally wacky, over-the-top Hong Kongese fantasies where everything goes. Instead, the FX shots are generally spread pretty far apart, so the story can be coherent & logical. But a rationale script won't do us non-Filipinos much good, unless you've enough time on your hands to learn to understand that language they call "Tag-Along", or whatever. I'm sorry, I mean, Tagalog!

If you can get passed the abundant tedious dialogue and comedic shenanigans, you'll discover some truly inspired moments in this good (by Filipino standards, that is) adventure/drama. There are several rubber monster villains, including two that are absolutely blatant ripoffs from the American flick *ALIEN*: 1. At the beginning of the film, one of them 'Chest-Bursters' (*ALIEN* larva) tears its way out of some poor guy's stomach! It looks just like the ones in the U.S.'s *ALIEN* trilogy! 2. Also on hand, at the climax is what's obviously a drastic imitation of the Queen Alien of the second *ALIEN* film. But this is a beautiful, huge prop, it's even bigger than its American counterpart! It's always amazing to see such epic models (I would guess it's about 20 feet high!) in Filipino movies. Though its feet are a little clumsy, don't be fooled—this is no paper-mache puppet! This creature is a masterpiece, and could easily be used in any big budget, American movie. If them Filipinos keep on churning out production values like this, and similar thrills in the first *OKAY KA FAIRY KO* (i.e. a spectacular dragon), *DUGU NG PANDAY* and *DARNA ANG PAGBALIK*, it seems logical that one day, their films will get international acclaim.

This Filipino take on the like of superior HK efforts like *A CHINESE GHOST-STORY* and *THE 7TH CURSE* casts Vic Sotto as Enteng (who, in one scene is shrunken by a fairy so he can fit in a piggy-bank. It's all reminiscent of the *I DREAM OF JEANIE* episode where Major Nelson got reduced to the size of a doll), the same suburban adventurer of 1992's *OKAY KA FAIRY KO*. This time, the same evil witch who wrecked havoc in Part 1 is back, and is trying to change the Philippines into a haven for druggies, alcoholics & prostitutes. The nasty (yet leggy; sort of a Filipino *Elvira*, minus the breasts) witch uses magical spiders to poison a good fairy, and the only way to cure her is with some magical fruit located in a hostile land populated by monsters and primitive cannibals; the leader of these natives is played by Tetchie Agbayani (*DEATH FIGHT*). So Enteng is given a Court Jester-ish uniform and an opportunity to ripoff *SWORD IN THE STONE*, and thus, finally, the adventure begins. After Enteng and his travel companions fight their way out of the village,

(continued on inside back cover)



妖怪大戦争

YOKAI DAISENZO

[aka Ghost Warfare, "The Big Ghost War", "Demon Warfare", "Spook Warfare", etc.]
 Daiei; 1968, Writer: Tetsuro Yoshida, Dir.: Kimiyoshi Yasuda, Special Effects: Mr. Kuroda, Starring: Akane, Kawasaki, Toru Ogawa, Akio Uchida, Jun Fujimaki, Gen Kimura, Reviewed by Damon Foster

Either my understanding the Japanese language is better than I thought or this fantasy/horror/comedy is so fun it requires no translation at all. Despite the language barrier, I did not use the Scan button even once. Though this classic film isn't really action packed, the pacing is quicker than Bill Clinton on a date. So long as you know the basics of Japanese folklore, following YOKAI DAISENZO shouldn't be too much of a problem. Needless to say, I was not disappointed, which is saying a mouthful, seeing as I've been aware of this movie's existence for most of my life; I'd say I first saw photos from it about 20 years ago. Back then, I made a quantum leap further into Asian fantasy, reaching a milestone at about the age of 10 or 11, when I discovered San Francisco's Japan Center. Through books, dolls & posters sold at this cultural shopping-mall, I came to

realize there were plenty of Japanese films & TV shows not released to America, including YOKAI DAISENZO, which, two whole decades later, I've finally had the pleasure to see- and it was more fun than I expected.

Granted, the video quality on this tape is poor, one day I'll have to see a clean, crystal-clear copy to fully appreciate this unique production. The tape's glitches, combined with the dark setting (it all takes place at night, in order to preserve the gloomy atmosphere of this lively 'kai-dan') made occasional squinting inevitable, but I still managed to decipher its over-the-top approach, regardless. It seems that them Japanese movie makers always had that urge to create outlandish, far-fetched, cartoon-like creatures. In the 1970s, this hidden longing was released full-force, via the superhero boom. But the 1960s predated most of the "Henshin Genre", so for sheer outlandishness, 1968's YOKAI DAISENZO is the next best thing; the 1960's equivalent of what would later result in the likes of HENSHIN NINJA ARASHI, BAROM I and the two LION MARU programs. YOKAI DAISENZO is hardly a superhero film, but offers an early glimpse of the amusing outlandishness about to explode all over Japanese TV.

Regretably (but not surprisingly), dudes complete, absolutely unfamiliar (and ignorant of) with Japanese culture & language may yawn & snore at the many dialogue

scenes in this drama set in samurai times. To the uninitiated, and to anyone who prefers the under-simplified morosity of the Super Bowl, this flick will come off as a bizarre, meaningless mishmash of unevenness and nonsense. It's easy to see why this movie, unlike so many more 'traditional' Japanese monster films, never received any English translation. This is a shame since, aside from some scenes of bloodshed, YOKAI DAISENZO could have been big fun for kids reared on the likes of H.R. PUFF 'N STUFF, LIDSVILLE, etc. But then, Sid & Marty Kroft's caricatures never bit necks and caused blood-letting; so much for genre comparisons. But as an American myself, I must confess that I too scoffed at the scenes of samurai warriors being scared shitless, by a ghost called "Karakasa Kozou" who's actually an umbrella dangling from pupper strings. With its tiny size and funny face, there's nothing scary about it. Were I one of those whimpy samurais, I would have burst out laughing at this little spirit, saying, "You gotta' be kidding!", while my fellow warriors screamed in terror at the least menacing, most harmless ghost since Casper.

It's story time, boys & geishas! Seems a couple curious Arabs accidentally dug up some huge, murderous blue demon (no, not the Mexican wrestler) called "Daimon", and it's a killer-looking monster costume! This nasty creature flies like a bat and has a long,



からかさ小僧



青河童



一角大王



浦すま



ダイモン

YOKAI DAISENZO

Frankenstein-ish forehead. Daimon goes on a small rampage before arriving in Japan, of all places. He discovers he has a taste for Japanese blood, and his teeth take to necks like Jerry Springer takes to interviews with bisexual skinheads who enjoy bathing with their mothers. This blue villain multiplies himself quickly, much like a mathematician or a rabbit, so he and his clones can possess a couple high-ranking officials. A young samurai (Jun Fujimaki) becomes suspicious at his commander's monstrous brutality (the demonic shogun stabs a dog to death, simply for barking!), but even his swordplay, and bow & arrows aren't enough to wipe out the entire, ever-increasing gang of possessive monsters. Fortunately, local Japanese ghosts become fed up with the planned conquest of this *literal* 'foreign devil', and they decide they don't want this blood-sucker on their turf. It's here that YOKAI DAISENZO becomes a little too comically Japanese for narrowminded American tastes. The Japanese spirits are more like muppets & clowns, they're far from scary! They're a funny, colorful bunch of goons satirizing old Japanese legends. They come in various shapes & sizes, including a blue-skinned "bird man" (who makes Heckle & Jeckle seem like terrifying apparitions) called "Ao Gatsuba", a witch with a long neck and a one-eyed, long-tongued puppet resembling an umbrella (who writes this stuff? I definitely want a hit off whatever they're smoking). A concept as wacky as a haunted umbrella can only come from the far reaches of Japanese folklore, and the concept is hilarious on film. Eventually, all these good spirits unite against the legion of blood-sucking monsters for the grand battle royale. A little of this confrontation is physical (a bit of grabbing and occasional sword clashing), but most of it concentrates on magic (fire is generated, and the villain even grows giant). It's an interesting duel (a spiritual variation on the climactic fight in DESTROY ALL MONSTERS), but as always, it's dark (night-time setting), and combined with my print being a multi-gen tape, all is not intelligible. Eventually, the wacky team of spirits drives the sinister invader Daimon out of Japan, and our eccentric, ghostly heroes frolick their way back to their secluded home in the mountains. *** -Damon Foster

LA BESTIA Y LA ESPADA MAGICA

("The Beast and the Magic Sword") Presented by Aconito Films (Spain) and Amachi Films (Japan) in 1983, E La Colabocion Especial de Conrado San Marito Y Gerard Tichy, Guion: Jacinto Molinor, Roberto Fandino, Director De Production: Pedro Sopena, Productores Ejectivas: Masurao Takeda & Julia Saly, Production Dejenda: Augusto Boue, Dir. De Fotografia: Julio Burgos, Un Film Escrito Y Dirigido Jacinto Molina, El-Starring: Paul Naschy, Sigheru Amachi, Beatriz Esudero, Junko Asabima, Violeta Cela, Yoko Fuji, El-Reviewed by Senior Damon Fosterdelgarcia

In this bizarre world we call the Earth, there's room for every type of movie, no matter how unusual the concept. This Japanese

& Spanish coproduction has quite an unlikely premise, and should be called "A Spanish Werewolf in Edo!" I'm not kidding, this is a samurai film about a European werewolf loose in old Japan, among samurais, geishas, ninjas, etc. In a way, it resembles the Hong Kongese mishmash VAMPIRE VS. VAMPIRE (aka ONE EYEBROW PRIEST), which came out six year later-- the main difference being that the European monster in question was a Dracula-ish vampire, having it out with Taoists & kung fu guys in old China. Whether or not VAMPIRE VS. VAMPIRE was inspired by LA BESTIA Y LA ESPADA MAGICA is not known, but all East/West horror flicks are bound to have similarities. I think cross culture films of this nature can be a really great (if not educational or intriguing) idea, if done right.

Which brings us to the question, was LA BESTIA etc. done right? It's hard to say, since the only print I could track down was all in Spanish (there are subtitles too, however, they're not in English; they look Greek!). The first fifteen minutes take place in Spain, so I was hoping that once the scene changed to a Japanese setting, they would speak Japanese so I would have at least a vague idea as to what the hell was going on. I was pretty pissed off that all the samurais were dubbed in Spanish, which put an effective end to my making heads or tail out of this bizarre, confusing script. With the language gap in full force, I know following this illogical story would be impossible, so I decided to concentrate on whatever entertainment value this dull movie had to offer. Here's what I came up with:

Despite on-location filming in Japan, I'd say it's still a pretty cheap movie. The werewolf mask looks like what it is, a mask! I was amazed to read this movie was made in 1983! With its weak SPFX, I thought for sure it must have come out in the 1960s! Though the werewolf looks as plain and lackluster as any werewolf from the 1940s movies, it's still a vicious monster, so his scenes are amusing to anyone who wants to see a blood-thirsty monster on the rampage. Another highlight are the occasional samurai swordfights (three or four total) sprinkled, though used sparingly through out the romp. One of the better duels has our heroic samurai ambushed by ninjas in an outdoor sauna. Some topless ninja lady gets a fatal shuriken right in the tit, and for an encore, the samurai takes on several other acrobatic assassins.

Unfortunately, when the werewolf isn't tearing off the blouses of geishas or making everyone bleed, and when the samurais aren't crossing their swords, LA BESTIA just plain sucks. This is one unique film which could really benefit from an English dubbed version! Does anybody know if such a thing exists? If so, I'm sure I would give it a much higher rating, this is a complex film which would be a lot more worthwhile if I knew what the hell was going on.

Fans of Spanish horror movies (both of you) will recognize genre fave Paul Naschy in the title role. Yet again, he plays a werewolf. Paul Naschy's first films were in

the 1960s, and his success seemed to climb up until the late 1970s. During a career slump in the early 1980s, he accepted offers to go work on films in Japan, of all places. Among the Japanese films he worked on, there's: 1982's LA CUEVAS DE ALTAMIRA ("The Altamira Caves"; a documentary), the 1982 TV series LA ESPADA DEL SAMURAI ("The Sword of the Samurai"; Naschy played a Dutch/Japanese halfbreed), INFIERNO EN CAMBOYA ("Hell in Cambodia"; a 1982 documentary he directed), 1982's LA MASCARA DEL JUYO ("The Mask of Juyo"; which he wrote and directed), EL MONASTERIO DE EL ESCORIAL ("The Escorial Monastery"; a 1982 documentary for Japanese TV), 1984's MI AMIGO EL VAGABUNDO ("My Friend the Vagabond"), 1984's OPERACION MANTIS ("Operation Mantis"), and the '84 TV show LA TERCERA MUJER ("The Third Woman"; where he played an international interlope agent). For more on this important man in the world of Spanish werewolf flicks, write to Bob Sargent, P.O. Box 9911, Alexandria, VA, 22304. Ask if he's still got any more copies of his great fanzine Videooze #6 (ask for price) lying around. It's got an indepth piece (and interview with) on Paul Naschy.

LA BESTIA whatever, starring Paul Nasty (or whatever) was based on old Japanese folklore, combining two different legends: Numero Uno: Some Spanish or Portuguese bandit committed a number of savage crimes during the era of the Shogun, when the first European explorers reached Japan. Little is known about the Spanish/Portuguese bandit, except that he hid out in the forest before the samurais finally hunted him down. Numero Two-o: Japan has their own legends of werewolves, called 'Okami'. So it would seem logical that they would know how to deal with a werewolf-- but what if it were a foreign one?!

Again, I just can't figure out this chaotic, non-translated flick! The first portion is set in Spain, where a cult of females worship the devil, I guess. Later, a knight and a barbarian (or viking?) have some sort of jousting duel to the death. The winner (the knight) is awarded the princess's hand in marriage (and her vagina, in bed). Later, Paul Nasty (I mean Naschy!) has some lame sword duel with hooded assassins (not ninjas; we're still in Spain at this point, the villains wear what looks like Executioner hoods) who stabbed some old man. Then, quite abruptly, we suddenly switch to Japan, where some European werewolf (Paul Nasty) is ravaging the countryside. We never see Paul's trip to Japan, so it almost made me wonder if I was watching two different films spliced together. Mr. Nasty befriends some righteous samurai played by Sigheru (a strange name for a Japanese, I suspect the correct spelling might be Shigeru) Amachi. Amachi tries unsuccessfully to cure Nasty of his being a werewolf, all the while dodging an occasional ninja and even some wierd Japanese cult of freaks or whatever. Another amusing bit of space filler has the werewolf captured by a gang of spear-wielding, Shinto priestesses who sick a tiger on him, before some geisha stabs the wolf to death with a sword. *1/2 -Damon Foster

HONG KONG HEROES



1960s:

THE KING WITH MY FACE

A Shaw Brothers Film, Producer: Run Run Shaw, Starring: people, Smaller Appearances by Cheng Lei and Hao Li, Reviewed by Damon Foster

Though I'm often wrong (i.e. the time I thought I was wrong, but turned out to be right, which made me wrong for assuming I was wrong! Dig?), I would guess this one to be no older than 1964, since the obligatory stock music features a piece or two from Akira Ifukube's GODZILLA VS. THE THING soundtrack. Being a Shaw oldie, other stock music abounds too, I doubt they ever made any original songs (other than the ballad from the song & dance piece) for any of their 1960s movies. Otherwise, THE KING WITH MY FACE is your average (or perhaps, slightly above average) 1960s costume drama and/or classic, and I guess since I'm the only human on the planet who reviews (let alone watches?) these old period-dramas, I'm in a position to know. The sets & costumes are as good as in any other film of the genre, the acting suffices, and the story is fairly interesting.

The story isn't an uncommon one: A nice guy who looks like the king (a corrupt tyrant who treats his villagers like slaves) impersonates the king and assumes his place on the throne and the province prospers from that point on. This story is universal; hell, they even did it in Mel Brook's HISTORY OF THE WORLD PT. 1, only the set-

ting was France. In the case of THE KING WITH MY FACE, it's a watchable drama with a couple swordfights (basically non-martial arts, the duels are slow, reminding me of those in the Italian film NIGHT STAR, GODDESS OF ELECTRA), a romantic triangle, a single song & dance scene (maidens again perform for their king at a lavish banquet), and the revolution where good soldiers (backing the king's righteous twin brother) tackle the bad soldiers (who still follow the corrupt ex-tyrant), and the good guys win. The evil ex-king tries to whip his brother with a chain, but ends up falling off a cliff, to his death. **1/2 -Damon Foster

1970s:

天王拳

SHOWDOWN

(aka ROYAL FIST and EL ROBIN HOOD CHINO) Exec. Prod.: Ng Tien Ting, Yang Ming, Producer: Lee Chiya Un, Screenplay: Ting San Shi, Photog.: Lin Un Ging, Lighting: Lin Sun Chie, Art Dir.: R. Yang, Music: Chow Rian, Film Editor: Yang Pa In, Recording by Kuan Fu, Dir.: Ting San Shi, Starring: Wang Yu, Chang Ching Ching, Fu Pi Fei, Ru Di, Chan Fue Rou, Lee Tsu In, Tung Yi Paou, Wong Fong Ying, Reviewed by Damon Foster

I don't get it, I just don't get it (and no, I'm not talking about sex or the jokes on THE SIMPSONS)- I mean, what's the deal with

this awkwardly uneven, early 1970s, Jimmy Wang Yu oddity? The tape I rented has no Chinese credits whatsoever, it's all written in English, except for its Spanish subtitle, "El Robin Hood Chino". So you would expect the characters to be dubbed in English or Spanish, but it's all in Chinese (there aren't any subtitles at all)! Perhaps the original Chinese version got lost or destroyed, and the only way they could show this movie in HK was to purchase the round-eye dubbing, and dub it back into Chinese again?! So only those who read perfect English and speak perfect Chinese can figure out this one entirely. To the rest of us, this movie comes off as useful to us gweilons as running shoes would be to Jerry's Kids.

This movie doesn't absolutely suck, but it's far from being Wang Yu's best movie. It's easy to see why he faded into obscurity after a string of comparatively classic films from the 1960s and early 1970s. The first hour or so is truly painful to watch, full of infantile slapstick (high speed running around, ala' Benny Hill minus the cultural intellect), and easily recognizable stock music (from films like FIST OF FURY and BLESS THE BEASTS AND THE CHILDREN-- you know, that type of film). There's also the obligatory rape attempt so Wang Yu can have an excuse to fight (the first half is comparatively slow-paced). Fortunately, the rest of the movie is a series of fights, like when the rapist unleashes a Japanese swordsman upon our hero. From this point on, it's action galore, and finally, SHOWDOWN becomes watchable. As anyone not absolutely ignorant knows, Wang Yu himself was not a real talented fighter, but his crude kicks and basic punches still manage to add a gritty, role-in-the-dirt type of gripping suspense-- something lacking from more limber, graceful stars of that era like Bruce Lee.

Lack of subtitles made following this script like following the story Naked Lunch-- impossible! But I gather Wang Yu is some sort of Chinese Robin Hood in the 1930s or 1940s, tackling corrupt, bumbling soldiers, mobsters, bandits, and anyone else striving to preserve false, injustice and the un-Chinese way. There are other subplots too-- one has something to do with a marriage, and I guess Wang Yu tries to elope with his girlfriend and must fight off her mother and grandmother (played by a man). Okay, fine, right, whatever. Once all this aggravatingly dull, sometimes stupid character development is out of the way, Wang Yu finally gets in a



series of long, cross-country battles with a large group of baddies. It's the usual kung fu, swordplay, bloodshed, and even a fight in a river, before Wang Yu pushes the last of his foes into a burning hot geyser in the ground! Now there's a chop sockey first! It ends with him united with his girlfriend, so I guess they live happily ever laughter, or whatever. ** -Damon Foster

FOUR REAL FRIENDS

[aka DRAGON SQUAD] 1974; A First Scope Production, Dir.: Wong Yu, Starring: Wang Yu, Chen Sing, Lu Chuan, Lung Fei (there were more names listed, but my video copy is poor and I couldn't read most of them), Reviewed by Jeff Goodhartz

Now that I've seen my share of Jimmy Wang Yu movies from the 1960s and 1970s, I've come to a conclusion. My enjoyment of his films will have nothing to do with the quality of martial arts. They're all sub-poor, even by early 1970s standards. The fun will depend on the characters, imagination and most of all 'originality' (something most of his later films do not have). If I see one more "One-Armed" film of his, I'll break the damn tape! He should have ended that idea after his masterpiece THE ONEARMED BOXER which was really the last word on that subject. Most of what he did after 1971 seemed to be remakes and variations on everything he did before.

Luckily, this criticism does not apply to FOUR REAL FRIENDS. While it isn't terribly original, it does not tread the same waters as previous Wang Yu films do. He doesn't lose an arm in this, which was really a plus. It also tries to be different by surrounding him with a trio of then-HK's more wellknown villains, except that they're playing heroes. It's an interesting quartet with a good deal of depth to the characters. And although Wang Yu is basically the main hero, it is Chen Sing who nearly steals the film as the shamed karate master. Don't think for a moment though that the complex characters make for a dull movie. There's plenty of action. Though the choreography is typically crude, the fights are always staged in interesting locales. The finale for instance, is in a barn. And I guess the fights are a bit faster than those in films made a couple years earlier (though this may be due to slightly sped-up camera work).

Okay, so I established that I enjoyed the hell out of this film, right? Well, I still had second thoughts about giving it four big, generous stars. So I watched it again, making sure I wasn't merely overcompensating for the low expectations I had. Nope! This film really is super neat groovie fun. **** -

Jeff Goodhartz

1980S

LEGENDARY WEAPONS OF KUNG FU

[aka LEGENDARY WEAPONS OF CHINA] Shaw Brothers, 1982, Dir.: Liu Chia-liang, Prod.: Mona Fong, Exec. Prod.: Run Run Shaw, Martial Arts Instructor: Liu Chia-liang, Released to American video by Worldwide Entertainment in 1984, Cast: Liu Chia-liang, Liu Chia-yung, Liu Chia-hui, Fu Sheng, Hsiao Ho, Hui Ying-hung, Chu Te Wu, Reviewed by Damon Foster

Sorry, all you diehard, obsessed Shaw Brothers fans, but not everything those greedy, power-mad (they treated many of their actors like slaves and stuck them in dormitories and heavy contracts) egoists



produced is a kung fu masterpiece, as this over rated farce so beautifully demonstrates. Otherwise accurate books like Martial Arts Movies: From Bruce Lee to the Ninjas (Citadel Press; 1985) and The Encyclopedia of Martial Arts Movies (Scarecrow Press; 1995) have labled this chaotic mess "The Greatest Kung Fu Movie Ever Made", and "the quint-essential martial arts movie!" With such blatant praise like that, I was expecting an action packed, stunt-filled spectacle- but what I got was a long, confusing farce with plenty of dialogue, lame clowning around, over-acted stupidity, and unnecessary characters which seem to do nothing but pad out the film. The voice dubbing is stupid, and most of its comedic gags are pretty stupid; i.e. yet again, a girl (Hui Ying-hung) dresses as "a man" (oh yes, no matter how feminine her voice is, and no matter how much makeup she has on, one of those stupid hats has me fooled every time).

But anybody who's been reading OC for

the last 20 years (almost!) knows that on the whole, I like the older Shaw Bros. flicks, specifically the earlier stuff from the 1960s and 1970s. But if LEGENDARY WEAPONS OF KUNG FU is any indication, perhaps it's a good thing that they ceased making a lot of films in the 1980s, their Golden Years were well behind them. No matter how many other credible experts praise this movie, it still strikes me as an inferior product. Perhaps they're right and I'm wrong, but I personally don't see what all the fuss is about. I just had to write this review to counteract all the merciless, ass-kissing which has been directed at this curiously popular "classic". I mean, I just don't get it, what's the point of a kung fu movie if it doesn't keep us on the edge of our seat with terrific fights? After all the hype, I was disappointed, much like a kid would be if he hit and broke a pinata that turned out to be full of used syringes.

Before I ramble on any further and piss off every Shaw fan out there, I think I'll read some alternate opinions to understand the many positive reviews given to this flick. Okay, hhhmmmm, let's see here. What I've read so far seems to indicate that they're impressed this movie is basically about kung fu, and how it became obsolete around the time of the Boxer Rebellion, due to the invasion of foreign guns. A main point would seem to be that unlike most kung fu films, this story's setting isn't interchangeable with a western, gladiator movie, samurai film, etc. Okay, well, that all makes sense- LEGENDARY WEAPONS OF KUNG FU has a unique script, and in its own way, is a one of a kind movie; for better or worse. There, I admit it, it takes an unusual approach not commonly seen in kung fu films.

I'll give it credit for that. Normally, I'm all for revolutionary ideas and experiments, so even though in this case I consider it more a miss than a hit, I'll give it a whole star for originality.

But cultural intrigue aside, I don't really consider it a whole hell of a lot of fun on the action level. Most of the "fights" (hah!) consist of the type of crap which would appear in so many Tsui Hark- style films which would plague us later on, the flying shinanegans and abrupt explosions seen in the likes of A CHINESE GHOST STORY and ONCE UPON A TIME IN CHINA, etc. LEGENDARY WEAPONS OF KUNG FU is more over-the-top gimmicks than actual 'legendary weapons of kung fu', perhaps the movie should be called "Legendary Gimmicks of Fantasy". For a full hour, I was rolling my eyes, seeing goofy clowning around, and its few fights were both brief and lame. Plenty of lackluster FX and flying projectiles, alternating with humor and drama. Fortunately, the final half-hour almost made up for this,

when they actually decided to throw in some cool duels. It's mostly weapons stuff like swords and spears, but I guess I tend to prefer hand-to-hand combat, especially when one guy takes on several henchmen (this film has none of that).

I must also admit to not being the world's greatest fan of the Liu Chia brothers. Liu Chia-hui (aka Gordon Liu) was never one of my favorites but I liked him in CHALLENGE OF THE NINJA, I'm entirely unfamiliar with Liu Chia-yung (he plays a villain in LEGENDARY WEAPONS OF KUNG FU), and the only thing I really liked Liu Chia Hui in was MAD MONKEY KUNG FU (I thought his part in DRUNKEN MASTER 2 wasn't very spectacular). I suppose to die-hard fans of these Liu Chia guys, LEGENDARY WEAPONS OF KUNG FU is enjoyable for their meager presence alone.

Though the story starts out cool enough, with a gang of Chinese revolutionaries (resembling ninjas wearing vampire capes!) trying to figure out how to fend off the foreigners' guns & bullets, the story does not actually concentrate on the east vs. west angle of the Boxer Rebellion. Instead, patriots like a Buddhist monk (Liu Chia-hui), and a woman dressed as a man (Hui Ying-hung) seek out a defector called Lei Kung (Liu Chia-liang) who left one of several sects all trying to convince themselves they're immune to bullets. But Lei Kung wised up early on, and knew it was pointless to use kung fu against guns, so he bailed. The course of this drama/comedy has a number of patriots seek out and battle Lei Kung, but one by one, they're defeated, they end up surrendering to his kung fu skills or befriend him once they realize he's right. I guess that's the basics of this plot, although it's hard to tell, I mean they padded it out with unnecessary subplots and stupidity (i.e. that whole bit with Fu Sheng being possessed by a Taoist voodoo doll?! Hardy har har). Like I said, the final series of swordfights are very good, but they only involve two or three people, and aren't as exciting as they could have been. But still, I'll give it an extra star for the final 30 minutes of clashing swords, spears, three sectional staffs, etc. ** -Damon Foster

1990s!

FROM HERO TO ZERO

Released by Tai Seng Video Marketing, A Sunshine Film Prod. House, Top Ten Ltd., Director: David Wu, Starring: Francis Ng & Anita Lee, Reviewed by Doug Weldy

If you like superheroes, you might like this comedy about a guy who develops a powerful punch along with the required sexual fling with whomever he saves. Is that Stevie Ray Vaughan? For a second I thought it was. Why does he appear more than one too many times? *I don't know what the hell Doug is on about, but for a different opinion of this satirical hero film,*

see my review in Heroes on Film #2 -DF/ After a big of coaligent (? Don't bother to look it up), there's an obese boy who draws pictures of superman. After he and his best friend are teased and beaten at school, he comes home and draws a violent superman ripping off heads and such. Years later, he's making a living drawing the same violent comic called "Superman in the Messy World", SITMW.

The best scene (sadly too short) is a dream sequence. Superman has an intense run-in with some murderer/attempted rapists. He sticks his fists through one guy's chest, rips off another's dick, and shoots them both in the ass, even though ones already dead. After the killings he unwinds by doing a Michael Jackson clutch dive. Sounds pretty cool, but the movie dulls out later. Bored me as I waited for more intense violence, but was only treated to comedy fights. I could have watched THEY CALL ME BRUCE, which is full-on gags. Pukey even. ** -Doug Weldy



THUNDERBOLT

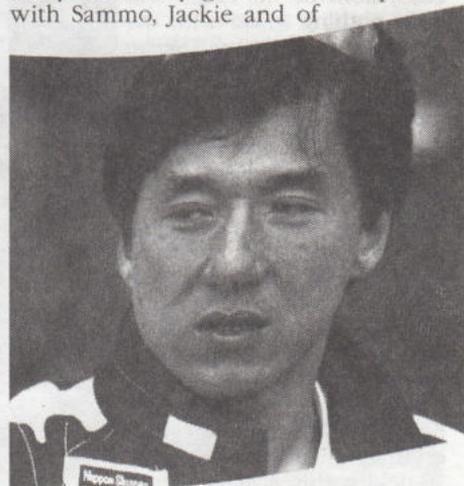
Golden Harvest; 1995, Produced by Chua Lam, Executive Producer: Leonard Ho, Dir.: Gordon Chan, Car Stunts Dir.: Frankie Chan, Stunt Dir.: Sammo Hung in Association with Jackie Chan's Stuntman Association, Starring: Jackie Chan, Anita Yuen, Michael Wong, Kayama Yuzo, Eguro Mari, Sawada Kenya, Low Houi Kang, Wu Ci Yan Dan, Man Cheung Han, Chien Hsiao Hu, Reviewed by Damon Foster

It's been a while since I watched a Jackie Chan film, I haven't really felt the urge to watch one since OC's Jackie Chan issue from about a year ago. I felt his first signs of slowing down were MR. CANTON AND LADY ROSE (1989), and ARMOUR OF GOD 2: OPERATION CONDOR (1990). Dismal efforts like TWIN DRAGONS (1992) and CRIME STORY (1993) had me convinced he was on his way to hasbeendom, but CITY HUNTER (1992) and POLICE STORY 3: THE SUPER COP (1992) had their moments. Then of course there was Jackie's DRUNKEN MASTER 2 (1994) which I did enjoy a lot,



even though it was overrated like crazy (because of the setting and trendy Wong Fei Hung angle, many writers & critics felt it made them sound oh-so-cool to praise DRUNKEN MASTER 2 mercilessly, so naturally it got rave, biased reviews with the arthouse crowd). I'm relieved to say that THUNDERBOLT (at the time of this writing in late 1995, it's his most recent film this week) falls more under the category of "has its moments" than "here comes hasbeendom!". There are definitely a few worthwhile scenes in THUNDERBOLT, and I pretty much enjoyed it, in fact.

I knew that when the opening credits mentioned Sammo Hung's involvement in the action scenes, we were in for a cool fight or two, and sure enough, the sensational battle in the Japanese pachinko arcade is more fun & exciting than anything in CRIME STORY or TWIN DRAGONS! Too bad there really aren't any genuine team ups with Sammo, Jackie and of



course Yuen Biao anymore, but that was more of a 1980s thing. But Sammo Hung's involvement behind-the-scenes is evident in Jackie's excellent confrontation with Tokyo's yakuza (complete with tattoos and those funny "jock-strap" things sumo wrestlers like to show off their obesity in), even though some slow motion and artsy-fartsy "strobe effect" (they've got Camcorders which do that now, for Christ sake!) diminished the impact of the scuffle a little. Other wise, the arcade battle, where Jackie uses a large hammer to waste several pachinko games (why couldn't it have been them stupid "Mortal Combat" video games that get forced in my face every time I turn on a TV set?) is the high point of THUNDERBOLT, and its this explosive burst of violence alone which gives the flick two of its stars (by that I mean the stars of my rating system [****], and not the stars/actors of the film).

Another star goes for THUNDERBOLT's over-all stuntwork in general, which is to be expected in any Jackie Chan film. Now 41, he still manages to be agile, limber and death-defying, like in a gripping scene where he's dangling hundreds of feet above an automobile wreckage yard, from a large, heavy steel tank. He gets knocked around a little too much in this scene, and although

it's not in a league with Jackie's Golden Years of stunts (DRAGON'S FOREVER and POLICE STORY 2), it's still more impressive than anything any Hollywood actor, regardless of age would attempt, or be permitted to do! Though some of these falls & stunts had me impressed as always, I personally wish Jackie would stop this hazardous stuff! Hell, we all know he's the greatest stunt-actor there ever has been-- he's impressed us over the years the way nobody else has (though other HK stars have come close). It's common knowledge he's the best, he's made his point more than once! So what's the deal? Is he suicidal? Will he not see the 21st century? Jackie, if you're out there reading this, be content in knowing that many of us will always watch your films and show them to future generations! So be careful and try to reach it to the age of 50, or at least 45!

But other than the limited amount of ac-



tion scenes, THUNDERBOLT

is more of a race-car movie. The kung fu and stunts take a back seat to the drag-racing footage, which is nice, if you're into watching cars drive a lot. Though I find drag-strips more entertaining than other sports like Baseball, Ping Pong, Football and Golf, the endless fast-car shots put me to sleep faster than a Genesis Greatest Hits C.D. There's plenty of racing scenes to satisfy any car nut, and there are spins, crashes, burning rubber, explosions, etc. I felt like I was watching a 3-dimensional SPEED RACER. Fortunately for me, I literally slept through the entire climactic racing scene, which I guess helped me enjoy THUNDERBOLT more. However, I was regretfully conscious during the obligatory drama, comedy, and teeny weeny, eye-straining subtitles (I had to hold my face so close to the TV screen to read them, that I got all these little "prickly" whiskers reaching for the screen), all of which made me wish I was editing *Better Homes & Gardens* rather than *Oriental Cinema*.

This is not to say that the dramatic and semi-comedic moments are actually bad. There's a decent laugh near the beginning (Jackie's silhouette/shadow reveals he was injured when his hand is slammed in a car door, a seemingly irrelevant gag which later proves to be a major plot staple), and for the most part, the characters are defined well

enough. The only performance I could do without was Anita Yuen's, she kind of got on my nerves and added nothing to the film except more talking, subtitles, and eye-strain. Her semi-romantic scenes with Jackie are as childish & sappy as always.

For this paragraph, I was going to give you a run down on the script. But I can sum it up with two words: Caucasian villain. White boys seem to be the scapegoats when them Hong Kongese can't come up with an interesting, original script, not to mention, interesting, original bad-guys. In this case, all they needed was to get some blond dude in a ponytail to drag (by car) his friend in the dirt to establish he's an evil killer, to become Jackie's enemy later in the film. The only twist is that this time, that obligatory dastardly, blue-eyed devil isn't a martial artist, but a race car driver. We first see him and his cronies in America, at Utah's Salt Lake City area, which makes perfect sense, since we all know how fluent them Mormones



are in Cantonese & Mandarin.

For whatever reason, this murderous villain, called Cougar ends up in HK and does a little hit & run before Jackie outrives the lousy gweilo and aids police in arresting him (until his lawyer, a sultry blond chick as corrupt as the rest of us round-eyed demons, gets him released). From then on, Cougar doesn't like Jackie and makes his life a living hell, unless he agrees to race against him in Japan. And so he does, and wins. *** - Damon Foster

GHOSTLY BUS

1994; A Long Shong (gimmie a break!) Intl. Co. Ltd. Film, You & Me Film Workshop, Action Dir./Screenplay: Johnny Lee, Martial Arts Dir.: Wilson Tong & Fung Hak On, Music: Sam Leung, Asst. Dir.: Law Wai Tak, Dir. of Photog: Cheung King Nin (H.K.S.C.), Art Dir.: Fred Chan, Exec. Prod.: Tsui Lung, Production Manager: Lisa Chan, Dir.: Wilson Tong, Cast: Simon Yam Tat Wah, Chow Kar Ling, Wan Yeung Ming, Chun Ho, Cheung Ka Nin, Fung Kak On, Wong Kok Cheung & May Lam, Reviewed by Doug Weldy

The opening previews include a movie called FALL TIME starring Mickey Rourke. Distributors out there: If you start making us watch American trailers, I'll start a rebel-

lion and end with the destruction of your massive piteous drooping ass bags. There will be bleeding corpses and grotesque suchness.

And maybe a review of this movie. A bus floats off a cliff very fast, crashing below. The bus line is then haunted by the ghosts of the victims. One driver sees the ghosts with his special eyebrows (?). Meanwhile, in a more interesting subplot, Simon Yam plays a pickpocket who hides razor blades in his mouth and is always being chased by large groups of men. As it turns out, one of the ghosts was Simon's bride to be. (I guess that makes her his fiancée or beyondcée.) Ghostly love story results and you guess the rest 'cause I'm not telling.

Only six snores and 1/5 stars. The box, bullshit as usual, shows duel buses flying through the air like it's some SPEED/ghost story/action flick. Well, it's not. It's just a disappointing bore, unless you adore love stories, sissy. *1/2-Doug Weldy

FAKE EMPEROR

1995; Tai Seng Video Marketing Inc., Prod: Michael Ng & Raymond Wong, Exec. Prod: Raymond Wong & Li Ning, Screenplay: Raymond Wong & Liu Guo Quon, Dir.: Liu Guo Quon, Dir. of Phot: Chau Pak Ling, Cameraman: David Li, Art Dir.: Cheung Ah Fong, Cast: Bobo Fung, Francie Ng, Catherine Hung, Cheung Shin Yuan, Yau Poon Chong, Chan Gar Yang, Reviewed by Doug Weldy

What a waste of viewing time. This movie should have been made 20 years ago, maybe it was and they changed the copyright. As this crap (better on film than on my stitched shoes) starts out, it's the early 1900's and Britain and France are attacking Peking. A British general has an epileptic seizure, falls off his horse and dies. The Chinese are blamed for his death, so in order to avoid any hassles, a look-alike (Bobo) is trained to represent the emperor. On a self-reflective note, I guess I missed the entire film career of Bobo Fung, because I, for the life of him, just don't know who the fuck he is.

Bobo plays four imprisoned Emperor doubles, in one of the film's only (short) amusing scenes. Their names are Ma Bien, Jacky Cheung, Jacky Chan, and Chow Yun Fatt. Their crimes are (Cheung) pissing while singing, (Chan) farting in a restaurant and then breaking up the place, and (Fatt) not paying the hooker. Ma Bien being the lesser of the rudenesses is the lucky guy.

My major complaint, again and again and again, is that there are too many subtitles blocked, again by white clothes, white skies, white dildos, whatever the hell that's white basically. There being much dialogue involved helps me not to understand the plot. In fact, there's too much fucking dialogue, obstructed or not.

A couple crying eunuchs and such instances caused many minutes to be fast forwarded at the rate of 72 snores and 12 naps. 1 star. Avoid, unless you're very tolerant and overly forbearing. *-Doug Weldy



DIAMOND EYE, WARRIOR OF LIGHT

["HIKARU NO SENSHI- DAIYAMONDO AI"] Produced by Toho, Consisting of 26 episodes Broadcasted from 10/5/73 'til 3/29/74, Shown on TV Asahi, Creator: Yasunori Kawauchi, Main Writer: Tsunehisa Ito, Main Dir: Ken Yamada, Music: Takaharu Iketa, Starring Shiro Ohama as Kotaro, Reviewed by Damon Foster

Jesus Christ, yet another outstanding superhero program from the 1970s? I first started calling the 1970s the Golden Years of Japanese superheroism long before I saw half the 1970s programs I've seen to date, and almost every time I discover an old series, the theory about it being the Golden Years of Japan's heroes is reconfirmed. Though produced by Toho, DIAMOND EYE still tends to immitate Toei's

whole post-Kamen Rider genre, in that the hero is human sized and frequently takes on several villains at once. But Toho added their own obligatory trademark; cool monster costumes! Most of these villains tend to be bulkier than the average human-sized villain of that period, and, despite their 'normal height', almost resemble the lumbering behemoths of the giant monster films, and Ultra programs. A few battles take place on alien planets, so the set of these fights reminds one of MONSTER ZERO. So on the whole, DIAMOND EYE reaches a good balance between Toei's "Henshin Boom" and the sci-fi movies of old.

I've only seen four or five episodes of this great, four star (****) program, but I think I got a pretty good idea as to just how great this series is. Like other 1970s programs, it's more violent than the ge-

neric, sterile, wishy-washy heroes of the 1980s & 1990s. Our heroic Kotaro has a rather bad temper at times, allowing actor Shiro Ohama to prove he can act just as well as he fights! One episode had the villains beating the crap out of a little kid, they nearly tortured the runt before heroic Diamond Eye & Kotaro rescued him! Though I don't recall any red blood (though one episode had a monster bleeding out yellow blood resembling mustard), stabbings (with no explosions) are common place, and expect to see an occasional decapitation. Of course, if limbs or heads come off, it's always happening to rubber monsters, not people (though I do recall an episode where a group of innocent men are machine-gunned to death). So compared to later, weak programs, DIAMOND EYE seems violent, almost to the level of KAMEN RIDER AMAZON.

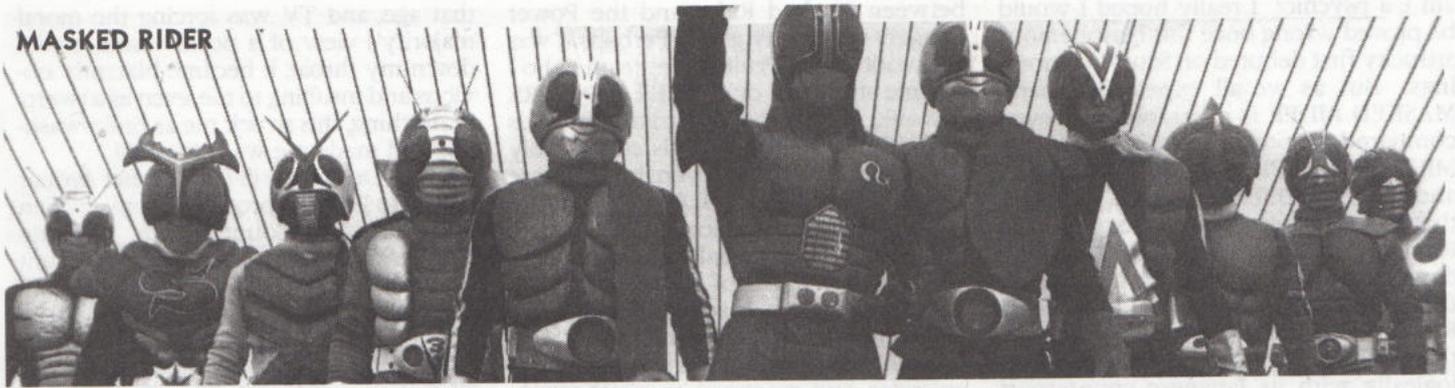
Actor Shiro Ohama (who plays co-hero Kotaro) definately knows how to kick. He's energetic & athletic, though that's not always emphasized in his many battles; many of these skirmishes are of the down & dirty nature where everyone takes a fall. Needless to say, these lively confrontations offer an entertaining pace and some nice little stunts. Main hero Diamond Eye is no weakling himself, but the majority of his duels are swordplay-inspired: He wields a mean staff, so his style reminds me of Golden Bat and the Monkey King. As a futuristic, cyborg-like superhero, he can of course fly, fire a number of rays, and probably has other super powers I've forgotten to mention because I'm busier than Oprah Winfried's refrigerator repairman.

The special effects are about average for a Toho production, but since Toho is more known for its giant monsters, it's hard to make a real comparison. Unlike the Godzilla movies, this show has no need



D I A M O N D E Y E

MASKED RIDER



for a lot of miniature sets or artillery, so it's not fair to compare DIAMOND EYE's FX with feature-length motion pictures. But taken as another post-Kamen Rider program, it holds its own. The pyrotechnics and super-impositions are first rate, though there's not as much used as in later programs. The monster costumes are for the most part good, but as was often the case with early 1970s Toho efforts, some creatures look too rubbery, sometimes clumsy. Often, even the common henchmen become bulky monsters, which increases production value (much of the time, the henchmen are your typical spandex-clad "throw-around-guys", but they usually change into full-fledge monsters, making the remainder of the duel all the more exciting).

Even its flawed FX are nice to watch, because everything is so damn colorful. All these FX are, of course, perfect targets for non-fans who like to dismiss anything Japanese & live action as cheap. Yes, there are cynics out there who would consider this program cheesy, tacky, low budget etc. But I look at it this way: DIAMOND EYE is infanately more entertaining than anything them whiny geeks are capable of. The bottom line is that any series where Kotaro beats up bad guys until they change into monsters so he contacts a blue superhero to finish the job is okay by me.

Though Diamond Eye resembles a typically heroic robot, he's actually some Arabian god or warrior, and the prophecy tells of his protecting the people. Somehow (like I said- I've only seen a few chapters), Diamond Eye ends up in Japan, and it's a damn good thing too, because some sort of monstrous space demon called King Cobra is giving everyone a real hard time! His gaudy helpers include 'horse-men', 'bull-men', and foam-rubber monsters like Himi Cobura, Mojinga, Kero Cat and Satan Bat, to name exactly four. From their base on The Moon, they're always sending monsters, horse-guys and henchmen to hassle people, and young man Kotaro (Shiro Ohama) in particular. Though Kotaro is a real tough cookie with

a knack for martial arts who can fare well against human opponents (even six or more at once!), it's their monster forms which are a bit too much. So when the going gets tough, the tough Kotaro uses his magic ring to summon Diamond Eye, a superhero who has made it his hobby to wipe out King Cobra's legion of monstrous invaders. His death blow is called "Royal Punch", even though it's neither royal nor a punch; it is, in fact, just a fancy name for a beam which emits from Diamond Eye's staff (or "stake", as he calls it). What follows are reviews of all the episodes I've seen:

#9 [11/30]

MARA ZEKI TEN JUKAI NO RIN PARA! (?)

First Shot: People at a flower garden.

Kotaro befriends Diamond Eye, but is later captured by thieves. Eventually Diamond Eye materializes to rescue Kotaro from drowning, and discovers that the mobsters are actually monsters in disguise. Diamond Eye battles King Cobra and others. ***

#10 [12/7]

MOJINGA DAI-KEN SURO (?)

ES: Flashback to previous episode.

King Cobra sends Mojira to Earth to steal Diamond Eye's magic stake, resulting in a

complex plot which has something to do with kidnapping and two truckers. **

#13 [12/28]

KING COBRA NO DAI-KETSU SEI (?)

ES: Montague of scenes: Flowers, hero, villain, motorcycle, action, etc.

To get a scientist to obey the baddies, some kid is captured by the villains, and severely beaten. So it's Diamond Eye to the rescue, and battles a plenty! ****

#14 [1/4/74]

WARA NI NA TETSU HIMI COBURA (?)

ES: Flashback; Diamond Eye in space.

The female villain goes undercover to spy on Kotaro, and they end up discovering a mutual attraction. She has a conflict of interest when henchmen beat up Kotaro (who gets in his share of kicks though!), and later, Diamond Eye tackles Satan Bat. ***1/2

MASKED RIDER



Co-Producer: Ann Knapp, Supervising Producers: Michael Montgomery, Tony Oliver & Scott Page-Pagter, Producer: Robert Hughes, Starring T.J. Roberts as Dex, Rheannon J. Slover as Molly, Ashton McArn II as Albee, David Stenstrom as Hal, Candace Camille Bender as Barbara, Ken Ring as Count Dregon, Jennifer Tung as Nefaria, And Introducing (unfortunately) Ferbus, Reviewed by Damon Foster

I believe a few magazines ago, I predicted that this unholy bastardization of Japan's KAMEN RIDER BLACK RX (Toei; 1988) would turn out to be a real stinker, and a sacrilegious mish-mash of a classic, 24-year old Japanese tradition & genre. Why must I always be so correct?! What

MASKED RIDER



am I, a psychic? I really hoped I would be proved wrong once this blasphemous atrocity first debuted on Saturday mornings. But, as we all expected, Saban's MASKED RIDER is miserable crap, even compared to previous racist edits like MIGHTY MORPHIN POWER RANGERS and V.R. TROOPERS. MASKED RIDER throws a monkey wrench into the whole Kamen Rider genre (though it doesn't damage over-all continuity any worse than Japan's equally bad SHIN KAMEN RIDER PROLOGUE), there's just no way this American ripoff can fit in chronologically with its Japanese counterpart programs. The real mistake was that this Americanized "Masked Rider" is now supposedly from outerspace! So right then & there, any sense of faithfulness is eliminated. If nothing else, at least the name "Mask Rider" is fairly accurate, since it means

K A M E N

between Masked Rider and the Power Rangers was pretty good. Perhaps it was the work of Jeff Pruit's stunt team, who I assume still work on POWER RANGERS. It would appear that what little action is in MASKED RIDER itself is comparably lackluster (but then, even in Japanese form, KAMEN RIDER BLACK RX was no epic masterpiece of action & thrills either).

The amount of actual footage (just FX clips and the fights, of course) from the Japanese program is actually quite minimal compared to the low budget, American-shot filler that dominates most of the episodes I've managed to sit through. From what little I've bothered to see, it seems as though Kamen Rider Black RX's (I mean, "Masked Rider's") battles with the alien invaders is a mere subplot; the remainder concentrates on High School or Jr. High shinanigans which makes the entire American student population look like the most cleancut, let's-buy-expensive-

that age, and TV was forcing the moral majority's view of a positive role model down my throat, it became blatantly obvious and insulting to me, even as a twerp. If anything, this struck me as brain-washing, and made me want to rebel.

Prince Dex of the ill-fated Planet Aynar comes to Earth to protect it from an alien empire lead by Count Dregin. Unfortunately, this incredibly annoying Dex runt gets to become the first (and hopefully last) American Kamen Rider, called Masked Rider. Even more unfortunate is that Dex is played by high-pitched whiner T.J. Roberts. Though TJ Roberts knows how to kick when the program's censors permit it, his acting sucks and it's just plain insulting to hear his squeaky, whimp voice coming out of Kamen Rider Black RX! Now, if the character was called "Kamen Rider Pink RX", that would be different. If ever TJ Roberts goes through puberty, that will be different-- let's hope it doesn't take forever, as is the case with Micheal Jackson. Anyway, Dex and his furry muppet Ferbus (Alf with Howard the Duck's beak) get adopted by a kind, wholesome, racially diverse family where everyone is squeaky clean, much like the high school he goes to-- you know, the way things are in real life. Inbetween idiotic escapades at home and in the classroom, Dex/Masked Rider occasionally battles the invading space creatures summoned by Count Dregin. The change in footage from old Japanese to new American wouldn't be terribly obvious to the first time viewer. But Dex dresses exactly like the original Japanese character (Kotaro Miname, played by Tetsuo Kurata) he replaced, and in brief glimpses, you can get vague looks at Tetsuro Kurata himself, but he's usually in the middle of a stunt so he's moving so quickly you wouldn't know the difference unless you were familiar with the original, superior 1988 program. 1/2 -Damon Foster



RIDER-- though there's even a discrepancy there because the first KAMEN RIDER show is from 1971, and the character looks nothing like Kamen Rider Black RX (aka "Saban's Masked Rider") now seen in America. It used to be I could wear my Kamen Rider Black RX T-shirt with pride, and nobody noticed. But now, over a year after the day I first bought it, I'm embarrassed to be seen in public wearing it because of all the stares, giggling and pointing from little kids.

So far, some of the better American-shot footage of "Masked Rider" was actually when the character made his debut (hah!) in a couple episodes ("A Friend in Need" Parts 1 & 2) of MIGHTY MORPHIN' POWER RANGERS. For years, I wanted a team up such as this, between two different Japanese genres, but Toei never seemed interested in doing any such cross-overs. So now finally, after all these years, we actually get to see a Kamen Rider battling some Sentai Rangers! But why, just why did it have to be done in America? Could it be that the Americans actually have more creativity than the Japanese, who seem determined to keep each series character within his own environment exclusively?! Sad to say, it seems to be the case. But the brief battle

clothes-from-the-Gap, pro-materialist bunch of preppy skum group on Earth. When I drive by my old high school, there's a certain percentage of these plastic dweebs, but many are smoking cigarettes, along side the punks, grunge-heads, metal-heads (yes, they still exist in some spots!), rappers, and gang members. Perhaps MASKED RIDER's exclusion of these other types of students (or anyone with a mild grass-stain on their knee or slight acne blemish) is to try and convince its naive audience that subcultures and people of varying tastes simply don't exist, and that we should all wear pastel colors and conform to an unrealistic, fairy tale existence that's only possible on TV. It's been quite some time since I was a little kid, but when I was

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LETTERS cont...

Dear Damon Foster,

Hi. My name is Victor Layro, a 15-year old HK movie fanatic. I'm also a pervert. Besides all of that, I like your magazine. The movie reviews (especially yours) are truly hilarious, most definitely a laugh riot. OC's "American Martial Arts Issue" was no exception, with non-stop belly laugh sessions of epic proportions, my friend! American action films are inferior to China's films, whether it be "double-gun John Woo over-the-table, floor-sliding, banister-riding Chow Yun Fat" or "kung fu master Jackie Chan". Those who disagree need a severe beating and a gunshot to each knee-cap. Anyway, I want to know how I can receive a copy of the fol-

lowing: HOT DOGS ON THE RUN, AGE OF DEMONS and HOT BUTTERED KUNG FU. Buy or trade, I want them- I want them bad! / I really regret including reviews of amateur videos in OC! I sure hope nobody expects these no-budget, shot-in-the-backyard (on cheap quality video) flicks to be anywhere even remotely professional! Not only that, but mine, specifically AGE OF DEMONS is offensive and highly Politically Incorrect! Whenever someone considers purchasing a copy, disclaimers of this nature are needed, AOD is recommended for adults only!!! But since you asked, these penniless videos are available at these prices...AGE OF DEMONS: \$15.00, HOT DOGS ON THE RUN: \$10.00, and THE ADVENTURES OF MYSTERON: \$10.00. As for HOT BUT-

TERED KUNG FU, that's Ed Holland's amateur production, and until he gets a permanent address, I don't know how you would go about getting that tape! -DF/

I thoroughly enjoy your magazine and will continue purchasing each & every issue as long as you don't lose sanity /How can I lose something I never had? -DF/ and devote your book to Pagan Satan worship /What I do in my private life is none of your damn business. -DF/ now that would be bad! A military style salute to you and the crew at OC for producing such a quality product. Bravo, my brothers!

Victor Cayro
IA, USA

ASIAN ODDITIES cont...

they eventually slay the giant alien/monster, and obtain the magic fruit to cure the old fairy of the spider poison. Then there's a brief duel (magical beams & explosions) with the evil witch, who now suddenly looks like Jin Doguma, a villain from Japan's KAMEN RIDER SUPER 1 (Toei; 1981). **1/2 -Damon Foster



From America: UNDER SIEGE 2: DARK TERRITORY

Directed by Geoff Murphy, Released by Warner Brothers, Starring Steven Seagal, Reviewed by John Grace

Steven Seagal's latest is a surprisingly entertaining sequel to his dull 1992 hit. While the film was not the box office hit the studio ex-

pected, it should make a fun time killer on video and cable.

There's nary a dull moment in this DIE HARD-on-a-train actioner, as Seagal foils the world domination plans of two maniacal terrorists (played by Eric Bogosian & Everett McGill). The terrorists have seized the passenger train that carries Seagal and his niece (played by Kathryn Heigl, the hot jailbait from MY FATHER THE HERO) through the Rocky Mountains. Now I would try to explain more of the complex plot, which involves a Pentagon satellite that can disintegrate anything on Earth, two copulating scientists who happen to be on the train, a super mean dike mercenary who gives co-star Morris Chestnut the fight of his life and a bickering staff of military advisors at the Pentagon, but space is precious.

Anyway, Seagal's limited aikido choreography suits the film perfectly, since most of the ac-

tion occurs on the train. There's no room in a train compartment for flying kicks, spin kicks or acrobatics (none of which do I think Seagal is capable of), so the brutal armlocks, judo tosses, and punches are fitting for the occasion. Nearly every fight scene is a variation on the Sean Connery/Robert Shaw fight in FROM RUSSIA WITH LOVE.

Bogosian & McGill are excellent as the eccentric villains, Heigl & Chestnut are fun in their supporting roles, and Seagal still can't act, but has decent screen presence as the hero. OC trivia freaks should note that Brenda Bakke (the whiny blonde from GUNHED) is featured as one of the ill-fated scientists. The stunts & FX in UNDER SIEGE 2 are quite spectacular, and the whole film is closer to the DIE HARD VENGANCE formula than DIE HARD WITH A VENGEANCE (which was a real letdown). *** -John Grace

STILL AVAILABLE: Videos (VHS only)....

AGE OF DEMONS: Amateur video shot on a camcorder! A remotely coherent plot combines horror, comedy, large breasted females, sci-fi, punk rock, fantasy, and martial arts. Cast: Butch Portillo, August Ragone, Eric Matson, Damon Foster, Perry Wong, Becca Torez, Rajar Shy, John Grace, DRAGON FROM RUSSIA star Anthony Houk, and Penthouse Playmate Tammie Costas! For Adults only! PRICE: \$15.00

HOT DOGS ON THE RUN: Incredibly amateur video shot on a broken camcorder! Made for no money at all, this cheap farce spoofs old martial arts films. Satirical characters include: Bruise Lee, Kwai Chung King, Toshiro Katsu, The Karate Dude (Ralph Macho), Wacky Chan, Billy Jerk, Jig' Kelley, and a special appearance by the Mexican wrestler: El Burito Negro! PRICE: \$10.00

ADVENTURES OF MYSTERON: Pennyless skits intended for Community Access cable, about a masked wrestler tackling secret agents, ninjas, aliens, a werewolf, thugs, and whatever other latex masks we found lying around. PRICE: \$10.00

DAMON FOSTER'S WEIRD VIDEOS: A collection of DF's older productions. Some are funny, some are offensive, and some are boring-for DF completists only. PRICE: \$10.00

Fanzines: OC#1 (1978), OC#2 (1979), OC#3 (1980), OC#4 (1981), OC#5 (1982), OC#6 (1983), OC#7 (1984), OC#8 (1985), OC#9 (1986), OC#10 (1987), OC#11 (1988), OC#12 (1990), OC#13 (1991), OC#14 (1992) and OC#15 (1993). PRICE: \$6.00 Each. NOTE: These back issues of *Oriental Cinema* are from its original, pre-Draculina phase, and not to be confused with Draculina's OC "#1", OC "#2", etc., as the more current ones are of a whole different volume, and are available from Draculina Publishing. However, DF is the only one selling these old collector's items. OC's early, newsletter/fanzine phase consists of home-made publications which vary in quality despite they're all costing the same amount (that's right, a whoppin' six bucks per issue!). The common rule is, the later the issue, the better it is (though OC#14 is where it reached its peak). OC's 14 & 15 are quite good, while OC's 1, 2, 3 & 4 really suck. The issues between are decent.

FINAL DISCLAIMER: DF's sense of humor has offended people before, and these videos and old fanzines are no exception. Though the intention is to amuse (not offend), it's important that only those in the right frame of mind consider purchasing these products.

Make checks out to Damon Foster.

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