

ORIENTAL CINEMA

AUG #3
\$3.25

THE JACKIE CHAN ISSUE!

ALSO INSIDE:

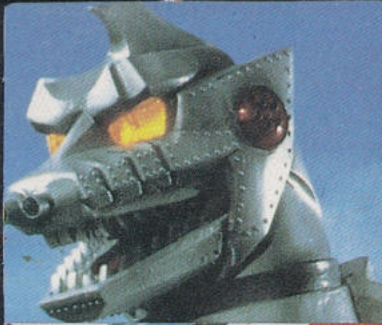
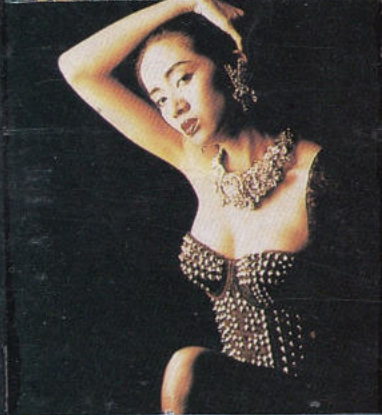
ULTRASEVEN!

JOHN WOO!

KIKAIDA!

GODZILLA!

AND MORE!





DRACULINA PUBLISHING - PO BOX 969 - CENTRALIA, IL - 62801 - write for ad rates.

2 EDITORIAL

3 LETTERS

4 JACKIE CHAN

8 JC'S MOTION(FUL) PICTURES

16 JACK-ISH FILMS

17 HINDI FILMS

18 ZINE REVIEWS

19 TERROR YAKI

21 HONG KONG HEROES

28 KAIZO NINGEN UPDATE

editor & creator
DAMON FOSTER

publisher
HUGH GALLAGHER

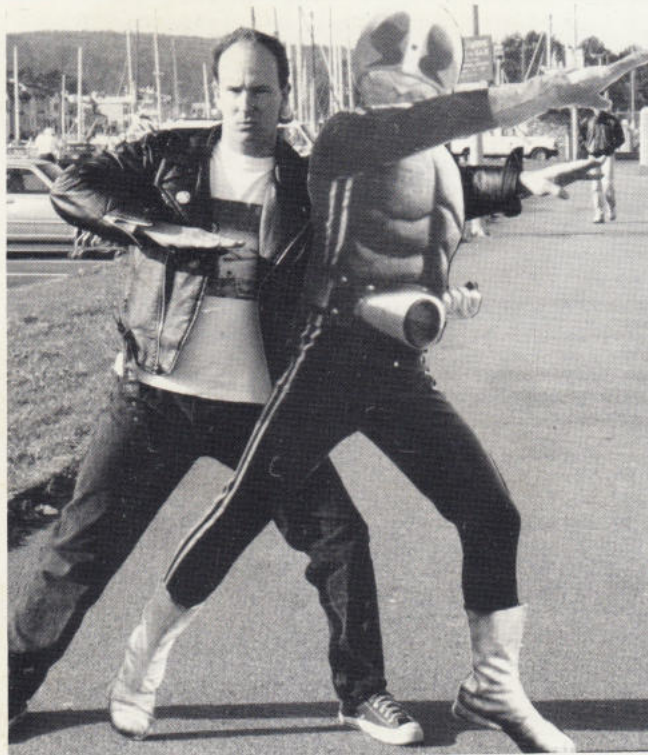
contributors
Darren Wheeling
Channing Smith
William Chang
Robert Mallory
Rajar Shy - John Grace
Butch Portillo
Richard Aktiyama
Nick Kulogeras
Bob Sargent - Yuki Maeda
Dan Mackey
Craig Ledbetter
Jimmy Robinson
Setsuko Emma
Massimo Lavagnini
Kam Lee - Don Coley
John Emma - Ron Murillo
Paul Haberman
Garo Nigoghossian

layout
HUGH GALLAGHER

OC infringes no rights over any characters, films, and TV shows herein, and is just a magazine of critical review, dedicated to the exposure and promotion of these productions. OC Volume 3 - Number 3 - Issue #18 is copyright © 1994 Damon

Welcome to yet another OC. If you're a new reader, and hope this will be yet another excuse to read about overexposed HK hits, you've got another thing coming. The only reason so many other publications (anything from the lowest of sleaze rags, to the pretentious mainstreamers) write about HK films this week is because there's money to be made off them. My goal isn't, and never has been to remind everyone about things they already know about, nor is it to become rich (it would be wonderful, but it's an unlikely dream). OC is more concerned with Asian filmdom as a whole, and not what's a trendy, hot seller. Anyway, on to the rest of this editorial.

Tonight I had originally hoped to apply for a job as a mime for the blind. I figure it's really easy; just whisper into a blind guy's ear, "This part's really funny- I'm climbing a rope! Okay, now I'm trapped in a box!" But this ambition died like gerbils in a San Franciscan apartment when I got a call from Draculina Publishing, asking if I'd ever get up off the pavement and begin work on another OC. So I said, "Okay, fine. Sure, right, whatever." So, a few seconds later, 'Shazam!' A new OC! Here it is at last, my long overdue Jackie Chan issue! It's taken longer than the entire length of Liberace's closet for this edition of OC to come into existence, because of my own reluctance to choose something so mainstream (after all, what's the point of covering something everyone knows about?). In the 1980s, Jackie Chan was the big thing for U.S. fans of Far Eastern films.



OC creator Damon Foster (left), as he appeared on Japanese TV in 1992.

But nowadays, the trendies are busy drooling over anything featuring the names Tsui Hark, John Woo, Ringo Lam, Jet Li, or films which use the word "Swordsman". Jackie Chan's popularity has gone down a notch or two, so now I can make this Jackie issue and not feel like a complete sell-out.

But to me, Jackie is THE martial arts star. As far as I'm concerned, he's the ultimate, internationally famous, kung fu star; succeeded only by Bruce Lee. Yet here in Dumbville, USA, it's rare to see Jackie on the cover of martial arts magazines, which routinely kiss ass to the inferior (in my opinion) talents of Steven Segal, Claud Van Dumb, and all that other domestic garbage. Hell, to this day, the only Chinese actor to appear regularly on such covers is STILL Bruce Lee! Wake up, America! It dumbfounds me, how Jackie is one of Asia's top stars (and has been since the 1970s), is apparently well-known in Europe and yet is still only an underground cult phenomenon in this self-centered country. Yet our own 'action' stars like Stallone & Schwarzeneger are famous worldwide, but neither has done half the sacrifice that Jackie has suffered to make his internationally under-rated films so incredible. I'm not saying Chan is completely obscure in the U.S., he's definitely known somewhat in America. But when you consider how influential & inspirational his films are, and how many profitable American 'epics' have ripped off his ideas, it's not hard to feel he deserves more recognition. Hence this issue!

But the world is a big place, as proven by a recent conversation I had when I entered a friend's house. . . Friend: "How is it outside?" I answered: "Big!" The number of things in this decaying world is even larger than half the contents of Imelda Marcos's flight bag! Yep, the Earth is absolutely huge, so it has plenty more to offer than just Jackie Chan. Other Asian film genres covered in this issue include regular topics like superheroes, kung fu, cartoons, and of course, giant monsters. Hell, I'm throwing in an article on the Hindu films of India too! Don't you just love me?! So do I!

Like last issue, this edition also features reviews by people other than myself. Nearly every other issue was written by me, myself and I; nobody else. So the articles & reviews are credited appropriately. If an article doesn't say who wrote it, it must mean I wrote it. Because I used to be OC's only writer, I rarely wrote my name as author of previous articles, everyone knew it was my work. But the gap between issues is much smaller than before (OC used to only come out once a year), so my new staff of writers will take up the slack & burden. This leaves me with more time on my hands, allowing me to eventually produce yet another action/comedy/fantasy video (I hope), and to pursue my new career as a poet. I'll get started now. Here goes. . . Roses are red. Violets are Blue. I'm a schizophrenic, and so am I!

I'm getting tired of having to say this: If you write to me and expect a response, enclose a SELF-AD-

DRESSED-STAMPED-ENVELOPE! Comprene? Know wh'am sayin'? Wakari masu ka? Many of you have written to ask about getting back issues from me, when by now you should know damn well they're \$6.00 each (make check or M.O. out to my name). I sell my older issues, ones during OC's pre-Draculina phase, when it was an independent fanzine. Two back issues are left, OC#14 and OC#15; both are six bucks each. Any issues after OC#15 are available through Draculina Publishing. Draculina does NOT carry anything before OC#16 (Volume 3; No. 1). Anyway, the main point is that if you expect me to write back, enclose an S.A.S.E., and even that is no guarantee I'll respond; I'm a very busy god. I mean, a very busy guy.

Finally, OC is starting to have a small female readership, about 10-15%. To accommodate this growing group, I'm going to attempt to make a few minor changes:

1. Occasional sexy shot of MALE actors. After all, OC has never skimmed on the T&A shots for my huge male readership. The girlie shots will still be more dominant than the 'hunk shots', as most of my readers are still guys. But being a heterosexual male myself, I have difficulty in telling what girls & flamers consider sexy. I assume people like Sonny Chiba, Jackie Chan, Bruce Lee and Chow Yun Fat are good looking; I mean there's no obvious physical abnormalities, right? Starting with this issue, I'll try to squeeze in a shot or

two of Jackie which will make females get hard- erh, uh, I mean, get wet. Which brings me to my second change:

2. I'll cut down on my sexist jokes. Of course, my goal was never to be sexist, racist, offensive, etc., but to be funny. But again, with growing numbers of females buying OC, I'll ease off on the crude jokes which represent the female body as a sex object. I also hope everyone realizes I'm not 'sexist' in person, just ask any girls (except my last couple girlfriends) who've known me in person. So hence forth, OC's sexist gags & one liners will be limited: No more than three jokes per issue, about breasts, UNLESS they're about LARGE breasts, in which case, no more than six jokes (added inches means added comments). Vagina jokes will be almost completely eliminated, unless I call someone, male or female, a 'cunt', since that's not really referring to someone's body; I may just as easily call that individual a 'dick'.

But eventually, I may entirely eliminate any and all comments which can be considered sexist or offensive to women, but I'll only finally stop when starlets, celebrities & other females cease appearing in skimpy, revealing, curve-emphasizing tight clothing (i.e. Amy Yip's many "don't-take-me-seriously-as-an-actress-just-stare-at-my-tits" outfits) entirely. Sincerely mine, Damon Foster, OC editor & founder, DAMON FOSTER, P.O. BOX 576, FREMONT, CA 94537-0576

TRIVIA QUIZ!

TEST YOUR ORIENTAL KNOWLEDGE!

Q: CAN YOU NAME ALL THE KAMEN RIDERS?

NOTE: Answer is at bottom of page.



LETTERS

Anyway, I'll start this letters section with the weirdest letter since Dino Campos's bizarre note in the previous issue. This issue's wacko letter comes from Jonathon Smock, who also sent an interesting news clipping, an actual article which I originally saw in NATIONAL LAMPOON's "True Facts" section long ago: "If you travel in Tokyo, you get a lot of help from the car-rental agency that offers you these instructions: 'When passenger of foot heave into sight, tootle the horn. Trumpet him melodiously at first, but if he still obstacle you passage, then tootle him with vim and vigor.'

Japanese-English like this may be pretty funny, but I still reserve the biggest laughs for their product names, as mentioned on page 3 of

the previous OC. As reported, Cindy Crawford went to Japan to promote the drink 'Pokari Sweat', and who can forget the appetizing sounding soft drink, Calpis? But for now, on to my letters, starting off with the one from Jonathon Smock:

DEAR MR. FOSTER, I WOULD VERY MUCH LIKE MORE ISSUES OF ORIENTAL CINEMA. IT IS GOOD MAGAZINE, I LAUGHED AND LAUGHED AND THEN I LAUGHED SOME MORE. I LAUGHED BECAUSE I BOUGHT THE NEWSSTAND MAGAZINE VERSION OF YOUR MAGAZINE, IT WAS FUNNY, I LAUGHED. NOW I WANT YOU'RE OLD STUFF. MY BUDDY HAS THEM AS WELL AS THE FILMS, THEY FUNNY TOO. I LIKED THAT UltrAman MUG IN FILM IT WAS

KOOL, YOU'RE ROOM KOOL, YOUR CAR COOL, YOUR ASSOCIATES ARE NEET AS WELL/IS THERE ANYWAY TO GET YOU'RE COPIES OF YOU'RE MAFOPIE, MAFOPA MAMAFOLOPIA, OR WHATEVER ARTICLES? OR ARE U SELLING ANY T-SHIRTS, MUGGS OR SPORTSBOTTLES WITH YURE LOGO ON IT? WELL SRRY FOR LETTER IS. THEY TARING THE ROOF TODAY AND I STUK IN MIDDLE OF BLDG IN MY OFFICE ROM NEAR VENT WITH-OUT WINDOW. SO SLEEPY, SO VERY SLEEPY.

Jonathon smock - Plymouth, MN

Dear Jonathon- Actually, it's Mirrorman on the mug in AOD, not Ultraman, but I agree, it's cool. Speaking of mugs, I don't yet offer products like that, but it's not a bad idea. Too bad only me and you would use such

products. As for MAFFAPA, it was a limited edition compilation fanzine I don't plan to re-release in the near future. And remember- be very careful when falling in love; for it may stick to your face. -DF

Damon-

I received my copy of your video, AGE OF DEMONS, and I enjoyed it immensely. While it was not as technically polished (those editing rain-bow lines have gotta' gol) as some of the other 'underground' movies I've seen, you more than make up for with your energy and enthusiasm. This is one of the few movies I didn't scan through. I watched it from beginning to end.

Joe Parda - Levittown, NY

(continued on page 34)

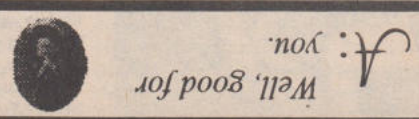
RATING SYSTEM

DF'S RATING SYSTEM—I'll be the first to admit that my Star system is flawed. One problem is that most people tend to disagree with me, so the films I pan, everyone else likes, while my favorites don't necessarily impress anyone else. Also, I base my Ratings on the entertainment value of the movie or series in question, and it has nothing to do with its budget, who made it, who's in it, what country it came from, or how much the bootleggers sell it for (OC is a magazine, not a catalogue). My taste lies somewhere between martial arts and sci-fi, so I tend to prefer that which is more action oriented, and prefer camp & comedy over sagas of mature, human emotion. Another inaccuracy is that I'm always changing my mind! One day, I may give a movie a four or five star rating, and later, I'll decide I was far too kind! It works in reverse too, like in OC#12 I only

gave KIKAIDA three measly stars! I regret that error in judgement. The final discrepancy is that OC now has other writers, and they all have different tastes and preferences, yet all reviews in OC maintain this rating system. An old-timer may give a high rating to classics like KAMEN RIDER and FIVE FINGERS OF DEATH, while younger whipper-snappers may give less flattering Ratings to these oldies, and go crazy ape bonkers over newer stuff like ONCE UPON A TIME IN CHINA part 92 and the new show BLUE SWAT (Toei; 1994).

*****= Outstanding production! Saying it's one of my favorites is like saying Hitler was a nazi.****= While not absolutely perfect (perfect is a myth; much like Loch Ness Monster, Big Foot, Polly Shore's ability to think, etc.), but really excellent and highly recommended.***= Definitely above average. There are slow moments, but a lot of fun

regardless. Check it out if you get a chance, unless you've got plans at the DMV or something.**= Average. This is a standard rating, a mixture of good and bad. It's worth checking out, but don't have high expectations.*= No sir, I don't like it. They could have done much better, so on the whole, I say you're not missing much if you avoid this one. = Barf! Yawn! Who the fuck made this worthless production?! What a load of shit. This is a complete waste of time. A definite must-avoid!!!



JACKIE CHAN

(aka Jacky Chan, Chen Gangsheng, Chen Long, Sing Lung, Chan Lung, Yuan Lou and anything else they could think up)

Conceived nine months earlier, Chan Lung was born (the only child of poor immigrant parents) the same year as Godzilla, 1954. Jackie's exact birth date was, and still is April 6, 1954. Little is known about Jackie's early years, except that he became very much influenced by the works of silent film stars of the U.S., like Charlie Chaplin, Harold Lloyd and of course Buster Keaton, a master of physical comedy.

But the poor Chan family (who moved to Canberra, Australia) couldn't really afford to feed young Jackie, so in 1962 (at about the age of seven), he was more or less rented to a traveling circus called Zhonggou Xiju Xueyuan, the Chinese Opera Research Institute (one of several Peking Opera schools in HK where impoverished families sent their kids, so they'd have less mouths to feed). He learned the usual Peking opera-type stuff: Acrobatics, how to withstand torture, mime, kung fu, dancing, and supposedly even singing (his attempts at singing in his later movies do little to prove it though). These traveling circuses took over raising the kids, whose room & board was paid for by performing. Under the harsh hand of

Master Yu Jim Yuen (aka Yuen Shanyon), the students painfully learned the ropes of the performing arts, and amazingly, most lived to tell about it. He worked the victimized kids from 5 a.m. to midnight almost every day. Among the survivors were Jackie's then young colleagues like Samo Hung, Yuen Biao, Yuen Wah, Meng Hoi, Yuen Kwai, Yuen De and even Lam Ching Ying, though he got his training & beatings from a different opera school. Using the stage name of Yuan Lou, he and 7 other students formed a troupe called 'Qi Xiao Fu' (The 7 Little Fortunes', also translated 'The 7 Cute Kids').

But 1962 was also the year an eight-year old Jackie made his movie debut, when a top Taiwanese actress, Li Li Hua (see her bio in this issue's **HK HEROES** section) cast him to play her son, co-starring in the drama **BIG AND LITTLE WONG TIN-BAR**. This started his career. In between training & bruises at the opera school, Jackie appeared in numerous movies in the 1960s, including **THE LOVE ETERNAL** (1963) and **THE STORY OF QIU XIANGLIN** (1964). But he was just a little twerp then & had no say in the type of films he made, and action films weren't really that fashionable in the 1960s. So Jackie had no chance to display martial arts, or do homages to Buster Keaton.

Jackie Chan and the boys were limber, strong and energetic by the time the school closed in 1970. Out of a job, they made the next logical step: Kung fu movies, Jackie's pains under Yu Jim Yuen's iron hand had

paid off! As I've stated many times before, the early 1970s were the chop sockey years! Bruce Lee dominated the box office in HK, and over in Japan, two-fisted, karate chopping heroes like **KAMEN RIDER** kicked major ass on Japanese TV, thanks to the work of Sonny Chiba's Japan Action Club. Even in America, David Carradine demonstrated his feeble brand of slow motion kung fu in **ABC's KUNG FU TV** series. So Jackie's opera school couldn't have died at a better time! Chan, Samo Hung and

other students started off as background extras in some of the many kung fu films that came out. While Jackie appeared in minuscule roles in **FIST OF FURY**, **ATTACK OF THE KUNG FU GIRLS** and **ENTER THE DRAGON**, Samo Hung & Lam Ching Ying are

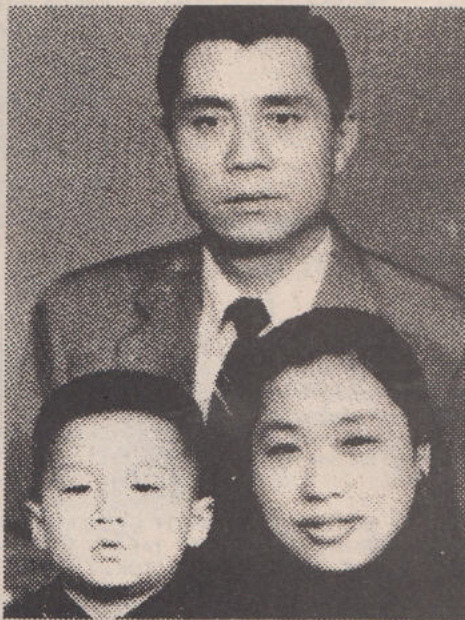
had made it big, with all new footage of a double imitating Chan's later work. **Numero Two-o**: There's a fight on the dock, where Jackie battles a villain of many 1960s classics, though the guy's name will forever be a mystery. Anyway, Jackie's next couple kung fu movies were **THE HEROINE** (1975) and **NOT SCARED TO DIE** (1973), which, like **SNAKEFIST FIGHTER**, was later re-released and retitled (**EAGLE'S SHADOW FIST**; 1978) after his name became profitable. But the worst was yet to come—Jackie cameos in 1975's **ALL IN THE FAMILY** (see my scathing review elsewhere in this issue).

Also in 1975, the now famous John Woo reunited Jackie with Yuen Wa and Samo Hung, to appear with Tan Tao Liang in **HAND OF DEATH** (aka **COUNTDOWN IN KUNG FU**).

Far left: 14-year old Jackie at his opera school.

Middle: Young Jackie with his soon-to-be proud parents.

Above: 12-year old Jackie.





But I don't give a damn what other people say, I see no evidence that Jackie was trying to imitate Bruce Lee in **SNAKEFIST FIGHTER**, **HAND OF DEATH**, or even 1976's **NEW FIST OF FURY**, for that matter! From the start, Jackie had his own style, his own unique interpretation which owed little to the basic, brutal tactics of Bruce Lee, Li, Le, etc. Jackie did a number of other serious kung fu tales, before hitting upon a great idea in 1977. **HALF A LOAF OF KUNG FU** was Jackie's first comedy, an amusing satire of the kung fu genre. Though not absolutely hilarious by today's standards, it set the pace for the remainder of Jackie's 1970s career.

One thing which helped Jackie to be successful, and to stand out, was his insistence to being as different from Lee's jeet kune do style as possible. While the chopsocky Bruces relied on basic kicks & punches, Jackie got as technically involved in kung fu as one could get. Where as Bruce and the other Lees were 'liberated' from the 'classical mess', Jackie delved into mutating the classical styles to an over-exposed, exaggerated level. He dealt heavily with the complex arm-blocks of the snake style, crane style, tiger style, rancid wombat style, whatever. But in a way, Jackie's avoiding Lee's street fighting technique made his mid-to-late 1970s films echo the artificial period films of the 1960s. It was a return to ancient basics, but with more skill, energy & humor than that of 1960s stars like Wang Yu, Lo Lieh, Yueh Hua, Pan Pan, Li Li Hua, etc. Many of these films of the mid-1970s were actually the work of Lo Wei, the director/producer responsible for two of Bruce Lee's films. But Lo Wei had less commercial success with Jackie than he did with Bruce.

Another trend in late 1970s Jackie films was his frequent use of a drunken, good-for-nothing bum. After these various 'drunken master'-type hits, imitators began flooding the market, with anyone from Billy Chong, Chi Kwan Chun to Liang Chia Jen trying to be the new Jackie Chan! Hell, I could do a whole issue on Jackie imitation films (**DANCE OF THE DRUNKEN MANTIS**, **THE WAYS OF KUNG FU**, **THUNDERING MANTIS**, **FEARLESS JACKAL**, **IRON CANTONEN KUNG**

FU, etc.) alone. But again, slobbering drunks who teach kung fu are not new to Chinese cinema; Yueh Hua played one in 1965's **COME DRINK WITH ME!** As for Jackie, he officially became a big star in 1978, when Ng Sze Yuen, daring to try a new approach, starred Chan in the ground breaking chop sockey romp, **EAGLE'S SHADOW**. This flick shot Chan to stardom in the Far East, plus made him mildly known in the U.S. There were a couple more kung fu comedies, like his directorial debut (**FEARLESS HYENA**; 1979), before Chan was taken in by Golden Harvest (at the advice of Jackie's then & now manager Willie Chan; no relation). He instantly became HK's biggest star, thanks to **THE YOUNG MASTER** (Golden Harvest; 1980). Since then, newer stars have come and gone, and Jackie has always been one of the main box office draws in Asia.

In the 1980s, Jackie decided he'd gone as far as he could within the confines of the orient. So it became the familiar tale of the Chinese star going west, as so many had done before him. While I personally enjoyed **BIG BRAWL**, both **CANNONBALL RUN** movies sucked like a homosexual vacuum cleaner, and **THE PROTECTOR!**?? See my review last issue, to see how awful this film is. But Jackie apparently hated director James Glickenhouse, and wanted Golden Harvest to replace him. But Glickenhouse's contract made it impossible, so that crafty Jackie re-shot sections of the film with his own crew after Glickenhouse left HK! Though neither version is much good, I prefer the Chinese version over the American one. Regardless, Jackie's differences with the American movie makers shows why Jackie never became a huge hit in the U.S. But there have been rumors going around for years, like: 1. Jackie will shoot a western in the U.S., featuring the inevitable showdown at high noon, amid tumble weeds in a western village. The only change is that instead of gunslingers, it's rival Chinese kung fu masters! 2. Jackie and Sylvester Stallone might appear together in a movie. I suspect this rumor came about because of shots of both stars posing together in **CINEMART** magazine. Jackie had dropped by, on the set of **DEMOLI-**



Middle:
Young
Jackie
(dead
center),
and his
group,
the
7
Little
Fortunes.

Right:
1970s :
Sporting
a Keith
Partridge
harid, Jackie
visits
his mom
in
Australia.





TION MAN. 3. Jackie appearing with Tom Hanks in *SINGAPORE SLING*, a movie which never came into existence. But again, these are all just rumors which have come and gone. If Jackie ever makes that big American film, it remains to be seen. But if American audiences continue to associate him only with what they've seen; shit like *CANNONBALL RUN* and *PROTECTOR* (and his Chinese 1970s farces won't help matters much), the odds of him succeeding in the U.S. are as likely as finding a swastika at a barmitzva.

Regardless, neither *PROTECTOR* or *BIG BRAWL* made enough money to keep Chan in America, yet his early 1980s HK films like *FANTASY MISSION FORCE*, *DRAGON LORD*, and *PROJECT* A broke new grounds not only for their unique stories, but because Jackie was flexing his muscle in different areas: Writing, directing, producing, singing badly, doing all his own stunts and editing. Of course, his heavy in-



A and *FANTASY MISSION FORCE*, though set in the past, were unlike his many 1970s farces. But I still believe it was a film from a rival company, Cinema City's ground breaking 1982 hit, *ACES GO PLACES*, which brought HK cinema into the present. Longtime OC readers already know all about this energetic comedy series about cops & robbers, so I needn't repeat my reviews. Anyway, after *ACES*, plenty of HK movie guys were cranking out auctioners set in modern, urban HK, and Jackie was no exception.

It's ironic that so many U.S. dumbshits first discovered Jackie Chan in the 'martial arts' sections of suburban video stores. By the time these old kung fu movies came out on tape in America, that genre had died in HK, and Jackie was making epics like *POLICE STORY*. 'Til this day, I still meet people who don't know Jackie quit making 'Eagle's Shadow' -type films many years ago. Strangely, his 1980s & 1990s films are still less common in American stores than those from his ancient 'snakefist' days!

To say the HK film industry grew significantly in the 1980s is one hell of an understatement. The cheap kung fu flicks were out, replaced by comparatively big budget, epic auctioners dealing with cops, spies, guns, car chases, gangsters and gamblers. Gone was the crude editing and cheap production values of the 1970s. Though I'm one of the few writers willing to acknowledge the existence of the 1970s films, even I agree that some of his 1980s auctioners, like

TWINKLE TWINKLE LUCKY STARS and *DRAGONS FOREVER*, are the cream of the crop. The martial arts and stunt work is the best I've ever seen. For once, Chan got international acclaim. The best way to describe Jackie's progression is by quoting other people:

"Four of Chan's films screen this month, including *DRUNKEN MONKEY IN A TIGER'S EYE*, an early film that marked his transition from kung fu performer to comedian." - Barbara Scharres, *The Film Center Gazette*.

"His unique blend of comedy and martial arts helped revitalize a floundering HK film industry in the late 1970s, giving it a swift kick in the funny bone. From his humble beginnings in (ok, I admit it) crummy kung fu movies in the early '70s, Chan has risen to become Asia's most popular movie star, whose films regularly out-gross the imported American blockbusters." - Tod Booth, free-lance writer for the *San Francisco Film Festival's 1989 Catalogue*.

"Now hE use gunn. Now him do stUnt in city. NoWw he drive in fast Kar. Before, hee using drunken snake tekneek in old day. Be4, he train iN kung fu trick. Me theenk Jackie like changel!" - Bubba McDumbal, Scribbler for *Special Children's Quarterly*

"*DRUNKEN MASTER*, the film that sent Chan on the road to stardom and kindled the birth of the kung fu/action comedies that populate late-night TV in America." - Ron Chepesiuk, *GALLERY*.

"To those who only associate Jackie Chan with his early kung fu flicks or (God forbid) scant appearances in the two dreadful *CANNONBALL RUN* all-star orgies, it's time to realize that you've been sheltered for too long." - Collin Geddes, *Asian Eye*.

"Theoretically speaking, drastic transformations within the preference of the quintessential audience hastened Mr. Chan's flabbergasting progression from inferior chop sockey-period film-fung fu - Wu Hsia Pan-innovator to the superior producer & performer in aaaaarrrgh!" - Grant Hiroshi, a whiney, neurotic technogeek at SF cons who only recently got into

Below: Jackie's 25th birthday party.





Middle: Jackie with Richard Kiel in **CANNONBALL RUN 2**.
Below: Jackie's career behind the camera started in the 1970s.



HK films and thinks he knows everything but is currently having the life crushed out of him by Damon Foster.

"Jackie Chan is the undisputed king of HK cinema. He almost single-handedly revived HK's sagging film industry in the late 1970s, toward the end of the Bruce Lee/kung fu movie boom, and has remained Asia's most popular star ever since." - Tod Booth, *San Francisco Weekly*, July 12, 1989.

"Once confined largely to martial arts costume dramas and stacy adaptations of Chinese opera, HK movies now boast a wide range of genres, many based on American models but all with a distinctive Asian twist." - David Kehr, *Chicago Tribune* (Jan. 7, 1990)

"His best films are not even available on videotape here. Chan is a HK Chinese, and perhaps for that reason alone, his dazzling, expensive and frequently hilarious action movies are unfairly equated with the sort of dim, badly shot kung fu movies that flooded these shores in the 1970s." - Steven Drachman, in some newspaper article, name unknown.

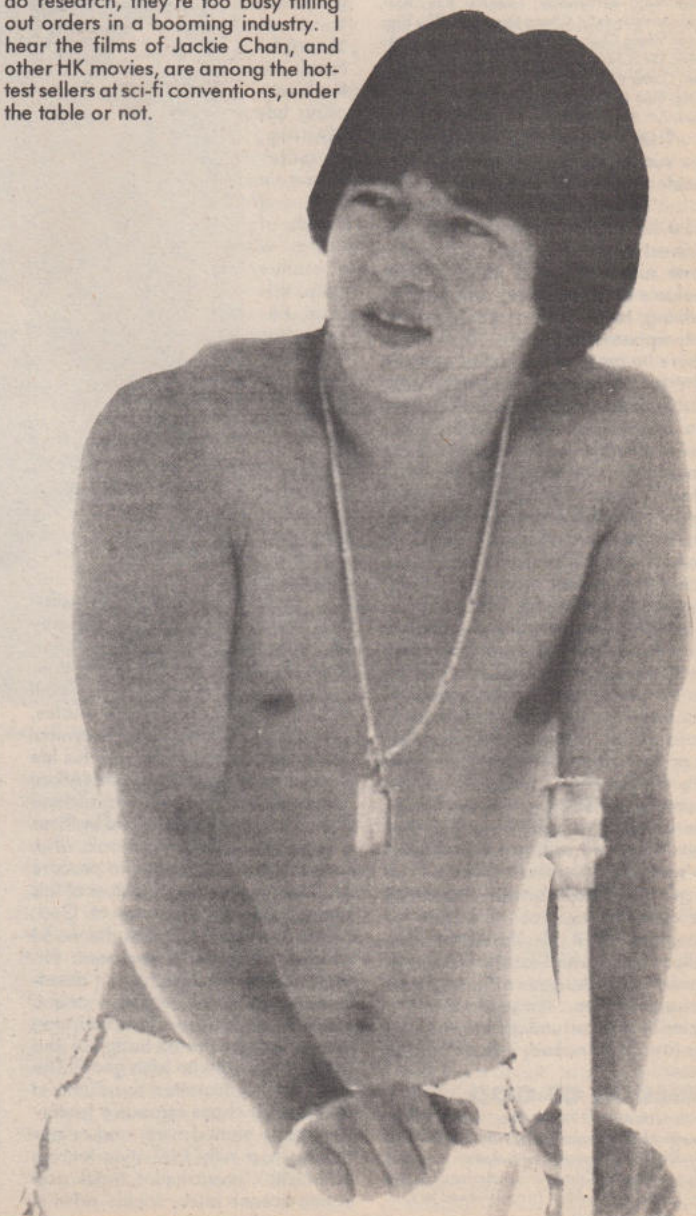
These quotes prove there are cool people & informed fans in the American fandom, and not just the idiotic suburbanites mentioned earlier, who only know of Jackie's cheapies, rentable at Blockbuster. More and more brave individuals & non-Chinese are venturing into Chinatown video stores & theatres, to see Jackie's 'forbidden fruits!' Exciting thrillers that the American mainstream somehow doesn't want us to see. That is, unless it's in some movie with Sylvester Stallone or the late Brandon Lee, where Jackie's ideas were blatantly used. In the Far East, Jackie is not just a movie star, but an all around celebrity. He's campaigned for worthy causes, has a 'singing' (if you call it that) career, and is always in the media; in magazines, endorsing products in commercials, and appearing on most variety shows & awards ceremonies.

Now it's the 1990s, and there's been a slight revival in historical period films in HK. For the most part, Jackie's 1990s films are similar to those he made in the 1980s, with him often playing a cop. One exception is **DRUNKEN MASTER Part 2**. But Jackie is in his 40s now, and certainly not in shape to do the same death-defying stunts which almost killed him in the 1980s. So naturally, his films show signs of slowing down. He still manages to generate some thrills and excitement in his old age though. I hear he plans to retire in about six years, leaving one hell of a legacy behind him!

Over on this side of the globe, even his 1980s classics are widespread at trendy, pretentious theatres, art houses and of course, phlegm festivals. I mean, film festivals. I suppose in the Midwest, fans have no choice but to see Chan in these stuck up, slimy places. The only other option for them is to buy tapes from sleazy, underground bootleggers. Bootlegging has always plagued the horror scene, but these sleazewads will steal anything that can make them a buck. While making a living off someone else's work is a lame excuse for working, the only real way to combat this is to make these films legitimately available! So long as most American distributors continue to ignore the likes of **PROJECT A** and **DRAGONS FOREVER**, the video pirates will continue to rake in the cash. Sometimes the only way to get these films legally is through a few specialized dealers, who are as overpriced as some of the bootleggers.

This bootlegging movement has lead to another Chan cult in the U.S., in the exploitation field. As always, along with it, comes the naive, hasty inaccuracies in this fandom's sleazierags. In a way, this misinformation which is infiltrating the scene is as damaging as the illegal sales themselves. One publication stated they were selling Yuen Biao's **WRITING WRONGS**, 'Starring Jackie Chan!' In another, readers were told Jackie's first movie was **BIG BRAWL**! Natu-

rally, video pirates haven't the time to do research, they're too busy filling out orders in a booming industry. I hear the films of Jackie Chan, and other HK movies, are among the hottest sellers at sci-fi conventions, under the table or not.



JACKIE CHAN'S MOTION(FUL) PICTURES

My god (which is me), was this compilation a major pain in the gonads. Not wanting to watch all of Jackie's movies myself, I asked others if they'd like to review some. Many of these assholes never wrote back. Others respectfully (which doesn't make me respect them) declined. Some said they'd review a film or two, but flaked out. Then there are those who've sent me reviews way too late to include. Regardless, I was unable to make this a complete article. There are a few films excluded because of a lack of space, while others, like **THE HEROINE** and **YOUNG MASTER**, are more illusive than a day of complete peace in Africa. So what follows are reviews of most of Jackie Chan's films, but not all of them. They're presented in alphabetical order, or as close as I could come to alphabetizing correctly. I've never claimed to be a mathematician, but now I am one.

ALL IN THE FAMILY

Presented by Uenye Enterprises, Produced by Golden Harvest in 1975, A Raymond Chow Production, Screenplay: Ssuma Ken, Asst. Producers: Souis Sit, Chang Man, Fang Chu Ting, Editor: Wang Chao Hsi, Opening Animation: Au Ching, Dir.: Chu Mu, Featuring: Dean Shek, James Tien, Carter Wang, Ku Feng, Jackie Chan, Sam Hung, Hao Li, Reviewed (reluctantly) by Damon Foster.

This is not only the dullest movie I've ever seen, but Jackie's debut for Golden Harvest. Apparently, they weren't very impressed with his work, since he wouldn't return to Golden Harvest for about six years. Since this lame movie is not a kung fu film, Jackie's performance amounts to nothing; he does no martial arts. He only appears in the last 15 minutes, where he more-or-less takes over the film. It's strange, there seems to be no one main actor throughout, but there are plenty of cameos, a lot of familiar faces. The names I listed above are the only ones I could recognize, from kung fu films. But nobody does any fighting at all, and none are in it for more than five minutes. There are plenty of other characters in the film, actors & actresses I'm unfamiliar with, and hope to keep it that way.

All in Chinese, with no translation of any kind shows why I hated the film; it's 100% talking, so I couldn't figure out the plot. I gather some grandfather is dying, and all his relatives are more anxious than concerned. Perhaps he willed them something, but only if they make changes? So the course of the flick has various characters going through lame comedic sketches. Like I said, Jackie's cameo isn't until near the end. This is before he got his cosmetic surgery to enlarge his eye-openings, so he's hard to recognize at first. He plays a rickshaw puller who gets his friend to do his job for him, while he goes off and screws a couple babes. It's unusual to see Jackie rolling around in bed with topless (and later naked) girls. - Damon Foster

ARMOUR OF GOD

[Golden Harvest; 1986] Dir.: Jackie Chan, Presented by Raymond Chow, Written & Directed by Jackie Chan, A Leonard Ho Production, Produced & Supervised by Ohua Lam, Starring: Jackie Chan, Lola Ferner, Allen Tam, Reviewed by Dan

Mackey.

Slam-bang adventure with Jackie cast against type, as an amoral mercenary-type, called the Asian Hawk- who takes on Indiana Jones-type gigs for fun & big bucks. After seeing Jackie in so many painfully virtuous roles, it's a kick seeing him spout such (subtitled) lines as "The name of my religion is money", and "No need to die, let me teach you how to be a whore".

The movie starts with a bang; as Jackie steals a sacred sword from a group of natives, interrupting their human sacrifice. Understandably pissed, they attack and Jackie fights, dodges spears and acrobatics so rad that he was almost killed filming this sequence (see outtakes during closing credits). This scene is followed by a cool abduction at a

fashion scene, in which lots of offsecurity guards are slaughtered. After this exciting beginning, it's unfortunate that a couple of slow stretches keep this from being a perfection film, but hey! Life's not perfect so stop complaining.

The plot goes something like this: Jackie used to be in the "Asian Bay City Rollers" {DF here, the name of the band is The Losers, spoofing Anthony Chan's old band, The Winners.} but quit when his best friend & his girlfriend, both band-mates, fell in love. Jackie became a cynical adventurer and got on with his life until years later; his ex-friend (Allen) shows up to tell him his ex-girlfriend (Laura) has been kidnapped by these evil machine gun toting monks who, for ransom, want Jackie to procure for them the remaining pieces of this thing called the Armour of God, which they need to make the world safe for the forces of darkness. Fifteen minutes of (ahem) plot development later, Jackie, Allen and a spoiled rich girl, are in the European town where the monks hang out and the movie kicks into high gear. The first monk encounter turns into a spectacular chase sequence featuring insane stunt driving and culminating in a nifty 007-style techno gimmick. Several plot twists and action scenes later, Jackie rides a

mountain bike up to the monks' fortress, to rescue everybody and kick some serious kung fu ass. The exciting conclusion features, among other things, exploding monks, a way cool battle with a quartet of kick boxing amazons (in stiletto heels and leather), and a hot air balloon. *** - Dan Mackey

BIG BRAWL

[Chinese title: BATTLE CREEK BRAWL] Presented by Golden Harvest in 1980, Producers: Raymond Chow & Fred Weintraub, 2nd Asst. Dir.: Tony Ronald, 1st Asst. Dir.: Craig Huston, Prod. Manager: Terry Morse, Starring: Jackie Chan, Jose Ferrer, Kristine De Bell, Mako, Ron Max, David Sheiner, Rosalind Chao, Chao Li Chi, Reviewed by Damon Foster.

Golden Harvest's second attempt, via Fred Weintraub, to break the American market. The first was six years before, Bruce Lee in 1973's **ENTER THE DRAGON**, but only a complete moron (like those who listen to Michael Bolton)

wouldn't know that. As such, **BIG BRAWL** has much of the same cast & crew: Lalo Schiffrin does the music again, and there are familiar faces: The black guy in **BRAWL**'s impressive roller derby scene was in **ENTER** (as Jim

Kelly's sifu; not to mention a cameo in **BRUCE LEE, THE MAN THE MYTH**), as was a white gangster (John Saxon fought beat him in **ENTER**). Other familiar faces include ex-porn star Kristine De Bell. If they needed an adult film star, they should have gotten Anne Sprinkle or Chesty Morgan; then they could have called it **THE BIG BRA**.

As an American martial arts movie, I still say **BIG BRAWL** is one of the best. There are a lot of fights, and Jackie's work is supreme. His fights are the best in any American film, topped only by Lee in **ENTER**, six years before. But anyone who's seen **EAGLE'S SHADOW**, or even **SNAKEFIST FIGHTER** can tell you **BIG BRAWL** is a poor example of what young Jackie had to offer back then! His kicks seem so slow compared to those in the chop sockey years immediately before this. Despite some enjoyable battles, Jackie's work is slowed down considerably! Hell, I could kick faster than that before I ever got my white belt! Regardless, slow motions aside, Jackie demonstrates much of the

same stuff he was known for in his 1970s HK flicks: katas, acrobats, comedy fu, training scenes, and battling with objects at hand; specifically, a bench.

Its big budget & slick look (compared to his HK oldies, anyway) don't offer Jackie an escape from the age old 'drunken master' theme. Yet again some old man is teaching him kung fu (though the term 'kung fu' is never used). It's not Simon Yuen though, it's the one and only Mako! Isn't that a species of shark? Strange name, but this Japanese American actor used to always get the roles of Asians in the 1960s and 1970s. Nothing from **BIG VALLEY**, to **GREEN HORNET**, where he fought Bruce Lee.

At first I thought Jackie's slowness was because the American stuntmen wouldn't be able to keep up with him if he moved at his normal speed. But in his one fight with Chinese (the 'Wu Bros.'), it's slow as well! Hell-damn, one of them is common in Chinese movies, though I don't know his name (he was a Japanese henchman in **CHINESE CONNECTION**, and was Bruce Li's Chinatown pal in **BRUCE LEE, THE MAN, THE MYTH**).

Set in 1930s Chicago, this silly farce has Jackie as Jerry Kwan, who's father's restaurant is frequently hassled by mobsters, one of which uses butterfly knives. They extort Jackie into taking part in Texas's Battle Creek Brawl. So he uses his out-of-place kung fu comedy to take on numerous flamboyant, overweight wrestlers, the main villainous wrestler being Killer Kiss (HB Haggerty, who was on an episode of **FAR-OUT SPACE NUTS**). Whether fighting Italian gangsters or typically obese wrestlers, it's exciting, even though Jackie is obviously restraining himself from moving fast. **1/2 - Damon Foster

CANNONBALL RUN

Presented by Golden Harvest in 1981, An Albert S. Ruddy Production, A Hal Needham Film, Starring: Burt Reynolds, Roger Moore, Farrah Fawcett, Dom Deluise, Dean Martin, Sammy Davis Jr., Jack Elam, Adrienne Barbeau, Jackie Chan, Terry Bradshaw, Bert Convy, Jamie Farr, Peter Fonda, Michael Hui, Bianca Jagger, Johnny Yune, Reviewed Reluctantly by Damon Foster.

The credits may say "Golden Harvest Presents", and "Executive Producer: Raymond Chow", but I think all they did was serve as financial backers for what's obviously an American film (and a bad one), made in America, and directed, written, edited & for Americans. It's still strange to see HK stars Jackie Chan & Michael Hui starring alongside American big shots like Burt Reynolds & his toupee, Dom Deluise and his stomach, Adrienne Barbeau and her knockers, Sammy Davis Jr. & his one good eye, and more celebrities than there are cats in the back alley of a Circumcisor's office. With anyone from Dean Martin to Roger Moore in this ridiculous stinker, it comes as no surprise that Jackie's involvement is minimal.

This neglect reminds me of my main problem with **GREEN HORNET**. Bruce Lee was constantly overshadowed by no talents, and yet it was he, the neglected one who became leg-



endary. It's the same thing with **CANNONBALL RUN**; Jackie Chan being the only one I know of to really offer anything to the movie industry. Farrah Fawcett and Burt Convy were TV stars in the 1970s, appearing in worthless programs, Dom Deluise is as funny as a common brick, and Burt Reynolds's main claim to fame would be dumping Loni Anderson about ten years later. Sammy Davis Jr. is a departed soul. And Jackie? He's been in dozens of films since (and before) **CANNONBALL RUN**, he's easily the most charismatic, talented, yet underrated person in this whole stupid movie. I think the best actors in **CANNONBALL RUN** are Jackie Chan, Michael Hui, and Burt Reynolds's toupee. The only important contribution this film gave us is that I think this is what gave Jackie the idea to later use outtakes in his films. This film does, though none are outtakes of Jackie.

Jackie's intro is a senseless Japanese/Chinese/Korean hybrid; some talk show supposedly in Tokyo! The host is Johnny Yune, that Korean guy from **THEY CALL ME BRUCE** (see OC#15, the Bruce Lee issue). He speaks Japanese to Chan & Hui, who respond in Chinese. I guess Jackie & Michael are suppose to play Japanese, while all their dialogue in the movie is obviously (or so I thought) in Chinese! The scene & its humor is pathetic, therefore fitting in flawlessly with the rest of this dim-witted movie.

The story has both Burt Reynolds and his toupee going on a cross country car race, which I assume was inspired by Reynolds toupee's **SMOKEY & THE BANDIT** films, which, I'm happy to say, I've managed to escape ever viewing. I really don't see who'd enjoy this movie, except for those who love car wrecks and high speed chases, since the humor is far from funny. Anyway, rival racers include Adrienne Barbo, Dean Martin, Bert Convy, and Roger Moore, spoofing himself and his image as James Bond. Jackie spends most of his time in his high-tech, futuristic 'Japanese' car, and much of that is in the dark (an excuse to wear fancy, space-age sunglasses). Anyway, at one point, Jackie, Michael Hui, Burt Reynolds, his toupee and the other has been stop at some road block, only to be harassed by some bikers. I suppose the battle isn't bad for an American comedy, when all the racers duke it out with the bikers. Naturally, Jackie shines out as the best fighter, and gets a chance to beat up Peter Fonda. But I'm not really fonda' his fight with Fonda, as it's too short, and Jackie obviously isn't doing his best work. Perhaps there wasn't much point, with Dom Deluise, Dean Martin, Burt Reynolds and his toupee all beating up bikers too. Obviously, it takes very little effort to fight better than them. Regardless, it's Adrienne Barbeau who wins the race, the only losers being the audience. Aside from Jackie's battle with the biker gang, and curvaceous cuties sprinkled through out, this movie is a waste of space.

CANNONBALL RUN PT. 2

Presented in 1983 by Golden Harvest & Warner Bros., An Albert S. Ruddy Production, A Hal Needham Film, Starring: Burt Reynolds, Dom De

Luise, Dean Martin, Sammy Davis Jr., Jamie Farr, Marilu Henner, Telly Savalas, Shirley MacLaine, Susan Anton, Catherine Bach, Foster Brooks, Sid Caesar, Jackie Chan, Tim Conway, Tony Danza, Richard Kiel, Don Knotts, Jim Neighbors - reviewed by Damon Foster.

The second and last in this terrible film series. On the whole, this is another worthless movie, but it's just not possible to be as bad as the first one. Naturally, Part 2 is a slight improvement over the first. Though Jackie's screentime is about the same, he gets in not one, but two fights. The first happens around the middle of the film, as he single-handedly gets the spotlight and takes on another motorcycle gang who're hassling a family who run a fruit stand. Later, he, like Burt Reynolds & his toupee, Marilu Henner, Richard Kiel, Tony Danza, Shirley MacLaine, Abe Vigoda and many others, takes part in the climactic free-for-all. On the whole, this movie is a little raunchier than the first, there's a little more T&A, and some of the better gags are remotely laughable (i.e. the orangutan, who's almost as funny as Burt's toupee).

But on the whole, despite its few somewhat worthwhile pieces, this silly romp fails. A star-studded cast like this defeats its whole purpose, especially since we rarely see Jackie in any shots with the other actors. Frank Sinatra, Tim Conway and Don Knotts look edited in, as do

many people. Now, if the final fight had Jackie using his infamous kung fu, alongside Tony Danza using his boxing, and Don Knotts using his lame karate chops, this might have been an effective parody & compilation. I honestly wanted to like this one. Don Deluise runs around dressed as a superhero, tossing men out of windows while busty babes in bikinis run around, and Jackie does spinning back kicks! Sounds like a sure winner, but even with all this insanity, they somehow managed to make a promising idea like this suck.

Ricardo Montalban & Jamie Farr play Arabs who fund another Cannonball Run. But this 2nd annual cross-country race is under attack by the Mafia. Plenty of chases, crashes, high-tech computer wizardry as Jackie again plays a 'Japanese' racer, and even Marilu Henner & Catherine Bach in tight clothing fail to save this movie. Regardless, by the end of the film, the racers stop the race long enough to confront the mobsters who've kidnapped one of the Arabs. The overall

fight is adequate, though the impact of Jackie's kung fu is diminished by the fact that everyone else is just as easily beating up the bad guys. - DF

CITY HUNTER

(1992) See OC#17, page 22, for review.

CRIME STORY

(1993)—See OC#17, page 22, where it was mentioned.

DRAGON FIST

Produced by Lo Wei & Hsi Li in 1978, Martial arts: Jackie Chan, Photography: Chien Ying I, Cast: Jackie Chan, Nora Miao, James Tien, Lin Yin Ju, Reviewed by Robert Mallory.

This is one of Chan's early 'straight' kung fu movies, but not so early that he was still doing the karate-like fights ala **SNAKEFIST FIGHTER**. Happily, here he looks like a kung fu fighter, supposedly a Dragon stylist. I say 'supposedly', as his favorite technique in this movie is the Phoenix Fist strike, but admittedly the Phoenix style lacks the kicks etc. that Chan uses here.



Other than some pretty decent fighting in Chan's scenes (some of the other fights are too phoney looking) what rises this film above the ordinary is its refusal to keep its plot mundane. The 'old revenge against my teacher's killer' routine is given a twist when said killer's wife commits suicide out

of shame for her husband's deeds, which causes the killer to cut off his leg in remorse and turn over a new leaf. Enter our hero Yuan (Jackie Chan) who, unable to take revenge ("You can't kill a cripple") is manipulated into working for the Wei Clan, general bad guys and enemy of Yuan's teacher's killer! Nor do the plot twists end here. Not as much fun as Chan's kung fu comedies, but really an above average kung fu movie with a real, honest to gosh, story! (For more on **DRAGON FIST**, see OC#15). *** - Robert Mallory

DRAGON LORD

Starring Jackie Chan as Dragon, Mars as Cowboy, Sidney Yim as Alice, Chen Hui Min as Tiger, Whang In Sik as the main villain, Kuen Ming Min as the Hatchetman, Tien Fung as Dragon's father, Tai Po as Ah Dum, Cheng Hong Yip as Ah Dee, Ng Yuen Yee as the Matchmaker, Fung Ka An as the Killer King, Ho Kam Kwong as the Commentator, Fung Fung as the Referee, Also Starring: Ng Ka Yung, Cheng Mount Ha, Chow Yuen Kin, Tong Yim Chan, Cheung Lung Ying, Wong Kam Kwan, Lee Kong, Lai Keung Kuen, Wang Chuen Yiu, Pang Kong, Cinematographers: Chan Ching Kui, Chan Chung Yuen, Second Unit Cinematography: Chan

Wing Shu, Cinematographer's Asst.: Poon Tak Yip, Music: Philip Chen & Avalon Music, Inc., Sound FX: Wang Ping, Martial arts: Fung Me An, Yuen Kuai, Dir.: Jackie Chan, Produced by Golden Harvest in 1982, Reviewed by Damon Foster.

DRAGON LORD has 29-year old Jackie finally growing up, he's about to enter his 30s and his 'HK urban action phase.' So **DRAGON LORD** represents his last gasp as a chop socky star. The setting is the early 1900s yet again, but the story and pacing are a lot more sophisticated than his 1970s films. But then, an epileptic having a seizure while intoxicated is more sophisticated than Jackie's 1970s films. But seriously, all hilarious DF one-liners aside, **DRAGON LORD** is a fun, nice little film. It's goofy, sometimes actually funny (believe it or not), and of course, gets downright stupid at times—but it never gets dull.

This one offers the first hint of Jackie's incomparable, inimitable stunt work. While there's not much which looks absolutely death defying, **DRAGON LORD** offers: Jackie dodging sharp spears on a roof, and a couple weird, brutal, unlikely sporting events combining football, kung fu and hackey sack! Hell, the first game involves firecrackers and a large golden egg! Go figure. Jackie demonstrates superb strength, skill and limberness in every frame, like his impressive kata & "super sword", near the beginning.

This story's many humorous scenes are largely part of a war game between youngsters Dragon Ho (Jackie Chan) and childhood pal & cousin Cowboy (Mars). By the way, anyone know why Jackie's co-star is known only as 'Mars'? Regardless, Dragon Ho ain't dragging 'no ho', he and Cowboy (nicknamed that because his family is taking in so much western culture) have a crush on Alice, a local village girl. Meanwhile, Tiger (Chen Hui Min) is thwarting the thefts of a gang of smugglers. Wang Ing Sik (best known as the Japanese villain in **RETURN OF THE DRAGON**) leads these villains, who're unconcerned with China's heritage, and plan to sell Chinese antiques to evil foreign devils like me and you. Hell, even if I had the money, I wouldn't waste it on vases and flowerpots! Anyway, we never get a good look at Wang Ing Sik's face until the end, when it's revealed he wears a murky contact lens meant to be a glass eye. It also isn't really until toward the end that Jackie & Mars battle that accurately named, sick looking wang, Wang Ing Sik! So the movie doesn't really have a lot of fights, but once Jackie & Wang go at it in the barn, the battle is first rate! Plenty of hits, painful looking falls and bruises. The battle easily sets the pace for the remainder of the 1980s, things would never be the same after **DRAGON LORD**! **** - DF

DRAGONS FOREVER

(See OC#11, where this outstanding masterpiece was reviewed).

DRUNKEN MASTER

(aka **DRUNKEN MONKEY IN THE TIGER'S EYES**, also "EAGLE'S CLAW, SNAKE'S FIST, CAT'S PAW part 2") Produced by Ng See Yuen in 1979, Starring: Jackie Chan, Yuen Hsiao Teng, Huang Cheng Li, Shih Tien, Hsu Hsia, Lin Ying, Lin Chiao, Shih Fu Tsan, & Chiang Chin, Editor: Pan Hsiung, Music: Chow

Fu Liang, Art: Tin Yuen Tai, Screenplay: Hsiao Lung & Ng See Yuen, Kung Fu Instructors: Yuen Woo Ping, Reviewed by Damon Foster.

I recall disgustingly discussing this film with some suburban 'normal Joe-type' I used to work with, who'd had the 'displeasure' of sitting through it on TV. Being an average all-American geek, he couldn't appreciate the humor & action. But I didn't take his criticism seriously, as he's probably the type who normally wastes his Sundays watching Football or other predictable bullshit, and is in no position to judge taste. I can see how this type of film would come off as bad comedy to an ordinary American viewer who'd seen it on TV. Naturally, they're missing the point, as this and Jackie's other 1970s comedies are satirizing the traditional kung fu genre. I must confess though, I laughed out loud at the scene where Jackie nearly drowns Simon Yuen in a huge jug of water. As always, I was impressed by Jackie's incredible acrobatics, and how he combines them with tables, swords, ropes, poles, spears and the traditional 'animal variations' of drunken kung fu. Unfortunately, other than the comment about the drowning scene, this whole paragraph can apply to nearly all of Jackie's 1970s comedies. I've heard of repetition, but this is beyond ridiculous— it's pathetic.

With sensational fighting by all actors involved, it's no surprise that this movie is what made Jackie big in Japan. It was released to Japan as **DRUNK MONKEY**, in 1982. I know it was 1982 because there was a trailer for it during a commercial break for **GOGGLE V** (Toei, 1982)!

But still, Jackie plays Freddie Wong (aka Wong Fei Hong), unruly son of Master Wong (one of the 7 Tigers of Kwan Tung). Jackie's brawls with locals leads to punishment; he must learn even more kung fu?! Lay off the rice wine and Tsing Tao Beer, script writers! Anyway, the late Simon Yuen, that drunken bum teaches Jackie drunken kung fu via endless training scenes depicting harsh disciplining that can only be considered torture. Among these never-ending scenes is a kata of Jackie, later edited into **SNAKEFIST FIGHTER**. Meanwhile, a corrupt man called Mr. Li hires an assassin, Thunder Foot (Huang Cheng Li) to kill Master Wong. So Jackie gets drunker than an Irishman on St. Patrick's Day, and fights Huang Cheng Li & wins (like so many before and since). **1/2 - DF

DRUNKEN MASTER 2

Produced by Golden Harvest in 1993-94, Released by Paragon Films in 1994, Starring: Jackie Chan, Anita Mui, Ti Lung, Andy Lau, Liu Chia Liang, Ho Sung Pak, Reviewed by Damon Foster.

A trendy film, Jackie Chan's chance to play Hong Fei Hung again. Produced around 1993, this is yet another period comedy, films like this are more common than trench-coats in an adult theatre. Thanks to **ONCE UPON A TIME IN CHINA**, **FUNG SAI YUK** and other Tsui Hark-type films, Jackie made **DRUNKEN MASTER 2** to cash-in on these other silly historicals. But as is obvious by the title, it's trying to bill itself as a sequel to 1979's **DRUNKEN MASTER**. Yet its slick 1990s look, combined with its period setting makes it more like a hybrid of **DRAGON LORD** and **PROJECT A**.

Despite the commercial success of these 'new age' costume dramas, it still seems strange for Jackie to return to his 1970s phase, after a decade of playing cops in modern, urban action-thrillers.

Despite a couple painful stunts, and serious brutality, I think it's safe to assume that I was somewhat disappointed. I'm no fan of other recent Wong Fei Hung movies, and this one tends to imitate them. Fortunately, there are no outlandish suspension wire gimmicks, or impossible gymnastics. Jackie is still in top form, doing impressive, high speed kung fu and displaying incredible agility and limberness. But when the actors aren't fighting, the story maintains the same inept comedy and naive rambling as in so many other Chinese movies. Interesting to note that Jackie's enemy is played by Korean born Ho Sung Pak. Born in Seoul on Nov. 8, 1967, he actually grew up in America,

traitors who've killed Liu Chia Liang's character. The final duel is pretty brutal, but like so many other fights in the flick, there's too much 'patty cake kung fu', aka 'swinging arm'. Endless arm blocks, but with a certain high speed energy not in the 1970s films. The battle takes place in a factory, and Jackie uses industrial strength alcohol to fuel his drunken technique against Ho Sung Pak. Hardy har har. *** - DF

EAGLE'S SHADOW

[aka **SNAKE IN THE EAGLE'S SHADOW**] Dir.: Yuen Woo Ping Presented by Serafilm Karalexis, a Ng See Yuen Film, Exec. Prod.: Cheng Chuan, Written by Ng See Yuen, Hsi Chi Yuan, Hsi Hua An, Action Dir.: Hsiao Lung, Ho Tien Cheng, Costume Designer: Kung Chuan Kai, Set Designer: Union Design, Art Dir.: Ting Yuan Ta, Cinematography: Chang Hai, Edited by Pan Hsing Yoo, Starring: Jackie Chan, Juan Jan Lee, Simon Yuen, Roy Horan, Shih Tien, Chen Hsiao, Wang Chiang, Louis Feng, Reviewed by Dan Mackey.

A young man, tormented by bullies and other oppressors, strikes up a

casian Roy Horan as his renegade Jesuit buddy. The movie also features a lot of other names I don't know, Jackie as agile and skillful as you've seen him, a wicked and funny rivalry between the kung fu schools, a truly grueling training montage with cheesy music, and an actual snake-against-cat fight. Damage report: Roy Horan dislocated his left shoulder doing the leap which he enters his big fight with Jackie. Being a trouper, he finished filming the scene like any good one armed swordsman. In the climactic fight, Wong Jang Lee kicked a front tooth cap right out of Jackie's mouth. Check out Chan's gap toothed smile at end of flick. I don't know how the stunt snake felt. **** - Dan Mackey

EAGLE'S SHADOW FIST

Produced by the Great Earth Film Co. in 1973; Dir.: Hsiang Tsu (aka Zhu Wu), Screenplay: Su Lan, Producer: Hsi Ling, Starring: Wong Ching, Jackie Chan, Hao Li, Reviewed humorously by Damon Foster.

Don't be fooled into thinking this early hunk of schlock is in any way related to **EAGLE'S SHADOW**! They only re-released & retitled it, from **NOT SCARED TO DIE**, to **EAGLE'S SHADOW FIST**, when Jackie had finally made it big. If it were retitled again today, they'd probably call it **POLICE PROJECT: DRUNKEN STORY** A pt 2. But this old film is just your average early 1970s chop sockey tale of revenge, Japanese rapists, and a million & one ways to spit blood before dying.

But after reading so many negative reviews of this action packed kung farce, I expected it to be much worse. Perhaps if you were expecting to see Simon Yuen continually wacking Jackie with a bamboo stick, I can see why you'd be disappointed. Yet I have no major complaints against it, it's no worse than all those other low budget martial arts films which flooded HK in the early 1970s. While it won't win any awards for originality, editing, acting, dubbing, fight choreography, photography, or much of anything else except being absurdly predictable, it does what it sets out to do: Be an average, ordinary kung fu movie with enough fights to maintain watchability.

Set in 1937, a troupe of stage acrobats is continually hassled by more evil Japanese soldiers, karatekas, and the Chinese henchmen traitors who help them to do all that mean stuff: Bullying, murdering, raping, extortion, and every other crime under the sun (except for maybe jaywalking, there's none of that in the film). Jackie plays one of the younger members of this Peking opera style group, and once or twice, is allowed to do an acrobatic. He's very young, almost unrecognizable, and with his head shaved, he looks just like he really did, back when he actually performed in these operas (this movie came out only a few years afterwards). But he's only the lead hero's sidekick (pun intended), our main man being Wong Ching! It's strange to see him so young, and playing a kung fu hero for once! I know of him best for when he worked with Tom Savini in **TILDEATH DO WE SCARE** (see OC#9, page 36). With the teeth of an old sick horse turned into a vampire, he never had



played a main character in the "Street Fighter" video game. As I understand it, there's also a Korean TV show based on "Street Fighter" (the video game, not Sonny Chiba's forgotten film), and I wonder if maybe Ho Sung Pak was in that too.

Wong Fei Hung (Jackie Chan) meets a revolutionary (Liu Chia Liang) who's trying to keep Chinese treasure in China, while money grubbers try to sell these antiques to that most evil race: Non-Chinese. But we're not suppose to learn about all this until after endless gags between Jackie, Ti Lung and Anita Mui— about ginseng?! Ti Lung plays Jackie's father, who doesn't like it when Jackie uses his 'drunken kung fu', as it involves excessive drinking. Strange, in Part 1, the father, Master Wong made sure Jackie did learn it! Anyway, to make a short story long, Jackie and a couple friends eventually tackle the Chinese

chance friendship with an eccentric but quite formidable martial arts master. After the older man puts the boy through a rigorous training regimen, the young man finds the courage and strength to face his fears and conquer his enemies.

Sound familiar? Sure it does, but years before all the Hollywood karate crap rip-offs there was the real deal, **EAGLE'S SHADOW**. This exciting hybrid of martial arts action and humor not only made Jackie Chan a star, but also put the genre of kung fu comedy on the map.—Set in 19th century China, this period tale features Jackie as Chien Fu, the hapless youth, and Simon Yuen (the directors' father), as his redoubtable sifu, the last of the snakefist masters. Both perform admirably. Also memorable are main villain Wong Jang Lee as the Eagle Claw expert who killed all the other snakefist guys and token Cau-

matinee-idol looks, but manages to command enough respect from the audience, playing a charismatic hero. It's he who avenges the death of his family, which includes Jackie (playing his younger brother), who dies a gory death in the middle of the film! So it's Wong Ching's vendetta, as he goes after the Japanese. Like a number of Wang Yu's chop sockies, Wong's final duel with the main villain is a long, cross-country ordeal, they fight on the desert, on the mountains, and even in the water, before our hero sends that lousy Nip to meet his Buddha. ** - Damon Foster

FANTASY FORCE MISSION

1981, Presented by Chueng Ming Film (HK) Co., ZIV, Wang Yu & Ling Jung Feng, Dist.: The Chang Chiang Film (Taiwan) Co., Supervisor: Chien Wen Hsiung, Shen Hsiao Yin, Planning: Hsu Tsai Lai, Producer: Shen Hsiao Yin, Starring: Jackie Chan, Lin Ching Tiao, Jung Shau Chiu, Wang Yu, Shiu Bu Lia, Fang Jung, Sun Yui, Tao Da Way, Gon Ling Fring, Chang Ling, Reviewed by Robert Mallory.

Deliberate farce involving gold, invading Japanese forces in WWII and some ghosts. A completely schizo film that breaks the 'fourth wall' as it were. The man with the mission is Jimmy Wang Yu (who hadn't appeared with Jackie since KILLER METEOR), who must pick out a crew to assist him. Among those considered are Rocky, James Bond, Carl Mak, and Snake (from ESCAPE FROM NEW YORK). As this film is set in WWII China, you kind of get the idea that this movie is not to be taken seriously!

Indeed even for Jackie (who's films are often comedies) and Wang Yu (who's films were often unintentional comedies, like THE CHINESE PROFESSIONALS), this movie is a bit too ridiculous to work. There are some nice bits in the film, such as Jackie's bout with a wrestler and another character's gambling session with a ghost (when he shakes the dice, he keeps exclaiming 'Buddha bless me' which disrupts the ghost body). Despite all, this film has an ending as cheerful as a German Opera with massive deaths caused by a traitor among them. Basically, this is one of the least likable movies that either Jackie or Jimmy has ever appeared in. * - Robert Mallory

FEARLESS HYENA

(See the previous OC, #17, where it was reviewed on page 19).

FEARLESS HYENA pt. 2

A Lo Wei film from 1983, Starring Jackie Chan, James Tien, Reviewed by John Grace.

Following the example his ex-boss Raymond Chow set with GAME OF DEATH, producer Lo Wei gathered outtakes from FEARLESS HYENA and footage from SPIRITUAL KUNG FU, and with the use of a double (who looks nothing like Chan), made this unwatchable and incomprehensible mess, made to capitalize on Chan's new found stardom with Golden Harvest. There is no plot, just various scenes of Chan goofing around, spliced in with dull scenes of a family fleeing from the Heaven & Earth Clan. Lo even stole the neat guitar theme from ACES GO PLACES for a chase sequence. The final fight is re-used footage from the first FEARLESS HYENA.

In 1983, Chan filed a lawsuit to

prevent Lo Wei from releasing this garbage (yep, it was actually released in HK theatres) but dropped the suit when he was told that Lo could do whatever he wanted with the old footage. Even the previously unseen footage is dull and it's easy to see why Chan didn't include it in HYENA's final cut. - John Grace

HALF A LOAF OF KUNG FU

Produced by Lo Wei & Hsu Li Hwa in 1978, Distributed by Ocean Shores Video, Dir.: Chen Chui Hwa, Martial arts Dir.: Jackie Chan, Starring: Jackie Chan, James Tien, Lung Juen Fe, Dean Shek, Reviewed by John Grace.

This was the first film where Jackie was allowed to throw in as much comedy as he wanted. The result is an uneven but entertaining kung fu comedy. The best part is the opening credits where Jackie spoofs Zato Ichi, Fu Sheng (attacking a miniature Wing Chun dummy) and Wang Yu. The rest of the humor is hit or miss, with the best moments coming from slapstick (check out the dream sequence where Jackie eats spinach and becomes strong like Popeye) and the worst

Raymond Chow in 1975, Music: Joseph Kuo, Written & Directed by John Woo, Action Choreographer: Sam Hung, Cast: Tan Tao Liang, Jackie Chan, Sam Hung, James Tien, John Woo, Yuen Wah, Reviewed by Damon Foster.

HAND OF DEATH is more fun than a barrel of drunken monkeys; it's a typical 1970s kung fu flick, despite direction by John Woo, way ahead of his trendy gangster flicks of the 1980s. The only major similarities to Woo's later work are the scenes of male bonding. But then, that happens in a lot of kung fu movies, as assorted heroes gather up to battle Manchus, Japanese, evil kung fu schools, etc.

Regardless, this fight-filled kung fu adventure has lead hero Tan Tao Liang, and assistant hero Jackie Chan (who gets killed near the end) protect a messenger (John Woo) from corrupt Manchus. I won't go into detail on this one, since I already reviewed it in OC#14, page 19. So send me six bucks if you want a more informative review. *** - Damon Foster

HEART OF THE DRAGON ISLAND ON FIRE

(See OC#11).



The two Chans (Willie & Jackie) meet San Francisco mayor Frank Jordan, to discuss a possible movie to be made in that city!

coming from the flatulence of Dean Shek's character. Chen Chi Hwa directs in his usual bland, unimaginative style.

James Tien, another excellent actor/fighter wasting his time in Lo Wei productions, plays one of the villains. According to Bill Connolly, Lo Wei considered this unreleasable until Jackie was an established star with Golden Harvest. It was a huge hit when released, obviously giving Lo the dough to make FEARLESS HYENA 2.

Jackie plays a happy-go-lucky young fool who is a good acrobat but a terrible fighter. Posing as the recently murdered Whip Hero, he joins a group of guards protecting some national treasures from the Poison Clan bandits. Throughout the film, his identity is exposed but he learns kung fu from a couple of bums (one is played by Dean Shek), and participates in the final battle royale where the remaining guards battle the Poison Clan. The final battle is excellent, with Jackie finally getting to show off his unique comedy kung fu. **1/2 - John Grace

HAND OF DEATH

(aka COUNTDOWN IN KUNG FU) Produced by

(AKA ISLAND OF FIRE, BURNING ISLAND) Dir.: Chu Yen-Ping, Produced by Da Shyue Film Co. in 1991, Producer: Ka Chuen Hsiung, Screenplay: Fu Lee & Yen Yu Chiao, Running Time: 122 minutes, Starring: Jackie Chan, Tony Leung, Andy Lau, Jimmy Wang Yu, Sam Hung, Reviewed by Craig Ledbetter.

When Damon asked me to pick a Jackie Chan film to review, I immediately latched onto this bastard stepchild of a movie. It seems no one but me will admit to liking it. I've gone on record as declaring my dislike for Chan films that incorporate overt amounts of slapstick humor in them, which puts ISLAND OF FIRE ahead (in my opinion only!) of quite a few of his fan-favorite films.

The other negatives (as far as Jackie's admirers) are that Chan has little more than a cameo, acts sullen throughout (hey, he's in prison!), does not perform many stunts (but the few he does perform are up to his high standards) and gets his ass shot and killed at the film's end. It's pointless to argue these points to Chan fanatics, however, I would recommend that fans of HK action cinema not approach ISLAND OF FIRE as a Jackie Chan film, but as a slam-bang, over-the-top adventure.

There's a cast to kill for (including

Chan, Sam Hung, Tony Leung - the film's real star, Andy Lau and Jimmy Wang Yu), and a plot line that, over the course of 122 minutes, tends to cover a lot of bases. The film definitely has weaknesses: There are too many subplots & characters, and the real crux of the film's main plot doesn't kick in until the last 15 minutes, however, you won't be bored, and the final gun battle at a Filipino airport is top of the line. The plot revolves around a cop (Tony Leung) going undercover at a maximum security prison to discover how inmates, supposedly executed months earlier, are turning up later as trigger men assassinating high profile, corrupt gangsters. While inside the slammer, he meets and interacts with several prisoners who, along with himself, end up discovering the truth of the matter. What he learns proves fatal for all but himself. *** - Craig Ledbetter

KILLER METEOR

(See review in OC#11).

MAGNIFICENT BODY-GUARD

Produced by Lo Wei in 1978, Starring: Jackie Chan & James Tien, Reviewed by John Grace.

Even Chan himself has a low opinion of this martial arts historical fantasy, but it is actually a lot of fun. {DF here, I've never reviewed this film, and never saw it until I made this issue. But I must agree with John Grace, it's a nice film. The very beginning is a fight, and there are many more afterwards. -DF}

The action is plentiful and non-stop, the fights are well-staged and the sets & costumes are lavish. It was one of several 3-D kung fu movies made in the 1970s (others including DYNASTY and ZENMASTER 6), so there are silly shots of objects flying into the camera. Filmed in Korea on a larger budget than the usual Lo Wei production, I suspect it was a Korean co-production, since there is a co-star (I don't know his name) who displays some incredible tae kwon do kicks.

The plot is simple: Chan plays one of three bodyguards escorting a mysterious carriage and a couple of swordswomen through a valley of warring clans and into a corrupt kingdom. One of their goals is to find the villain, who has six fingers. There is also a CRYING GAME - type twist at the end. Oops, I said too much. But don't worry, no male nudity. Unfortunately, while the print I viewed (from Japanese video) was English dubbed, it's among one of the poorest prints I've ever seen. Colorless print, long pauses between reel changes and non-letter boxed. Music from STAR WARS is sampled throughout the flick and James Tien co-stars. *** - John Grace

NEW FIST OF FURY

1976, Executive Producer: Lo Wei, Producer: Hsu Hua, Starring: Jackie Chan, Nora Miao, Chen Sing, Reviewed by Rajar Shy.

Nothing new here except the addition of Jackie Chan to the cast & the relocation of the Ching Wu School to Taiwan, in this sequel to the late Bruce Lee's FIST OF FURY. Nora Miao & Lo Wei return to reprise their roles from the first film, in this mid-1970s chop socky which features a lot of cliched elements, like Japanese villains and tedious training sequences.

Jackie is a street-wise thief who comes to save the day against some evil Japanese who are out to control all the martial arts schools in Taiwan, in this early effort in Jackie's career. Most trendy 'Johnny-Cum-Lately' Chan fans will be disappointed if they expect this flick to live up to Jackie's later blockbusters like **PROJECT A** or **ARMOR OF GOD**. I can only give this film one star, for the stock shots of Lee from **ENTER THE DRAGON**, and the presence of Mr. Chan showing a little promise of things to come. To be viewed by hard-core Jackie Chan completists only! * - Roger Shy

MR. CANTON & LADY ROSE

[aka **MIRACLE**] (1989)—See OC#16 (pages 15 & 16) for review. **1/2

MY LUCKY STARS

Presented by Golden Harvest in 1985, Producers: Raymond Chow & Leonard KC Ho, Dir.: Samo Hung, Story: Barrie Wong, Cast: Jackie Chan, Samo Hung, Sybelle Hu, Jackie Chan, Yuen Biao, Richard Ng, Erik Tsang, Michiko Nishiwaki, Ti Wei, Lam Ching Ying, not reviewed by anyone (See review in OC#11)

POLICE STORY

(1985) American title: **POLICE FORCE**, Produced by Leonard Ho, Directed by Jackie Chan, A Golden Harvest Production, Stunt Unit: Fang Hark On, Benny Lai, Mars, Denny Chow, Paul Wong, La Kan Sang, Starring Jackie Chan, Brigitte Lin (Lin Ching Hsia), Maggie Cheung, Cho Yuen, Yung Pui (Bill Tung), Kenneth Tong, Reviewed by Ron Murillo.

Of all the early Jackie Chan films that I have seen, the stunts in this film are always the ones I bring up in conversations of Jackie's work, or are brought up by other aficionados. From the spectacular chase through the shanty town to the final battle in the shopping mall, **POLICE STORY** is one of the most memorable of Hong Kong action films. Jackie Chan is Detective Chan Ka Kui, a HK policeman assigned as part of a task force to bring drug lord Chu-Tu down. A stakeout at a shanty town goes sour, but Chan and the police try to maneuver Tu's secretary Selina into betraying him. She discovers the ruse and is able to embarrass Chan during Tu's trial. Tu decides to use Selina as bait and frame Chan for the murder of a fellow cop who Tu has on his payroll. Chan & Selina are marked for death, so Selina is able to retrieve Tu's computer files to use against the kingpin. This leads to the aforementioned showdown in a shopping mall between Chan and Tu's gang.

POLICE STORY delivers all the action and comedy that fans of the genre have come to expect from Jackie Chan. Whether answering several phones at once or trying to get his gun from Brigitte while fending off a half dozen thugs, Jackie demonstrates the talent he cultivated from the silent era comedians like Buster Keaton and Charlie Chaplin. It is when he tries a dramatic speech while attempting to flee police headquarters that he seems a bit over-the-top. Fortunately, his dramatic talent would develop somewhat by the time he would tackle films like **CRIME STORY**. His acrobatic talent comes well into play, especially in a spectacular "firepole" fall at the film's conclusion, though the cost is high, judging by outtakes at the film's end (Jackie being carried off the set, Jackie being revived, Jackie being

bandaged, etc.). One of the most essential stunts in the film is one that was totally accidental. Attempting to stop an oncoming bus of escaping criminals, Jackie stands in front of them and threatens to shoot. The bus stops abruptly and the criminals fall through the glass onto the pavement. The bus in actuality stopped short and the stuntmen, who were to fall over Jackie to land atop a parked car behind him, landed instead in front of Jackie, and had to be carted off to the hospital, due to severe injuries like broken bones.

Brigitte Lin turns in a fine performance as Selina, who starts out as a cool moll and then turns to Jackie for help when Tu decides to kill her. Maggie Cheung is splendid as May, the perennial **POLICE STORY** series girlfriend and the female foil to Jackie's stunt gags (at one point, she is yanked off a moving motorcycle; at another, she's literally kicked down a staircase). **POLICE STORY**, which won the Best Picture Award in HK, can safely

gang of attackers at a park playground. In the rousing conclusion, Chan confronts his bomb-making tormentors in that old standby of HK movie finales: a warehouse. Some of the stunt work is pretty amazing, and even Maggie Cheung manages to get involved in the action; in fact, her admirable chutzpah earned her a headful of stitches due to one painfully botched stunt that is shown in all of its blood soaked glory during the end credit outtakes (though, curiously, not in the Japanese version). The only real disappointment at the conclusion is that Chan's duel with the fast kicking foe is cut short when Chan discovers a stash of mini-explosives and quickly bombs his enemy into submission rather than engage him in one of those exhaustingly drawn out martial arts duels that punctuated such flicks as **DRAGONS FOREVER** or the more recent **DRUNKEN MASTER 2**. Regardless, **POLICE STORY 2** is one of Chan's best contemporary action films, as well as being his most explo-



be considered a Jackie Chan classic and well worth checking out. ***1/2 - Ron Murillo

POLICE STORY 2

Presented by Golden Harvest, Raymond Chow & Leonard Ho in 1988, Written & Directed by Jackie Chan, Title song: Michael Lai, Lyrics: James Wong, Sung by Jackie Chan, Starring: Jackie Chan, Maggie Cheung, Bill Tung (aka Tung Pui), Lam Kak Hung, Reviewed by Richard Akiyama.

This is probably my favorite among the three **POLICE STORY** films because it maintains a consistently fast pace, features mucho action as well as a bunch of intimidating villains, and de-emphasizes the silly comedy without ignoring it completely. There are some funny bits with Maggie Cheung as Chan's continually beleaguered girlfriend but also some poignant moments when Cheung decides to break off with Chan, who is too committed to his police work to recognize the serious strain on their relationship.

Granted, there's no Lin Ching Hsia or Michelle Kahn/Yeoh for Chan to play off of, and the ending doesn't have as memorable a setting as the first film, but what remains here is hard to quibble with. Besides the restaurant skirmish, Chan flexes his acrobatic skills during a battle with a

sive - literally!

After recklessly causing the destruction of a shopping mall in the finale of the first **POLICE STORY**, Jackie Chan's 'super cop' (named Kevin Chan in the English dubbed version) is reprimanded with menial motorcycle duty at the start of **POLICE STORY 2**. Soon, Chan has a run in with the mob boss (Chu Yuen) he helped put away at the end of the original film and is informed by the gangster's arrogant lawyer (Charles Chao) that the mobster has been released from prison, due to a life threatening illness. Out for revenge, the lawyer foolishly dares to rough up Chan's girlfriend May (Maggie Cheung), thus causing a showdown with Chan in a restaurant, which is predictably laid to waste when a furious Chan must face off against a vicious gang of explosives manufacturers who are using their bombs to extort money from a rich corporation. These malicious goons show off their terrifying capabilities by casually blowing up a shopping mall (I guess they figured they might as well destroy it before Chan does). Before the movie finishes, Chan will have a bomb strapped to his chest, be nearly kicked into submission by a mute martial

artist, and almost lose his manhood to a remote-controlled, explosive toy car. ***** - Richard Akiyama

POLICE STORY 3 - SUPER COP

Golden Way Films; 1992, A Leonard Ho Film, Dir.: Stanley Tong, Starring: Jackie Chan, Michelle Yeoh, Maggie Cheung, Yuen Wa, Mars, Lo Lih, Reviewed by Damon Foster.

While not an all-out kung fu extravaganza like the first two, the 3rd edition is a nice adventure. It was made when Jackie was older (he's even older now!) than he was in the first two, which explains why the martial arts aren't as prevalent. In fact, all its fights are brief, much shorter than you'd expect in a JC flick, you selfish pig, you! However, stunt wise, **POLICE STORY 3** delivers. Them incredible feats at the end; jumping from helicopter-to-train-to-motorcycle-to-car are truly harebrained, uhh, I mean, hair-raising! These stunts are as amazing as always. I still think the shopping mall massacre in the first one are Chan at his wildest, and the many fights in Part 2 are more fun than anything in this movie, but this one is no disappointment. A lot of people liked this film, so I wish I hated it, so I could once again cut a film down just to piss everyone off.

It's a semi-interesting cast. Rarely will Jackie ever share the spotlight with another big name star, yet in this one, the one and only Michelle Kahn plays co-hero! Perhaps she's not really the 'one and only', since she has more aliases (Michelle Yeoh, Michelle King, etc.) than a **STAR TREK** fan has fat cells. Michelle Kahn actually steals the film, some of her kicks are the best scenes! Also on hand is Tung Pui ('Bill Tung' in English), again reprising his role as Jackie's cop boss. His best scene is where he poses as Jackie's mother to fool the baddies. Jackie's longtime childhood colleague Yuen Wa plays a villain again (he was equally evil in **HAND OF DEATH** and **DRAGONS FOREVER**). Mars again makes a cameo, which is strange. All his life, it seems he's only made cameos! His only good role I know of was in **DRAGON LORD**.

Jackie yet again plays that HK traffic cop, going after the bad guys. In this case, he's sent to Communist Canton, to help an army general (Michelle Kahn) infiltrate another of those nasty gangs. Jackie's initial meeting with his Mainland comrades (Red China soldiers at their training center) is a little too rushed. Though it involves a good fight, I'd hoped for a more detailed, cultural comparison of the ways of Hong Kongese, vs. Mainland Communists who still dress like toilet attendants on the Oriental Express. But Jackie & Michelle Kahn hit it off well, so it's off to rescue villainous Yuen Wa from jail, to gain the trust of him and other mobsters. So the story is nothing new; told often before. Jackie's adventures across the Chinese landscape include: 1. A chase near a coal mine. 2. Talking. 3. Michelle Kahn going under cover as Jackie's sister. 4. Talking. 5. An explosive shoot out with soldiers in a jungle. 5. More talking. 6. And fights which last an average of five seconds. But Jackie's girlfriend (Maggie Cheung, of course) shows up and

accidentally spills the beans. So now Jackie & Michelle have lost the trust of the villains, who're trying to rescue another comrade from jail. Therefore, we get this wacky, totally unga bunga climax mentioned earlier! Chases, explosions, bullets & kicks on top of a speeding train! The good guy & gal win, the bad guy & gal do not; that's because they lose. Then comes the credits, which as always, come with those disturbing bloopers. One scene where Jackie hangs from a rope ladder, shows him virtually knocked unconscious. In another, Kahn falls onto the street, off a moving car, and splat! I bet she came very close to looking like one of them cats, skunks or opossums I normally see on the side of the road. ***

PROJECT A

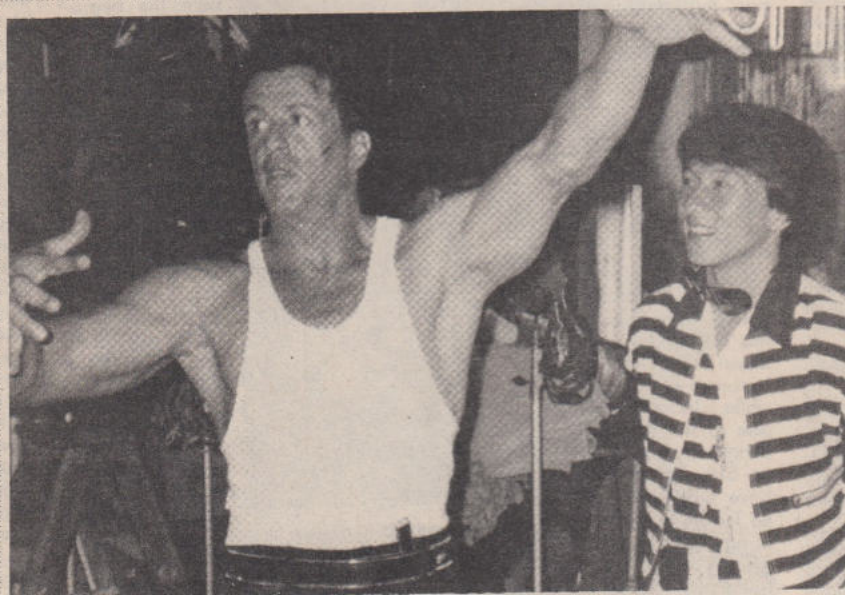
A Golden Harvest film; 1984, Dir.: Jackie Chan, Produced by Leonard K.C. Ho, Exec. Prod.: Raymond Chow, Screenplay: Jackie Chan, & Edward Tang, Production Supervisor: Ting Shan So, Assoc. Prod.: Chan Pui Wah, Music: Michael Lai, Stunt Coordinators: Chow Yun Kin, Wong Kwan, Lai Keung Kuen, Mars, Wan Fat, Cast: Jackie Chan, Yuen Biao, Sammo Hung, Ti Wei, Mars, Vinnie Wong, Tai Po, Lee Hoi Sang, John Cheung, Wu Ma, Reviewed by Damon Foster.

An important transitional film, linking his chop sockey roots (pre-PROJECT A) to his upcoming (it was then) 'modern' phase (post-PROJECT A). But saying it's only important historically is more stupid than going out in front of the audience at SHOWTIME AT THE APOLLO and yelling: "All I can see are eyes and teeth!" PROJECT A is an all around great movie in its own right, not to mention its own wrong. The fights are faster than Mike Tyson on a date, and oh them stunts! You can see Jackie reaching his peak, this is definitely an excellent, state-of-the-art combination of kung fu, stunts, gymnastics, and the most frightening use of chairs I've ever seen. Jackie, Yuen Biao, Sammo Hung, Mars and Ti Wei ('Dick Wei' in America) give it their all, it staggers the imagination at how agile, limber, swift and strong the human body can be; Jackie performs what I previously hadn't considered humanity possible.

However, I've never seen a print of PROJECT A on tape I could completely follow. The subtitled version is cropped too much to read everything. My English dubbed version sounds muffled, as it barely survived the transfer from a British pre-record (them lucky twits, bloody sobs, limey wenches and arseholes in England get to see English dubs of all these HK films!). To make it even more unintelligible, the dubbers have British accents and are trying to talk with Japanese (?) accents! Two-dialects-in-one equals basically, grunts and incoherent mumbling. Strangely, Jackie is the only one dubbed cleanly, and I believe it's the same voice he has in WHEELS ON MEALS and MY LUCKY STARS.

Jackie Chan plays a sailor in the Coast Guard, protecting HK from pirates in the early 1900's. I assume it takes place well after the Boxer Rebellion, as HK is under British rule.

Jackie gets help from cop Yuen Biao and a con-man/gambler, Sammo Hung. After a lot of comedy, chases, conflicts, duels with John Cheung & Li Hoi Sheng, and humorous character development, our heroes steal rifles from the pirates who keep robbing foreign ships. During the course of these adventures, we see incredible bicycle stunts, Jackie's infamous fall from the huge clock tower, and, forgiveably, a few talky, pointless scenes which drag on a little too long. But that's okay! We forgive them! Because Jackie later impersonates a smuggler in order to infiltrate the cave where the pirates reside! Mars and Yuen Biao release some hostages while Sammo tries to steal the pirate's treasure. By now, Jackie and lead pirate Ti Wei are going at it. Our heroes use the usual kung fu, guns, bombs, swords, acrobatics and chairs, to waste all the pirates. Speaking of pirates, once I dressed as a pirate on Halloween and a lady said, "Where are your buccaneers?" I replied: "They're under my buckin' hat." ****1/2 - DF



This photo indicates JC apparently fogave Stallone for ripping-off one of Jackie's ideas for one of his movies.

PROJECT A PART 2

Produced by Golden Harvest, Distributed by Paragon Films in 1987, Associate Prod.: Cho Yee Wong, Prod. Manager: Rita Wu, Asst. Prod. Manager: Patsy Leung, First Asst. Dir.: Chan Chi Hwa, Stunt Players: Mars, Chris Li, Benny Lai, Danny Chow, Wan Fat, CAST: Jackie Chan, Maggie Cheung, Rosamund Kwan, Carina Lau, David Lam, Bill Tung (aka Tung Pui), Sam Lui, Regina Kent, Chen Hui Min (aka Charlie Chan), Lau Siu Ming, John Cheung, Lee Hoi Sang, Ricky Hui, Mars, Reviewed by Damon Foster.

Though I never once considered it as good as Part 1, this sequel came off as quite a classy movie at first. What's not to like about a movie which features babes like Maggie Cheung, Carina Lau and Rosamund Kwan? But midway through the film, everything gets confusing and falls apart. Lame humor is worsened when seemingly endless characters are introduced. But I forgive the movie makers, a little pointless rambling is to be expected in a Chinese film. Finding a perfect movie is as likely as finding a

bottle of Nair at a feminist meeting.

The story seems to start off with the surviving pirates of Part 1, plotting their revenge. But again, my two tapes of it give me a choice between two unintelligible versions: 1. Badly subtitled version. 2. Muffled dubbed version. But translation or no translation, it's great when Jackie joins the cops to battle mobsters Wang Lung Wei and Chen Hui Min. This sensational duel features a scene of Jackie rolling down stairs, where his finger was broken, either on this actual take, or a different one. But again, it's afterwards that the whole film gets muddled with one two many subplots: 1. Jackie gets suspicious of a corrupt cop (David Lam). 2. A group of pretty female revolutionaries are keeping a top secret book from enemy agents from Mainland China. 3. Something to do with a high class party with lots of Caucasians. Anyway, there's plenty of rambling and sleep-bait before Jackie's climactic chase with the Communist villains, played by John Cheung and Li Hoi Sang (who both played different characters in Part 1). There

quality is still imperfect and this video includes an apology for same. Nonetheless, the movie is quite watchable, and the opening credits have Chan square off, one at a time, against monks using one each of the Five Animals styles (Dragon, Snake, Tiger, Leopard & Crane). Great choreography here! (NOTE: For an opposing viewpoint on this movie, see my more interesting review in OC#10:-DF)

Apparently, Chan is a student known only as 'Dummy' because he's totally mute. In actuality his father was killed by a masked martial artist and Chan swears an oath of silence 'til he can avenge his father. Only he is one of Shaolin's backward students at first, and has no hope of passing by the other 'dummies' of this movie, the Shaolin Wooden Men (which are robots of a sort, operated by springs & chains, used with pulleys, etc.). Talk about tough final exams!

Along the way in his training at the Shaolin Temple, Chan is helped by a monk who teaches Drunken Style, a renegade monk in chains that Chan sneaks in to visit (who teaches

Chan a particularly vicious form of mostly Snake and Tiger (who promises to show Chan how to beat the Shaolin Wooden Men) and a Buddhist Nun that shows Chan a 'kinder', 'gentler', Snake Style instead. Ever notice how Snake styles pop up in Chang's movies? It appears in varying degrees in SNAKEFIST FIGHTER, EAGLE'S SHADOW, SNAKE & CRANE ARTS OF SHAOLIN, DRUNKEN MASTER (again combined with Crane in one scene), SPIRITUAL KUNG FU and this movie!

Chan passes through the Shaolin Wooden Men and delivers a message for the renegade monk who's name is, I hope, Fut Yu and hopes to find his father's killer. Of course, the Drunken Style Monk thinks his training got Chan through (no doubt so did the nun) it, but Chan used everything from everybody. In the outside world he encounters a mysterious stranger

who shows Chan still has much to learn. Said stranger also uses a technique like the one that killed Chan's father! Meantime, the renegade monk escapes, the Shaolin Temple tries to recapture him and Chan (as always) is caught in the middle! The film has a hokey but unique ending (the longer version that played in Japan as opposed to the shorter HK version) and some of Chan's humorous bits in an otherwise straight movie. *** - Robert Mallory

SNAKE AND CRANE ART OF SHAOLIN

Produced by Lo Wei & Hsu Li Hwa in 1978; Production Designer: Chu Shih-mei, Starring: Jackie Chan, Nora Miao, Kum Chong, Kim Ching Lin, Lee Yung Wu, Lu Ya Ying, Reviewed by Goro Nigohossian.

Okay, so Tom Hanks played a homosexual in PHILADELPHIA and ended up winning best actor at this year's Academy Awards, but when Jackie played a homo in SNAKE AND

are stunts a plenty, as Jackie is pursued in a marketplace and village, and this final half hour, much like the first battle (in the restaurant), is what makes it all worth while. The stunts & acrobatics around the scaffolding are a direct salute to old Buster Keaton flicks. Also, I got a kick out of Jackie's use of red peppers as a weapon. ***1/2 - DF

PROJECT S

(1993)—See OC#17, page 22, for commentary.

SHAOLIN WOODEN MEN

Produced by Hsu Li Hwa in 1976, Executive Producer: Lo Wei, Production Manager: Li Hsien Chang, Executive Dir.: Chan Chih Hwa, Dir.: Lo Wei, Cast: Jackie Chan, Kin Kang, Long Chiu, Reviewed by Robert Mallory.

One of Chan's earlier films, the last known print of this movie was already deteriorating before a video was finally mastered from it. Despite what technical improvements could be made in restoring the film, the

CRANE ART OF SHAOLIN, no one took notice except me. Now those of you who've seen this movie may be saying, "Garō must be smoking some bad stuff" but let me explain. Jackie comes back to his room to find Nora Miao there. She tells him that she will give him the Golden Eagle of her clan and let him play hide the salami in her stabbin' cabin if he gives her the book of Snake & Crane. He refuses. She then asks what he wants and he says "A man". Okay, I was shocked, but then he goes a step further and says "A man with a scar on his shoulder." Quite a fetish there, Jackie!

Jackie plays a homo who may or may not be in possession of the Shaolin Snake & Crane book that all the clans want. They can't fight him for it, since he knows the styles, so they try to bribe & charm it from him. But that shit don't even work, so since this is a kung fu movie, they decide to fight him, even though he knows the styles. But as it turns out, Jackie doesn't have the book and it's all a plot by a Shaolin monk to get revenge on the person who killed the Shaolin masters. Jackie gets revenge by letting him taste his Snake & Crane. What surprises me most is that he uses Snake & Crane, because I thought he was gay, and he would use Gerbil style, but Jackie ends up kicking the villain's ass, instead of fucking him up it. Overall, an enjoyable early Jackie film. *** - Garō Nigoghossian

Snakefist Fighter

(aka MASTER WITH CRACKED FINGERS, SNAKEFIST NINJA, LITTLE TIGER FROM CANTON) 1971. Presented by Dick Randall, Produced by Lee Lang Koon, Martial arts instructors: Chan Yuen Lung, Se Fu Yoi, Juen Hsiao Tan, Starring: Jackie Chan, Shih Tien, Tien Feng, Han Kuo Tasi, Reviewed by John Grace.

After the smash success of **SNAKE IN THE EAGLE'S SHADOW**, HK schlock producers took a previously unreleased Jackie chop sockey auctioneer, **LITTLE TIGER FROM CANTON**, and filmed new footage with Simon Yuen, Dean Shek, the fat dweeb from **EAGLE'S SHADOW**, and a flabby, unconvincing Jackie double (probably a member of the Yuen clan) to pad the film. Hell, it even includes footage from **DRUNKEN MASTER**, the scene of Jackie doing the 8 Drunken Fairies kata. The result is a boring mess.

LITTLE TIGER FROM CANTON was filmed in 1971 and it appears to be sort of a **BIG BOSS** rip-off, with Jackie as a young waiter who gets into various fights with the town bullies. Compared to other kung fu flicks of the era, the choreography is average, with Jackie showing some sloppy high kicks (this was filmed before he studied hapkido) and Bruce Lee mimicry. He is also cruelly punished by his dad, who makes him stick his fist into broken glass and catch flower pots that his dad throws at him (egads!). In the flower pot catching sequence and in brief moments during the brawls, he shows off some of the acrobatic agility that would make him a star later. The new pseudo.

DRUNKEN MASTER footage is crudely inserted to be part of the storyline as the Jackie double is trained by an old bum in the woods (Yuen) and fights an evil kung fu master in the

flick's finale. All of the new footage is duller than **BLADERUNNER**, especially the mahjong duel between Yuen and Dean Shek (as a villainous tax collector) which seems to go on forever. This is a cheap, crass and incomprehensible flick for Jackie completists only. * - John Grace

Spiritual Kung Fu

Produced by Lo Wei & Hsu Li Hua in 1978, Released on video in 1984 by Alpha Film & Video Inc., Starring: Jackie Chan, James Tien, Yu Wen-Siu, Ti Tung Chuen, Shih Tien, Kao Chang, Wang Chin, Dean Shek, Wong Ching, Reviewed by Damon Foster.

Fairly somewhat average period adventure, one which I avoided when it played in Chinatown because it 'looked stupid.' Many years later, I finally watched it in Japan, dubbed in Japanese. So again, thanks to this issue, I've finally watched it all the way through, in English. I have mixed reactions; I was partially right when I said it 'looked stupid' about 16 years ago. But the stupidity is all confined to the first 15 minutes. After the scene of Jackie gathering small animals to eat, and putting them in his pants, I did not want to watch the remainder.

But once the clown-like ghosts appear, this tale of betrayal at Shaolin becomes worthwhile. Jackie is one of the few kung fu students at Shaolin to have hair, and he learns more kung fu from ghosts which haunt the temple. The ghosts are pretty silly, making Casper the Friendly Ghost seem quite terrifying. They wear bright red wigs and grass skirts, they look like albino hula dancers. Each represents a different type of kung fu (Snake, Crane, Dragon, Tiger, etc.) which they teach Jackie, so he can get revenge against a warlord (James Tien), who stole another Shaolin book of kung fu. Jackie's battle with James Tien, and a deceitful monk are average kung fu movie stuff. The fights are great, as always. Jackie uses a pair of tonfas at high speed, against a whole army of monks wielding staffs. So the fights and acrobats are all nice. But my favorite scenes involve the ghosts, and I actually laughed at the scene where Dean Shek is spoken to by talking skeletons! But its minor fantasy/horror elements are microscopic in another wise average chop sockey comedy. ** - Damon Foster

To Kill with Intrigue

Produced by Hsu Li Hua in 1977, Exec. Prod.: Lo Wei, Cast: Jackie Chan, Shen Le Lung, Yu Ling Lung, Wang Kuo, Tung Lin, Ma Chi, Chiang Ching Hsia, Chen Hui Lou, Li Wen Tai, Production

Manager: Li Hsien Chang, Prod. Designer: Chu Shih Mei, Martial Arts Dir.: Chen Hsin le & Chen Wen Lung, Dir. of Phot.: Chen Chung Yuan, Music: Chen Fang Chi, Screenplay: Ku Lung, Directed by Lo Wei, Starring Jackie Chan, Chu Feng, George Wang Reviewed by Damon Foster.

If I lie, and tell all you pretentious newcomers this movie came out at the same time as **ONCE UPON A TIME IN CHINA** or **DRUNKEN MASTER 2**, I bet you'd all get hard-ons and watch it wouldn't you? Of course you would, you fuckers. But since this superior example [of what a real period movie should be] came out in the 1970s, most will avoid it like a blow-job from a rattlesnake. But you know I enjoy the 1970s historicals, so naturally, **TO KILL WITH INTRIGUE** pleased me. Though Jackie never appeared in a Shaw epic, this uneven drama is the next best thing. **TO KILL WITH IN-**

TRIGUE may be crude, old & cheap, but it packs in more punch than Jackie's three most recent films combined. Hell, near the beginning, Jackie carries around a bloody hand he chopped off an opponent! He'd never do anything like that in his newer 'family oriented' films!

It's an interesting film for at least five reasons: 1. It's nice to finally see Tung Lin (**FIVE FINGERS OF DEATH**, **3 SUPERMEN AGAINST THE ORIENT**, etc.) play a good guy. 2. "But still" is still the dubbed phrase of choice. 3. There are mock ghosts (hoaxes) at the beginning. 4. Jackie's acrobatic limberness mixes well with the typical, theatrical swordplay. 5. Because I say so.

This isn't to say it's not without its faults. Its four or five fights are spread well apart, in huge gaps of dialogue which border on the dull. Fortunately, the training scenes aren't quite as tedious as in other movies. Too much of the plot concentrates on shattered romance between Jackie and his girlfriend Chin Chin. I bet her name had to be changed in the Japanese version, since in Japanese, her name means penis! I believe 'chinchin' is a slang term, meaning dick, cock, pud, love missile, one-eyed trouser snake, third leg, wife's best friend, etc.

Jackie plays Hsiao Lei, basically a rude S.O.B., but one of the good guys. His family was killed by a clan calling themselves Killer Bees! However, this doesn't stop him from fooling around with a female member of the group. They eventually become friends and unite against common enemies, of which there are plenty. The real villains are the Bloody Rain Clan, masters of death & deception.

Jackie's two-faced friend Ching Chun (one hell of a kicker) turns out to be leader of the Deadly Rain Clan, and kills Jackie's other friends, the Dragon Escorts. But between fights, there are complex characters and subplots (i.e. our hero torn between love and war). Confusing script aside, Jackie learns more kung fu from the flying woman of the forest, in her scarf & veils (way ahead of Joey Wang in **CHINESE GHOST STORY**). Using these new techniques, Jackie defeats the main villain of the Bloody Rain Clan, hanging him by his own sash! *** - Damon Foster

Twin Dragons

Produced by Golden Harvest in 1992, Directed by: Everyone, Starring: Jackie Chan, Maggie Cheung, Nina Li Chi, Teddy Robin Kwan, Reviewed by Richard Akiyama.

Jackie's 1992 project, **THE TWIN DRAGONS**, had fans licking their lips in anticipation of seeing the incomparable action star mixing his considerable talents with not one, but two of HK's most acclaimed action filmmakers, Tsui Hark and Ringo Lam. Not surprisingly, a number of fans were disappointed that the movie opted to be an amiable comic thriller instead of an all-out action extravaganza. As a result, the movie has become one of Chan's most underrated vehicles -- a tour de force for the star's immense comedic capabilities and a witty new take on the old mistaken identity routine.

Made as a benefit for the HK Film Director's Guild, **TWIN DRAGONS** takes its cue from Jean Claude Van Damme's earlier flick **DOUBLE IMPACT**, in which the martial arts star played twin brothers separated at infancy. Here, Chan's two personas are sent their opposite ways shortly after birth when a wild hospital skirmish leads the anguished parents into believing that one of their twins has been killed. While the mourning couple fly with their 'surviving' son off to America, the other tot falls into the hands of a wandering drunken femme. U.S.-related Ma Yu grows up to be an internationally famous conductor while HK-bred Wan Ming toils as an auto mechanic who just happens to be highly proficient in martial arts. Wan Ming's fighting gets him into trouble with some gangsters who hold his buddy Tarzan (the impish Teddy Robin Kwan) hostage to ensure Wan Ming's cooperation in the planned break-out of their imprisoned boss. Meanwhile, Ma Yu has arrived in HK to conduct a concert, unaware that he and his twin sibling are about to blaze a path of disbelief, mass confusion, and impeccably timed comedy through the befuddled citizens of HK.

Jackie Chan attacks his duo roles with an engaging relish. Following the big budgeted epic **OPERATION CONDOR**, in which a frustrated Chan seemed to be struggling to have a good time against enormous pressure, the more modest **TWIN DRAGONS** is empowered by Chan's energetic performance. Perhaps leaving the burden of direction to veterans like Tsui and Lam was the tonic Chan needed at the time, for he truly seems to be enjoying himself gerne and his renewed vigor is as disarming as any



Jackie joins Anita Mui for a musical duet.



As far as a Jackie Chan type of movie goes, it's not one of his best. (DF here, for a conflicting view on this film, see my review in OC#11. Hell, I gave it four stars!) The major problem with **TWINKLE TWINKLE LUCKY STARS** is that it looks like a Chinese version of the lame-ass **CANNONBALL RUN** movies. I think for the type of movie it is, it pretty much falls way below Samo Hung's talent as a director. I think Samo should have stuck to directing action films, not comedies. There are way too many plot twists and cut-back sequences that, after a while, were giving me a fucking headache. The version that I reviewed was in Cantonese with English subtitles. It was also cut up a bit, for regular TV viewing, because of a few scenes like when Samo fights these Chinese babes

and he hits one in the crotch, underwear & all. The subtitled version that I've seen, made this flick practically unbearable to watch as it was. Comedy wise, this flick has very little to offer. Richard Ng, who looks like an oriental Sammy Davis Jr., is probably the only bright spot in this so-called action comedy. As far as an action movie, well, not much action, but a few great fight sequences, and if you're a true genre fan of old & sort of new kung fu flicks, you will enjoy Jackie Chan and Yasuaki Kurata fight in a great sequence at the end of the movie. Also, there is a nice fight between Samo & Australian martial artist Richard Norton. For me, the best part of this movie was the warehouse fight where Jackie, Yuen Biao, and Ti Wei fight. The stunts are painful, and the pace is quick and fast. I think if this movie was scene in a dubbed version, it would be a little more bearable, but if you don't understand Cantonese/Mandarin, your best bet is to have your Fast Forward button on your VCR ready & waiting. Plot wise, there is no fucking plot. Samo, along with other notable HK actors; Richard Ng, & Sybelle Hu are on their way to a resort area in Pattaya (where ever the hell that is). It seems that they stumble onto a crime ring

led by Yasuaki Kurata & Richard Norton. While one of the no name actors gets waxed by the mob, we cut to a warehouse set up, and guess who finally decides to show up? Jackie Chan, Yuen Biao & Andy Lau. There they meet up with HK bad guy, Ti "Dick" Wei. He's mean, he's bad, he's a real dick, as he and his bunch of thugs fight Jackie, Yuen Biao & Andy Lau. The fights are great and are one of the highlights of this otherwise dull flick. After this confrontation, we are back to more lame comedy and no real plot. But hey, guess what? We're back in civilization now, and the mob is still pursuing Jackie and the rest of the quote unquote "comedy troupe". Finally, after a lot of chasing around, we are back in some building, nice little movie cut-uh? Here they meet up with

TWINKLE TWINKLE LUCKY STARS

Produced by Golden Harvest in 1985, Dir.: Samo Hung, Starring: Samo Hung, Richard Ng, Erick Tsang, John Sham, Jackie Chan, Richard Norton, Yuen Biao, Andy Lau, Sybelle Hu, Ti Wei, Reviewed by Butch Portillo.

Yasuaki Kurata & Richard Norton again, and another fight ensues. Finally, I'm ready to fall asleep and wake up with a woody (but that's another story), and catch the end credits.

There is one interesting scene in this so-called comedy. At the end of the movie, after all that has been said and done, we have sort of a 'Love Boat reunion' of notable 1980s actors, basically has been now. They just sort of enter the building where all the commotion was going on. They should've turned back right away. ** Butch Portillo

WHEELS ON MEALS

Presented by Golden Harvest in 1984, Japanese title: SPARTAN X, Producers: Raymond Chow & Leonard KC Ho, Directed by Samo Hung, Starring: Jackie Chan, Samo Hung, Yuen Biao, Lola Forner, Benny Urquidez, Keith Vitale, Reviewed by Robert Mallory.

Perhaps the perfect Jackie Chan vehicle, this movie is funny but not too silly, has great stunts (including some on a skateboard), bizarre plot and numerous fight scenes. Chan is Thomas, friend of David (Yuen Biao) and Moby (Samo Hung). Fierce opposition is supplied by Keith Vitale and Benny Urquidez (the latter's final fight here with Chan is one of the best martial arts fights ever seen!).

The film is available under both of the above titles. **SPARTAN X** runs longer as it includes a comedy scene with Samo Hung and is in the letter-box format. Though dubbed in English, it has Japanese subtitles at the bottom, and the **SPARTAN X** title appears only on its video & box (the film itself also bears the **WHEELS ON MEALS** title!).

Set in Spain, Thomas and David work from a customized van that converts into a food stand, hence the title. Moby has 'inherited' a detective agency he worked for. All three get involved with the daughter of a woman Thomas's father dates (both are in an insane asylum) who first seems to be a hooker, but is really 'only' a pick-pocket. She also turns out to be the illegitimate daughter of a count and heir to a fortune. A relative who needs only keep her from showing for a certain time would then inherit every-

thing. Twists abound in a surprisingly cohesive storyline. ***** - Robert Mallory

WINNERS AND SINNERS

(See review in OC#11)

YOUNG MASTER

Produced by Golden Harvest in 1980, Written & Dir.: Jackie Chan, Scr.: Lau Tin Chee, Tung Lio, & Tang Kin Sang, Martial Arts Chor.: Jackie Chan, Stunt Coordinator: Ling Ke An, Starring: Jackie Chan, Ho Kam-Kwong, Wei Pi, Tien Feng, Shieh Kin, Yuen Biao, Wang Ling Sik, Reviewed by Damon Foster.

Jackie's first kung fu film for Golden Harvest, and he & business manager Willie Chan (no relation) did a good job at making this one more polished & slick than the earlier chop sockies done for Lo Wei's company. Unfortunately, I haven't seen this one since it played Chinatown theatres about 14 years ago! I searched everywhere for a tape, anywhere from the most exotic, foreign language video stores to Blockbuster. So my memory isn't exactly refreshed. Naturally, **YOUNG MASTER** will show up everywhere once this fuckin' issue is complete.

So what do I remember about **YOUNG MASTER**? Well, I recall Jackie in an impressive lion dance at the beginning, where he again combines kung fu & acrobatics. Later, Jackie leaves his opera school and somehow, somewhere, he fights a fat guy, using a fan. The choreography was exceptional, though I don't remember a thing about it, or why I was so impressed by it. The climactic battle has Jackie again pitted against Wang Ling Sik, in a long, overdrawn, 'anything goes' fight. Several kung fu techniques are masterfully displayed, Jackie uses everything but the kitchen sink. Sorry that this review wasn't very informative or detailed, but my memory is poor, the tape is now hard to find (but the damn thing was everywhere back when I was doing the Ninja Issue), and nobody else volunteered to review this movie. So it's everyone else's fault! You see, I'm always right, nothing is ever my fault, and life, the universe & everything would be a lot better off if things were done my way all the time. *** - a pissed off Damon Foster



JACKIE-ISH FILMS

Now you know about Jackie's real movies. But there were others, either influenced by him, or ripping off his work. Here are some films which, in one way or another, may be of interest to diehard Jackie fans.

COWARD BASTARD- I haven't seen this one in about 14 years, but I think Meng Yuan Wen (?) performs some superb stunts and Jackie Chanesque comedy, in this wacky farce. **

DANCE OF DEATH- Jackie doesn't appear, but choreographed this rarely seen Angela Mao flick.

DANCE OF THE DRUNKEN

MANTIS- Ng See Yuen, who directed **EAGLE'S SHADOW**, offers us more of the same, with Simon Yuen (Yuen Shao Tin) again teaching some Jackie wannabe kung fu, the 'drunken mantis' variety. This 1979 farce has decent enough kung fu, but it's all stuff Jackie already did. **

DRUNKEN FIST BOXING

An illegitimate 'sequel' to **DRUNKEN MASTER**. Stock footage of Jackie (from **DRUNKEN MASTER**) pads out this rip-off, again with Simon Yuen teaching kung fu to Jackie imitators like Casanova Wong.

DRUNKEN MASTER 3

I hear Liu Chia Liang got mad at Jackie and walked off the set of **DRUNKEN MASTER 2**. Now he's trying to make his own sequel, much to Jackie's annoyance. At the time

of this typing, I've not seen the film.

ENTER THREE DRAGONS

Bruce Lee imitators film with Dragon Lee, Bruce Lea, someone called Bruce Li that isn't Ho Tsung Tao (yes, we have Bruce Li imitators too!), and Jackie Chin!! Sometimes called **THE DRAGON ON FIRE**, but it's not the Dragon Lee/John Liu film of the same title, but instead is utter nonsense about smuggling that also wastes Yang Sze's (aka 'Bolo' Yeung) talents. "Jackie" fights without power. Perhaps Chin-ups would help Jackie Chin, but nothing will help this piece of garbage!

HEROINE, THE- Virtually nobody has seen this 1973 movie, where a young Jackie makes a guest appearance. The first film in which Jackie acted as Martial Arts Instructor, and he supposedly played the second male lead.

IRON FISTED MONK- Starring Samo Hung (and his first directorial), Jackie choreographed the fights. Never seen it.

JACKY CHAN CONNECTION

The poster says: "Starring Jacky Chan," "Fight Scenes by Jacky Chan," and "Directed by Jacky Chan." I don't think even Jackie Chan has an ego so big as to call it this. In reality, it's just a deceitful retitling of **TO KILL WITH INTRIGUE**.

KID FROM TIBET- Yuen Biao in a remotely watchable fantasy from 1991. Jackie makes a microscopic cameo, as does entertainment value.

it's interesting, seeing the real Samo Hung play his old teacher, and Lam Ching Ying co-stars. It's about changing styles & trends, with western ideas (i.e. movies, pop music & even birthday cake) infiltrating HK, and driving the Peking Operas' acrobatic plays into obsolescence. 1960's heroine Cheng Pei Pei cameos! **1/2

POM POM- Directed by Cheung Cheung Joe, this 1984 comedy features Jackie in another small, point-less cameo, just an in-joke.

PROJECT S- A sequel to **POLICE STORY 3: SUPER COP**, where Jackie cameos, in what's basically a fun film starring Michelle Kahn. ***

Meng Fei looks and fights exactly like Jackie, while Tan Tao Liang again does magnificent kicks. **

STORY OF DRUNKEN MASTER

Produced by Shih Chao Chin, Simon Yuen once more teaches a pupil how to fight the bad guys, the only major change being that the student is female. The ad says: "Starring the Female Jackie Chan: Yang Pan Pan."

JACKIE CHAN & THE 36 CRAZY FISTS

Behind-the-scenes shots of Jackie (in **YOUNG MASTER** or some such film), choreographing a kata are spliced into this film's opening credits! This typical rip-off also

makes lies like: "Directed by Jacky Chan", or "Guest Appearance by Jackie Chan", whatever. But after the opening five minutes of Jackie, it's just another comedy kung fu goof-fest, with Hsiung Kuang getting endless training from Ku Feng and another drunken hobo. Full of challenges, cartoon-like music, decent fights & flips, and even a little nudity. *

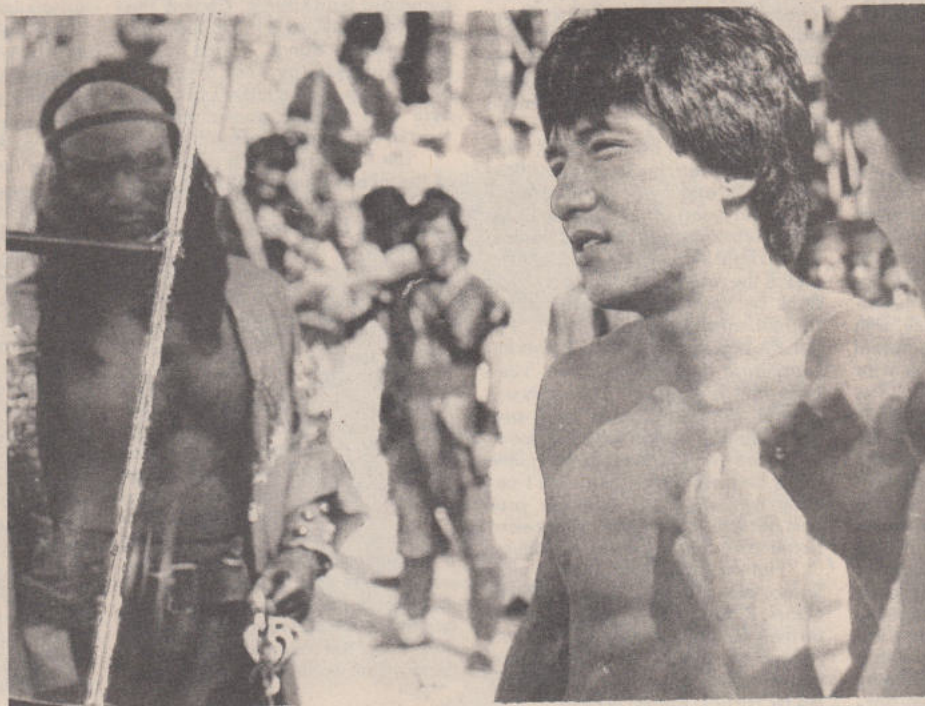
WORLD OF DRUNKEN MASTER

Never seen it (and hopefully, never will), but I gather Joseph Kuo produced & directed Simon Yuen (of course), teaching a couple of Jackie wannabes how to be even more like Jackie.

YOUNG TIGER

Wu Ma directs Meng Fei in a typical modern 1970s auctioneer. Jackie is spliced into the opening credits, stock footage from one of his period films, from the same session as in **JACKIE**

CHAN & THE 36 CRAZY FISTS! Then it immediately, abruptly fades to Meng Fei riding a motorcycle in somewhat modern times! So don't be fooled, this exploitive, deceitful stinker is not a Jackie film! It's about an over-acting Meng Fei, framed by kung fu mobsters Fiong Tsui Feng & Mars. But still, there are many fights and a motor-cycle chase. 1/2



NAUGHTY BOYS- Jackie produced, but doesn't appear in this 1986 film.

OF COOKS AND KUNG FU

Starring Jacky Chen. The hero is taught by a master chef who is also a master of kung fu. The techniques and strategies are based on principles of preparing Chinese cuisine! Despite unlikely premise, too many cooks do not spoil the broth of this decent film. By the last fight our hero is really cooking! Also see **THE KUNG FU COOK**, virtually the same film, but starring Chan Che Ping & Lau Wai Ying. **

PAINTED FACES- An odd drama from 1988, about life at Jackie's opera school in the 1960s. Unfortunately, it's only 30% accurate, and the youngsters chosen to play Jackie, Samo Hung, Yuen Biao, Yuen Wa, etc., look nothing like them. But

ROUGE- Produced by Jackie, it's another romantic ghost movie.

SEVEN STAR GRAND

MANTIS- Seven stars? They're lucky if I give it one. While the kung fu isn't bad, this is a stupid farce that starts off with a contest involving pigs, and a group of gay, fat gangsters. Eventually, another old man teaches a guy, this time an Elton Chong imitator (yes, it got that bad!) how to beat up villains. That is, in-between lame skits. *

SNAKE CRANE SECRET

Rip-off of early Chan farces like **TO KILL WITH INTRIGUE** and obviously **SNAKE CRANE ART OF SHAOLIN**. Very predictable stuff: Woman dressed as a man, pickpocketing, Wu Ma cameos as a drunken bum, and villain Hung kills good guy Ting. Unfortunately for Hung, the dead man's kids grow up to become Meng Fei and Tan Tao Liang!



HINDI FILMS

Rahul Roy and Sheeba in India's BAARISH.



In a country with an elevated rate of illiteracy, also divided from the same language (the official dialects are 16, counting out English), ordinary people go to the movies to look for simple amusement. Every film runs over two hours, often reaching three. The genres which people like best are tear-jerker melodramas or action flicks (in which good feelings are always triumphant). Inevitably, annoying popular songs are inserted into each and every film, so that we can assume that in India, 'movie' is synonymous with 'musical.'

Nude scenes are forbidden because the Hindu religion considers them miseducative; up to a few years ago, even kisses were out of the screen, but as things are at present... (who has invented Kamasutra, anyway?).

Many films are financed with the money of the mafia. Some actors are even more popular than politicians: Amitabh Bachchan, for example, childhood friend of Rajiv Gandhi, during the recent insurrections in Bombay has given his support to the government. But many other actors are as popular as Bachchan: Om Puri, the sexy Sridevi, Mithun Chakrabarty, Javed Khan. . . The more they're popular, the more they cost to the production. Their cachet can reach fifty percent of the whole budget.

Well, that's all for the introduction. In this column, I'll try to analyze some of the best & wildest Hindu productions. Unfortunately, on video as on the big screen, Indian films have no subtitles (sigh!). But sometimes actors use some English greetings. I have to warn you; when you're watching an Indian movie, it's not so easy to resist the temptation to use the FFW button of the VCR. But I assure you that, once you've plunged deep into the Hindu culture, you may consider leaving the HK cinema. Yeah, right. Trying is believing.

100 DAYS

Starring: Jackie Shroff, Madhuri Dixit, Javed Jaffery, Laxmikant Berde, Directed by Partho Ghosh, Reviewed by Massimo F. Lavagnini.

Prediction is the motif for this Hindu masterpiece, which if it wasn't played by oriental actors, could be a perfect Italian giallo. Davie, the heroine, is gifted with innate ESP powers, which make her be the witness of a cruel murder committed by a black-dressed killer. The woman is positive that murder still has to take place, maybe she can do something to stop it.

100 DAYS is a film unique in its kind. Partho Ghosh, the director, succeeds in melting the visionary style of Dario Argento with the plot of Lucio Fulci's *THE PSYCHIC*. The result is a masterly mixture of suspense, horror, kung fu and even some very bad musical number, which unfortunately pulls down the rating, as it's too much for the Western viewer. But don't miss it, that's an order. **** -Massimo Lavagnini

AJOOBA KUDRAT KAA

("The Magnificent Guardian"), 1991, Starring: Hemant, Manjeet Kular, Deepak Parashar, Shaguffaa Ali, Directed by Tulsi Ramsay & Shyam Ramsay, Reviewed by Massimo Lavagnini.

There's no doubt about it. Some crazy Indian producer must have seen *YETI IL GIGANTE DEL XX SECOLO* (1977, by Gianfranco Parolini) and, impressed, has decided to do a carbon copy for the Hindu market.

The plot of the two films is almost identical. The variant is that here the protagonist is a little girl, Sasha, who is kidnapped and taken to the mountains by a gang of crooks. Sasha gets free of her captors, takes shelter in a cave where she naps. Awakened by strange noises, the child finds a big surprise; a shaggy monster two meters high, the Yeti in all its glory! Sasha screams in terror, but immediately she realizes that the big ape has no intention of harming her. Better still, he protects her from the crooks who've followed her footsteps. But her family, who's been searching, arrive and take her from the mountains. She reluctantly has to part from the friendly Yeti. But the delinquents don't give up, and this time they abduct the poor giant, and sell him as a circus freak. But the child and her relatives rescue the Yeti from the crooks.

In balance between cosmic shit and absolute masterpiece, *AJOOBA* is a must-to-be-seen. The monster is a cross between the look of Mimmo Crao in Parolini's 'kolossal' and the Ron Perlman of *BEAUTY AND THE BEAST*. Simply fantastic is the musical score of the movie, we can listen to such wonderful songs as: "I love you Yeti"! Compliments to the composer, Ajit Singh, who even in the beginning carries assorted plagiarisms, from Henry Mancini to the *STAR WARS* theme! Somebody give an Oscar of trash to the Ramsay Bros.! **** -Massimo Lavagnini

AADMI AUR APSARA

("Bad People") 1991, Starring: Chiranjeevi, Sridevi, Amrish Puri, Directed by K. Raghavendra Rao.

A wonderful movie, which perfectly conjugates fantasy with comedy, action and a pinch of horror. An oriental fairy tale told with a fluent European editing, *AADMI AUR*

A couple issues ago, I asked if anybody is self-destructive enough to sit through and review Indian flicks in OC. My limited (very!) interest in Indian movies all started when I heard of some Bengali director called Satyajit Ray, and when I saw a more recent Indian movie, *CHAAL BAZ*, on cable TV's International Channel. The flick was way too long to watch all in one sitting, but it had English subtitles, making it worth checking out. It combined everything: Drama, comedy, tragedy, music and even some martial arts. It starred a talented, beautiful Indian actress (she played a duel role as twins separated at birth) who looked like a cross between Joyce Godenzi and Nina Li Chi. The movie wasn't great, but decent. If nothing else, it proved India's movies may be worth checking out. I've seen clips and glimpses of other Indian movies on TV, and they're all musicals, and all the women sound exactly alike (incredibly high-pitched voices). There are Indian video stores, displaying

posters which look like imitations of *RAMBO*. It seems India makes more movies than any other country! What follows is an article sent to me by and written by Massimo F. Lavagnini, from Italy. His English is only okay, and I don't think my attempts at re-wording his stuff will help much! Part of the problem is that some of the time, I just plain can't tell what the hell this guy is talking about! But I'm grateful to him, his noble effort of making 'Hindi Films' part of OC. - DF

Every country has its 'factory of dreams'. America has Hollywood, India has three Bollywoods, as they are familiarly called by Indians. Their cine-industries are located in Bombay, Madras and Hyderabad. In 1993, the motion picture industry produced around 800 films, destined only for the home market of 850 million spectators. Television's penetration power is nearly non-existent in India; people like movies best at the theaters, that's the explanation for an annual revenue of 350 million US dollars.

APSARA makes a display of magnificent set designs, good FX and many spectacular action sequences of unexpected violence. It's the perfect passport that you need for Hindu cinema.

In a frozen brook, Radju finds a golden ring and decides to put it on. Actually, the jewel belongs to a goddess of the Indian pantheon, Hindraja, the Princess of Light, who, without her celestial seal can't come back to Heaven. The Princess has no choice, she must try to recover the ring, therefore she's made flesh on the Earth appearing to the skeptical Radju, who, being a kindhearted man, agrees to give hospitality to the beautiful stranger in his hut on the river. Everything seems to be going well; the friendship between the mortal and the goddess is on the point to turn into passion, when we come to know that Radju is in contrast with some gangsters. The powerful fighting techniques known by Radju saved him from his first violent clash with the criminals. The bad dudes, unable to defeat the main man, decide to ask a necromancer for help. Will our hero Radju come off better than his enemy? Will he save his family and, especially, Hindraja, unable to defend herself without her ring? **** - Massimo Lavagnini

VEERANA

("Dreadful") 1988, Starring: Jasmin, Hemant Birje, Sahila Chadha, Gulshan Grover, Dir.: Tulsi & Shyam Ramsay, Reviewed by Massimo



Lavagnini.

The sexy star Jasmin gives the best of herself in this excellent cult trash, directed by the Ramsay Bros. The inspiring models are THE EXORCIST, SUSPIRIA, and even SATANIK; grandiose sound track by Bappi Lahiri (attention to the theme "Turu bye-bye") and good makeup FX of the vampire. The final vote isn't compromised from a couple of inserts, one stolen from Carpenter's THE THING (a mangled dog) and one from Kaufman's INVASION OF THE BODY SNATCHERS (another dog, with a human face).

A vampire witch is hanged by a fierce crowd, but the priest of the cult devoted to that abomination succeeds in bringing her back to life. The sorcerer abducts a little girl, and binds together the two souls. Several years later, we again find Jasmin, now a beautiful woman. She lives in a big house, together with her uncle and some servants. In the meantime, horrible killings are taking place in the city; victims die torn to pieces, the police are baffled. Getting suspicious from the strange behavior of Jasmin, who sometimes speaks with the Pavarotti voice, her uncle decides to have the family doctor examine her. During a session of hypnotic regression, the terrible truth comes out: The gentle soul of Jasmin is overwhelmed by the spirit of the witch, who makes use of the body of the girls to kill the villagers, after having good sex with them! *** - Massimo Lavagnini

zine reviews

Every couple issues or so, I do my reviews of OC's newer 'competitors'. But I lack the space to review each magazine by issue, or to really review any publication more than once. Also, I'm sure as hell not gonna' waste space on every sleaze movie magazine which reviews a HK flick (rags like that are more common than trigger-happy rednecks at an NRA meeting). OC caters to Far Eastern contents, not general horror & exploitation. The following reviews are just a few of the recent books on Asian movies; for additional reviews of other publications, buy OC back issues!!

Here's another address I just got, but haven't seen the publication yet: HONG KONG FILM CONNECTION, PO Box 867225, Plano, TX 75086-7225. Send them a S.A.S.E.

The following reviews prove that OC is no longer the only Asian-zine to break new grounds, as I foolishly boasted last issue! I would eat my words, but I'm too busy keeping my foot in my mouth! Indeed, these younger zines (reviewed below) are finally offering diversity, now admitting there's more to life than the latest HK gangster flick. All these publications are worth checking out. So although I may mention a few of what I consider their 'weak' points, on the whole, they're pretty damn good.

ASIAN EYE

Digest size, and maybe a little too technical & analytical for my taste, but it should satisfy people who don't mind reading about Ringo Lam, John Woo, Jackie Chan and of course, Tsui Hark for the 100th time. But there are also reviews of INFRAMAN and DAI TETSUJIN 1-7, which relieved the monotony! Unfortunately, its editor, Collin Geddes, seems to have difficulty in answering his letters, I've rarely heard from him. Since I lost my copy of ASIAN EYE, I haven't a clue as to what his address is! So you'll have to search and ask around, to get a copy of this illusive, obscure fanzine.

CINERAI DER

Digest size, and maybe a little technical- Hey, wait a minute; didn't I just say all this?! The similarities are striking, but CINERAI DER is actually the second volume of Richard Akiyama's SKAM (see SKAM review in OC#14). More Jackie Chan, Tsui Hark, etc. For a year subscription (3 issues), send ten bucks to Richard Akiyama, PO Box 240226, Honolulu, HI 96824-0226

ASIAN TRASH

CINEMA T H E BOOK

Digest size, and maybe a little... No, hold on. What's going on?! Deja vu? The pages may be small (like the previous two), but that's because it's a thick, soft cover book, based on the magazine ASIAN TRASH CINEMA (digest size, etc., see it's review in OC#14 too). Though not 100% accurate, it's an informative guide to HK film rentals. Anything from Jackie Chan, to Tsui Hark, to (believe it or not!) John Woo! Full of useful reviews and a hilarious statement on the back cover where ATC claims credit for 'igniting' the current enthusiasm for Far Eastern films, when we all know damn well ATC didn't debut until as late as 1992! This first-of-its-kind novel is a must have for newcomers to the HK scene, and take it with you when you go to your local Chinese video store, as it's the perfect guide to choosing what films to rent and not rent. No HK film fan should be without it, so long as you realize there are plenty of mistakes, don't believe everything you read. For example, films from the 1960s and 1970s are credited as being made in the 1980s! Hopefully, they'll actually do some research if they make a 2nd edition,

and I hope they do. Ask for price. Craig Ledbetter, PO Box 5367, Kingwood, TX 77325

SENTAI

This "comicbook meets MARKALITE" hybrid tends to concentrate generally on superhero-type stuff, which actually makes it more closely resemble OC. Coincidence? I think not. Hell, the editorial blatantly states that they too hope to cover films of HK, Philippines and Korea! Sound familiar? But it's a nice little zine in its own right, more of a comicbook than anything else (nice artwork, not that I'm a comic critic), despite pieces on Godzilla, SPACE GIANTS, and, naturally, MIGHTY MORPHING POWER RANGERS. To obtain SENTAI, contact Benn Dunn, C/O SENTAI, 7272 Wurzbach #204, San Antonio, TX, 78240

HENSHIN

I hear this is the new title for the new magazine coming from Bob Johnson and August Ragone, founders of the late, lamented MARKALITE magazine. So it promises to be an extravaganza! For details, contact Bob Johnson (see his address last issue).

Why the hell did I ever call this Japantasy section "Terror Yaki?" It sure is a stupid title. But I enjoy Japanese movies about terror, and teriyaki is one of my favorite Japanese foods (especially the way they serve it at Shogun, a local restaurant in San Leandro). But the topic of Terror Yaki is Japanese sci-fi/fantasy, not Japanese restaurants. However, I thought it would be funny to mention a silly sign I spotted at the Shogun restaurant: "Please See Your Hostess to Be Eaten." Needless to say, the sign wasn't up long, not after all the giggling, pointing, & snickering from customers like me. But again, I'm still straying too far from the subject! Terror Yaki is suppose to be about monster movies, goddamn it! NOT Japanese restaurants! Yet I can't help but remember an exotic Japanese cocktail advertised in another popular East Bay restaurant, Mifune's. The drink was called "Sayonara", and was spelled in ominous black letters. The drink didn't sell well, and was quickly discontinued.

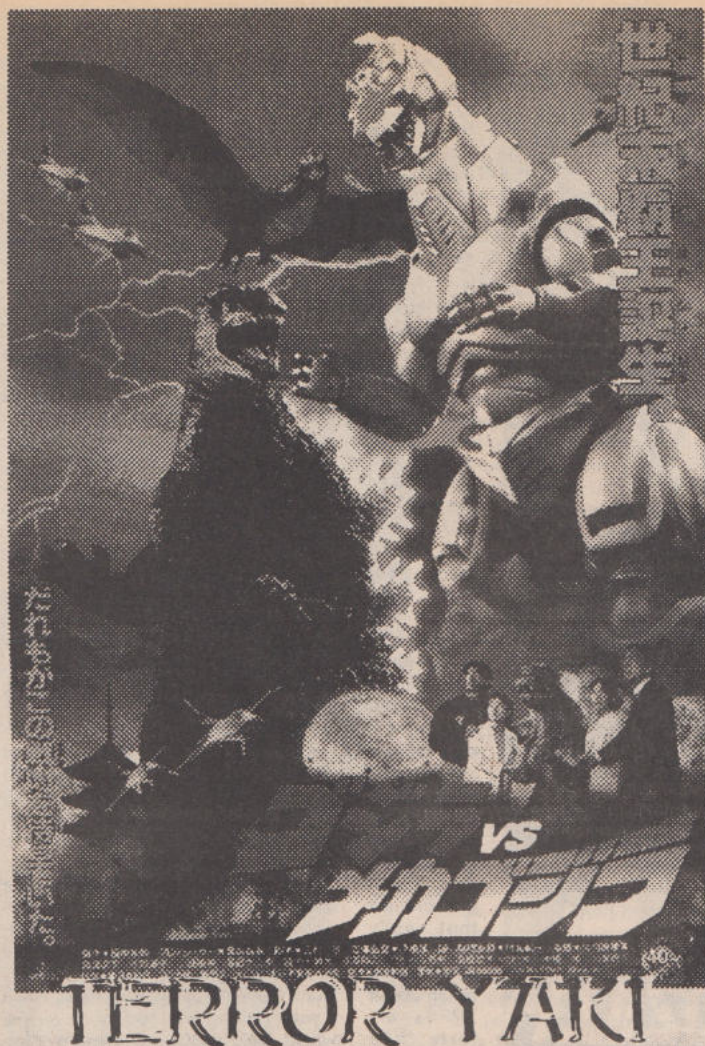
By now you guys are wondering when I'm gonna' start talking about Japanese movies. Well, as I see it, magazines which go into detail about Japanese films are cropping up again, and as always, most are technical beyond belief, to the point of being rather dull. OC is pretty competitive, so I'll be dull too. But instead of being analytical, I'll be silly and irrelevant. Speaking of which, how 'bout that GODZILLA VS. MECHAGODZILLA? No, not the new one, I'll review that one next issue. I'm talking about the original, from 1974. That's one of the two movies I'll review in this edition of Terror Yaki. Also included is a trendy art fan movie, TETSUO THE IRON MAN.

But before going into these two reviews, what the hell? Why not give you guys some new info, after all, I've had my fun. So anyway, Koichi Kawakita has completed a period/fantasy called YAMATO TAKERU. It features an eight-headed Hydra, kind of like the one in THE 3 TREASURES, but more like Ghidrah. You know, the same thing, only different. The long overdue return of Gamera is imminent. Absent since 1980's GAMERA, SUPER MONSTER, he'll battle long-time rival Gyaos once again, in GAMERA DAI KAIJU KESSEN, due out in March, 1995. Amazingly, onetime Daiei (Gamera's creators) rival Toho will make this flick! Naturally, the questions on everyone's minds are, "Does this mean they'll finally produced 'Godzilla vs. Gamera?', and "Heh heh heh, how much money can I make bootlegging this one? Heh heh heh!"

Speaking of Godzilla, I've heard yet another rumor they might make "Space Godzilla"! Hell, I first heard that bullshit title back in 1978! Current rumor has it Godzilla will battle Mogera (aka Mogalla, of MYSTERIANS) this week.

GODZILLA VS. MECHAGODZILLA

{Japanese title: GOJIRA TAI MEKAGOJIRA, French title: GODZILLA CONTRE MECANIK MONSTER, alter-



1994's GODZILLA VS. MECHAGODZILLA

nate American releases: GODZILLA VS. THE BIONIC MONSTER, GODZILLA VS. THE COSMIC MONSTER} Presented by Toho Eizo in 1974, Exec. Prod.: Tomoyuki Tanaka, Orig. Story: Shinichi Sekizawa & Masafumi Fukushima, Dir. of FX: Teruyoshi Nakano, Dir.: Jun Fukuda & Hiroyasu Satsuya, Sound Recording: Fumio Yanoguchi, Music: Masaru Sato, FX

Photography: Mototaka Tomioka & Takeshi Yamamoto, Starring: Masaaki Daimon, Kazuya Aoyama, Reiko Tajima, Barbara Lynn, Hiromi Matsushita, Akihiko Hirata, Hiroshi Koizumi, Goro Mutsu, Shin Kishida.

With all the hype on the new GODZILLA VS. MECHAGODZILLA, I figure it's about time somebody (me, as usual) remembers the original.

© copyright Toho Movie Co.

The true Mechagodzilla, seen in this 1974 movie looks a lot cooler than the whimpy-looking Mechagodzilla in 1993's bastardized remake. The original Mechagodzilla was an awesome costume, and King Seesar (aka King Shisa & King Seesaw) doesn't look half bad for a playful lion. Godzilla, however, has that same stupid mask that was used in last issue's GODZILLA VS. MEGALON. It's bad enough that they kept changing Godzilla's facial structure in each movie, but their choice of this cute, muppet-like mug makes Barney look fierce. There's actually an additional Godzilla mask used in GODZILLA VS. MECHAGODZILLA '74 too, one with larger eyes & teeth. It's even less realistic, and too cartoon-like. Regardless, both masks look too different [from each other] to be the same monster, and it really confuses matters during their first battle in the city at night; Godzilla battling his supposed 'look-alike'!

But other special effects are splendid, it's obvious Teruyoshi Nakano tried his best to fill in the gap left by the late master, Eiji Tsuburaya. The superimpositions and pyrotechnics are colorful & plentiful, and whatever few miniatures used definitely suffice. But one annoying effect which Toho loved doing in all these 1970s monster movies, was to have these supposedly huge, heavy monsters become weightless-easily lifted, like a feather. In this case, the gimmick is even worse; suspension wires are clearly visible, as Mechagodzilla (disguised as Godzilla) lifts Angilas by the tail (he's stiff as a broom from tail to snout, with head going up first). Shortly there after, Angilas bleeds florescent blood.

If you can find it, by all means buy New World Video's uncut English dub, and not the cruddy, censored versions like GODZILLA VS. THE COSMIC MONSTER! COSMIC MONSTER, retitled from GODZILLA VS. THE BIONIC MONSTER (the dudes behind SIX MILLION DOLLAR MAN didn't want anyone to use 'their' word) is what I saw in theaters as a kid. Heavily edited, it made little sense, but now I finally know what the fuck is going on (for those of you old sci-fi geeks who still find my usage of 'fuck' offensive, take note: Hell. Heck. Cut out one of the two underlined words and glue it over the word 'fuck'. Oops, there I go again!). Like when the ape-man pulls out a knife and cuts Masaaki Daimon's hand, completely censored from the theatrical version! I only wish the censor had accidentally cut his hand during the process.

There's an interesting cast; one which I'd normally associate with superhero TV. One character is played by Kazuya Aoyama, best known as Zone Fighter in RYUSEI NINGEN ZONE (see OC#12, and more on that show next issue). Main star Masaaki Daimon would later lead the good guys in CYBERCOP (see OC's #6, #14, & #17). Then there's the ever cool Shin Kishida, who steals the film as Nanbara the interlope agent. Aside from playing vampires in other Toho films, the late actor starred in SUN VULCAN (see OC#9, & #14) too. Then of course, there's the equally late (or even later!) Akihiko Hirata,

© copyright Cinema Shares & Toho

SEE THE MIGHTY GODZILLA IN A FIGHT TO THE DEATH WITH HIS COSMIC DOUBLE!



CINEMA SHARES Presents GODZILLA VS. COSMIC MONSTER IN COLOR G

who's been in **ULTRAMAN**, **RAINBOWMAN** and most of Toho's older monster movies. The simian assassin on the ship is played by

Daigo Kusano, who was also in **KOSEIDON**.

So with its FX, action, unintentional humor and a talented cast (as

proven in the previous paragraph), the original **GODZILLA V S MECHA-GODZILLA** is a highly recommended movie. Sure, some old farts & purists will roll their eyes and claim all of Godzilla's 1970s films are kiddie films. But then, consider the source of the comments; such negative reviews are generally technical and boringly serious. So look at it this way: If dull geezers like that really moan & groan so much about 1970s efforts like **MECHA-GODZILLA** & **MEGA-LON**, it's proof that these 1970s films are wild, energetic, over-the-top films which dare to shove fun & entertainment in our faces! I'll take **GODZILLA V S MECHA-GODZILLA** over 'classics' (snicker) like **GODZILLA, KING OF THE MONSTERS** any day.

Gorilla men from outer space, who's masks make those of **TIME OF THE APES** actually look authentic,

want to conquer the Earth (well, who doesn't?). In their secret, futuristic laboratory (hidden in an Okinawan cave), they've created a huge, powerful robot called Mechagodzilla. But descendants of the royal Izumi Family have discovered paintings on a cave wall, dating back to a time when people painted on cave walls. These ancient paintings, located near a small statue of King Seesar (a savior-god, thought to be a myth), would be more convincing if it weren't so obvious that they were made with a can of spray paint! What's the deal? Medieval graffiti and tagging? You think maybe the Okinawan's were descended from an ancient tribe of cholos, Crips or Bloods? What be hapnin'? Yo, check 'dis out, it be prophecy, kno' wha'm sayin'? Dees old homeboys be sayin' 'dat dude King Seesar just be chillin' now, but he go leave 'da crib to protect 'da homeboys in 'da hood, and 'dis the bad dudes, know warn sayin'? Regardless, long before the magical statue activates King Seesar (part dog, part lion, part comedian) to rescue Okinawa from imminent evil, the apes unleash Mechagodzilla, impersonating the real Godzilla. The only clue that it's not Godzilla (aside from its obvious mechanical movements & sounds) is that longtime Godzilla buddy Angilas briefly tries to 'unmask' the villain, before getting his ass kicked. Meanwhile, scientists, reporters & interpole agents try to keep the statue from the monkeys, resulting in a suspenseful chase, fight & shoot out on an Ocean Liner. The good guys get captured, but by now, the film gets rather entertaining as the monsters are ready to fight! Nami Izumi (Barbara Lynn), a priestess, sings a song (a long one; too many verses) which activates the dormant King Seesar, who helps Godzilla to tackle Mechagodzilla.

While the behemoths battle it out, the Japanese good guys escape from enemy headquarters, roasting a few simians in the process. King Seesar and Godzilla (who uses his new 'magnetic powers') waste the Mechagodzilla. But you can't keep a good monster down. He returned for two more movies. To be continued, next issue. ****

TETSUO, THE IRON MAN

Presented by Kaiju Theaters, Video Subtitles by Captions Inc., LA, An Original Cinema Release, 1992; Kaiju Theatre.

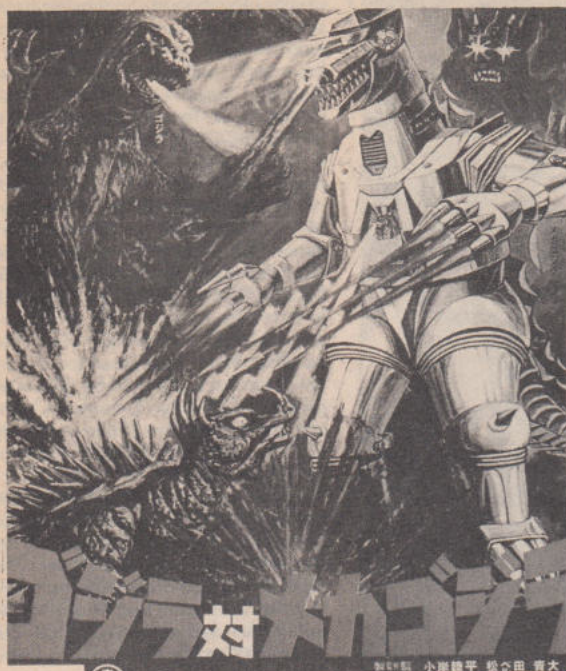
TETSUO shows why my love of art films rivals my love of taking a hot shower while having a bad sunburn. I'll stick to logically written movies with a be-

ginning, middle & end, not artsyfartsy bullshit like this! While people on drugs and pretentious art students may find this 'innovative', 'surreal', 'avant garde', etc., I found it to be a stupid, cheap mishmash of gore, crude animation, tasteless sex and the worst use of high speed photography since **BENNY HILL**. I'm relieved by its being in B&W though, making its bloody scenes that much less gross.

On the good side, it was mildly interesting to watch once, but only once. It's not the kind of film which you'd replay for friends and say, "Watch this part!" "Here's where it starts!" "Guess what happens next!" So it was almost worth watching, and my itchy trigger finger kept reaching for the scan button.

The story, as though there is one, is about a couple of stupid guys who stick metal in their bodies, and these tiny particles integrate with their blood cells, sending iron through out their bodies. One guy knows something is wrong when he has macabre nightmares that his girlfriend rapes him (you just gotta' see it to believe it), when in fact, it's he who rapes her to death, using his mechanical dick, now a spinning screw-drill! Talk about getting screwed. Anyway, among & between shots of these metal mutants, there's bizarre photography & editing; quick cuts, pans & FX to remind us we're watching a strange, wanna be' cult film. Later, both of these sickening Eraserhead-clones chase each other at high speed, until they unite and form one, via some odd animated gimmicks. They decide it's so fun they'll combine with the whole world. I guess their plan of conquest is to turn the earth into a huge blob of metal & rust. I've seen plenty of worse movies, but that doesn't mean I like **TETSUO, THE IRON MAN**. *

Copyright Toho



Copyright New World Video & Toho



Copyright Toho



EN COULEURS

WIDESCREEN

GODZILLA
CONTRE
MECANIK MONSTER

UNE PRODUCTION TOHO INTERNATIONAL LIMITED



HONG KONG HEROES

Here we go with yet another edition of HK HEROES, OC's ground breaking column about bone breaking. Pictured above are Jackie Chan in **DRUNKEN MASTER 2** (see this issue's JC section), Steven Chow Sing Chi in **LOVE ON DELIVERY** (coming next issue), Chow Yun Fat in **TREASURE HUNTER** (in this issue's 1990s section for HK HEROES), and Maggie Cheung in a killer costume. China's history, full of wars, invasions and rival clans, resulted in a great many tragic deaths. But the good news is that these horrid slaughters weren't in vain. Were it not for the ancient tragedies of China, there never would have been all these great action movies! For every decapitation, every laceration, and every castration & rape, there's now a movie, making the ancient horrors seem worth it. So the thrilling movies out of HK really kick ass (literally), they have to! The Chinese movie maker has violence in his blood, not to mention blood in his violence!

But seriously, this column, HK HEROES, is all about China's kung fu & action films, which you already know, unless you have the I.Q. of a snail. Again, I'm dividing HK HEROES into four categories: 1960s films (oldies), 1970s films (kung fu schlock), and 1980s & 1990s films (the same stuff everyone else is writing about). Also included in three of the categories are articles on certain movie stars. The 1960s star is Li Li

Hua. The article on her is quite interesting, she was actually a big star well before the 1960s. The 1970s & 1980s sections are graced by an interview with Leung Kai Jien (aka Liang Chia Jen), even though he continues to make films 'til this day (though I remember him best in 1970s films like **FIVEMASTERS OF DEATH** and **THUNDERING MANTIS**). In the 1990s section, are not only movie reviews, but a piece on Chingny Yau.

But wait! This intro isn't finished. So before going into this column's four separate categories (1960s films, 1970s films, 1980s films, and 1990s films), here are brief commentaries on lame movies I've recently seen which were of the easiest access, and involved minimal effort to see. They were shown locally on TV! None of these were really good enough to get full reviews.

One recent broadcast was 1989's **LUCKY STARS** (*), which I saw on a Chinese TV station. Basically a drama-comedy-semi auctioneer, it has absolutely nothing to do with Sammo Hung's similarly titled, though unsimilarly fun **MY LUCKY STARS**. **LUCKY STARS** has Simon Yam as a down-on-his-luck con man, who, along with his Japanese friend, falls for a cute lady who sings in night clubs. This plotless comedy/drama could start & end at any time in the film, and its nonsensical, pointless story wouldn't suffer. There are, however, a few worth while fights & laughs, if you can find them. An-

Right: Diana Chang. Left: Scene from LUCKY STARS.



other somewhat watchable tale was **VANISHING SON** (*), an American TV movie, part of some mini-series called "Action Pack". Created by someone involved in **DRAGON, THE BRUCE LEE STORY**, it too is entertaining, so long as you don't think too hard. Incredibly predictable, cliché ridden, but with decent martial arts by stars Russell Wong, & Chi Muoi Lo. HK villain John Cheung (**DRAGON, PROJECT A, IMAGE OF BRUCE LEE**) cameos in this familiar tale of Chinese immigrants coming to America, fighting villains, each other, and themselves. But getting back to the Chinese-language broadcasts, I managed to sit through **LIFELINE EXPRESS**, a 1980s stinker which should have been called **LIFELESS EXPRESS**. Kent Chang is warned by fortune tellers that he's cursed & doomed, so his brother (HK munchkin Teddy Robin Kwan) hires a wizard (Eddie Ko) to eliminate the curse. Basically just another all-talk drama, it does feature a few minor elements of horror and/or fantasy, and a couple chuckles. There's cute dialogue, like when they discuss the possibilities of meeting Sid Vicious and Bruce Lee in the afterlife. But there's mucho boredom.

1960s:

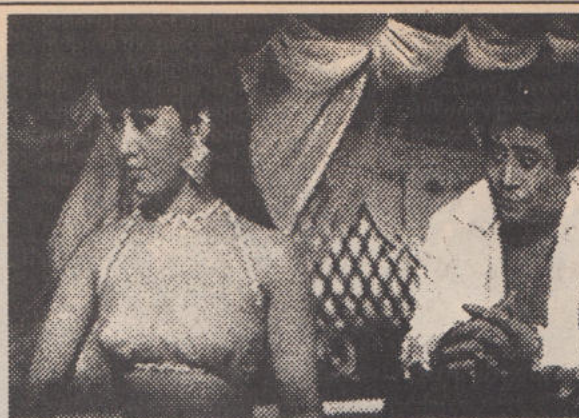
符命催

SUMMONS TO DEATH

Producer: Run Me Shaw, Film Editor: Chiang Hsing Loong, Screenplay: Lo Wei, Photography: Wu Chuk Hua, Sound Recording: Wang Ying Hia, Art Dir.: Johnston Tsao, Make up: Fang Yuen, Based on the Novel by Fang Loong Isang, Music: Kung Foo Ling, Dir.: Lo Wei, Starring: Tina Chin Fei, Tang Chang, Lo Wei, Wang Hsieh, Fanny Fan, Kuang Chung, Chiang Kiang Chao, Shirley Huang, Tsai No, Ma Ying, Hao Li

Last issue I begged your help in locating 1960s spy capers like **THE BRAIN STEELERS**, **JAMES BOND CHINESE STYLE** and **OPERATION MACAO**. While those three still remain as scarce as a Jewish fan club for Louis Fara Kahn, this fun little farce did turn up. **SUMMONS TO DEATH** is so ultra-1960s, it's funny. The gags, action, gimmicks, characters, girls, music, attire & script all reek of James Coburn's **FLINT** movies, and all that James Bond crap. But what the two Jameses lack are decent fights. This isn't to say that the 4 or 5 fist fights in **SUMMONS** are exactly great, though there's a little more to offer here than the lame 'hi-ya' chops of U.S. 1960s flicks. Sure, the artificial karate chops & poor stances (true martial artists face their opponents sideways, to minimize themselves as targets) are evident in **SUMMONS**, but the judo flips are effectively choreographed. The kicks lack any power, speed or form, and the punches sometimes miss by at least a foot!

But still, this 'classic oldie' came out many years before the chop sockey craze of the early 1970s. So without crude experiments like **SUMMONS**, later kung fu movies might never have appeared. The fights are relatively short, and spread well apart, so there's some debate as to whether it's really a martial arts film. But there are



Far left:
Fanny Fan
in **SUMMONS TO DEATH**.

Left: Fanny Fan and Wang Hsieh.

plenty of other highlights to make it entertaining, like campy gimmicks, flavorful music, and gorgeous women galore. So it's an all around fun movie, check it out! If the other 1960s secret agent farces are this good, I'm dying to see more. There are flaws though; the plot is too stretched out. The subtitles are adequate, but there's a lot of talking. Some scenes get dull, and the movie seems like a full two hours long at least (though I never timed it). So it's entertaining, but it could have been more so.

There are young, familiar faces like Ku Feng, Lo Wei (who acted & directed even back then!), and even Tang Chang. He too would make it into the 1970s chop sockey genre, years later. But by then, he was too old to learn real kung fu, and looks better as the young hero in **SUMMONS**. Can anybody confirm that he'd later be known as Allen Tang in the 1970s? Also on hand is Wang Hsieh, here playing a bad guy, but would later gain fans worldwide as that loving bringer of human warmth, Professor Chang, in **INFRAMAN** (Shaw Bros.; 1976). A background henchman in the gambling scene is played by Hao Li, who'd later give Bob Wall a facial scar in **ENTER THE DRAGON**. Most of the other stars in **SUMMONS** are delectable females like Tina Chin Fei and Fanny Fan. HK sure had some beautiful actresses back then! I mean, they still do, I'm not criticizing current 1990s starlets like Veronica Yip, Maggie Cheung, Irene Wen, or Carina Lau. But just as the 1960s offer a lot of great, forgotten movies, the 1960s also offers a lot of great-looking, forgotten actresses. So here I am taking time out of what was meant to

be a review of **SUMMONS TO DEATH**, to talk about 1960s starlets in general. Suffice it to say that in future issues, I hope OC will bring you more nostalgic looks at 1960s starlets like Li Li Hua, Tina Chin Fei and Diana Chang on page 21.

But getting back to **SUMMONS TO DEATH**, this who dunnit caper starts out with the heist of a treasure map, on a garbage. I mean, on trash! Nope, that's not right; it happens on a 'junk' (Chinese boat). The stolen map results in a tacky yet fun

fist fight between sailors and pirates (but don't expect another PROJECT A). Lo Wei leads the pirates, and the whole clash is emphasized by slick, catchy surf music. The map was stolen by Ku Feng (a villainous hero, or heroic villain), and later our main hero, Teng Lei, stumbles upon the quest for the much sought after map. Teng Lei is played by a young Tang Chang (Allen



Chin Han of **THE WARLORD AND THE ACTRESS**.

Tang?), the character is stereotypically cool. His house's interior, his gadgets, his attire, and his whole persona exemplifies chic. A humorous case of mistaken identity gets him in on the plot, and before you know it, our heroic master of gambling & disguises is helping a circus performer (sister of one of the pirates) to find that map! In the process, Teng Lei gets to chase girls, fight men, fight a girl or two, and escape from a few close calls. The map is found in an artificial eye; from a dead body of a hit man called the One Eyed Dragon. The map leads Teng & his new girlfriend to a cave on some island. But just when they're about to dig up the

treasure, a self-destructive villainess (Fanny Fan) blows up the cave. Feng & his partner (Tina Chin Fei) escape with their lives only. ***

紅丹牡丹血 THE WARLORD AND THE ACTRESS

Producer: Run Me Shaw, Dir.: Ho Meng Hua, Written by Wang Foo Ling, Starring: Jong Yeh Feih, Landj Chang, Chin Han, Yueh Hua (cameo), Hao Li (background extra again)

Ever notice I always compare these 1960s oldies with the 1970s chop sockey which evolved out of them? That's because I identify with the kung fu movies, and I'm curious to see their ancestors. So just as **SUMMONS TO DEATH** offered early glimpses of the action which would later fuel the martial arts films, **WARLORD AND THE ACTRESS** offers an early example of the genre's setting, characters, costumes & traditions. **WARLORD & ACTRESS** has no kung fu, but otherwise, much of it looks like the turn-of-the-century auctioneers to come out the following decade. I kept expecting somebody to do a kata, pull out some nunchakus or demonstrate his Shaolin handlock.

WARLORD is an early 1960s soap opera, with romance, endless talking, suspense, ballads, tragedy, comedy and betrayal. Normally, I don't like realistic movies about 'normal' (aka boring) people, but this one's characters are interesting,

and there's the usual 'who's who' for trivia buffs (familiar faces in a semi-familiar setting). Only HK film completists & historians would bother with this one, if only to get an early glimpse of what would later look like **BRUCE AND SHAOLIN KUNG FU**, minus Bruce & Shaolin Kung Fu, of course. There are corrupt soldiers, Japanese oppressors, righteous Chinese rebels, and the obligatory ending where the villains gun down our hero (way ahead of **CHINESE CONNECTION!**), whom they outnumbered significantly.

This love story deals with a beautiful stage performer called Red Peony (Chin Han), and her fiancé, student Ke Chiang. Unfortunately, some ugly old army general has the hots for her too, and forces her to marry him, and more-or-less sends her lover into exile. Turns out Ke Chiang is part of a revolutionary group, who's gang of dancers & singers infiltrate the evil

soldier's mansion during his 50th birthday party. Their plan is to steal important documents from the villain's

safe. However, 'safe' is not the word here; as their mission results in a shoot out & car chase. This is just

about the only action in the film. The bad news is that both our two young lovers are shot into bloody messes.

The good news is that the baddie gets full of lead too, and is cured of his insomnia, permanently. **

由政府出面歡迎到台參加電影年

李麗華這回很有面子！

十年來台灣不歡迎入境，如今竟待如國賓。
WELCOMED TO PARTICIPATE IN THE FILM FESTIVAL BY THE TAIWANESE GOVERNMENT-LI LI HUA IS NOW WELCOME! REFUSED TO ENTER TAIWAN FOR TEN YEARS, NOW SHE IS TREATED LIKE A STATE GUEST

Li Li Hua is indeed a super-star. Although she's been retired from the movie world for over ten years, when comparing her brilliant achievements in the past with those younger generation performers, nobody can top her. The reason that Li Li Hua is welcomed warmly by the people and the Taiwanese government is because one of the activities at this year's Taiwanese Film Festival is to show some good old classical movies, and Li Li Hua is among those veteran stars.

Over ten years ago, Li Li Hua was able to visit Taiwan frequently. But at one time, she went back to Mainland China and that caused some problems between her and the Taiwanese government. However, after ten years, Taiwan is more open than before, and a lot of changes have been made, even movie stars from mainland China can visit Taiwan today, let alone Li, who had just a little misunderstanding with the Taiwanese government.

Li Li Hua coming to Taiwan is a big story, media follows her everywhere, every day. It is because she's a living legend in the movie world. She's been in stardom for over 30 years and even now, when she's so old, she is still welcomed. This is called 'Invincible Li.'

Let us talk about her glorious records. She is the first Chinese movie star to make movies with international directors: In 1944, she starred in China Movie Company's movie, "Sorrows Left at Spring River", directed by famous Japanese director Hiroshi Inagaki, and Chinese director Hu Shin-ling, who is still in Taiwan now. In 1958, she starred in American United Artist's movie **CHINA DOLL**, directed by academy award winner Frank Borzage, and was introduced to the public in a press conference held by Hollywood producer Cecile DeMill. In the same year, Paramount Pictures approached her with a movie script for **THE BUCCANEER**, to co-star with Yul Brynner, but she refused because she disliked the script.

In 1947, she starred in the movie **FAKED PHOENIX**, story by Sang Hu, directed by Huang Zuo-lin, premiered on July 11 in Shanghai. Because of the protest held by the Shanghai barbers, later joined by the barbers in Hankou & Guangzhou, the movie made a sensation throughout the country. It was a big box office hit, and showed over a month. The movie was an outstanding comedy.

Other famous movies starring Li Li Hua include **UNIVERSAL LOVE** from China Movie Co., **BRIGHT DAY** written & directed by Tsao Yu (1947), **FLOWER GIRL** directed by Chu Shih-ling (1951), and **MISSED WEDDING DAY** (1951), all have been awarded in European film festivals. Also, both **CONCUBINE YANG KUEI-FEI** and **EMPERESS WU TSE-TIEN**, directed by Lee Han-hsiang, were screened at Cannes International Film Festival, with **CONCUBINE YANG KUEI-FEI** winning the best indoor cinema photography award. **MISTRESS FENG-HSIAN**, directed by Tu Kuang-chi in 1953 won a praising National Culture Memorial Award. She won two Golden Horse best actress awards because of her performance in movies **BETWEEN TEARS AND SMILES** and **STORM OVER THE YANGZI RIVER**. Yonghua ('Forever China') Movie Co.'s **ROSE, ROSE, I LOVE YOU**, directed by Tu Kuang-chi had been shown in London, and its theme song is still very popular in Europe. Shaw Brothers' **THE GRAND SUBSTITUTION**, directed by Yan Jun, won Best Film Award from

Asia Pacific Film Festival.

When she was making movies on the set, she was always on time. Even when she was not filming, she stayed on the set watching others filming. She was nice to everyone on the set, even temporary actors. Lee Han-hsiang praises highly of her working manner. She's helped new actors. Shaw Bros.' actor Ku Feng recalled when he was making **YANG NA-WU AND LITTLE CABBAGE** with Li Li Hua. Ku Feng was very new at that time. He only starred in a small role, and he was really nervous when filming with Li Li Hua. Li told him: "Little brother, don't treat me like a star. Treat me like an older sister." This helped Ku overcome his mental barrier.

At one time, Li Li Hua saw an electrician fall from a high building on the

set, so she immediately used her car to take him to the hospital. Later that electrician was told it was Li Li Hua that saved his life! Li has helped a lot of people in her life, but she never brags about it. Some people think she spends money too widely, but actually she uses money sparingly, and only when necessary.

Li Li Hua is very loyal to her mother. There were a lot of rich men who pursued Li Li Hua when she was young, but they all failed because her mother said no. One of them was the popular Japanese star Ryo Ikebe (later in **BATTLE IN OUTERSPACE**, Chiba's **EXECUTIONER AND WAR IN SPACE**), who followed her from HK to Tokyo!

In 1980, Li went to Mainland China to visit her 80-year old mother-in-law, who was ill. She returned to the United States in May, her mother-in-law passed away in June, and her husband Yan Jun died in August, so she was very sad.

Although she was born in 1924, Li Li Hua doesn't look all that old. Her boyfriend is 80 years old. Maybe because she is in love, Li is glowing, and looks very happy. Her boyfriend has a textile mill and a real estate company. He was working when we interviewed Li. So we asked about her love life first. As usual, Li answered frankly to every question we asked. She said her love story is not new, because she has known her boyfriend for over 40 years. Her boyfriend is Li Zu-yong from Wuxi, Jiangsu Province. He was one of the stock holders of Yonghua Movie Co. He went to Taipei once with his friends in the textile business. He had stayed in Mainland China after 1949, until when his hair had turned all white.

However, according to him, he thought of Li often when he was in distress during Mao Tse Tung's Cultural Revolution.

Her late husband, Yan Jun, who was a superstar & director, died in the United States in 1980. She was in deep mourning when she met Li Zu-yong again. Later, Li smiled and said: "After that, my old friends persuaded me, and now here we are." Finally, they have a new beginning. When Li was young, she learned Peking opera from Hu Tie Fang and Tao Yu-Zhi. Her father Li Gui-fang, mother Zhang Hsia Kwan, nominal father Du Yue-Sheng, and nominal mothers Yao Yu-Lan and Meng Xiao-dong, all are famous Peking opera performers. She stopped learning Peking opera when she came to the USA. Her boyfriend also knows Peking opera, they can renew their opera now. She likes the environment in Singapore, and will move to Singapore in the near



future. "Welcome you visiting me in Singapore", Li said with a sweet smile.

Damon here. When something is literally & directly translated from Chinese into English, there's bound to be some confusion, and something is definitely lost! I tried patching up the rough edges, like placing Cecile DeMill in what was originally interpreted as "Shee (as in sheep) Shee (also as in sheep) Dee (as in deer) Miere (as in premiere)". So I'm guessing that the old Hollywood director Cecil DeMill is what they're trying to say! Also, I haven't a clue as to why the barbers in Shanghai and Guangzhou protested a movie! Regardless, this article was translated from a piece in CINEMART #279 (April, 1993), HK's movie magazine. And so ends another of HK HEROES' looks at 1960s films.

1970s:

SUPERMEN AGAINST THE ORIENT

(aka LOS SUPERMENS CONTRA ORIENTE, SUPERMEN IN THE ORIENT, and THREE SUPERMEN IN THE ORIENT) Produced by Jacques Dufillo in 1973-74, in Participation with Isabella Biagini, Bitto Albertini, Gino Calpone, Adriana Spadaro, Starring: Robert Malcolm, Antonio Cantafora, Sal Borgese, Lo Lih, Shih Szu, Tung Lin, Alberto Farnese, Liu Mui Ling, Chiang Ling

The sudden chop sockey craze in the 1970s created some bizarre, unlikely movies, such as this wacky Italian/Chinese hybrid. Seems Italian movie makers became cry babies over the success of HK's chop sockey movement, as it took its toll on profits which otherwise would have been had by Italian film moguls. So it's a case of

"if you can't beat 'em, join 'em!" Though mainly an Italian movie, it was filmed on location in HK. I suspect them Shaw Bros. were probably involved, since there are a number of Chinese stars, including Lo Lih, Shih Szu, and other familiar faces. I think this was Lo Lih's first Italian film, the other being **STRANGER AND THE GUNFIGHTER**, with Lee Van Cleef. This comedy is one cute little film, a lot of fun. But it's very uneven, the way the Chinese ideas mix with Italian ones. The many kung fu scenes look like they're right out of **FIVE FINGERS OF DEATH**, but some of the Italian influence is slow moving & dull (i.e. the whole pointless scene of the guys stealing from the American consulate?!). The kung fu duels are great, and dubbed in Italian 'punching' sound FX! They definitely sound more familiar in a spaghetti western or Hercules type film, than in an oriental martial arts film. But **SUPERMEN**



AGAINST THE ORIENT owes as much to **SUPERARGO** (Italy; 1967) and maybe even Mexico's **El Santo** films, as it does to Chinese cinema. But it is an intriguing story; a team of superheroes in China (two Chinese, two Europeans, and an American), all wearing the stereotypical comic book attire (cap, boots, leotards, gloves, belts, etc.) of so many American superheroes.

Needless to say, any superhero film that involves martial arts is okay by me! Kung fu is good, superheroes are good, but kung fu superheroes are excellent! So it's a safe assumption that I recommend this goofy crime drama, despite its occasional bad humor and lame gimmicks. I'm curious as to why this amusing flick never made it big in America (though John Grace swears it got a domestic, theatrical release in the 1970s), it could be a smash hit on the likes of TNT's "Weird Movies" or other all night film fests. Hell, it's an all around fun movie, with no 'mature themes', I'm sure kiddies would love it too.

SUPERMEN AGAINST THE ORIENT is actually the third in a trilogy of films which don't really even seem related to each other. The only connection is that the heroes in all three films wear the exact same superhero attire, and the same people made all three. Since the other two don't deal with Far East locales or actors, I won't go too in-depth on them, but here are a couple mini-capsule reviews:

THREE FANTASTIC SUPERMEN (I FANTASTIC TRE SUPERMEN) Hard to believe this Italian (though I think it was filmed in Germany) heist caper came out way back in 1967! There are gymnastic flips a plenty, performed by the Italian Acrobatic Team! There are approximately four fights in the movie, as our three heroes (Brad Harris, Tony Kendall, & Nick Jordan) take on spies, mad scientists, assassins, FBI agents, counterfeiters and imposters; and these wild battles & chases combine boxing, wrestling and even some advanced martial arts! The movie is way ahead of its time! This is not your average 1960s 'hiyal' karate chop artificiality, these actors are very energetic! Definitely one of my favorite non-Asian movies! An exhilarating, fast-paced adventure comedy which makes **BATMAN & SU-**

PERMAN look like documentaries on crop-rotation. ****1/2

THREE SUPERMEN IN THE JUNGLE-Great fun!!! Them wacky Italians are at it again! Hell, both these movies are better than the third one, since the supermen appear throughout both films; fighting, exploring, and flipping. This adventure has our three heroes up against Russian spies, cannibals, and a tribe of scantily clad amazons. But my favorite scene is a battle near the beginning, as the heroic trio fight their way out of an Arabian village. In this movie, George Martin now plays the thief, and Brad Harris returns to play the FBI agent, but the goofy mute is played by Salvatore Borgese (who was only an acrobatic double in the previous flick) this time, not Nick Jordan. Salvatore Borgese was also the only one of the three to appear in the third film, so there's no one movie which uses all three as actors. ***1/2

The story of this 3rd installment, **SUPERMEN AGAINST THE ORIENT** is all about this American secret agent called Capt. Bob Wallace (Robert Malcolm), sent to the Far East to rescue a team of narcotics agents captured by a HK triad. He's sent to Asia, which interrupted his wedding for what he calls the third time? In **THREE SUPERMEN IN THE JUNGLE**, this happened to a different character, I think. Oh well, them Europeans always did have difficulty in having any continuity between their 'sequels'. During his adventures in HK, Bangkok, Siam and Taiwan, he meets up with two 'old' friends; European thieves Max (Antonio Cantafora) and Jerry (Sal Borgese). Unfortunately, they never all fight in their uniforms until the end of the film, though there are ordinary kung fu fights sprinkled through out. The uniforms are a bullet-proof weapon supplied by the CIA & American Consulate, so our team can battle Chen Lo's (Tung Lin) gang of hoodlums. The powers of the Supermen are entirely kung fu generated, as they can't fly or fire any laser beams. Again, the highlight is when these three Caucasians finally get help from sexy Shih Szu and their kung fu teacher, Master Tang (Lo Lih). But before this long overdue duel pitting the five superheroes against the Chinese triad, there's a bit of silliness, like one hero (Sal Borgese) who never



Antonio Cantafora, Shih Szu and Lo Lih in **SUPERMEN AGAINST THE ORIENT**.



Lo Lieh as
Tong. H.K.'s
Superman.
Clark Kent, eat
your heart out
and choke on
it!

speaks. But he makes noises, and he mugs & hams. He gets irritating after a while. But after all this goofing off,

the heroes and villains eventually clash, pitting fancy superheroes against typical chop sockey villains, right out of

FIVE FINGERS OF DEATH! After Lo Lieh kicks Chen Lo's ass again, they rescue the prisoners. ***1/2

梁家仁 嘆影壇

人情淡薄

LIANG CHIA JEN, A VETERAN OF THE BUSINESS, IS UNHAPPY WITH THE CURRENT CUT-THROAT STATE OF FILMMAKING IN HONG KONG-

Cantonese name:
Leung Kai Jien
Mandarin name:
Liang Chia Jen



He feels everyone has to fail at one time to truly understand Real Success and he doesn't mind Playing Supporting Roles now. He hopes to one day make a Hit Movie which he feels is of Good Quality and High Standards.

Liang has his own production company now (Liang Chia Jen Movie Co.), but last year he only made one movie, **BOGUS COPS** (see back cover), with Veronica Yip and Eric Tsang. He concedes it's difficult for a small company to make films. "It's very hard to hire the top actors even if you're able to gather the budget. Their time is limited. And even if you get one, it doesn't guarantee a hit. The audience has gotten spoiled. So you try to get many top names in the film, yet even that doesn't guarantee a hit." "All the big actors/actresses want at least \$1,000,000 HK., so if you need 6 or 7, the budget for their salary is already so much." "Sometimes I really want to make a good movie, but it's so hard. The money to pay the big names takes so much of the budget. Even if I plan a 'billion' dollar film, more than half goes to the actors, so how can I do it? It's almost impossible these days!" "Now in HK, the film market is unstable. Top names don't guarantee success to companies are looking for other kinds of movies, with lower budgets to test the waters." "I want to make 'real' kung fu movies. So the audience can watch and tell it's real, and not wire FX. They'll walk out at the end knowing it was real."

Liang's company was established just over 1 year ago. He puts all his own money into it. "I don't have any other skill, so this is it. So I hope to one day make a really good movie and the big theater chains will support me. I'm a decent person with a list of industry fiends. Eric Tsang has been a friend for more than ten years." "Eric was not late for shooting even one day!" At this point, the interviewer made an unbelievable facial expression. It's very unusual for him to be on time. Word is he sometimes doesn't show up at all.

A lot of Liang's industry friends volunteer their time for him. "I'm so grateful to old friends because my Company has no base actor/actress to draw on their popularity." Liang has so many friends because he himself is such a trusty friend to others. "I've been working with famous actors but I don't hang around to be seen with them in public. I'd rather hang with my closer, not-so-famous friends, they appreciate my sincerity. I've been friends with Sammo Hung for over ten years. When Sammo was at his peak, he always had 10-20 people just hanging around him. When he went to a restaurant he would always have to pay for an extra table. Now look at how few people hang around him. It's so cruel. When his movies were popular, overseas merchants would buy it sight unseen. But now his movies are like everyone else's. They have to wait to be picked, like the rest." "One year ago Sammo asked me to go to Peking to act in **BLADE OF FURY**, but I was acting in Chow Sing Chi's **FIGHT BACK TO SCHOOL 3**. So I turned him down. Nowadays in the movie business, it's so hard to predict what's going to be hot, or stay hot. Another example is Jet Li's **WONG FEI HONG**.

"Jet told me that he made two modern day movies that flopped. But now people always follow him and treat him like royalty. The industry is so fickle and shallow. I feel only those who know failure really understand and know how to handle success. Like Li who failed before. He's not like those who experience success immediately then get a huge ego; then can't understand why people are turned off."

Liang has been in show business for 20 years and has seen so many careers go up & down. He feels that the most popular actor in Chinese movies ever... was Bruce Lee. "His first movie made more than 3 million HK (over 1 million is considered a super block buster). This now only broke HK records but world

records as well.

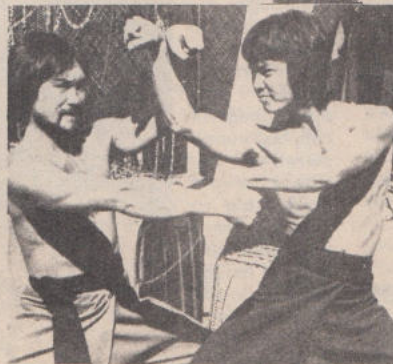
It wasn't topped until the Hui Brothers comedies. "Because of my experience I can apply what I've learned and know pretty much what to expect in various situations. Now I play many different roles, supporting roles, villains, and comedies. In the old days, it was harder to for me to do this. But now I play lots of support roles ('Green Leaves') and let the main actor ('Flower Blossom') shine. Even Stephen Chow can't be funny alone.... he always needs support."

Liang Chia Jen is happy to play supporting roles in his changing career. "I think I'm very lucky. When I changed to comedy, the audience accepted me. When I played villains they also accepted me. So now I want to

build up my own film company and I hope it will be accepted by the bigger companies.

(The preceding article appeared in a back issue of CINE-MART Magazine, translated into English by Kam Lee and Darren Wheeling. Watch for Liang Chia Jen in an almost infinite number of movies,

including **FIVE MASTERS OF DEATH** (1975), **IRON MONKEY** (1977), **THUNDER MANTIS** (1978), **RED SHIELD** (1992), **FIGHT BACK TO SCHOOL 3**, **IRON CANTONEN KUNG FU**, **LEGEND OF ALL MEN ARE BROTHERS**, **RED SHIELD**, and TV shows like **THE STOUT-HEARTED GENERAL** and **TAK MO, ORIGINATOR OF KUNG FU**.)



Young Liang
Chia Jen
takes on
Yuen Biao
in the
1970's!



Veronica Yip, star of Liang Chia Jen's **BOGUS COPS** (see back cover).

1980s:

PATH OF GLORY

Produced by Movie Impact Ltd. in 1989. Released by That's Entertainment Co., Consultant: Paul R. Dalton, Featuring: Aaron Kwok, Norman Chu, Lo Lih, Reviewed by Damon Foster.

I'm afraid this one failed my boredom test. But the good thing about dull flicks like **PATH OF GLORY** is I always get a chance to clean my house while the tape is playing. My main problem is that this 2 hour waste of time is too talky, and with uninteresting characters. It's basically just a slow-paced drama, with minor ingredients thrown in occasionally, like comedy, one training scene, one fist fight and a shoot-out.

It's the tale of cadets at a police academy. So it's similar to **POLICE ACADEMY**, minus the babes and attempts at humor. The main stars are people I didn't recognize, but there are short cameos by Lo Lih and Norman Chu. Anyway, our young cast learns police stuff at some weird academy where men rarely wear shirts, but women do, unfortunately. Between dull classroom scenes, it's padded out with occasional humor, romance, and a subplot about some neurotic, ex-undercover agent. Eventually, the students graduate, but discover their instructor was gunned down by racketeers. Naturally, they reunite for revenge. The climactic shoot out on the dock is fairly good, making this farce wildly uneven. * -DF

1990s:

ALL'S WELL THAT ENDS WELL

1992, Executive Producers: Steven Lo, Raymond Wong, Cinematogra-

phy: Lee Kun Jeung, Art Dir.: Raymond Chan, Original Story: Raymond Wong, Starring Sandra Ng, Chiau Sing Chi, Leslie Cheung, Raymond Wong, Maggie Cheung, Teresa Mu, Reviewed by Damon Foster.

I've recently learned three things, though two of which have nothing to do with this romantic comedy (so just bear with me): 1. Never drive recklessly near a donut shop. 2. When at an adoption agency, never ask for a child that's good in bed. 3. It's amazing how much HK is familiar with and/or influenced by our films & stars, yet the American mainstream isn't aware of their's. **ALLS WELL THAT ENDS WELL** spoofs a number of American films including **MISERY**, **PLAY MISTY FOR ME**, **TEXAS CHAINSAW MASSACRE**, **POLICE SQUAD**, **TERMINATOR 2: JUDGEMENT DAY**, and even **GHOST** and **PRETTY WOMAN**, neither of which, I'm pleased to report, have I had the misfortune to sit through.

But these inventive satires are short and spread well apart, amid typically bad humor, boredom and cutesy, stupid, predictable romance. This is often done when original thought becomes too difficult. I'm no fan of lovey dovie soap operas, so

it's a safe assumption that I found this one to be duller than an over-used, smoothed down bread knife.

Amazingly, it has good points, aside from the fact that it's only a movie, nobody forced me to watch it, and I saw it for free (off TV). The cast is good; Steven Chow is actually funny for the first time since **MAGNIFICENT SCOUNDRELS** and **GOD OF GAMBLERS 3**. Leslie Cheung plays a gay man, and it's suspiciously convincing. Maggie Cheung, always nice to look at, is amusing as a schizophrenic psychopath. Sandra Ng, rarely nice to look at, is amusing as an over-worked housewife and painfully bad karaoke singer.

The story is about this dysfunctional family, and centers around the three brothers (Raymond Wong, Steven Chow, Leslie Cheung), their main squeezes (Maggie Cheung, Sandra Ng, Teresa Mo), and two senile, TV-addicted parents. Raymond Wong's and Sandra Ng's subplot is little more than a predictable tale of a man cheating on his wife. But Steven Chow & Maggie Cheung steal the film in a tale of a DJ (Steve Chow) followed around by a crazy, beautiful listener, Maggie Cheung. But she's also obsessed with American culture (someone has to be), or lack of it; one minute she's dressed like Madonna (minus the ugly mole), and later like Julia Roberts (minus the ugly everything-above-the-neck) in **PRETTY WOMAN**. Once the two of them start fooling around, along comes another parody of **GHOST**, complete with clay and potter's wheel. Meanwhile, Leslie Cheung plays a homo, so I'd hoped for some subplot about him and a gay lover; an excuse for some sicko jokes about bottles & gerbils. But nope, the story for his character is how he falls for a dike, and how they 'overcome' their homosexuality. Yeah right, you show me one queer who asked to be attracted to poop-shoots and I'll show you a liar. Regardless, as the title says, it all ends well. At a Chinese New Year Celebration, Raymond Wong returns to his wife, Leslie Cheung over comes his hormonal imbalance and Steven Chow gets as obsessed with American films as Maggie Cheung. A match made in

Hell. *1/2 - DF

TREASURE HUNT

Produced by Golden Princess in 1994, Starring: Chow Yun Fat, Liu Chia Hui, Kuo Chui.

My god, what a mess. **TREASURE HUNT** isn't necessarily a bad film, but it's as far from coherent as Texas is from Taiwan. Whatever the script writer was smoking, I'd like a hit off it. It's ridiculously uneven; many of the movie posters show Chow Yun Fat once again holding a pistol, but there are only two short shoot-outs, the rest is a wacko love story, with two or three kung fu fights carelessly thrown in at random. Again, not a terrible film, but if you're expecting to see something like Chow classics **THE KILLER**, **FULL CONTACT** or **A BETTER TOMORROW**, you'll be disappointed, if not pissed off.

As near as I can figure out, this escapist-romantic regurgitation has Chow as a secret agent hired to locate some sort of 'treasure' at Shaolin Temple, of all places. The so called treasure turns out to be a gifted girl who possesses ESP, telekinesis, or some such power. Why she's been locked up at Shaolin Temple must have been explained while I was in the bathroom throwing up. Regardless, Liu Chia Hui plays the lead monk, and Kuo Chui doesn't. There are at least a couple kung fu fights, which occur for rather stupid reasons. Anyway, the strange girl gets kidnapped by corrupt Red China agents, so Chow leaves the temple to have a shoot out with the villains and rescue her. But this doesn't reunite him with her, she's sent to some lab to be studied, resulting in an ineffective, overdone tear-jerker. It ends with her being released, and resuming her romance with Chow. Perhaps I've rationalized or over simplified the script. It was necessary, as otherwise, I might spend the rest of my life writing this review. **

Chow Yn Fat in TREASURE HUNT.



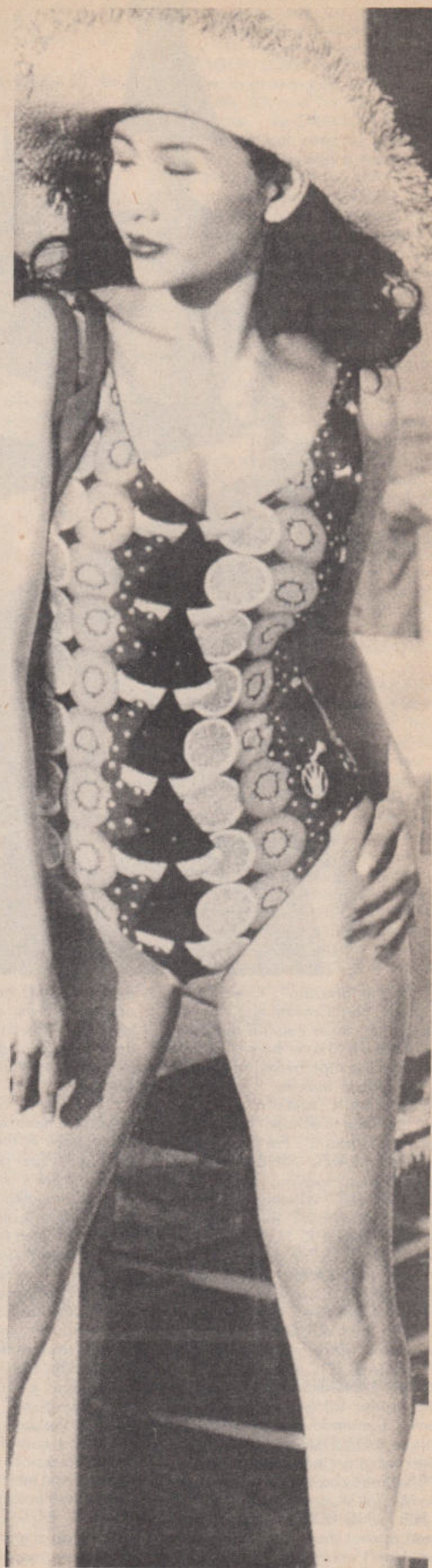
CHINGNY YAU UNFORGETTABLE GREEK VIEW

Chingny Yau was recently modeling swimsuit wear in the scenic landscape of Greece. She stayed in Greece for six days. This was her first time in Greece. She came away from her trip with an indelible impression and unforgettable memories. Chingny Yau told this reporter, "Once I arrived in Athens, I was flown in a small bi-plane to a small island where locations were being scouted for the photo shoot. During the course of the flight, the plane experienced wind turbulence. At first, I thought this rocking, up and down motion was quite fun, like going over hills in a car. After a while, the air started to get thin. I started to feel dizzy and off-balance. The other two Mainland China models I was with began vomiting." It took forty-five minutes for the plane to finally land on the island. It was the longest forty-five minutes of Chingny Yau's life. An experience she will not soon forget.

During the month of March in Greece, the temperature was only 6°C.

She had to wear sexy, revealing bathing suits, walk back and forth on the beach, and strike attractive poses. She was freezing to the point of shivering. But once in front of the camera, she had to smile radiantly as if she was in a warm, sunny place. Greece's landscape is absolutely gorgeous. The hotel she stayed in faced out to the sea, affording her a breath-taking view of clear blue skies and vast ocean blues, as well as rows and rows of little white houses. Unfortunately, being afraid of cold weather, she caught a cold and could only admire these magnificent views from afar, inside her hotel room. She wishes that sometime in the future, she can return to this beautiful small Greek island and frolic.

{The preceding article originally appeared in CINEMART #280 (May, 1993), translated into English by William Chang. For those who don't know, Chingny Yau's Chinese names include Chiu Su Tzen and Yau Suk Ching. This ends another edition of HK HEROES.}





Forget "Shazam", "Great Scott, Batman", and "Cowabunga, dudes", this heroic, super column shall show you what a real superhero is! Quotes for Japanese superherodom, destined to be classic include: "Henshin," "Asukaaaah!!!", and of course, "Using the Beta Capsule, Hayata becomes Ultraman!" For years, OC's continuing KAIZO NINGEN REPORT has informed readers of superheroes, new and old! Whether you're into classic old-timers like JOHNNY SOKKO AND HIS FLYING ROBOT (see OC#9), ULTRAMAN (OC#4, & OC#9), and KAMEN RIDER (OC#9 and OC#14), or one-dimensional fun like MAZINGA, GATCHAMAN (OC#3), and YUUSHA RAIDEEN, or even the more recent stuff like DYNAMAN (OC#9 & #14) and POWER RANGERS (OC#'s 14, 15 & 16), you've all (yes, both of you!) shown tremendous support for this unique column, so it's a gonna' stay. Like I just said, I think older, long gone OC's already covered ancient heroes like MAZINGA, and JOHNNY SOKKO & HIS FLING ROBOT (both are pictured above), but that doesn't mean they won't eventually return to OC. Right now, I'm trying to recap a lot of

the newer stuff, and expose the more obscure shows, so all my begging fans who want coverage of their old-time favorites, please be patient! Hopefully these mere photos will do for now.

On March 6, 1994, I saw the inevitable news report, one I anticipated back in OC#16 (see POWER RANGERS, first paragraph). As predicted, there's already at least one study of the violence in POWER RANGERS. This particular study was apparently conducted by Under Graduates at Cal-State Fullerton. They counted 140 acts of violence per episode. You get the idea these guys have a lot of time on their hands? The TV's American producer was quick to respond that the show makes a "Special effort to promote nonviolence", and how "each show explains how fights are choreographed." Though I personally wish the show would go off the air because I consider it an exploitive, deceitful rip-off of Japan's Sentai genre, I'm in total agreement with Fox Children's Network and Saban Entertainment. For what it's worth, they did a good job at promoting positive role models and nonviolence. The heroic characters are so clean-cut and goody

two-shoes it makes me sick, and yet them shut-ins at Cal-State Fullerton (wherever the hell that is) had to go and whine about the program's action. I don't know about the rest of you, but when I was in college, I was more interested in sex, rock & roll, partying and having a fulfilling social life, not nitpicking kiddie shows like them whiners at Fulla' Ton of Shit, or whatever it's called. No doubt similar surveys will take place once POWERBOY and VRTROOPERS reach American shores this fall. I hear VR TROOPERS is a new retitling for what was originally to be called "Cybertron", as reported last issue. VR TROOPERS is a sacrilegious mish-mash of SPIELVAN and METALDER, both Japanese TV shows (see last issue) are being edited into one show!

While over in Japan, the current superheroes airing are BLUE SWAT and NINJA SENTAI: DAI RANGER. BLUE SWAT, sort of an extension of last issue's 'Rescue Mission genre', is about people who've supposedly died, but actually formed Blue Investigations, and become the Robo Hero-like BLUE SWAT. The villains are called Alien. KAKU RANGER, as always, is the latest superhero team clone, the

only interesting note is that the son of Sho Kosugi, Kane Kosugi plays one of the heroes! First he kicks ass as a little boy (around ten years ago) in those terrible U.S. ninja films (see OC #16, Ninja Issue), then he gets the distinction to star in ULTRAMAN: THE ULTIMATE HERO, and while that series is still in post production, he's off to Japan to play the Black Ninja! Since he spent so much of his life in America, Kane tends to mutter occasional English sentences in KAKU RANGER.

It's cartoon time, boys & girls of all ages! No OC would be complete without at least one paragraph which makes fools out of the geeks who're so obsessed with 'anime', and 'manga' (but more on manga later). Speaking of Japanese words now used by cartoon dorks who think they speak Japanese, these guys are now calling themselves 'otakus'! Otaku is a derogatory word; meaning geek, nerd, dork, square, and of course, fanboy. Oh well, at least the Japanimation freaks are honest about how lame they are, and blatantly admit it. But back to manga. Having dealt with Japanese superheroes all my life, it's hard not to accidentally get a little exposure to Japanese comics, though I try to avoid

them at all costs. But unfortunately, a recent trade dictated that I buy 'adult' manga for somebody else. How embarrassed I was when at the Japanese bookstore, I had to buy this one-dimensional erotica, with titles like **HOTMILK** and the appropriately titled **BEAT**. As fate would have it, one of these sleazy rags lacked a price tag, so the cashier called all the employees to come and examine this grotesque book, and the embarrassed fool holding up the line of impatient customers, all for this X-rated publication. I kept expecting one of them to say: "Hayaku! Hurry ando findo za puraisu! Americajin otaku want to go mastabeito!" My face turned redder than a sunburned Communist as the lady giggled at me while others looked down at me as another of the drooling otakus who regularly buy these sleazy, explicit comic books. Needless, to say, I hope I never get caught purchasing this filth again. This silly paragraph was brought to you courtesy of DF's sense of humor, and, amazingly, was not meant to offend the cartoon fans. The goal was to amuse those of you who've found yourselves in similar positions.

For this edition of "Kaizo Ningen Update", I'm reviewing not only **CONDORMAN**, **GOLDEN BAT** and **CUTIE HONEY**, but the temporary returns of two classic superhero shows: **KIKAIDA** and **ULTRASEVEN**. Both programs are old, and have been ready for American release for over twenty years! But the idiots who run America's TV stations never had the balls to release them until **POWER RANGERS** became more profitable than protologists in San Francisco. So if nothing else, **POWER RANGERS** was the financial inspiration which brought these two old-timers to American TV.

人造人間キカイダー KIKAIDA

aka **KIKAIDER**, {Full Title: "Jinzo Ningen Kikaido"} Produced by Toei, Broadcast on TV Asahi from 7/8/72 until 5/5/73, Consisting of 43 half-hour, full color episodes, Created by Shotaro Ishimori & Tooru Hiriya, Script: Shukei Nagasaki & Masaru Igami, Directed by Hideyuki Kimura, Music: Chumei Watanabe, Starring Daisuke Ban as Jiro, Mitsuo Ando as Professor Gill, and Jun Mizunoe as Mitsuko Komyoji.

This sure as fuck isn't the first time I've written about **KIKAIDA** in OC, but its recent return to Hawaii has generated new interest. In the mid-1970s, **KIKAIDA** was actually shown in Hawaii (with English subtitles!), and also here in California's bay area, as **KIKAIDER—THE ANDROID OF JUSTICE** (shown locally on San Fransissy's Fuji TV, in 1976). Whether you know it as **KIKAIDA** or **KIKAIDER**, it's definitely a classic among classics, part of Toei's early superhero movement which includes other ground breakers like **KAMEN RIDER** and **NINJAARASHI**.

As a little boy, no series influenced me like **KIKAIDER** (as we called it then) did. When **KIKAIDA** came on, there was this strange feeling shared by other American kiddies at my elementary school in the middle-class suburbs, that we were watching some-

thing forbidden, something underground; and only meant for the bay area's large Japanese population. An action packed, two-fisted tale of colorful creatures doing acrobats and displaying magical powers. Like the characters depicted, the show kicked ass! There was nothing like it (even the comparatively tame **ULTRAMAN** was only a fading, distant memory from the 1960s). I was all teary-eyed whenever I watched Kikaido in action. Of course, back then, we thought we'd never see it again (local Japanese TV never offered repeats). Nobody had heard of VCRs & videotapes, so the possibility of collecting **KIKAIDA** episodes was unheard of.

I was fortunate to have seen **KIKAIDA** as a child, almost as fortunate as Japanese of my generation (reared on **KAMEN RIDER** and others). But as an American, I can't help but feel we've been gyped. We were raised on H.R. PUFF & STUFF, F.A.R. OUT SPACE NUTS and LOST IN SPACE. While we grew up on shit like this, our Japanese counterparts got to see the Ultra Brothers and Kamen Riders go on epic adventures, weekly! The average American superhero fan should look at **KIKAIDA**, **KAMEN RIDER**, & **GORANGERS** as classic, nostalgic pop icons. But so many fans are only now discovering these classic programs. I'd say we were all ripped off; denied the chance to grow up on some truly awesome TV shows. I think it's a shame and a crime that, in our youthful years, we were cut off from the most thrilling children's TV ever produced. Though many of you are 'catching up', the fact that these old shows were ignored for so long pisses me off, like an ant on a toilet seat. We as Americans think we know it all and have seen everything. While Japan is very familiar with Madonna & Michael Jackson, how many Americans have heard of their bands like Shonen Knife, Plastics, Stalin, or Blue Hearts? Likewise with superheroes; the Japanese grew up being very familiar with dreck like Superman and Batman, yet the true classics like **KIKAIDA** are mere cult phenomena here in the U.S. I think this proves just how isolated and insignificant we really are.

After a nearly 20 year wait, seeing subtitled **KIKAIDA** episodes again makes me happier than a drunken redneck watching Rush Limbaugh. No more of these awkward Japanese

prerecords, were they release only certain episodes, sometimes showing them in random order. For the first time since the 1970s, I can view the episodes in chronological order; the way they were originally shown in Japan, the way they're meant to be seen! Though my Japanese language ability is good enough to follow the simple story lines, the English subtitles make it that much easier to understand every scene! Unless you are fluent in Japanese, subtitles are the only way to watch this excellent series! I must confess, I shed a tear or two, watching it again, much of my life flashed before my eyes; the series is exactly as I remembered it! The only major change is that when I was a little kid, my reading skills were bad, until I started watching subtitled programs more often! Since my reading skills developed & improved later, much of **KIKAIDA**'s plots & characters were hard for me to follow then, but now, I can finally read what's going on.

In the early 1970s, **KIKAIDA** stood out as being slightly different from the average **KAMEN RIDER** clone. For its time, **KIKAIDA** had some of the more colorful villains. Kikaido's human form, Jiro, was a confused individual. At times, he was glad he's an android and not human. Other times, he regretted his being so different, and considered himself a freak. The villainous animal/monsters were a little bulkier than the average animal/monster from **KAMEN RIDER** or **KAMEN RIDER V3**, and sometimes took on a bloated look. Kikaido's combative technique consists mostly of karate chops, punches exaggerated judo tosses and plenty of acrobats. Not as much fancy footwork as in **KAMEN RIDER**; where as Kamen Rider does high flying "Rider Kicks", Kikaido's high flying blows were "Double Chop", and the fatal hand chop "The End", which he pronounces badly. But otherwise, **KIKAIDA** was basically similar to the rest, as all offered the same basic ideas.

And now, the part that hurts: Cheapness. Though fun, entertaining, exciting, amusing and thrilling, big budget is one thing **KIKAIDA** is not. The series never had a single

monster or henchman which I'd consider realistic. The sets, though not exactly cardboard, look like sets. The FX include occasional miniatures & explosions, but nowhere near the amount you'd see in later programs like **DYNAMAN**, **POWER RANGERS**, **GAVAN**, **METALDER**, etc., as FX are the main ingredients in the more recent stuff. But you know why I don't mind **KIKAIDA**'s lack of high-tech FX? Because it's a superhero series not a sci-fi series. Believe it or not, there's a difference. While **METALDER** is both a superhero series and an FX/sci-fi series, **KIKAIDA** is pure superhero action. About the only time I mind **KIKAIDA**'s cheap FX is when they do something stupid, like all through episode #17. The monstrous Red Wasp, aside from being a typically stupid design, never seems to have his back zipper zipped up! It's bad enough when a zipper is visible on the costume, but when it's left wide open? Perhaps they wanted to make sure nobody saw the zipper, to they never sewed one on. It's as though they want us to see the open costume, and the back of then stunt man Kenji Ohba's jacket. Other minor complaints are its continuity & editing. These lame edits sometimes happen during the fights; like the fight starts inside a house, and then suddenly, without explanation, they're all out in a field. Worse yet, occasionally, there's stock footage; some of Kikaido's duels with henchmen are used in more than just one episode.

Strangely, I only gave **KIKAIDER** three stars when I reviewed it in OC's #12 & #14. Of course, back then, I was at the mercy of whatever tape releases or laser disks Toei came out with. Again, watching random episodes, and not necessarily the best, may explain why **KIKAIDA** got the unjustifiably low rating. Either that or I was in a bad mood; I'd had an unhappy love affair with a girl who told me her previous lover was a bisexual drug addict from Haiti. But today, my opinion of **KIKAIDA** is much higher, thanks to the subtitles, and the chance to see & understand so much of the series!

Professor Gill is the frightening, vampire-like leader from the Planet Dark. But this series isn't about space travel, as there are no spaceships, or scenes which take place anywhere near outer space. It's assumed that this evil empire of androids is already functioning on Earth, planning to monopolize all of Japan's wealth. Like most alien monsters in these shows, they've got a plan of conquest; only there seems to be an effort to gain control of Japan's economy, by eventually selling their androids & robots to whatever corporation offers the highest bids. But Japanese Earthling Dr. Komyoji, who was hired by the dark to invent robots, has a change of heart. Secretly, our righteous scientist invented the almighty Kikaido, and was in the process of installing a 'conscience circuit', to prevent Kikaido from being an asshole, which the rest of the androids are. But a lab accident causes amnesia in the good doctor, and the dazed & confused Kikaido escapes & befriends Mitsuko & Masaru, Dr. Komyoji's kids. Thanks



KIKAIDA using his death blow, "The End"!

to his partial conscience circuit, Kikaida fights for justice against the Dark's many androids. But his conscience circuit is incomplete, so Dr. Gill exploits this flaw. Gill's magic flute plays an eerie song which can turn Kikaida into a villain, and causes him pain when he resists. Gill plays this flute, agonizing Jiro. But in the nick of time, just when you think Jiro has had enough pain and will crack, some outside noise drowns out the sound in time for Jiro to recover and become Kikaida, who then battles the bad guys! Another supporting character is a goof who calls himself Hanpei, named after a famous ninja folk hero, Hatori Hanpei, whom he claims to be related to. However, everyone else calls him 'Hanpen', much to his dismay. I assume 'Hanpen' is less flattering a name than 'Hanpei.' The guy is semi-funny, he tries his best, but is basically a blundering fool, who's car breaks down in nearly every episode. Regardless, the course of the series has Kikaider protecting Mitsuko & Masaro from the Dark's androids, while the two youngsters' father, Dr. Komyoji, wanders around in search of his past. Episodes usually start with the latest monster committing some sort of crime, and with Mitsuko trying to find her father. At some time, she's usually attacked by a monster, and we hear Jiro's guitar playing (a pretty lame tune, making me wish I had earplugs. Hell, Gill's 'mean flute' offers more catchy music than Jiro's acoustic guitar). They all look up to see where the music is coming from. The song has announced Jiro's presence, so he jumps down and battles the villains. Each episode ends with our hero on his motorcycle, in search of more robotic monsters to waste. *****

コンドルマン

CONDORMAN

[Japanese title: KONDORUMAN, SEIGI NO SHINBORU, which means "Condorman, Symbol of Justice"] Produced by Toei in 1975, for broadcast on TV Asahi, consisting of 24 for episodes, lasting from 3/31/75 to 9/22/75 (Mondays; 7:30-8:00 PM). Created by Kohan Kawachi, Writers: Tsunehisa Ito & Haruya Yamazaki, Directed by Minoru Matsushima, Atsuo Okunaka & Masamitsu Igayama, Special Effects: Hideki Nakamura, Music: Kunihiro Suzuki, Starring: Hitoya Sato (aka Jinya Sato) as Isshin Mitsuya, Jun Tataru as Gentaro, Rika Kayama as Makoto, Shobun Inoue as Taba Rojin, also featuring: Shunsuke Ikeda, Sachi Oshima, Mikiko Hoshi, Mari

Okagi, Shiro Amakusa, Shozo Izuka, Michio Hazama.

Wasn't there also an American movie from Disney, called CONDORMAN? I wouldn't know, as I'm as much a 'Disney fan' as I am a driving-down-the-road-with-some-jerk-tailgating-me-and-there's-no-cop-in-sight-until-I-speed-up-a-little fan.' Anyway, when the Disney CONDORMAN came out, I was annoyed, much like when other fellow Yankees had the audacity to make a movie called STARMAN. If these self-centered assholes would do a little research before they snap up any

and KIKAIDA.

But still, the sleazy bootleggers who sell this stuff under the tables at sci-fi geek cons won't have much interest in CONDORMAN, as they can't make big bucks off it. Overall, it may come off as a low budget series despite some flashy, impressive visuals. But as I see it, the amount of FX, vs. amount of action separates what's a 'superhero series', and what's a 'sci-fi series.' I consider CONDORMAN a superhero series, possibly even a fantasy series, but not necessarily a sci-fi series. It has good action, more so than later efforts like

known as a writer of porn fiction in Japan!). The first two in the series were the programs DIAMOND EYE (coming next issue) and RAINBOWMAN (see the previous issue); both produced by Toho. Being a Toei series, CONDORMAN differs from the first two. In fact, I think the only connection are the villains of all three programs, apparently related in some way. The original story was called "Nihon Hunger Sakusen", about the efforts of greedy monsters to rob Japan of its food, wealth & economy. I gather all three heroes in the programs are independent of each other (never a team up).

Isshin Mitsuya (Jinya/Hitoya Sato) is a member of a peace organization called World Flag. However, evil King Monster is not. So already, we got problems in Tokyo again! King Monster's secret organization is titled, appropriately, Monster! Monster's terrorists killed Isshin as he pursued them in the Nevada desert. But luckily, a magnificent creature, the Dragon Condor, nearly extinct and thought to be a myth arrives to help the late Isshin's friend, a master of mysticism called Taba Rojin (Shobun Inoue). Old wizard Taba (also a member of World Flag) combined his magic with that of a newly hatched Dragon Condor (called the 'Golden Condor'). Somehow, this not only brought Isshin back to life, but he can become another superhero of justice, Condorman! He flies and has eyesight like a wild bird, allowing for bird's eye views of Monster's merciless attacks on the people of Japan (though strangely, King Mon-

ster and his silly menagerie spend most of their time in a New York office, in the Empire State Building! Go figure.). The monsters are intent on creating famine in Japan, by monopolizing the food industries & stores. But getting back to the vital statistics of these creatures, they appear to be demons. King Monster himself was born in Hell, which I hear is worse than Detroit. The other monsters look artificial & downright stupid. They each seem to represent a different 'sin.' One has a huge coin sticking out of his head, he's greed. Another looks like he's made of garbage, he's pollution. But don't worry about these deadly beasts! Condorman keeps kicking their asses, flying at mach 3 and using his own fighting techniques like: Shock Punch, Condor Hurri-



Kikaida!

Above: Evil Android Red Condor gets a kick out of Kikaida.

Left: Kikaida defeats another evil monster!

catchy title, this type of confusion could be avoided.

CONDORMAN came out in the late 1970s, and its clean edges & overall slickness makes it look like a prelude to Toei's FX-filled sci-fi programs of the 1980s. But fortunately, unlike SPIELVAN, 1980s Sentais, etc., CONDORMAN never wasted its whole budget exclusively on flashy FX. Being a 1970s series, the fights were considered equally important! Condorman is not only skillful at martial arts, but fast! The high speed battles, pitting Condorman against henchmen and wacky monsters are definitely overflowing with excitement. The karate stunt men of JAC (if you still don't know what JAC is, buy OC#14 off me for \$6.00) have come a long way since the early days of KAMEN RIDER

BYCLOSSAR or TURBO RANGER. The latter involves more spaceships & robots. So I consider them more sci-fi shows than superhero shows.

Anyway, hopefully I've made my point that I like CONDORMAN a lot. Some of the supporting characters (mostly added for dramatic subplots and comic relief) are dull filler, but when Condorman battles the villains, it's the usual Toei 1970s excellence. The characters are a lot quicker as they battle it out; more so than in KIKAIDA or GORANGERS. So in the final analysis, it's a great show, despite excessive human characters, who's scenes drag on too long sometimes.

This story is apparently the 3rd entry of a series, based on an original story by Kohan Kawaguchi (he's best

cane, and the illogically named 'Three Cushion Kick?' ****

CUTEY HONEY

Artwork & Creator: Go Nagai, Produced by Toei Doga for broadcast on TV Asahi, lasting from October 1973 to March 1974, consisting of 25 episodes, based on Go Nagai's original comicbook from Shonen Champion Comics.

If already you've noticed that I, Damon Foster, longtime hater of 'sexy' Japanese, am giving three whole stars to a mere cartoon (when many live action shows & movies have gotten less), you're probably thinking, "Damon, you hypocritical poser! You're a two-faced sell out." But rest assured, this is not the case, I've no desire to cater to the profitable cartoon fandom, or its trendy fans. Not until I'm independently wealthy or own a big house (or any house) will I be a complete sell out (my ever poor financial situation proves I'll never be a sell out). And rest assured, despite the positive statements for CUTEY HONEY, this is the same old Damon Foster who trashed AKIRA and UROTSUKIDOJI, so hear me out before you condemn me for liking this Japanese cartoon.

First of all, any fan of MAZINGA or DEVILMAN can tell you Go Nagai's artwork & cartoons are quite fantabulous. Though all Japanimation looks the same, his colorful art stands out from that of Osamu Tezuka, Tatsunoko's stuff, and that master of boredom, Leiji Matsumoto. So like MAZINGA, etc., CUTEY HONEY has beautiful artwork, full of vivid, flashy colors. The quality of animation isn't bad either. I guess it's about average for Japanese cartoons in general. The only technical glitch is occasional problems with the lip syncing. More than once I've noticed mouths moving, and nobody bothered to add a voice. This is especially bad when Cutey Honey herself sings, it's anything but convincing.

CUTEY HONEY is pretty racy, especially for 1973! Hot damn, a series like this could never be broadcast in America, even today! Our sexy heroine's already revealing clothes are frequently torn off, and there are villainous lesbians added for comic relief. This series, like life & entertainment in general, is not for those who consider themselves 'politically correct', or those who use words like 'misogynist'. Every episode features nudity, and other adult situations (it's not unusual for breasts to be groped by men & women alike).

But it's not the sexy aspects of CUTEY HONEY which make it so much fun (though it certainly doesn't hurt it). Though the ever present T&A is a welcome sight, let's not forget that, cartoon or not, this is a superhero series! Lots of action; fights, explosions, chases and slashings! While I scoff at other cartoons, what we got here is one of the most action packed programs around, animated or otherwise. Like its sleazy aspects, the violence & bloodshed are still way too much for American TV! But then, that which is watchable is too much for American TV.

Originally, somebody (I don't recall who) told me CUTEY HONEY is a superhero series for & about girls. After all, the main characters (good & bad) are females, Cutey Honey's main opponent is always a strong willed, powerful, commanding woman (though monstrous & vicious). Men only serve as secondary, supporting characters, and generic henchmen who get routinely slaughtered. But I still say CUTEY HONEY is a guy's show! You think heterosexual females gawk at her awesome bodd and huge hooters? Cutey Honey is no role model for Japan's young ladies! There's not a Japanese woman alive

nerds would make as much sense as the white supremacists in Africa.

Cutey Honey's father was killed by an evil empire of she-demons called Panther Claw. What a relief that Cutey Honey just happens to be an android with super powers! Her 'Honey Boomerang' (which she pronounces wrong) is razor sharp, much to the regret of her many slaughtered opponents from Panther Claw! The main, strongest evil warriors are female monsters, also having the trademark nice knockers. But there are male henchmen who wear Batman-cowls under their businessmen hats! Cutey can transform into numerous



CONDORMAN

who looks anything like that. Not only are the tits too big, but, as in all Japanese, so are the eyes. I'm not sure where this takes place, but it sure as hell isn't Japan (not with all them blondes & redheads). But whether it's for males or females, there seems to be something in it for everybody.

One reason I consider CUTEY HONEY a 'guilty' pleasure is because of most of the others who like it. I imagine this show is a big hit for the overweight male couch potato geeks who pull their puds at the 'Japanimation video rooms' at sci-fi cons across the country. You know, like when they show the 'all shower scenes' highlights, etc. I could never watch this series among the fat, greasy haired, unshaven four-eyed geeks who maintain a steady diet of this stuff. Nor would I whack off to a cartoon, and hanging around with the anime

characters, including a pop singer, stewardess, and investigative reporter. This change happens instantly, allowing us to see her naked body (briefly), as one costume tears to shreds (by itself) and another materializes. She has no nipples or pubic hair, which I thought was intentional, maybe her father/inventor created her that way. But I guess it was censorship that did it, since some recent remakes, the new Original Animation Videos (two laser disks at least) have her with nipples. Another of her weapons is a sword which shoots out fire. But when this voluptuous robot isn't engaging in karate duels with the villains, she lives and prays at some Catholic School full of hideous dikes who've got the hots for her! These scenes are pretty funny, even in Japanese. ***

ウルトラセブン ULTRASEVEN

Created by the Tsuburaya Company in 1967, broadcast on the Tokyo Broadcast Service (TBS) from 10/1/67 to 9/8/68, Consisting of 49 episodes, Main Writer: Shinichi Ishikawa, Dir.: Kazuho Mitsuta, Music: Toru Fuyuki, Starring: Koji Moritsugu, Mitao Dokumimashi, English Versions Credits: Presented by Turner Program Services, Written by Tim Reid, Bernard Reid; Directors: Kathleen Fee, Howard Ryshan, Tim Reid, Exec. Producers: Eiji Tsuburaya, Jacques Pettigrew, Music: Alain Clavier, Edited by Andre' Long, Sound: Andre Clavier, Title Animation: Jean Sarault, Prod. Services: Cine-Groupe (Montreal), Prod. Coordinator: Marielle Gaudreault, The Original Version by Tsuburaya, A Cinar Films Inc. Production, For Turner Programs Services, Inc.

There seems to be a common misconception that only little kids enjoy the pleasures of watching two giants beating the living fuck out of each other. Case in point; English dubbed episodes of the classic SF series ULTRASEVEN, broadcast on the TNT network, at the outrageous time slot of 6:00 am! Adults are waking up to go to corporate slavery (aka work), and kids are readying themselves for a day of bullying & peer pressure (aka school). The only people able to really watch TV regularly at six are preschoolers! Do them numskulls at TNT really think that BARNY and ULTRASEVEN share the same target audience? I've heard of stupidity, but this takes the cake. Naturally, ULTRASEVEN is bombing in the ratings, there was nobody awake to watch it! Hell, living on the other side of the country, I couldn't even get TNT without cable, and even then, ULTRASEVEN came on at 3 a.m. California time! Were it not for VCR timers, none of us on the West Coast, excluding nocturnal insomniacs could have seen this important program in English.

It's no secret that the success of POWER RANGERS was the driving force behind ULTRASEVEN's long overdue arrival in the U.S. But at least the Fox Network was smart enough to show RANGERS at a watchable time slot. Perhaps TNT still doesn't know that to get ratings, you need an audience, FIRST!! Not vice versa.

ULTRASEVEN first came to America in the early 1970s, broadcast (dubbed in English) on KHON, channel 2 in Hawaii. It was part of a package deal with ULTRAMAN (1966), both were dubbed & released simultaneously; same releasers, voice dubbers, etc. Strangely, ULTRASEVEN never attained the national status & repeats as ULTRAMAN. People of my generation grew up on ULTRAMAN, it was the most anticipated & watched series of my kindergarten class. Back then, ULTRAMAN was shown in the late afternoon, allowing my parents & baby-sitter to enjoy it with me. Hell, even my uncle made it a point to watch it daily! The point is, an important icon of Japan's pop culture was as big a part of our daily lives as H₂O, Ultraman was a cultural ambassador



of Japanese TV; by the age of six, I could pronounce Japanese names (Hayata, Hoshino, Fuji, Ito, Tokyo, Gamakujira, etc.) flawlessly. Over 20 years later, I'd hoped it would all happen again, **ULTRASEVEN** would familiarize the younger generations with Japanese TV heroes. Could it make the USA's kids realize there's more to life than Baseball, apple pie, guns on every corner, hot dogs, MTV and Chevrolet? Wouldn't it be something if kids today were gossiping about Dan Moroboshi, Amagi, and Kiriyama, the way we used to gossip about Hayata and Captain Mura?

But **ULTRASEVEN**'s failure in TNT's ratings proves the series failed to rescue our culturally retarded youngsters from rip-offs like *Ninja Turtles*, and bastardized, deceitful hybrids like *Power Rangers*. To add insult to injury, **ULTRASEVEN** was replaced by **HUCKLEBERRY HOUND**. You can imagine my disappointment when I got up and played back my tape of what I thought was **ULTRASEVEN**, only to hear: "Oh my darlin', oh my darlin', oh my darlin' Clemintine." Now I hear it's on the air again, but only on Saturday morning, and there might be an **ULTRASEVEN** marathon on TNT. Who knows?

But even when TNT did show **ULTRASEVEN** weekdays, all was not perfect. Each episode was censored and chopped to pieces, to make way for the latest commercial for the current Credence Clearwater Revival compilation album that week (since you know damn well all preschoolers are dying to get all their favorite CCR hits). Much of the editing was skillfully done & undetectable (unless you've memorized the Japanese language episodes), but what made it obvious was the severe screw-ups in story & continuity. What's left were nonsensical stories which made as much sense as the time my girlfriend (now an ex-girlfriend) wore her skimpiest, tightest miniskirt to go hang out with 'just

friends.' Some episodes were so drastically altered, I almost wish it would disappear (like the mercy killing of a dying animal who's internal organs had been ripped out). The English dubbing isn't that of the 1960s dubbers who originally dubbed **ULTRAMAN** and **ULTRASEVEN**. Seems Ted Turner hired some company in Canada to 're'-dub what was already available in English! This new dubbing (done around 1986) generally keeps the show faithful, realistic and logical, but the dubbers injected extra humor into each episode. But don't worry, it wasn't a joke like the English **DYNAMAN** dubbings on *Night Flight*. The original Japanese music & sound effects remain intact, and the stories are unchanged. I actually like **ULTRASEVEN**'s Canadian dubbing, the humor helps spice up a story which was too serious for its own good.

As a Japanese hero series, **ULTRASEVEN** has gone down in history as a classic, though not one of my personal favorites. The FX are more polished & believable than those in its predecessor, **ULTRAMAN**. The series lacks most of the humor & camp of the other Ultra programs. There's also more talking, less action. So unless your Japanese is fluent, there was no hurry to watch **ULTRASEVEN**, not so long as **IRON KING** (Ultrasen's illegitimate twin) existed. In Japanese, I give **ULTRASEVEN** a mere two stars (**). But its stories are fun & intriguing in English, so it's English dubbed episodes amount to at least four stars (****) worth of fun! But after what TNT did (cutting it up, adding a stupid synth song to the opening & ending credits) to it, I'll eliminate a star, and give it a three (***).

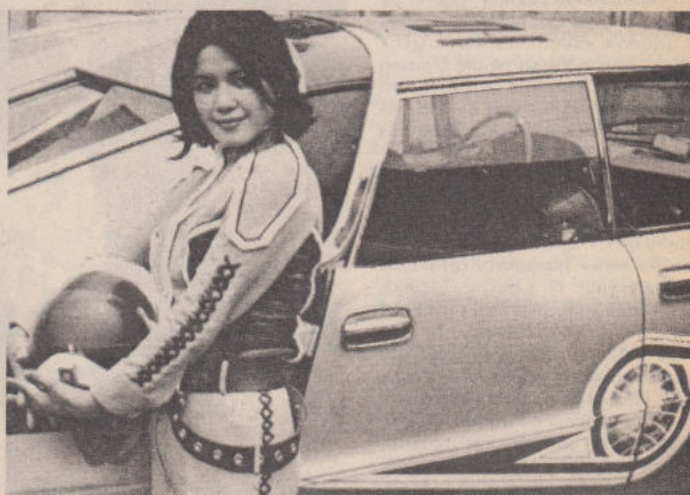
Storywise, change **ULTRAMAN**'s Science Patrol to Ultra Squad (aka Ultra Garrison), and Ultraman into Ultrasen, and basically, you've got **ULTRASEVEN**'s plot. It's more than similar to its prequel. The only major

Left: **CUTIE HONEY**

Below 1: **ULTRASEVEN** helps the Ultra Squad rid themselves of another alien pest!

2: Donna (Anne Yuri) of the Ultra Squad.

3: **ULTRASEVEN** chops his way through episode #45.



changes (aside from more seriousness) are: Numero uno. All of the villainous monsters are from outer space (Ultraman battled his share of aliens, but took on Earth monsters too). Numero two-o. Ultrasen had 'monster capsules' which could become heroic monsters like Windam, Mikuras and Agira, creatures from his own galaxy. Anyway, the course of the show has Ultrasen as Dan Moroboshi, his Earthling identity. Along with Captain Kiriyama, Amagi,

Donna Mishibani ('Anne Yuri' in the Japanese dub), Furuhashi & Soga, these futuristic soldiers (Ultra Squad) are protecting Japan from aliens from numerous planets. But despite ray guns, jet planes, high-tech cars, space-ships and crash helmets, they're rarely able to protect the human race. That's why Dan uses his Ultra Eye ('Task Mask' in the English version), strange sunglasses which turn him into Ultrasen. Ultrasen is giant (40 meters high, weight: 5 tons) most of

the time, but can also fight when he's in his human size (Ultraman only shrunk to human size in one episode of his series, and it lasted mere seconds). Fortunately, Ultraseven lacks one of those annoying lights (the other Ultra Brothers all have them) on his chest, which start blinking when the fight is getting good. Therefore, the fights tend to be a little longer, but not when they're edited like this! ***

黄金バット 黄金バット

THE GOLDEN BAT

[Japanese title: OGON BATTO] Produced by Toei in 1966. Screenplay: Susumu Takahisa, Directed by Hajime Sato, Original Creator: Takeo Nagamatsu, Cinematographer: Giichi Yamazawa, Film Editing: Fumio Soda, Music by Shunsuke Kikuchi, Art Dir.: Shinichi Eno, Special Photographic Effects: Sadao Uemura, Production Supervisor: Kaji Kuwata, Exec. Prod.: Yo Aozawa, Running Time: 73 minutes, Starring: Sonny Chiba as Commander Yamatone, Hirohisa Nakata as both Suzuki and Golden Bat, Emily Koken as Emily, Wataru Yamakawa as Kazahaya, and also featuring Andrew Hughes, Hisako Tsukuba, Koji Sekiyama, Yocihi Numata, Keiko Kuni, Keiichi Kitagawa, Kosaku Okano, Yukio Aoshima.

Last issue I told you all about the 2nd live action Golden Bat movie (1992's YOUNG GU & THE GOLDEN BAT), so I figure, what the hell, let's check out the long forgotten original. But Golden Bat himself is even older than that, he's a great grandfather of Japanese superheroes, having appeared for the first time in Takeo Nagamatsu's 1930 comicbook (hell, doesn't that put him ahead of Superman and Batman?!). As mentioned last issue, there was also a Golden Bat cartoon in the late 1960s or early 1970s. Unfortunately, there are only two live action movies; this one and the Korean adaptation reviewed last issue.

One thing's for sure, this B&W superhero classic sure as hell did not disappoint me! It's being all in Japanese (except for Chiba's rocket countdowns) didn't require my scan button even once! This can't be said about the English dubbed INVASION OF THE NEPTUNE MEN (another early Chiba hero flick)! GOLDEN BAT is fast-paced and exciting in any language! The script is simple & basic; traditional superhero fare. I really can't think of a single complaint against it, except that Shinichi Chiba does no fighting.

GOLDEN BAT is a must see for all

fans of Japanese superheroes. It's an in-between movie; the borderline between the old drabness of Space Chief & Prince of Space, and the up & coming excellence of Kamen Rider! Fans of Shinto's revolutionary Starman movies will definitely get a kick out of GOLDEN BAT. It's a wonder that Golden Bat (unlike the films of Space Chief, Starman & Prince of Space) never got released in

Also to be commended is director Hajime Sato, who directed TERROR BENEATH THE SEA and GOKE, BODYSNATCHER FROM HELL (two more magnificent films). This film alone is making Sato one of my favorite directors. Despite its limited budget, Hajime Sato has come up with a well made, entertaining caper (the only time it reeks of cheapness is the cloth costume for the monster Nazo).

favorite flicks. So I guess it is probably one of my favorites, though there are other favorites I prefer over this one. The generous rating is the result of several points: 1. It's action oriented, not a lot of boredom. The hero is so cool, his helper is a bat! 3. Though he never throws a punch, a young Sonny (Shinichi) Chiba stars. Enough said. 4. Any film which has music by Shunsuke Kikuchi is better than those

which don't. 5. Without this early effort, masterpieces like KAMEN RIDER wouldn't have appeared. 6. I recently sucked toad juice, which made me happy and at peace with the world.

Synopsis: It's the familiar tale of low budget aliens, this time from Planet Icarus, up against us often downtrodden Earthlings. Not even the Space Science Center (not at all unlike ULTRAMAN's Science Patrol), with their spaceships, ray guns, futuristic cars & jets, are as ruff 'n tuff as evil space monster Nazo, and his eerie followers. But don't worry! We must not forget that this is a superhero movie (though a sometimes violent one! Twice a little girl is nearly choked to death). So on an abandoned island of ancient ruins (believed to be left overs from Atlantis, Mu, Lamoria or one of those places), SSI agents (Sonny Chiba, Wataru Yamakawa & Hirohisa Nakata in an unclothed role) discover the equally ancient tomb of the legendary savior, Golden Bat! This flying mummy is soon revived, and fulfills the old prophecy (written in hieroglyphics) that he'll arise to protect the Earth from evil! Speaking of evil, Nazo has his henchmen steal a lens from SSI; a lens for SSI's powerful new ray gun. Not only that, but they've kidnapped Dr. Paal (sci-fi veteran Andrew Hughes, of TERROR BENEATH THE SEA and later DESTROY ALL MON-

STERS, but dubbed here in a ridiculously inappropriate voice!) and of course, his daughter! You'd think by now all scientists would quit having daughters! All they ever do is get kidnapped by villains! SSI leader Commander Yamatone (Shinichi/Sonny Chiba), and a few helpers use their ray guns to fight their way into Nazo's squid-shaped base, for a rescue mission. The two hostages are rescued, first by Chiba, then again by Golden Bat. The laughing skeleton uses his baton to single-handedly waste all the alien minions, in classic samurai tradition. Then Dr. Paal's ray gun (now with the returned lens intact) destroys the enemy planet, which was on a collision course with Earth. *****



ULTRASEVEN in episode #27, tackling Cyborg Sakusen!

America! Our loss, nobody's gain. That is, nobody but lame Superman fans who have no taste for real superheroes!

Another great thing about this story is its daring to be different! For once, zombies, bats & skeletons aren't treated as villains! He's such a sinister looking & sounding hero. With his evil laugh & scary persona, he's the ultimate statement against prejudice. There's really no other character like him, and creator Takeo Nagamatsu is to be commended. Interesting to note that the man in Golden Bat's costume is Hirohisa Nakata, who'd later star as CAPTAIN ULTRA (TBS; 1967), and would play the villainous Meisun in BIOMAN (Toei; 1984).

Being such an old movie, naturally the battles aren't as spectacular as those in the Korean follow-up (which came out 25 years later). But the lack of martial arts doesn't reduce the impact of Golden Bat using his staff to conk dozens of generic henchmen (who're definite preludes to those in Kamen Rider programs). He also performs a couple basic, simple kicks (naturally, no spinning-back kicks, or Kamen Rider-like "Rider Kicks") too. There really aren't that many fights, but other action scenes include chases and plenty of ray gun shootouts.

Despite its many good qualities, I still had to think twice before giving it my rare, gracious rating of five whole stars. Five stars means it's one of my

Dear Mr. Foster,

I first saw your work back in ZETRAMAN #1, and when my friend Steve Ross loaned me the robot & superhero issues of OC (OCs #9 & #12). I was interested enough to order OC#16 when I saw it listed. It's much easier to read now that it isn't done on a photocopier.

I find your writing style to be vulgar and occasionally highly offensive, but also amusing, and above all, very informative. While I may not like everything you say in your magazine, it is YOUR magazine, and people who don't like it should go start their own magazine.

Who is the guy with the red and gold square helmet in three pictures on the cover of OC#16? I saw him with Kamen Rider RX and Liveman in a commercial for an amusement park stunt show, but have no idea who he is. Please, enlighten me with an article about him.

David Crow - Scottsdale, AZ

Dear David - Enlighten you with an article about him? I already have! At least three times! The guy's name is Jiraiya, of the series **WORLD NINJA WAR: JIRAIYA**, reviewed in OCs #16, #14, and #6! As for the carnival stage shows, I wrote all about them in OC#14. Do your mixed reactions to my writing style keep you from reading certain parts of OC? Did you miss when I said not to mix up the addresses of me and Draculina Publishing? This letter of yours, though intended for me, ended up at Hugh Gallagher's place, and almost didn't reach me in time to include it in this letters section. Therefore, you might never have known about Jiraiya, and would forever live in confusion and suspense. Hopefully, most readers realize that California and Chicago aren't exactly next door to each other. -DF

Dear Damon,

It was incredible! By pure chance, I was in a Barnes & Noble bookstore browsing through the magazine section when I spotted an intense photo of Cingny Yau in a leather mini, holding a crossbow! I thought, "Who in the hell is hip enough to know about HK starlets?" Then I looked up and saw the name of the magazine. **CONGRATULATIONS!!!!** Man, I grabbed OC#16 so quick that in the wake of my lightning fast hand movement every magazine on the rack fell to the floor and spelled out your name, and then I knew it was fated I would use the No Shadow Kick to break out of the evil store and read the sacred volume; that which is OC! I'm now writing to you from the local sanitarium and...

Just joshin'. Good to see

that OC is still among the land of the living. #16 was excellent. The only thing wrong was the omission of **CHINESE CHILLERS** and **SWORD & TAOISM**. The ninja film list was very nice. I recently saw **NINJA IN THE DRAGON'S DEN**. I see why you speak so highly of Hiroyuki Sanada. I agree with you 100% as far as the **MIGHTY MORPHIN POWER RANGERS** go. I like the martial arts battles and amusing SFX, but the horrendous addition of the stereotypical, honeydipped, Dudley DoRight, make-the-token-black-of-the-group-act-like-a-dancin' Amos & Andy, ho type, color of the costumes relate to either gender or nationality, American footage travesty. I get my kicks watching it to find blurbs of the original Nipponese footage, such as when the white Volkswagon is used. Only far shots are used so that the original Japanese cast can't be seen. Wardell Sims Jr. Warrensville Heights, OH

Dear Wardell - It never ceases to annoy me how much press the **POWER RANGERS** get, and so far, never have I seen any truthful article (outside of OC) with the guts to tell the truth! **POWER RANGERS** is a mutant rip-off of Japan's **JYURANGERS** (Toei; 1992)! By now you've all read my expose in OC#16 (pages 21 & 22), and even an early glimpse of the Japanese version on OC#14, written well before Saban & the Fox Children's Network had brought it to America. However, if you can find it, get **CRACKED** #290 (July, 1994). This amusing comic did a funny, hard hitting spoof, calling them **MIGHTY MORON**

POWER RANGERS, also **THE MIGHTY MORONIC CHOWDER RANGERS**! Targets included: Why Rita (Machiko Soga) is the only one that had to be dubbed, and the obvious transitions from American to Japanese footage! The running gag seems to be 'what if the releasers kept accidentally splicing in the wrong Japanese footage?!' Mistaken clips, added at random, include shots of a Sumo Wrestler, Godzilla, and a cereal commercial! The climax has our heroes relaxing after battling that episode's monster. It says they're doing what teenagers do best, and shows the Rangers smoking, drinking, car-jacking, blasting music from a ghetto blaster, and robbing a man at knife-point!! -DF

Damon Foster,

The ninja issue of OC was rad!! I'm half Filipino and Japanese, and your magazine's mixed articles are really entertaining. About the Filipino movies; **DUGU NG PANDAY** ("Blood of the Swordmaker") is a really good movie, I think it's the best special effects the Philippines have ever come up with. **DUGU NG PANDAY** is a sequel to the original called **ANG PANDAY** ("The Swordmaker"), another one is **ANG PANDAY, KALAWANG YUGTO** ("The Swordmaker, 2nd Chapter"). The original starred Fernando Poe Jr., who is now a government official, same as **DUGU NG PANDAY**'s Bong Revilla's dad, who was also the kung of Filipino action movies at one time. The vice president of the Philippines, Joseph Estrada, used to be an action star too. The "Panday" story also

had the first ever cartoon made in the Philippines, which was real cheesy compared to any other cartoon, but it was a worthwhile try. The bad guys in the Panday series were suppose to be Spanish cronies, and it was filmed in the Philippines, we too have vast deserts.

There are a lot of Filipino superheroes, the most common is still Darna. The guy Edu Manzano, who played the bad robot guy in **DUGU NG PANDAY**, is also in a superhero movie called **CAPTAIN BARBELL**. The character has been a comic hero in the Philippines since the 1970s, and the guy who played him, Edu Manzano, was once married to Vilma Santos, who was the original Darna in the 1970s.

Robert Vazquez San Diego, CA

Dear Robert - Thanks for the info! How ironic, Edu Manzano also played a villain in the most recent **DARNA**, the movie reviewed in OC#15! -DF

Damon,

New issue of OC is pretty nifty. It's looking more slick, almost (uh hum) respectable! But luckily, the Amy Yip back cover killed that. Ya' know, she's practically engaged to that rich doctor guy she's been hanging out with. Doubt she'll do anymore movies. Nina Li Chi bought a hotel resort in Mainlan, and she's retired. Veronica wants to be respected, so she says she won't take her top off anymore. Unfortunately, I haven't seen any worthy contenders itchin' to fill their shoes. The Grade 3 industry is kinda' like the kung fu industry was when Bruce Lee died- anyone with tits can make a Grade 3 movie these days.

Did you know in Taiwan there's a 'black market' tape floating around with outtakes of films which show major HK starlets nude & partially nude (i.e.. Bridgette Lin Ching Hsia from **DRAGON INN**, when her towel fell!). I don't mean to seem like a pervert, I just thought your readers might be interested. Unfortunately, I was unable to get a copy of the tape, darn it. Darren Wheeling - Stafford, VA

Dear Damon,

Thanks for your production, **AGE OF DEMONS**! It was a hoot; the movie was an absolute riot, certainly a lot funnier and more great fight scenes than much of the garbage they show in theatres these days (too politically correct, which I dispise!).

Now, onto OC, I was quite relieved to see you haven't toned down the sarcastic wit & humor that I've known for a couple years now. Looking forward to the next issue of OC!

Kevin Lonergan - Merrick, NY

PHOTOS FOR THOUGHT: DID YOU KNOW?

Riki Hoshimoto played not only the title monster in Japan's **MAJIN, MONSTER OF TERROR** (Daiei; 1966), but he also fought Bruce Lee in **CHINESE CONNECTION** (Golden Harvest; 1971)! He was lead villain Mr. Suzuki, and his stunt double was none other than Jackie Chan!



C O R R E C T I O N S F O R L A S T I S S U E :

Try as we might to keep everything correct, there were still minor errors through out the previous OC. Some are mere typos, like **SHARIVAN** being spelled "Sharvian", Helvira was spelled "Helvina", and Young Gu (of Shim Hyung Rei's **YOUNG GU AND THE GOLDEN BAT**) was spelled "Yong Fu" and "Yong Gu". But the most foolish misnaming on my part, which goes back for several issues, is saying that Machiko Soga's name is Machiko Sobal! For years, I thought her last name was Soba, even though that means 'noodle!' So for now on, let it be known that the queen of Japanese villainy is Machiko **SOGA**! On to more corrections: In the 2nd paragraph for the editorial, the final line states, "I don't feel movies should influence us only to spend ours watching TV," etc. "Ours" should have been 'hours!' The English translation for last issue's **SHIN KAMEN RIDER PROROGU** is "New Kamen Rider Prologue." Why I omitted it is a grandiose demonstration of stupidity. On the final page is an ad for OC "#1" (3rd Volume, No. 16), the Ninja Issue. It states 'John Woo' is in the issue. Though Woo may have been merely mentioned, there was no such article. This happened because I was making OC#15 at the same time, it's #15 which has John Woo coverage. Somehow, the wires got crossed. The French title for **GODZILLA VS. MEGALON** is **GODZILLA 1980**, not **GODZILLA 1990**, as reported in last issue's **MEGALON** review.



ORIENTAL CINEMA #4

COMING IN OCTOBER - THE GODZILLA ISSUE! And what a better way to feature this MONSTER than in a MONSTER SIZE ISSUE! ORIENTAL CINEMA #4 will be 16 PAGES BIGGER from issue #4 on! Also featuring Hong Kong Action, Mighty Morphing Rangers, Samurai TV Shows, and those Asian beauties. Full color cover - 52 pages in ALL! Advance order for \$4 (ships in October).

SUBSCRIBE!

Get the next 4 issues of ORIENTAL CINEMA for only \$15! (You save a buck!) Make check or money order payable to:

DRACULINA PUBLISHING - PO BOX 969 - CENTRALIA, IL - 62801

SIGNS OF DESCENDING INTO SEDUCTIVE

This tape contains the first two episodes of this Oriental animation S&M cartoon. This video is the greatest fantasy art ever created by Apollon.

SIGNS OF DESCENDING INTO SEDUCTIVE 2

Featuring episode three and four of this animated S&M cartoon. Apollons latest exploration into the surprising and shockingly sexual world of female domination!

YOU MUST BE 21 TO BUY!

You must submit a signed statement of legal age before movies can be shipped!

Tapes are \$49.95 each - Plus \$3 shipping & handling. Allow 3-4 weeks for delivery. Send to:

MAIN FORCE PICTURES - PO BOX 969 - CENTRALIA, IL - 62801



DRACULINA #19

DRACULINA #19: INTRODUCING A NEW FULL COLOR CENTERFOLD! CONTAINS INTERVIEWS WITH DEBRA LAMB (Stripped to Kill 2), LINNEA QUIGLEY (Chainsaw Hookers), JOEL REED (Bloodsucking Freaks), GIANNETTO DE ROSSI (fx MAN), AND TIM RITTER (Wicked Games). Plus a look at the HOLLY RYDER incident, bizarre toys and lots of photo's and video reviews. \$5.00

Send a stamp for a list of other publications, stills, posters and vidoes. Send to:

DRACULINA PUBLISHING
PO BOX 969 - CENTRALIA, IL - 62801



BOGUS COPS

走佬威龍

領銜主演：葉玉卿 曾志偉 梁家仁

監製·編劇·導演：梁家仁



友情演出：苗僑偉 陸劍明 劉家輝 黃錦榮 小柏林 張國強 成奎安 袁和平 王龍威 何家駒 陳觀泰 雷宇揚 秦沛 黃一山 戴志偉 湯鎮業

出品人：劉淑慧 監製：鍾珍 編劇：陸劍明 葉天行 製片經理：梁榮炎 製片：梁文龍 攝影：宋剛 美術指導：羅志強 燈光：周永光 動作指導：梁家仁 夏占仕 譚禮賢 監製特效：猛龍特技