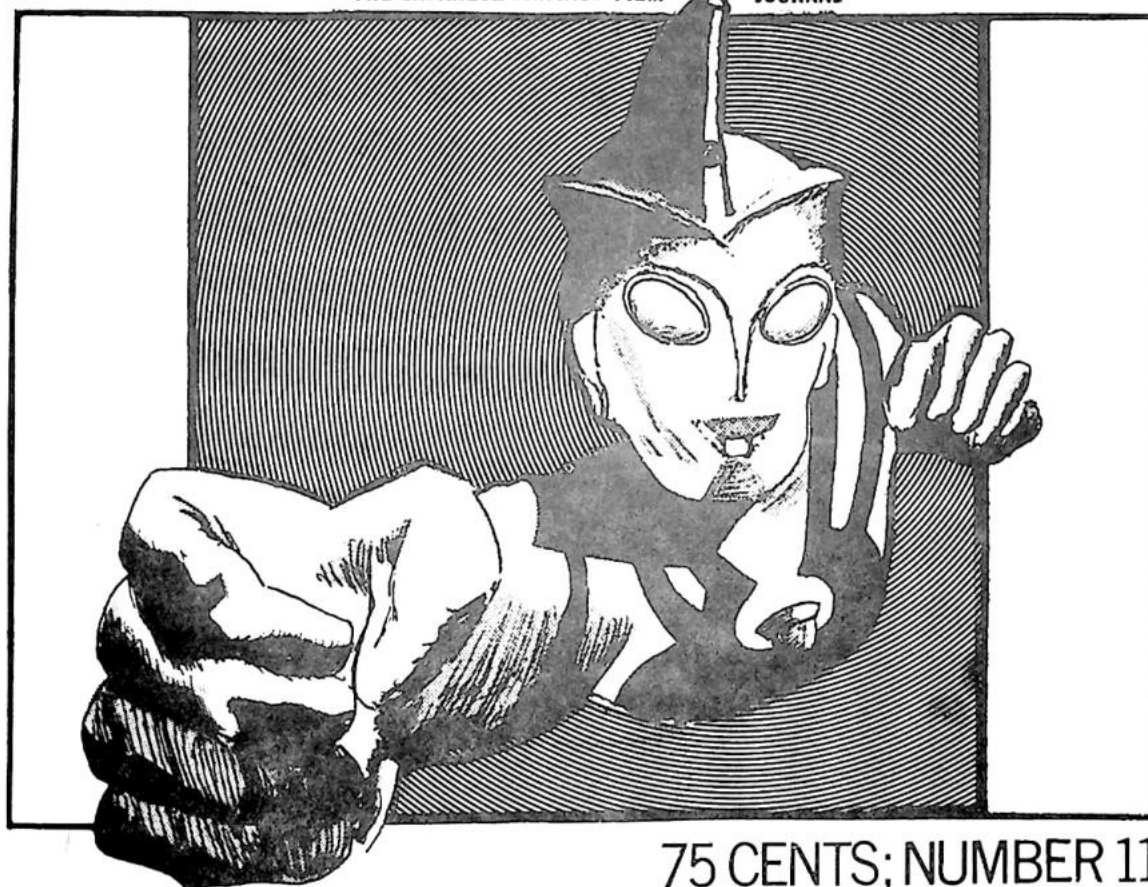


THE JAPANESE FANTASY FILM JOURNAL



75 CENTS; NUMBER 11

THE SUPERHERO --- GHIDRAH



GREG SHOEMAKER : EDITOR

FINANCIAL AID: BOB SCISM

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CONTENTS

In Right Relations	
editorial	2
Feedback	
letters	3
Fanzine Corner	
reviews	7
The Light Fantastic	
film news	8
The Superhero: Japan's Interpretation	
Greg Shoemaker	15
GHIDRAH	
filmbook conclusion	
Tony Malanowski and Duncan	25
Blue Screen Travelling Mattes	
Mike Natale	36
Creature Features	
Stan Timmons	39

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This issue is dedicated to Forrest Ackerman, who has done more for the fantasy/horror/sf film genre than all of us fanatics put together—and who is still continuing in his quest to place our beloved films on an equal plane with all genres of the art form known as filmmaking. Our best to you, Mr. Ackerman.

in right relations

editorial



I bid you welcome!

"This eleventh issue is going to be very fine," I say to myself as I lay the pasteups on the floor before me. A fine issue indeed! It will surprise the reader who is just today getting his feet wet and the reader who has been with JFFJ for quite some time. And rather than me expounding on the contents within, I will forego that pleasure to allow you to take the plunge yourself.

Note: Let me inform you now that the new price of JFFJ, beginning with issue #12, will be \$1 per copy. All the qualified words of defense provided by me will never convince some that this decision is necessary, while others will heartily concur with this move. Rest assured that JFFJ will continue to improve, taking into consideration that interesting and informative reading matter is the prime concern.

Since I am short of words for this editorial and honestly have no prophetic or profound statements to scatter, let me tell of a group of individuals I know who have gathered on occasion to view rented 16mm Japanese fantasy films. In number there were 4 originally, and now there are 5. All met through JFFJ, and the relationship garnered through the conclaves have provided friendships that are heavy indeed. And so far three cities have been the home base for the gatherings: Chicago (thrice), Lafayette (twice), and Toledo (once).

At each get-together an individual takes it on himself to provide housing for the guests, food, films, etc. This practice started with the first meeting and has continued as the rule to this day, but I would recommend a sharing of expenses, yet taking into consideration the money spent by individuals who travel long distances to attend as well as an individual's income.

Stills, posters, pressbooks, films (amateur and pro), or whatever else one can bring will be appropriate. It doesn't all have to be Japanese fanta-film oriented for invariably the attendees have other interests which he can share with the rest.

This arrangement is ideal and can fill the gaps created by the big sf cons as well as warm the formal air created by letter writing.

Back to JFFJ: Comments on JFFJ #11 will be appreciated as only from your critiques of this publication can ye editor strive to serve you. Unfortunately, due to limited space not all letters received can be printed, but I can definitely say that your letter will be read and considered.

There. A little smattering of everything, just like the pages that follow, but in effect of unified essence—it's all for you.

Peace.

Greg Siskowski

FEEDBACK



Bob McVay
Charlestown, S.C.

Thanks for the latest issue of JFFJ; each issue is better than the one before it.

I have an idea for an article for your magazine. Why not do an article on the Japanese versions of the Hammer films? I have read several times that they were made extra bloody. It might make an interesting article to know how the oriental versions differed from those seen in England and America.

/Anyone interested in writing such an article? -Ed./
I am looking forward to the next issue.

Tom Murdock
Philadelphia, Pa.

Cover: Glad to see JFFJ has arrived, only a mere year since the last one. Problem: the drawings of the monsters are from scope film-clips, and the people, if that's what they be, yetchh, no Yosuke Natsuke or Yuriko Hoshi...

Neon: Some nice letters and artwork, except page 6's artwork.

Fanzine Corner: To me, a total waste of space. A misplaced cartoon on page 7. Tell Mr. Albert to brush up on his Camera, that's not the way his shell is shaped. As for page 9, nice going on the artwork, gang.

Aside: Very interesting, material wise, but Andre could have done a better Godzilla. Page 11 has some nice info on it.

Creature Features: Good ol' Stan has a style that reminds me of Johnny Hart, the creator of B.C. and The Wizard of Id. I liked this page tremendously.

LAKE OF DRACULA: Really super article; more by Horacio Higuchi, please.

Light Fantastic: The cartoon feature was really wasted space. Everything else, mainly Fantasy Film Roundup, was really fantastic. I kinda wonder where you get all of your info.

MATANGO - Pro and Con: Really well done. I agree with Mr. Pugmire. Tell Mr. Ray he has the class of a dead orange peel.

GHIDRAH - Part One: Quite over-done and incorrect. I feel when a filmbook is done words should remain unchanged and a complete tape of the soundtrack should be used so as not to miss things like these guys did. And stupid lines like "The deed is done," and "The die is cast," do not belong here, maybe in a prozine like Nightmare or Psycho, but not in good ol' JFFJ. Page 29's artwork is pitiful. Mr. Gumen copied off a scope film-clip. Other artwork--OK. Loved your little filler material in between the article.

May many more JFFJ's come your way. Live long and prosper.

Craig Berman
Dover, N.J.

I have received issue #10 and found it to be a slightly disappointing one. The drawings in the GHIDRAH review were okay, especially the picture of Malness, the villain, but don't you think more photos from the movie would be just as good?

The article on ATTACK OF THE MUSHROOM PEOPLE was good reading, although I have never seen the movie. It is very obvious that Fred Ray doesn't go for Japanese movies after reading his review of the film.

The Light Fantastic was good reading, especially the information on the people who played Godzilla and Hedorah.

I shall wait for #11 with great anticipation.

Stan Timmons
Lafayette, Ind.

I kept telling myself and the kind people who have bought a copy of TGS #1 that I was gonna get my issue out before JFFJ #10. "I'm gonna get it out...I'm gonna get it out...I'm gonna..." "Mail!" "Mmm-hmmm...Another flyer from the Army wanting this one to join. Sorry guys. Previous engagement and all that. A letter from John Denver and hey... What's this? An envelope...and it's from Toledo... and it has a ten after my name...Goddammit! You beat me after all, Shoemaker!!"

My dog, should anyone inquire, will be recovering soon after having had his ear-drums split by a glass-shattering scream of...Who knows?

Number ten, huh...? Show-off. I was one of the fortunate few to have been shown some pages of #10 in advance by you. I knew just from what I saw it would be (sigh) another "Where the hell you come up with all this far-out stuff, Greg?" issue...It was, and then some. The first thing that knocked me out of my tree was the colour picture from DAM. My special thanks to Terry Spidle, wherever he is. I note the mast head changes from issue to issue which is good. Inside the pages were articles by all my old faves. Artwork: Mark Gelotte (and when you get right down to it, you've said it all when you say "Mark Gelotte"--Hey, I thought Rembrandt was dead!). And a new face or two: Terry Spidle, Murad Gumon, and a fella name o' George Brycki, Jr.

Noon: Man, that's something else, that picture.

Everything within just helped make for the perfect kind of an issue. And I used to think early Christmas presents didn't happen no more.

Creature Features: I dunno who this kid is that has the gall to tear our beloved creatures apart, but take it from me, Greg, get rid of him! He'll only lower the quality of the magazine!

Goddammit...you beat me after all, Shoemaker!

Richard Smoot
Three Churches, W. Va.

JFFJ #10 was and is one of the best issues of a fanzine I've picked up this year. The articles, art, photos--can't find much to complain about, except I don't think the artwork on the cover is as good as some that you've had. Still, I like it.

Terry Spidle deserves a pat on the back and a very loud "Thank you!" for the free photo from DESTROY ALL MONSTERS. Do you think you can keep it as a regular part of the zine? /No. -Ed./

This is the year for anniversary celebrations. Gore Creatures marked 10 years with its 22nd issue.

JFFJ marks five years with its 10th issue. I've not seen a copy of your very early issues, but if #5 is any idea of what they were like, then JFFJ has come a very long way up the trail of quality. I hope you can keep it up.

Art: Inside, JFFJ #10 was full of magnificent work. Where did George Brycki, Jr. come from? I like his style. All the other pieces were captivating. Stan Timmons is weird, but I like his sense of humor. That was a lovely play on words.

Articles: Aside - I'm glad you ran this, as you may realize, because I think there's a lot of trivia that goes passed up when it's worthy of mention. As a matter of fact, here's a little more: Marvel Comics has been publishing a number of black and white magazine-sized comics. Monsters Unleashed is one. Issue #4 contains "Web of Hate," a story inspired by Edwin L. Arnold's novel Lt. Gullivar Jones, a John Carterish tale published in 1905, before ERB's Carter novel series. Anyway, as the story opens Gullivar and friends are dismounting their 7-foot-tall riding lizards to make camp and dine when one of the lizards lets out a "SLURPPI!", to which Gullivar replies, "Hey! Cut that out, you half-pint Godzilla!"

MINYA and LAKE OF DRACULA were interesting and present some clever views. I still think GODZILLA'S REVENGE was poor, but I'll still be awaiting LAKE. That MINYA ad was a find. Congratulations!

The Light Fantastic: It's ghastly to think that a country's movie industry will go down the drain. And the fuel crisis in Japan probably won't help.

AAAAAAAAAAAAHHHHH! Ya did it! THAT'S the man behind the rubber! HARUO NAKAJIMA! Wunnerful, wunnerful! I never really thought of who it must be wearing the Godzilla suit, but it'll be a pleasure to nudge the guy next to me in a theater and as Godzilla appears and say, "Look! It's Haruo Nakajima!"

MATANGO was one of the first Japanese films I ever saw. Perhaps this "loyalty" and my childhood thrill over seeing fantasy films that don't pop up



JFFJ/5

on TV too often have been of great influence on me, but I feel ATTACK OF THE MUSHROOM PEOPLE is a darn good film. As a matter of fact, I think it, not LAKE OF DRACULA, was Toho's first horror film, though LAKE is more completely horror. MATANGO has a wonderfully eerie atmosphere, and the beached ship has a number of sets that border on the gothic. Attention isn't kept on the fact that the ship was an internationally staffed group of scientists experimenting with radiation and mushrooms. I think Toho has the potential of presenting notable horror films.

Japanese Films in Your Own Home: I don't have the facilities necessary for presenting movies at home, but I'd like to. I didn't realize that many Oriental sci-fiers were available for home viewing. Might write to the addresses anyway just to look over their catalogues.

GHIDRAH: Afraid I didn't read this. I dislike getting interested in a story or filmbook and then having to wait a couple months for the ending. I did glimpse it over, and it looks interesting.

Photos: Gigan! That is one of the best preview pics I've seen in a while, rivalling the FRANKENSTEIN AND THE MONSTER FROM HELL color photo on page 41 of Cinefantastique #8. He looks pretty flashy, but "Big G" won't have much trouble with him.

The scenes from Japan's horror efforts were truly eerie and gothic. The middle pic was reminiscent of the "Catspaw" episode of STAR TREK. The first picture could've been clearer, but that was probably due to the printer's doings. /Partly. The photo was a scene from the film by Shochiku of a sequence that used a grainy film effect as explained in the copy above the photos. -Ed./

I was grinning ear to ear at the MATANGO scenes, but page 36 is probably the best page you've put together since I started with JFFJ back with #6. SUPERB!

Murad Gumen
Flushing, N.Y.

Well, you've done it again. You've obviously

made up your mind to improve on each and every issue, and needless to say, you have far from failed it. My first surprise was to see another all-offset issue. Where you dig up the money to get by the awesome printing costs is beyond me. /Simple. You put it on Master Charge! -Ed./ And the increase in pages. The variety of articles. Whew! Hardly a disappointment.

There are so many new things that you've tried this time. Let's start with the written material. Many faneds, including you, have been under attack for talking of little else but their new product in their editorials. Noticeably, you've disdained somewhat from this practice--a move for the better. Yes, it is interesting to read of the editor's problems in getting the issue out, of his enthusiastic descriptions on what he has in store for the readers, but up to a point. It is even more fun to read of some trivial facts, new topics, suggestions. Who says editors don't listen to their readers?

Your fanzine review policy is fine. I find it totally agreeable for you to refrain from reviewing the bad zines. If there aren't fanzines, there wouldn't be fandom, and discouraging purchase of the not-up-to-it mags damages the already shaky, non-profit situation of the editor. Mentioning flaws is your responsibility too, and you handle this perfectly, giving some bad along with the good. People look at these sections to buy the better zines after all. But if there is a zine where you honestly can't say many good things about, not to review it is better than murdering it. If these were professional magazines such as Famous Monsters, I would never agree with this policy, but fandom should be allowed to thrive.

Both MINYA, SON OF GODZILLA and LAKE OF DRACULA were nicely written. The inclusion of any article on DRACULA would've been more than appropriate, as here is a new, seldom-touched area of Japanese fantasy cinema. Happily, the review serves that purpose and is good at it. The Light Fantastic is a feature which is always enjoyable, and this time it's packed with even more ridiculous facts. Wonderful! And what's this? You even have a Fantasy Film Roundup. You have





JFFJ/6

something for everyone in this issue!

Hearing both sides of the story is something which should be done more often as it made the ATTACK OF THE MUSHROOM PEOPLE treatment more entertaining. And those are extreme sides too; Fred Ray dismisses the film entirely while I couldn't find one important criticism Bill Pugmire gave in his longer section. The bad thing here is that anyone who didn't view the film will tend to side with Pugmire's more seriously handled version. I suspect you decided to give it the pro and con treatment after both writers submitted their reviews. If this is so, it isn't fair to Ray as he probably would've handled his writing more sensibly, knowing it would be up against the other side. /It is not so. Fred heard from someone that I had gotten a pro review from Bill. He told me in the letter he enclosed with his review that there should be an opposing view to balance the article out. So Fred knew what he was doing. -Ed./ Although Ray's writing is enjoyable, it just isn't on an equal basis with Pugmire's, and if I hadn't seen the film I would have went with Pugmire. I was on the pro side anyway as I found the film to my liking.

A new base JFFJ touches this time comes with the rather unique Japanese Films in Your Own Home piece by Greg Feret. I never knew the facts behind renting any 16mm film, let alone the Japanese fantasy type. I'm afraid I can't make much use of this information, though. But at least the writer realizes the impracticality. Your Aside was great fun to read as were the comic strips by Timmons. The GHIDRAH related articles interspersed throughout the filmbook are something I'm not used to seeing in the "Big J," and as for the filmbook itself...well, it seems the writers know what they're doing, to say the least. And those frame blow-ups of Ghidrah's formation, have pity! Not too many never-before-tried, great things at once, please!

The written material helps #10 to be a success, but unfortunately the artwork has slipped. Although

I've liked Garrison's work in other zines, I believe he has contributed to the worst JFFJ cover since #5. It looks like he's more concerned with drawing those thousands of little circles to fill up the white area more than the art itself. But I can't help but marvel at his patience to draw those circles. On page 2 for instance we have a much more professional Garrison by no means showing his capability to draw. The issue suffers from few Gelotte pieces, he being your best. As for the newcomers, with the exception of what's-his-name, Greg Shoemaker, I'm not impressed. But they're all promising a lot. If only some wouldn't take a still and copy from them directly. Of what use is an art scene you've already seen before in a photograph? 90% of fandom's artists use this unoriginality.

JFFJ #10 has an identity crisis, I noticed. There is an equal sprawling of informal and formal styles. Look at The Light Fantastic vs. the GHIDRAH filmbook, the pro vs. con of the MATANGO article, the informality of the editorial, the 16mm film article, Aside, the comic strips, the more seriously handled reviews. The question is, which is the real JFFJ? I would say it definitely shifts more to informality, but it really doesn't matter. Amazingly, the magazine works with both styles together.

I did think #9 couldn't be beat, but you have done it. You have improved on the unimprovable.

"Well, congratulations are definitely in order, Greg. You've reached your tenth issue (your best to date), and it's your fifth year of editing JFFJ. You must really be proud of yourself and JFFJ."

There! I couldn't have said it better myself.

END

FANZINE CORNER

by Greg Shoemaker

Little Shoppe of Horrors #3 (Dick Klemensen, 608 Lakeside Dr., Waterloo, Iowa 50703; \$1.50; published irregularly; offset; 92 pages; 8½x11) Incorporating David Soren's excellent Fantastic Worlds fanzine, #3 is a gigantic wealth of fantasy film material, and the price is outrageously low for the length, quality, and interesting and informative reading that abounds in this new issue. Highly recommended. Contains scoops of films other fanzine and professional editors haven't even heard of yet. Lots of great stills inside and on covers—all reproed very well. Excellent all the way through. Noy a slick zine, but who cares! Contents: Editorial, letter column, fanzine reviews, "The Films of Eiji Tsuburaya," "Andre Morell: Actor," "2nd French Fantasy Film Convention Reviewed," "Tribute to Lon Chaney, Jr.," "The Music of Hammer," "Vincent Price Interviewed," "Soren's Forgotten Fiends," film previews, "The Fruition of Terence Fisher," film news, "Hammer at Bray: Jack Curtis," special Ralph of the Vampyres comic insert section.

Fandom's Yellow Pages #2 (Lon Johnston, 1716 Center Rd., Novato, California 94947; 25¢ for 2 sample issues, \$2.50 for 24 issue subscription; published irregularly; offset; 28 pages; wraparound with yellow stock; 7x8½) An adzine geared to those primarily interested in fantasy, horror, and sf films. Nothing exists like this anywhere else in the US. It needs the support of anyone who possesses material or wants material on the cinema of the fantastic. Tell your friends and people you do business with about FYP. Artwork by Tim Hammell appears throughout and helps increase visual appeal. Fannish approach and unique concept provide promise and presently provides a service that is dearly welcome. Contents: Editorial, fanzine reviews, classifieds, display ads.

Fright and Fantasy #4 (Ami Buchbinder, 315 Rushton Rd., Toronto 10, Ontario, Canada; \$1.15 in check or \$1 cash; quarterly; offset; 48 pages; wraparound; 8½x11) A very nice genre fanzine that is relatively new to the scene, though it doesn't show it. Very good art. Most photos in the issue are never-before-run. A few of the articles are a bit sketchy, but most read very well to offset this. Good repro. Great promise. Contents: Editorial, letters,

reviews, "THE EXORCIST," "8mm Filmguide," "A Survey of Prehistoric Films," "COUNT DRACULA," "Alfred Hitchcock and PSYCHO," "Obituaries," fanzine and book reviews. Very nice indeed.

The Argentine Science Fiction Review #4 (Hector R. Pessina,

Cailla de Correo Central 3869, Buenos Aires, Argentina; \$1, 4 issues for \$3.75—payment by bank checks or International Money Orders; quarterly; offset; 20 pages; wraparound; 8 3/4x10 3/4) Price appears steep for length of zine, but Hector is not at fault here. Inflation is hitting Argentina on a much larger scale. The work as presented is quite good and remains an excellent reference source to space films. Many great new photos illustrate ASFR; repro is excellent also. Contents: book reviews, sf film reviews (basically non-current titles, which is a relief), a checklist of space motion pictures (continuing "A" from last issue and beginning the "B" titles.)

Gothism #4 (Rob Comorosky, 16 Green Dr., No. Dartmouth, Mass. 02747; 75¢; bi-annual; offset; wraparound; 42 pages; 8½x11) The best genzine (def.: fanzine hitting all areas of fandom—music, films, books, literature, art, etc.) out today and very well reproed. Excellent on all counts and a joy to read. Gothism is a good time, a very nice trip. Excellent artwork by Garcia and others. Contents: Editorial, letter column, fanzine reviews,



Robert Block on his work in the hey-day of radio, movie reviews, record reviews (primarily progressive rock, space and head rock), poetry, "Pink Floyd," "THE INVISIBLE RAY."

Cinemagic #3 (Don Dohler, P.O. Box 125, Perry Hall, Maryland 21128; \$1; published irregularly; offset on slick paper; 32 pages; wraparound; 8½x11) Probably the last issue. Don has had problems, but no reason not to buy this beautiful paen to amateur filmmaking and techniques. Back issues are still available. Maybe if enough support is expressed this fine zine will return. Us ama-filmmakers need it, and he needs us. Write. Contents: Film profiles, filmmaker profiles, letter column, editorial, news from amateur filers, "Final Steps to A Foam Mask," "Fantasy Art Gallery," "A Guide to Basic Animation," "Making A Miniature Flying Saucer," "Models and Trick Photography."

The Terratoid Guide #4 (Claude Plum, Jr., P.O. Box 531, Hollywood, Calif. 90028; \$2; quarterly; offset; 44 pages; 8½x11) "International Guide to Magazines Dealing with Science-Fiction, Fantasy, and Horror Films," so says the line beneath the title on the cover page of this zine. And it succinctly describes the nature of the work prepared by Claude. Continuing to add, delete, and correct his listings in his attempt to update the titles of magazines that cover the genre the liner qualifies, he has great ideas where TTG is going, and they are excellent. Anyone into the cinefantastique should not be without TTG. Contents: Editorial, letter column, several editor's discussions on the motivation behind their fanzines, resume's of several editors' work in fandom, a list of magazines by title and by editor, ads, artwork, much more!

Gore Creatures #22 (Gary Svehla, 5906 Kavon Ave., Baltimore, Maryland 21206; 75¢; annually; offset; 50 pages; 8½x11) A non-slick Photon with a personal approach supplied by Gary. Intelligent reading without going over the layman's head. Beautiful artwork. Contents: Editorial, letter column, "Mythic Elements in Monster Movies," "Hitchcock: Emotion on Film," "A Guide to Film Memorabilia Collecting," "The Erotic World of Hammer Vampirism," "Paramount: The Fantasy Years (1929-1939)," film reviews. The contents speak for GC quite nicely.

Nosferatu Illustrated #1 (Saki Hijiri, Takeda-Kata, 2-chome-Nanbacho, Kawahigashi, Niijo-Dori, Sakayoku, Kyoto, Japan 606; \$1; offset on slick paper; 50 pages; 7½x10) All in Japanese but loaded with stills, stills, and more stills on fantasy films from America and England. No articles per se. A rarity. Better get yours before Saki is sold out!

The Monsters, June, 1973 (Hajime Ishida, 93-25 Kirencho, Higashiumiyosi-ku, O-saka, Japan; price unknown; very good Xerox-style duplication; 20 pages; 7½x10) Another all-Japanese language fanzine, this issue devoted to the king, Boris Karloff. Loads of photos. Another very rare item. You won't want to miss this fanzine either.

Original Monsters #10 (Warren Stein, P.O. Box 25, Lakewood, New Jersey 08701; \$1; biannually; offset on slick paper; wraparound; 30 pages; 8½x11) Articles tend to be sketchy, but Warren is gradually changing all that, and the variety of the articles dissipates any qualms one would have on that matter. Very good Jim Garrison artwork, and many unusual and interesting publicity stills grace the pages from cover to cover. A magazine to watch. Contents: Editorial, film news, new films (cont. p. 28)

THE LIGHT FANTASTIC

JAPANESE FILM NEWS

Fantasy feature film production continues on the same plane for the Japanese companies as reported in last issue of JFFJ. Toho, the only studio to retain any signs of vitality, is continuing with their monster series, all starring Godzilla, several other familiar faces, and a new visage here and there in rehashes of previous battle epics. One of these, GODZILLA VS. GIGAN, was described last issue. And Toho, still exploiting the horror film, released on July 20th the conclusion of director Michio Yamamoto's trilogy. The film is titled THE BLOODTHIRSTY ROSE (CHI O SUU BARA). It follows THE BLOODTHIRSTY DOLL or THE VAMPIRE DOLL (CHI O SUU NINGYO), the first of the trilogy, and THE BLOODTHIRSTY EYES (CHI O SUU ME), also known as LAKE OF THE VAMPIRE or LAKE OF DRACULA.

The new offshoot of the fantasy genre is the survival/cataclysm film, and Toho has proceeded along these lines with probably its most successful film to date, SUBMERSION OF JAPAN. The title is quite similar to a pre-release title for a film originally planned by Daiei, SINKING OF THE JAPANESE ISLANDS, but of course Daiei went bankrupt before their film could begin production. There may possibly be a connection between the two films, but at this time this factor is unknown.

The other three major film companies are producing little in the way of fantasy. It would be beautiful news indeed to learn of an increase in fantasy film production from Toei, Shochiku, and Nikkatsu to wrest the popularity from Toho—to perform a coup reminiscent of that accomplished by Hammer in their renaissance of the horror film which occurred in the later fifties. This is not meant to deny Toho their due, but new blood in Japan's sf/horror/fantasy film market is long overdue, and the competition could stimulate Toho into new and better end products.

Unfortunately for the American audiences, regardless of the quality of the current crop of fantasy films, all have been passed over by American distributors. A part of the explanation, it would appear, is due to the depreciation of the film's approach, that is to say that the motion pictures currently being issued in Japan are geared primarily toward a very young audience. Not all films being released in Japan are treated as such, e.g. LAKE OF DRACULA, but the majority share this fate. In doing this, the Japanese studios have limited the box-office potential of their releases. Sf/fantasy/horror is not necessarily a genre for the very young. It is about time that the Japanese film companies wake up to this reality.

GAMERA VS ZIGRA

Before coverage of the more recent motion pictures is undertaken, time should be spent in recounting the last fantasy film from Daiei before its demise. The film, the seventh in the series of "Gamera" films, is entitled GAMERA VS. ZIGRA. This final entry for Daiei has yet to be released in the U.S. either to television or the theater. But it is appropriate to give a word or two on this film, for JFFJ, at the time of the film's release in Japan, had little information to publish. However, this situation has at last been remedied:

As on Earth, the planet Zigra too is plagued with pollution. But while the people of Earth live on land and depend on the sea a great deal for their food, the Zigras, a highly intelligent race, live in the sea and devour only things they find on the land for their existence. Since their smaller sea has become greatly polluted, they decide to conquer the Earth, live in its vast seas, and use its almost inexhaustible supply of humans for food.

One day something like a space ship appears suddenly and settles down on Earth. It throws out a mysterious ray on a small boat carrying four people. In the craft are Ishikawa and Wallace, who work at the International Oceanic Research Laboratory, and two children, Ken'ichi, Ishikawa's son, and Helen, Wallace's daughter. Quickly they are all whisked into the space ship and are met by "X," a human being who is a captive of the Zigras and is being used in their conquest of Earth. Looking into her eyes both Ishikawa and Wallace fall into a trance, but due to a foul up, "X" falls into a trance herself, and the children escape back into the sea with their fathers still mesmerized.

On orders from Zigra, "X" follows Ken'ichi and Helen, but Gamera intervenes and rescues them from danger. From the scanty information the children can provide, a headquarters to counter the Zigra conquest is set up, and all the world rises to the crisis. Luckily, a method is found to awaken Ishikawa and Wallace from their trance, and "X" recovers her memory and helps in the fight against the Zigras.



TOP: GAMERA VS. ZIGRA, Daiei's last.
BOTTOM: THE SHADOW WITHIN, Shochiku horror.

In the meantime Gamera attacks the space ship and an alien Zigra appears. Due to the difference in the water pressure on Earth and the planet Zigra, the alien grows and grows into a frightful, hideous monster with the semblance of a shark. The creature is 80 meters long, weighs 75 tons, and has a sharp fin on its back that can easily slice through the hardest steel.

The Earth Defense Army attacks the Zigra, but it is wiped out by the red ray expelled by the monster. The Zigra's orange ray stops all cell activity in Gamera, and the people fear their champion is dead. All seems lost until a stroke of lightning revives Gamera. After one of the greatest fights

The Shadow Within

Shochiku, who has limited itself primarily to horror films rather than sf or fantasy, has released a psychological horror thriller, THE SHADOW WITHIN, that boasts a new photographic process for added effect which appears in a sequence in the film. The new multi-color separation process is described by Shochiku: The eyes of the audience will be focused on the unique color image flashbacks in the film. To

create special color effects, the original negative was separated into three primary color negatives which were piled one on top of the other, shifted a few frames, and combined again into one color negative. In many parts of the film a black and white negative was added to it in order to give the scene a relief-like impression with coarse grain. These technical methods utilized by Shochiku for the first time in movie history have succeeded in bringing into the film images the subtle inner psychology of a man who roams between reality and illusion:

One day a man, Yukio, is addressed by a woman, Yasuko, both passengers on a bus. A neighbor in his childhood, she explains she is now a widow living with her young son, Ken. Married and with no children, Yukio is a middle-aged man working in a travel agency. Tired with the routine work, he leads a solitary family life, neglected by his hard-working wife. He persuades himself to console the lonely widow. Both suffering from solitude, they approach each other, although each knows that such a relationship could be disas-

GODZILLA VS. MEGALON



TOP: GODZILLA VS. GIGAN, after SMOG MONSTER.
BOTTOM: GODZILLA VS. MEGALON, after GIGAN.

ever witnessed on Earth Gamera is victorious and flies away with the thanks of the grateful people ringing in his ears.

GAMERA VS. ZIGRA (GAMERA TAI SHINKAIKAIJU JIGURA)—Produced by Daiel Motion Picture Co., Ltd.; Executive producer: Hidemasa Nagata; Screenplay: Fumi Takahashi; Director: Noriaki Yuasa; Photography: Akira Uehara; Sound recording: Hideo Okuyama; Music: Shunsuke Kikuchi; Starring: Eiko Yanami (Woman X), Isamu Saeki (Yosuke Ishikawa), Mikiko Tsubouchi (Hiroko), Yasushi Sakagami (Ken'ichi), Koji Fujiyama (Tom), Reiko Kasahara (maid); Filmed in color and scope; Running time: 91 minutes (8 reels or 2483 meters); Released 1971.

trous if they fall in love.

Each time he visits her, however, Yasuko's six-year-old boy weighs heavily on his mind. Yukio is conscious of the boy's eyes while making love to Yasuko. He is tormented by his melancholic memories and illusion in his own childhood—his uncle loved his widowed mother...he hated his uncle and caused him to fall into the sea to his death on a fishing trip. "Wasn't it I who killed my uncle? It's not certain...Yes, I did...And now I'm in my uncle's position, and Ken is attempting to kill me...That's impossible...No, Ken surely harbors ill feelings against me..." Illusion and reality are mixed in the mind of the timid man who is stung by his conscience.

Early in the morning after spending the night with Yasuko for the first time, Yukio happens to see before him Ken with a hatchet. In his delirium Yukio grabs the boy's throat. He insists to the police that he acted in self-defense because the boy tried to kill him. Unfortunately, no one believes him. Who could believe that a boy only six-years-old

Following on the heels of GODZILLA VS. GIGAN are two new Godzilla features from Toho, GODZILLA VS. MEGALON and GODZILLA VS. MECHAGODZILLA. Ascertained from the description printed in JFFJ #10 of the GIGAN film is the belief that the monster opuses are becoming increasingly more children-oriented. This belief is strengthened when one reads the recounting of Godzilla's latest.

Mu, the legendary continent that supposedly sank beneath the Pacific three million years ago, still remains as an underwater kingdom called Seatopia. The peace that has prevailed there for generations is under threat of destruction by Man's relentless testing of nuclear weapons. To protect their land under the ocean the Seatopians rise to arms.

The aquatic people send their guardian, a monstrous insect named Megalon, to destroy land-bound mankind. To control the guardian, however, they need a cyborg created by Goro Ibuki, a Japanese university professor. The Seatopians raid Ibuki's laboratory, capture the cyborg, the professor, and his brother. But before they can take their prisoners to their underwater kingdom, Ibuki's race driver friend rescues them.

Megalon starts destruction of the Earth's land-locked civilization. However, the cyborg which is controlling the monster escapes from the control of the Seatopians and sets out on its own, for Ibuki had designed it to work only in the cause of justice. When the cyborg is about to be trampled by Megalon, it suddenly grows as huge as the monster, and a fantastic duel ensues.

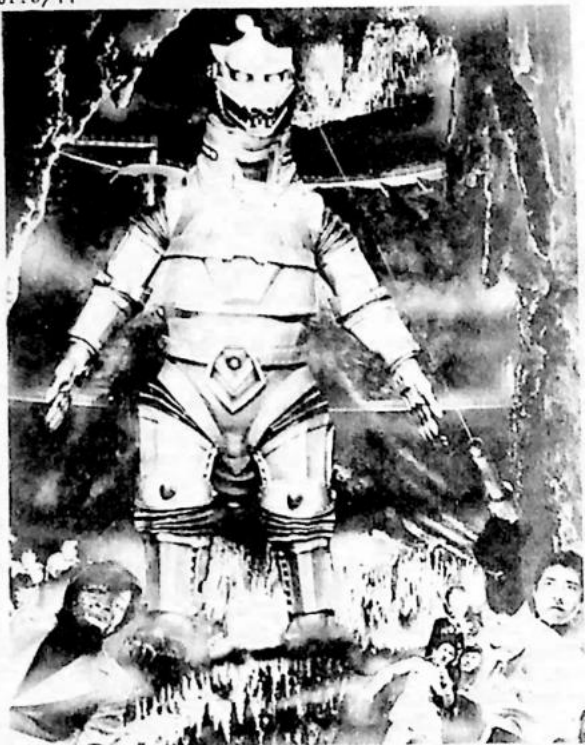
Unable to control Megalon without the aid of the cyborg, the Seatopians invite from the Hunter Nebula the powerful space monster Gigan. Enjoying the superiority of the two-to-one odds, Megalon overwhelms the cyborg.

In response to the plight of the Earth, Godzilla comes to the aid of mankind from his home on Monster Island. A titanic battle occurs: Godzilla and the cyborg against Megalon and Gigan. Even for Godzilla, monster of monsters, Megalon becomes a formidable

could plot to murder someone? Yukio cries, "It's true! The boy was attempting to kill me! It's not a lie! Even a child can harbor the thought of killing!"

Then the images come forth again from the recesses of Yukio's mind: the sea waves which swallowed up his uncle and the beautiful sunset. Nobody knows for certain whether it was fact or his illusion.

THE SHADOW WITHIN (KAGE NO KURUMA)—Produced by Shochiku Company, Ltd.; Executive producer: Yoshiharu Mishima; Based on a novel by Seicho Matsumoto; Screenplay: Shinobu Hashimoto; Direction: Yoshitaro Nomura; Photography: Takashi Kawamata; Art direction: Shigemori Shigeta; Music: Yasushi Akutagawa; Starring: Go Kato (Yukio), Shima Iwashita (Yasuko), Mayumi Ogawa (Keiko, Yukio's wife), Kaneko Iwasaki (Yukio's mother), Yusuke Takita (Yukio's uncle), Hisato Okamoto (Ken), Azusa Koyama (Yukio as a child), Shinsuke Ashida (detective); Filmed in Shochiku Grand Scope and color; Running time: 97 min. (2679 meters); Released December 18, 1971.



able enemy. In the course of the titanic battle mountains are crushed, cities are levelled. The efforts of mere men are useless in dealing with such enormity.

After several days of desperate struggle, Godzilla and the cyborg finally overcome their foe. Godzilla shakes hands with the cyborg and lumbers back to Monster Island. The cyborg shrinks to its original size and returns to the laboratory of Professor Ibuki.

GODZILLA VS. MEGALON (GOJIRA TAI MEGARON)—Produced by Toho Motion Picture Co., Ltd.; Executive producer: Tomoyuki Tanaka; Direction: Jun Fukuda; Screenplay: Shinichi Sekizawa and Jun Fukuda; Photography: Yuzuru Aizawa; Starring: Katsuhiko Sasaki, Hiroyuki Kawase, Yutaka Hayashi, Robert Dunham, Kotaro Tomita; Filmed in color and scope; Running time: 82 minutes (6 reels or 2235 meters).

MEGALON might be classified a sequel to Toho's *ATLANTIS*, but the only linking elements between both films is the lost continent of Mu and the scheme by its inhabitants for the takeover of Earth. The remainder of *MEGALON* nullifies any thoughts that the film is a sequel to the 1963 motion picture.

GODZILLA VS. MECHAGODZILLA

The most current Toho Godzilla film is *GODZILLA VS. MECHAGODZILLA*:

A young architect named Shimizu, engaged in construction of ocean exhibition facilities in Okinawa, discovers a statue of a lion in a cave. The Okinawans call the lion King Seeser. Wall paintings of monsters were also discovered by Shimizu. According to legend, when the people of Okinawa are in danger a monster will appear to save them. Saeko, a female archaeologist, takes the statue to a professor in Tokyo to decipher the ancient inscription it bears.

The sudden appearance of Godzilla shocks the people of Tokyo with his unusual ferocity. While the monster runs amuck, a cyborg of space titanium in the likeness and size of Godzilla rises from the sea under the control of evil invaders from space. After a stupendous battle, the cyborg called Mechagodzilla undergoes malfunction and retires from the fight to lumber back to the space invaders secret lair in an Okinawan cave.

Learning the statue of the lion can bring King Seeser to life, the space invaders attempt to steal it. Their try proves futile, and Shimizu and Saeko return the statue to Okinawa with the aid of and Interpol agent named Nanbara. In the cave Shimizu's brother locates a fragment of space titanium. Professor Miyajima, an expert in space mechanics, searches the cave for more pieces with his daughter and Shimizu's brother. They are met by the space invaders who capture the three and force Miyajima to repair Mechagodzilla, whereupon the enormous cyborg resumes its rampage.

Shimizu, in accordance with the deciphered inscription, brings the statue to the shrine at Asumi, where it is properly positioned. When the sun rises,

a ray of light reflected from the eye of the lion is cast on a seaside rock. And out comes immense King Seeser! The monster quickly pits itself against Mechagodzilla, and Godzilla also joins in the battle. After an incredibly destructive ordeal, Mechagodzilla is soundly defeated. Shimizu and Nanbara are just as successful for they wipe out the entire force of the space invaders and blow up their secret base.

Godzilla returns to his home in the South Pacific, and King Seeser fades into the seaside rock, and there both shall remain until the appearance of another crisis which threatens the safety of mankind.

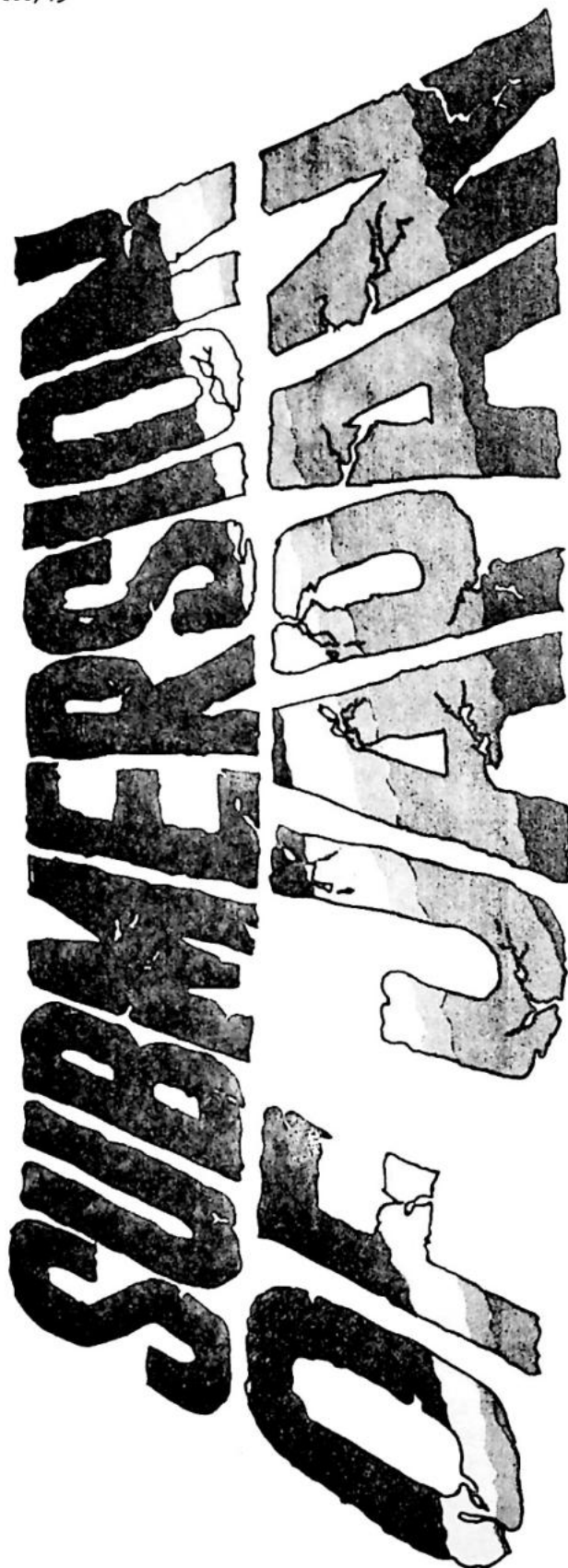
GODZILLA VS. MECHAGODZILLA (MEKA-GODZILLA NO GYAKUSHU)—Produced by Toho Motion Picture Co., Ltd.; Executive producer: Tomoyuki Tanaka; Screenplay and direction: Jun Fukuda; Music: Masaru Sato; Special effects: Teruyoshi Nakano; Starring: Masaaki Dai-mon, Kazuya Aoyama, Reiko Tajima, Akihiko Hirata, Hiroshi Koizumi; Barbara Lynn; Filmed in Eastmancolor and scope; Running time: 84 min. (6 reels or 2308 meters).



FANTASY FILM ROUNDUP

Toho's *MONSTER OF MONSTERS*, *GHIDORAH* (CHIKYU SAIDAINO KESSEN, known in the United States as *GHIDRAH, THE THREE-HEADED MONSTER*) was reissued in Japan on December 12, 1971...In *KAITEKITA ULTRA MAN* the superhero Ultraman battles Sea Gorath in order to save Earth in a 44 minute color featurette directed by Yoshiharu Tomita. This Toho production was released on December 12, 1971...Coming from Toei's animation studio is *RETURN OF PERO* (NAGAGUTSU SANJYUSHI), a feature-length animated cartoon in color...Pending for Amicus of England and Toei of Japan is a co-production to be titled *KONGORILLA* with scripting by Tudor Gates...*GAPPA, THE TRI-PHIBIAN MONSTER* from Nikkatsu has been released to France as *GAPPA, SON OF GODZILLA* and Toho's *GODZILLA VS. GIGAN* has been released there as *DESTINATION EARTH: MISSION APOCALYPSE...FEMALE MAGIC* (KU-NO-ICHI NINPO). No information is available...Slithering through the grass comes *HORROR OF THE SNAKE WOMAN* (KAIDAN HEBIONNA, literally translated as *WEIRD STORY: SNAKE WOMAN*), a 1973 film from Toei...All for now. See you next issue.

Top right: Insect beast Megalon wages battle with cyborg creation in an Ultraman-ish sequence from *GODZILLA VS. MEGALON*. Top left: In celebration of Godzilla's 20th anniversary (1954-1974) Toho creates a worthy adversary, a mechanical double, in *GODZILLA VS. MECHAGODZILLA*. Bottom: A dynamic publicity photo of the four monsters in *MECHAGODZILLA*.



A deep research party, Dr. Tadokoro, a geologist, and Toshio Onodera, the navigator, included, find a variety of drastic changes in the Earth's crust at the Japan Deep. A cataclysm is underway. Not long after the discovery a dormant volcano near Tokyo erupts, followed by a series of earthquakes and tidal waves which threaten the nation.

The Japanese government headed by Premier Yamamoto holds a meeting of scholars and specialists to ask their opinions about the phenomena. Dr. Tadokoro warns that Japan will suffer a terrible disaster in the near future, but his warning goes disregarded.

A retired statesman named Watari, whose words carry weight, respects Dr. Tadokoro's opinion and talks the Premier into organizing a secret project team. The members include the geologist, Onodera, and Yukinaga, a university assistant professor. They pursue an investigation and reach a shocking conclusion: the Japanese Islands will sink beneath the sea.

In the meantime an immense earthquake rocks Tokyo. The metropolis is leveled in a few moments and loses one third of its ten million population. The submersion of Japan is inevitable. The Premier sends secret envoys abroad to request acceptance of 110 million Japanese who must flee their country, but few countries welcome the idea.

Soon after Onodera proposes to his sweetheart, Reiko, Premier Yamamoto announces the grim news: the Japanese Islands will sink within 10 months. Onodera, released from his job, is ready to go to Switzerland with Reiko as soon as she comes from Osaka. Then he receives a call from her: Mt. Fuji is erupting, stopping the train. She wants him to leave the country immediately without her, but he immediately sets out to find her.

The Japanese Foreign Minister attends a U.N. meeting to beg foreign governments to accept Japanese refugees. At the same time his government proceeds with preparations for mass transportation via air and sea.

The emigration of the Japanese people is well underway when the catastrophe begins. Shikoku island is the first to sink. Kyushu breaks in two, and Hokkaido follows suit.

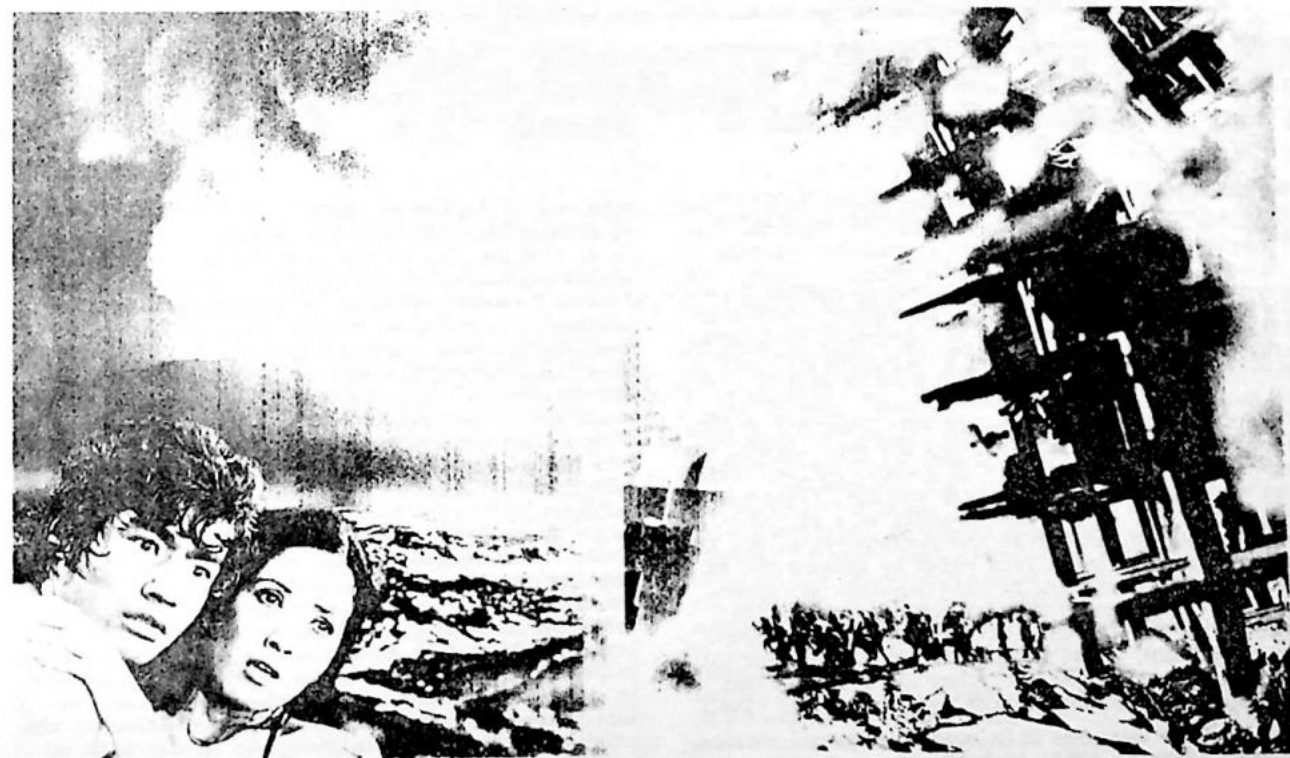
Determined to find his fiancée, Onodera joins a rescue team. The more people he saves, he thinks, the better his chances of finding Reiko.

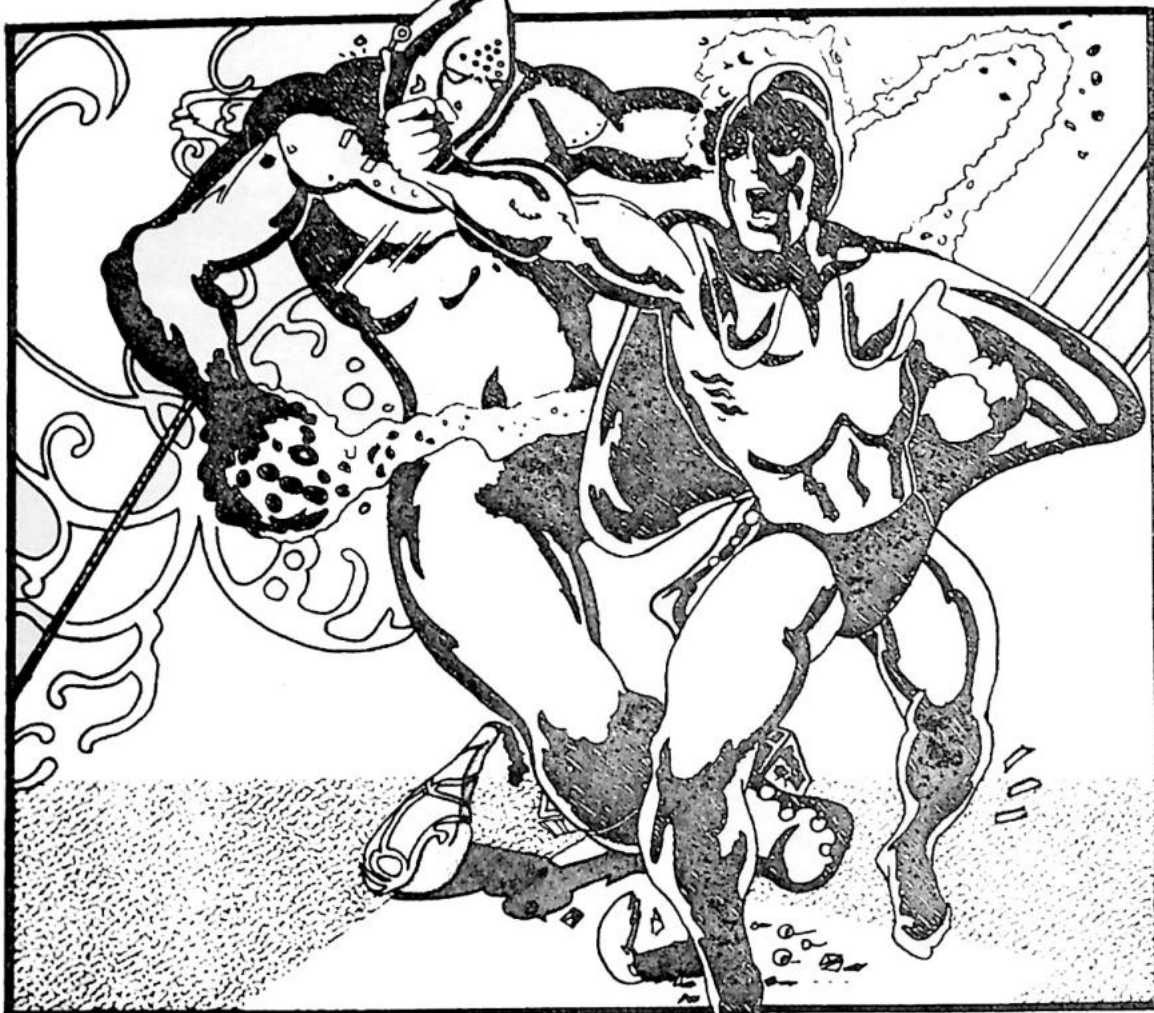
Eventually Japan is completely submerged. The Premier, Dr. Tadokoro, and the old statesman share the fate of the country. The nation has vanished.

Several days later, Reiko is seen in a train moving across a snow-covered northern land, while Onodera is among the refugees on a train traversing the desert—each gazing at a different horizon still hoping for a reunion.

SUBMERSION OF JAPAN (NIPPON CHINBOTSU)—Produced by Toho Motion Picture Co., Ltd.; Executive producer: Tomoyuki Tanaka; Associate producer: Osamu Tanaka; Direction: Shiro Moritani; Screenplay: Shinobu Hashimoto; From the novel by Sakyo Komatsu; Photography: Hiroshi Murai and Daisaku Kimura; Music: Masaru Sato; Special effects: Teruyoshi Nakano; Technical advisors: Prof. H. Takeuchi (Geophysics; Tokyo Univ.), Prof. Y. Osaki (Seismology; Tokyo Univ.), Prof. N. Nasu (Oceanography; Tokyo Univ.), Dr. A. Suwa (Volcanology); Starring: Keiju Kobayashi, Tetsuro Tanba, Hiroshi Fujioka, Ayumi Ishida, Hideaki Nitani, Shogo Shimada; Filmed in Eastmancolor and scope; Running time: 113 minutes (9 reels or 3100 meters). END

Right: Scenes from Toho's recent smash, **SUBMERSION OF JAPAN**, a \$3 million epic portraying the doom of a nation, showing where most of the \$3 million went.





THE SUPERHERO

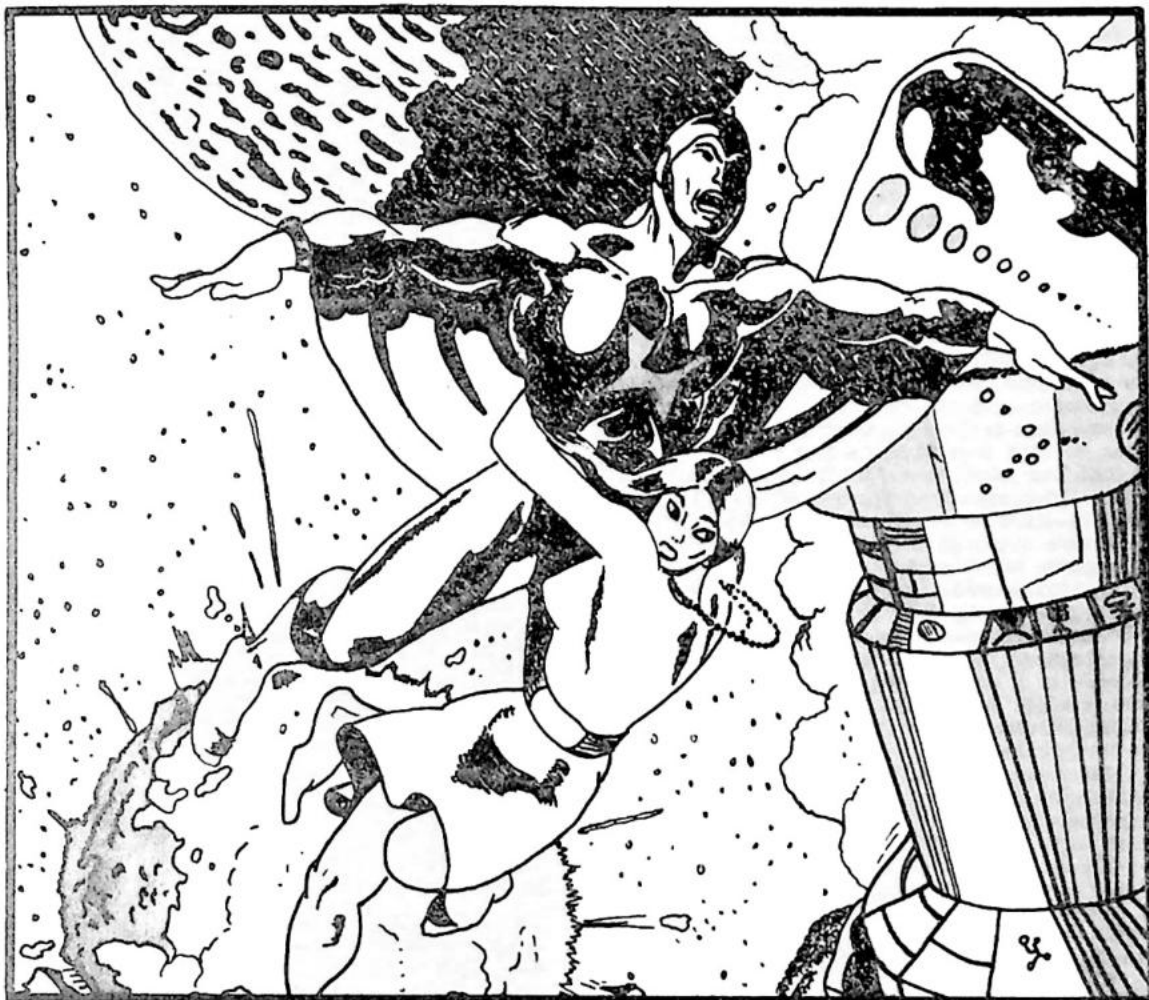
SUPERHERO/,su-per-he-rō/n. : an individual gifted with extraordinary powers who opposes crime and/or evil

The above definition does not appear in any dictionary or manuscript to this author's knowledge. It is purely a fabrication as a means of re-introducing a genre familiar to most—the superhero. The definition, unfortunately, tries to be general and in so doing self-eliminates the mutants, the beings Frankenstein-like synthesized with a variety of discordant and harmonious feelings and motivations, the superheroes representative of several worlds: living and dead, man and machine, man and god, Earth and non-Earth, and on and on. It would be a difficult task indeed to categorize the various types. But the definition is a basis from which to explore the subject more intensively, in this instance the superhero of the Japanese fantasy motion picture, for America is not the only nation beset with a superhero fixation. Japan's genre in the live-action cinema has an evolutionary history all its own. That history is quite interesting and unique unto itself.

The Japanese film superhero had an extremely late start in 1957, that is, compared to his begin-

nings in America circa 1941, and he finally began to be accepted in 1965 with the release of **ULTRAMAN**, today even moreso. At this point three important but unanswerable questions could be posed—unanswerable because information regarding the Japanese and their culture is very scarce on this side of the globe. It would be unwise to assume answers to the following questions: Why did it take the Japanese filmmakers approximately 16 years to bring their version of the superhero to the screen? After the initial release of the first superhero film why did popularity arrive almost 8 years later? Why are the superhero serials so popular in Japan today? Interesting and intriguing though these questions may be, they may never be resolved.

The superhero films themselves have seen many changes. They have passed from theatrical feature film format to television serial, from black and white to color film stock, from non-Earth-born heroes to Earth-born to automatons. The most successful of all is this later phase, the robot superhero in a color television serial. Numerous series feature these creations, each being a derivation of the original Ultraman, a metallic giant gifted with an amazing number of powers. Ultraman is actually a



JAPAN'S INTERPRETATION

by Greg Shoemaker

member of the Science Patrol team who turns into the silver colossus when he swallows the Beta Capsule. Shades of Captain Marvel?

The other Japanese film superheroes, coincidentally or not, bear traits similar to the American superheroes in a few areas. Whether this is typical of the superhero genre, that is, there will not be a superhero contrived somewhere who does not contain a vestige of some already created superhero, or the Japanese have committed a mild form of plagiarism is another facet that will be open to debate because the answers are just not available.

The special effects of the Japanese superhero films also have progressed since their early days. Obviously cheap and rushed work plagued the first efforts. It took Eiichi Tsuburaya and his staff from Toho to implement a look of style and better budget missing in the beginning of the evolution. Satisfied with the results, the popularity of the superhero films, and the money, Tsuburaya founded his own company for the sole purpose of producing these film types. Of course his is not the only studio cultivating the fields, but they are the major producers of its kind.

The effects in the American serials progres-

sed from bad to excellent to mediocre. Many of the last serials' effects in fact were copied from earlier serials and feature films. Serial making became too expensive in the U.S. and as a result cutbacks were made—one area facing that decision was effects.

Of course effects did not play as major a role in the U.S. serials as it now does for the Japanese superhero films. But the Japanese are able to produce effects work for a much lower cost giving them a distinct advantage. This is part of the reason that several American companies have co-produced features with Japanese studios.

Amazingly, similarities do exist between U.S. and Japanese superhero films. First, both countries have watched the superhero character advance from starring in theatrical releases to achieving prominence in the television medium. Second, storyline and dialogue are extremely trite in both nation's superhero films. The films feature enormous amounts of footage devoted to chases, captures, escapes, recaptures, etc.—all constructed on a foundation of titanic battle sequences that create an abundance of destruction. Lastly, acting is sub-par—overacting is the keyword here.

However, several remarkable facts surround-

JFFJ/17

ing the Japanese superhero films make them unique to any other countries efforts in the same genre. The Japanese are the first to film a superhero serial that contains nine episodes running feature length, SUPERGIANT (1957-59), each episode being complete in itself. They are also the first to film a superhero feature, INVADERS FROM THE SPACE SHIP (1959). They are the first to film a television serial with cliffhanger style episodes that features a robot superhero as its star, ULTRAMAN (1965). And unlike American film superheroes who evolved from the comics, pulps, and radio, the Japanese heroes transferred their newly gained popularity from films to printed matter—a complete reversal of the American history.

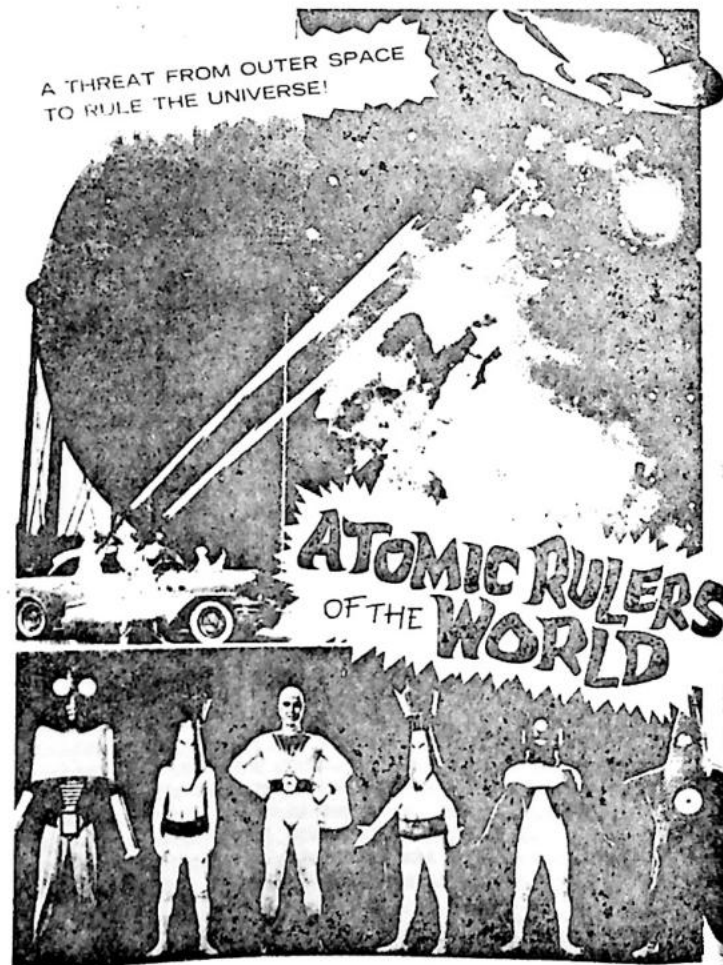
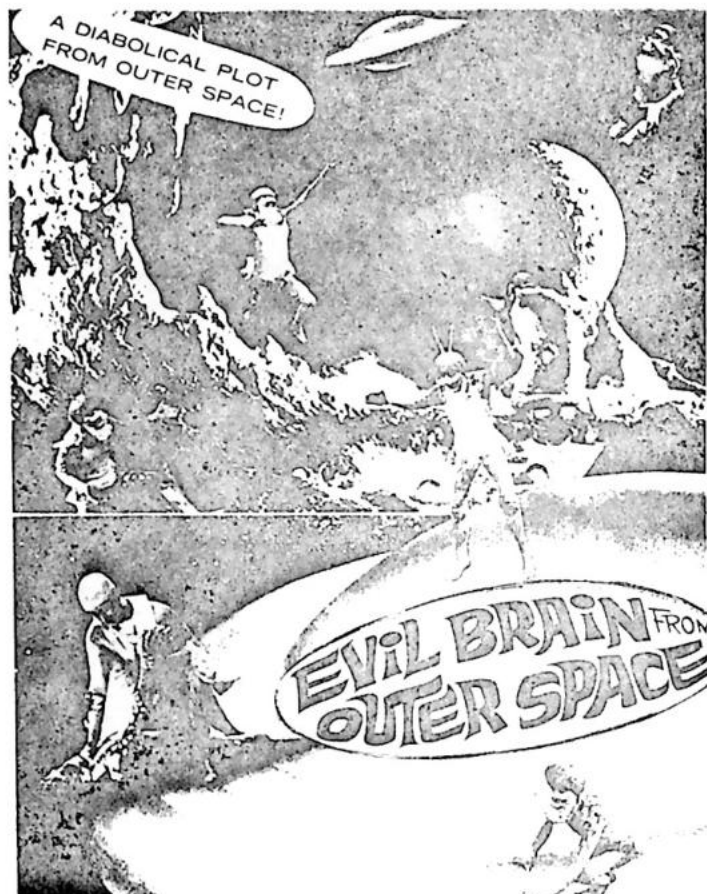
In spite of the inadequacies that face the Japanese superhero films which are meeting with continued success and the American films which have seen a tremendous decline in popularity, the superhero films of both countries contain a redeeming quality that the young ones find so appealing. It is the presence of a staunch supporter of the ideals of civilized man—ideals brainwashed into them since the youngsters were crawling on all fours; the presence of an adventurer who travels to places often never seen by the little ones; the presence of an honest, polite, and trustworthy soul—someone to believe in and share his experiences; someone to emulate. The wild imaginings of the young can accept the moralistic attitudes of a super being who works his wonders in a fantasy world filled with monsters and the like. The real-life world is more fantasy to the young ones than any scriptwriter could ever conceive.

"When I grow up?" one youngster might respond. "I'm going to be Supergiant!" Or insert any other superhero's name the little ones have been fascinated with over the past 40 years. More likely than not the names would be familiar to most individuals who have come in contact with the American serials or the superheroes on American television. Only now it is Japan's turn to accomplish a gradual turnabout of popularity in their favor.

Prosel: Supergiant

Shin Toho (literally "New Toho"), born in 1947 from striking technicians and actors who opposed Toho's union policy, acquired a few very skilled film craftsmen as a result of the formation and was therefore able to produce several memorable motion pictures in its early history. A fight with Toho ensued when the parent company needed film and the prodigy needed cinemas. In spite of a profitable settlement Shin Toho experienced financial troubles in the middle fifties and turned to exploitation films as a means of accruing the proverbial "fast buck." But success was not forthcoming and a struggling Shin Toho, a latter day equivalent to America's PRC or Monogram, ceased production in 1961. It is from this final period that SUPERGIANT arose.

From which source Supergiant can claim his beginnings is impossible to discern. He may have had his start based on the fundamentals of the American comic and film medium, for a resemblance to some of the American comic and motion picture heroes is evident, coincidence or not. Similarities with the





JFFJ/18

American serial form extend as well into the production and of SUPERGIANT's nine feature-length episodes filmed in black and white between 1957 and 1959: quick cuts; orgiastic fighting sequences wherein hordes of villains are dispatched by the solitary hero; the "apparently" stock soundtrack of repetitious sounding martial music and electronic effects; the most minute amount of characterization; heavy doses of action; overused, over-sized, outlandish, and impractical weaponry; the sleaziest of cardboard sets; far-fetched costumes and story-lines, basically concerning alien invasion; seemingly endless captures and escapes that plague both sides. The list is endless, but the few mentioned above provide a good comparison between the two country's serial efforts, for Japan its earliest work, and pretty much summarizes the overall effect and appearance of the SUPERGIANT films.

As far as can be determined, the cast and technicians for the series remain constant throughout. Unfortunately, only four of the nine features are in release to American television: EVIL BRAIN FROM OUTER SPACE, ATOMIC RULERS OF THE WORLD, ATTACK FROM SPACE, and INVADERS FROM SPACE. Which four of the nine episodes and their respective years of release they represent in the series is uncertain. If anyone has access to such information, this author would welcome the data.

The name of the hero chosen for the American-released films is "Starman." What prompted such a move is anyone's guess. The choice may allow for better dubbing or easier promotion to television studios with a more commercial sounding name. There are many possibilities, but only one true answer. One can only toss out suggestions as to why the transition occurred.

Evil Brain from Outer Space

Balazar, the diabolical genius leader of the planets in the Marpet Galaxy, has been assassinated, but his followers succeed in keeping his brain alive. Now that brain leads a great invasion of our solar system.

The creatures of the Emerald Planet send a man of steel, Starman, to stop the Marpetians as they plan to attack Earth.

A young scientist, Kawada, upon learning that Balazar's brain already has landed on Earth, tries to destroy it, but finds that it cannot be killed by ordinary methods. He seeks to warn the people of Earth of the imminent danger, but it is to no avail. Meanwhile the Marpetians attack every strata of life on Earth. They weaken humans with disease, destroy entire cities. The Marpetians begin to multiply as horribly malformed mutants. Starman fights the evil hordes, but is outnumbered.

World leaders realize that their only hope for salvation lies in destroying Balazar's brain. When Starman battles his way into the Marpetian supreme headquarters, one of Earth's greatest scientists quickly follows to use his new powerful formula to destroy the evil brain.

Starman's mission is successful, and he returns to the Emerald Planet leaving behind an Earth which is at peace again.

Atomic Rulers of the World

The evil leaders of the Meropol Nation plan

to take over the world by planting atomic devices in every nation and threatening to set them off unless the nations surrender. Knowing the threatened holocaust could destroy their entire galaxy, the creatures on the Emerald Planet send Starman to save Earth.

As he enters Earth's atmosphere, Starman saves an airliner lost in a storm, but he detects an atomic device on board and upon landing seeks to learn the plans of the men carrying it. The saboteurs are Meropolians, and Starman engages them in a fight. During the battle the atomic device is taken by a group of boys from a local orphanage.

Later, the Meropolians seek to learn from one of the boys, Ito, where the device is hidden. But Starman has already retrieved the device and put it in a safe location. Then Starman, disguised as an Earthling, rescues Ito and goes in search of Muntar Deem, the Meropolian leader.

Starman eventually confronts the evil leader within the Meropolian attack base. There is a mighty battle, and Starman finally succeeds in stopping the Meropolians from setting off their arsenal of atomic weapons. Muntar Deem and his deadly hordes are defeated and the Earth is delivered from annihilation.

Attack from Space

A warrior race in the Sapphire Galaxy begins an attack against our solar system. From the friendly Emerald Planet comes Starman to save Earth.

Starman intercepts one of the Sapphirean ships, but is unable to defeat its guidance system and divert it. Meanwhile, three young children accidentally discover an already established Sapphirean base. They are held as hostages as the Sapphireans lure their father, Dr. Yamanaka, to the base. The doctor is forced to turn traitor against Earth and fly the ship he had built as a defense against space attacks—the only ship which could defeat the Sapphireans.

Starman succeeds finally in destroying part of the attacking force. But Bundar, the supreme leader of the Sapphireans, is only moments away from total victory as he waits for the doctor to fly to the main base and join the attack.

New York, London, and Tokyo are destroyed before Doctor Yamanaka is able to get his children on board the defense ship. With Starman's help the doctor turns against the Sapphireans and succeeds in destroying their attack headquarters. The ship, the doctor at the controls, rams the space vessel containing the Sapphirean nuclear forces, and the entire attack is turned back. The Sapphireans' ship explodes, and our solar system is spared.

Invaders from Space

Earth is about to be invaded by the Salamander Men of the planet Kulamon. From another planet comes Starman to rescue Earth.

An advance party of Kulamonians already is spreading deadly germs throughout the human population of the world as the main army of Kulamonians is nearing Earth in space ships. The Kulamonians who have landed capture some of our leading scientists and try to use their brains to invent weapons of destruction. The scientists who are free desperately seek a weapon of defense against the terrible invaders from space.

Noriko, the young daughter of Dr. Fukami, is held captive as a lever to pry from her father the

whereabouts of the secret defense laboratory.

In the last few hours before being attacked the scientists discover a poison which might destroy the Kulamonians. The space creatures use diabolical tortures to learn of the new weapon, but Starman defeats one of their armies in a mighty battle and rescues Noriko.

The defensive weapon is used in a final decisive clash in which Earth is saved.

"With at least three billion stars in our galaxy, somewhere in deep space there are thousands of planets with civilizations built by living creatures. Some peaceful, some war-like. From a distant galaxy a malicious race of creatures has set out to conquer our universe, beginning with the planet Earth. A nuclear war is imminent, the results of which will poison even the distant reaches of outer space and planets such as this one, the Emerald Planet.

"Though they are fierce fighters when it comes to defending and protecting their way of life, the Emerald Men in the Marphet Galaxy are essentially peaceful beings. They realize, however, that the enemies' mad idea of conquest now threatens their way of living. Concrete steps must be taken to prevent this dangerous act of aggression. The High Council of the Emerald Planet is now deciding what must be done.

"The Emerald Men realize the assaulting force which the enemy is sending to Earth represents their finest leaders and their entire army. If this force can be destroyed before a nuclear war can begin, then the universe will be safe. The High Council agrees that there is only one way to end all their invasion plans. The scientists of the Emerald Planet have invented one of the most ingenious mechanisms the universe has ever seen. Called a Globe-Meter, it is carried on the wrist. It enables the wearer to do three things: to fly through space, detect radioactivity, and to speak and understand every language on the planet Earth. Finally, the High Council of the Emerald Planet reaches a decision. In order to save Earth from the invasion of the enemy, they once more must present the Globe-Meter to one of their fellow creatures, send him to Earth. He is the creature known as Starman."

In effect these preceding words are used by a narrator to begin each of the four features available in America, though specific names are used to pin-point a certain galaxy or race of beings who plan to conquer the universe, and they quite appropriately introduce the superhero to the viewers, as well as set the stage for the story to unfold in the next hour and a half. Visually the prologue presents a surrealistic scene taking place on the barren surface of the Emerald Planet. It is the convening of the planet's leaders and advisors to decide on an approach for solving the dilemma created by intervening outside forces. The end result is always to send Starman to save Earth. And there he stands, mounting a rock formation with the planetary winds softly billowing his white cape behind him.

The supposed planet as presented in the intro has an obviously painted sky background. In the foreground of the small set surrounded by unrealistic, tall rocks is a semi-circular table at which is seated a myriad variety of creatures—a kind of council of Japanese gods with Starman as a Christian Jesus Christ overlooking the well-being of the Earth—mostly presented as robots with tin can appendages and shapes, lights flashing on their person, with each individual

stiffly moving in repetitious cycles. (See *ATOMIC RULERS OF THE WORLD* illustration.) A possible though highly unlikely existing aggregation of "things" ever witnessed.

The camera pans to Starman—a humanoid form dressed completely in white. Of average build tending to border on the pudgy side, he far from resembles the George Reeves/Tom Tyler mold. He "looks" too good-natured, too kind, too average, even when he frowns. It is hard to imagine him as any threat to the minions of malice. Actually he's kind of cute—like a grown up kid. This appearance may be his drawing card for the youngsters who watch the show, though adults may find his looks a bit hard to accept. And oxygen plays no role in limiting Starman's activities for he is able to sustain himself on his own planet, in space, and on Earth with no difficulties whatsoever. Thanks are due no doubt to the infamous Globe-Meter, a very fancy wrist-watch.

As Supergiant stands on the rock formation, one cannot help but be reminded of a similar visual that occurred in the television show *Superman*, where he stands superimposed on Earth with his cape and the American flag blowing in the atmospheric breezes.

Supergiant often appears in the features dressed in a suit, topcoat, and hat, and on occasion performs feats of strength in this garb. While Superman used his disguise to distract people from his real identity, Supergiant obviously feels that due to his short stays on Earth and since he resides elsewhere during the interim of his saving Earth his chances of being recognized by someone are minimal. Such aplomb!

Regarding the SUPERGIANT series, the problem with it, and the American serials, is time and money, neither one of which is in abundance. Forced to shoot the footage at break-neck speed using limited resources will obviously damage the end result. And that is what happened to SUPERGIANT. However, the director faces an additional fate—filling on the average a 90 minute period with excellent material. The US serial makers needed only to fill a 15 to 20 minute slot, each episode merely a reworking of the others. So threatened by 90 minutes, a bare storyline, and a small budget, irregardless of the competency of the director, there are too many factors playing against his favor to ever allow for quality end products. In spite of the inadequacies of the SUPERGIANT films, many find them fun to watch due to the sense of wonder they have maintained and appreciate the films simply for having been attempted.

The effects of the films are for the most part mediocre, for example the flying sequences of Supergiant. Lessso, there's one wire, two wires... There are, however, two highlights of all the effects that are fun to watch irregardless of quality.

First, the jumping bit that occurs among the battle scenes. Supergiant, and more often than not his opponent, can be observed jumping around like kangaroos to assorted locations, like from a precarious girder on a tank at a petroleum refinery to the edge of a building all the while they are fighting. Amazingly, this trick is quite effective and is achieved in part by suggestion. Supergiant jumps up high in the air from where he is standing. Another scene is filmed of him at another location doing the same thing, but this segment is reversed in the laboratories. The two scenes are tightly edited together, and the appearance is given of a lightningquick and very long jump.

Secondly, the fight scenes. Scores and scores of baddies rush Supergiant—no, not all. Save for a few all hover in the background and on the fringes of the battle. Filmic license? If all the evil peo-

ple charged Supergiant, he would be pummeled to a pulp in no time. But no, only a few are brave men and soon get the _____ kicked out of them courtesy of various judo punches choreographed like a Broadway musical. (You thought the kung-fu films were first, did you?) It's so exhilarating to see and hear the brigands groan and fall following various killer chops performed by Supergiant with lightning speed! But a grimace comes to the viewer's face when he perceives a jab miss the intended victim by a foot, yet the villain still groans, grunts, and reacts to the swing just as if it hit him. One can also notice an enemy of Supergiant fall from a blow out of the range of the camera and then see a dummy substituted for the blacked-out individual, picked up by Supergiant and thrown into a crowd of on-rushing blaggards who fall like bowling pins from the collision. It is all done for fun for the kids, but the technical mares inject additional unintended humor for the older kids.

The nine films are as outdated as the American serials they emulate. The fault basically lies in the format—a style no longer favored in the United States, but meeting with success in Japan, at least on the television sets. Americans, due to their present viewing habits, will probably never allow a revival of the serial. It looks very bleak.

On the cheery side for those of you who think the SUPERGIANT films are unsophisticated, yet a joy to watch, be aware that Starman is now in the throes of a limited revolution—a revolution that will cause no change in bringing back serials nor making the world a better place to live. Honored by the showing of his films on television and at conventions, Starman is being given praise by the throngs of people who have witnessed the showings. The result is due to the "camp" qualities of the films. It is the mediocre film techniques, the strange effects, the general shoddiness, the extremely serious dialogue—"the dated serial approach"—that has brought this turn of events. An American god-like looking superhero is one thing, but an average off-the-street Japanese dude who puts on a bathing cap and tights and who has been given super powers is cause for celebration.



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Deze schlager weldra te ANTWERPEN !

Phase 2: Invaders from the Space Ship; Space Greyhound

The second generation of the superhero is a product of one company also, Toei: INVADERS FROM THE SPACE SHIP (1959) and SPACE GREYHOUND (1961). As do all the superhero films manufactured in Japan, these two cinematic works have a special appeal to kids outside of the simple plotting of their storyline. It is the featuring of children in the films as aides to the respective films' superhero stars, but Phase 2 takes the approach a step further toward greater involvement between the two factions which provides even better empathetic relationships for the films and their leading characters. This is best displayed in INVADERS FROM THE SPACE SHIP (released to television as PRINCE OF SPACE) where Space Prince's alter-ego is a teenager whose occupation is shining shoes and who is friends to many youngsters in the city in which he lives. One can easily imagine the young people viewing the film and unconsciously aligning themselves to the younger star, as opposed to the "fatherly" image Ken Utsui projects in his role as Supergiant, as well as with the occupation the Space Prince has chosen to disguise his real identity. SPACE GREYHOUND's superhero, Ironsharp, also cuts a lithe, youthful figure who in his normal working hours operates as a scientist, an honorable profession a lad may want to project for his distant future, while the shoe shine job may lie in his near future.

Both films as products of one company share improvements over the low budgeted Shinto series. This is not meant to construe the fact that the Toei films are recipients of big budgets, but rather to generalize on the polished appearances both films convey. Obviously Toei had more financial resources to inject into the lifestream of both products, but even Toei skimped on the two motion pictures. Toei knew what the films were to represent and their primary target audience to which they were aimed so they most assuredly did not avail the budgets they would allow on their bigger film projects.

INVADERS FROM THE SPACE SHIP is the best of all the films in Phase 1 or 2. More effort went into its production, evident in the consistently imaginative and mobile camera work, high quality effects, a score composed primarily of electronic music put to restrained use, and competent acting, less broad in style than the Supergiant films and SPACE GREYHOUND (released to television as INVASION OF THE NEPTUNE MEN.) The storyline for INVADERS FROM THE SPACE SHIP is a little less farfetched than the other films yet retains the clichés of serial storytelling and filmic techniques, which, abetted by the improved technical work mentioned above, makes the film a classic of the Japanese superhero films.

Filed in black and white and scope, INVADERS is in actuality two films each complete in themselves. Both films have been edited together for release to American television.

Part 1: The people of Japan are terror-stricken when Phantom Mission (Phantom of Crangkor in the U.S. release) approaches Earth in his space ship while warning mankind to surrender to those from outer space. However, Planet Prince (Space Prince)

who defends right and justice arrives in his flying saucer and goes into action against Phantom Mission.

When Shibazaki, a scientist who is assisting Dr. Maki in perfecting a new rocket fuel, is hypnotized by Phantom Mission into stealing the secret of the fuel, Planet Prince comes to the rescue but is repulsed and vanishes through the Phantom's use of magic smoke. But when Phantom Mission takes off in Dr. Maki's rocket Planet Prince reappears and recaptures the secret of the new rocket fuel. Dr. Maki's rocket explodes with the Phantom Mission inside, and all is well once more.

Part 2: Having escaped the rocket before the explosion, Phantom Mission, still determined to conquer Earth, returns to do battle. A crisis has occurred: aircraft are missing over the Pacific, and ships and planes disappear one after another. In the meantime Dr. Maki, the atomic physicist, is captured by the people from outer space.

Planet Prince hastens to combat the danger to the Earth and learns of the kidnapping of the noted scientist. He follows Phantom Mission to his planet and there battles the dreaded giant protector of the Mission's base. Planet Prince is able to overcome the giant and finally rescues the scientist from the kidnappers. The planet, Phantom Mission, and his evil followers are destroyed in a cataclysmic explosion.

Rather important to mention perhaps is Toei's first attempt at a giant monster. On the planet (called Crangkor in the U.S. version) as protector of the planet's sole city there lives the Giant of Crangkor, an over-sized version of a Crangkorian made up a tad more grossly. The miniatures are very nice, but the giant looks quite miserable and seems out of place in the rocky mountain region which he inhabits. The battle he takes on with the Space Prince in his space craft is dynamically presented though as sequences are edited together of the minia-



ture craft buzzing the giant, the firing of rays back and forth between the craft and the giant (emanating from the huge beast's mouth), matte shots from the inside of the Space Prince's space ship showing the giant on the view screen, and matte shots of the battle as viewed from within the white city of Orangkor.

When one considers the intelligent sf films of recent years INVADERS/SPACE SHIP and the rest become pallid in the comparison. Understandably though these films are a product of that neophytic age of fantasy filmmaking when sf and fantasy motion pictures were looked down upon by filmmakers and audiences alike. (It is amazing how closely aligned the films in Phase 2 and 1 are to the sf/horror/fantasy films in the U.S. that were produced in the fifties and early sixties with the bizarre, yet crude makeup, the stilted styles, and impoverished look about them.) Too, these films are not geared for the sophisticated viewer but toward entertainment for the young masses, and thus should not be considered fodder for the herd of elite critics.

SPACE GREYHOUND, in black and white/scope, lacks the impact, the smooth flow of action, and the technical improvements evident in INVADERS/SPACE SHIP. The film projects itself as being a bit too chaotic and often slapdash in its compilation of scenes. However, the overall quality of this motion picture lifts it above the evident tackiness of SUPERGLANT, but it can in no way approach the standards set by INVADERS.

Shinichi Tachibana, a space scientist, is popular with the boys and girls of the Children's Space Institute, but the children feel something lacking in Shinichi. This is due to his rather meek and mild personality—a rather humble soul lacking also athletic prowess. His secret identity, Ironsharp, is quite the opposite, and as the superhero he is protector of the world and a friend to children everywhere. (He is called "Space Chief" in the U.S. version.)

One day the children of the space center are attacked by an unidentified spaceship and are narrowly rescued by Ironsharp who appears from nowhere in his space craft and disappears just as quickly once his work is done.

The world is suffering from unidentified ultra micro-electric waves which have made electronic

brains inactive, made electric clocks turn back by themselves, reversed electric trains for mass transit, and exploded atomic reactors.

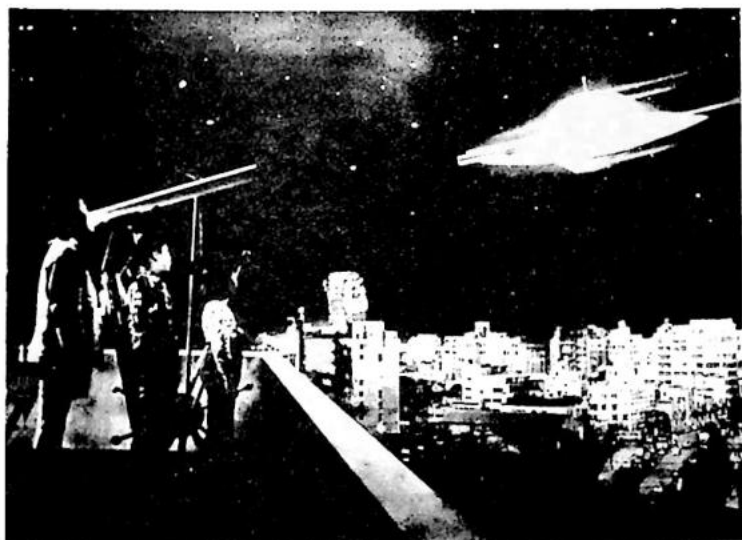
Although the boys and girls tell of the spaceship and their rescue by Ironsharp, no one believes them. However, Shinichi analyzes the matter which the children brought back from the spot where they encountered the alien space ship and learns that it is an alloy of regium and panium. From this he infers that the spaceship came from Neptune.

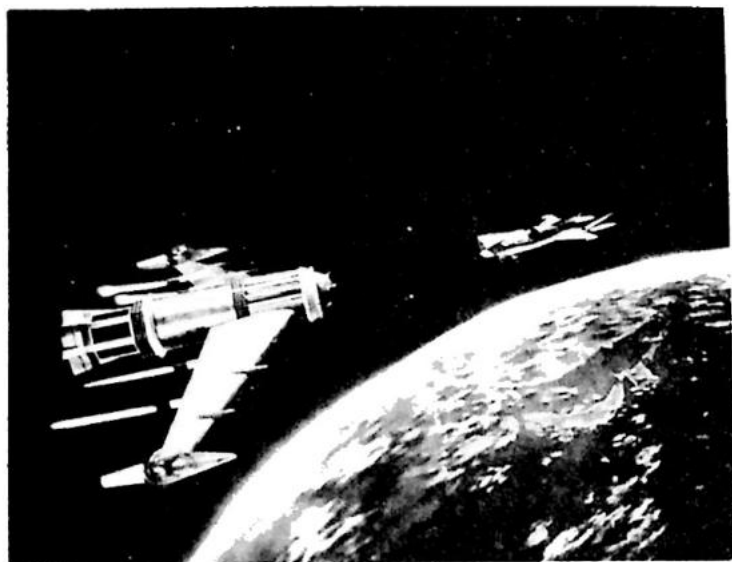
The alien UFO attacks the Space Science Institute of Dr. Tanikawa which is guarded by electro-walls called the Elequi Barrier, but missiles sent to destroy the mysterious ship have their guidance systems fouled-up by the barrier, and the Neptune craft narrowly escapes. However, men from the distant planet land on Earth and explode the generator of the Elequi Barrier. The disturbance causes the temperature of the Earth to begin dropping. Neptune intends to destroy mankind by freezing the planet. But the generator is soon repaired by Mr. Yanagida, and the temperature starts to rise. Suddenly, Ironsharp arrives in his space ship and battles in the air with the alien space craft. A small landing craft which is part of the Neptune invasion forces draws near the Institute, but Yanagida is able to direct several missiles toward the mother ship and the smaller craft and all are destroyed. There is now a clear blue sky once more above the children who are sure that Ironsharp will continue to guard Earth.

The effects for GREYHOUND are a strange mixture indeed, one of mediocrity coalesced with excellence. The work commissioned for the film is a sad affair and lacks professionalism, though credit must be given for its inventiveness. Effects can be effective if properly handled and conceived with the budget in mind, though one cannot expect results like those John Fulton created for THE TEN COMMANDMENTS. Surprisingly, one of the basic flies in the ointment is Ironsharp's mode of transportation—a space car, a cross between an old Henry J with all four wheels jacked up and a one man submarine, looking akin to something from the Republic invasion serials. The machine, an integral part of the film, comes equipped with heavy duty shocks. It is impossible to repress laughter at the sight of this refugee from an amuse-

Left: Dressed immaculately in glowing white is the amazingly pure-looking marvel of the Far Eastern skies, Planet Prince or Space Prince, as he is known in America. Middle: Approaching the city in great haste in search of the dreaded Phantom Mission is Space Prince's space craft as witnessed by the super-

hero's faithful young friends. Right: The fierce Phantom Mission and his deadly compatriots aim their outlandish weaponry, reminiscent of the equipment used by the villains and heroes in the American serials of the 30's and 40's, at the approaching superhero. (Photos from INVADERS FROM THE SPACE SHIP.)





Left: Special visual effects created especially for Toei's SPACE GREYHOUND. Other effects footage was lifted from Toei's doomsday thriller, WORLD WAR III



BREAKS OUT. Right: Ironsharp, the star of SPACE GREYHOUND, his friends and followers, and the infamous space coupe during a lull in filming activities.

ment park stiffly bouncing off the rough terrain.

The excellent visual effects are courtesy of Toei's WHEN WORLD WAR III BREAKS OUT. Scenes of flying saucers swooping into a city for the kill like birds of prey after sustenance are intercut into the film along with blinding explosions of the buildings in the city under attack. A shot bursts from a saucer. The repercussion quickly ensues as whole city blocks spew out their insides in one heart stopping roar onto the innocent people below, courtesy of truly master-craftsman matte work.

But the good are not enough to defeat the tarnish created by the poor effects. And so as a total unit they fail to supply the film with the needed support that they as a necessary part of a motion picture of this type should supply, and a part of the reason why SPACE GREYHOUND is less of a film than INVADERS FROM THE SPACE SHIP. A short shooting schedule, in combination with a limited budget, may have been the reason behind the borrowing of footage. If so, this would help explain the rushed appearance of the other technical work in the production.

The concept of Ironsharp is quite similar to the dimensions of Space Prince. Both in the real world are humble servants of mankind, though one wears a white collar while the other dons the blue of the laborer, both become strength, justice personified as the superhero, both are young, and both have made friends with boys and girls. But whereas Space Prince's inner workings are glossed over, those of Shinichi are made known, and as such he becomes a more complex individual. However, is his role as a meek, weak-willed, unathletic clod, yet humble servitor as a scientist, a put on to dissuade anyone from possibly connecting him to his alter-ego, or is he really the poor soul he portrays, and only through his transformation (never explained) to Ironsharp can he become the purveyor of protection, the all-around jock that he would like to be, at last gaining the social acceptance he was unable to obtain as the scientist? Does this teach, if the latter assumption is true, that to become the "thing" of one's dreams, to be accepted, one should put up some sort of front on occasion? Ironsharp is loved by the children both as the scientist and as the superhero; the adult world, his peers, are interested only in the superhero personality, so perhaps the transformations is

a necessary part of his psyche to keep him existing.

This idea comes through in most of the superhero films that deal with the dual identity element, and it is a complex situation, but perhaps to the youngster who watches the films this exchange is quite desirable on a different level since they may be unable to perceive the one just stated. Their dream would be to escape their present reality of parental dominance and older generation pressures and conformity forced upon them.

Both premises are intriguing but to comment any further on them would be too great a digression from the discussion of SPACE GREYHOUND and its leading character, Ironsharp. Shinichi Chiba plays the superhero a bit too broad, unfortunately, over-gesturing with his hands and body movements. There is just too much swashbuckling, too much Errol Flynn, in his characterization of Ironsharp. Adding insult to injury is the individual dubbing the voice of the mighty protector who has chosen to read his lines like a combination of Dudley Do-Right and Bela Lugosi, squeezing out every drop of juice of ham from the lines. Space Prince in INVADERS/SPACE SHIP is played much more restrained and as a result ends up as being the more believable of the lot because of it.

To bring this portion of the article to an end, it must be assessed that INVADERS FROM THE SPACE SHIP and SPACE GREYHOUND are not the progression beyond SUPERGIANT's approach to the superhero genre one would have hoped to have seen. That is to say that both motion pictures bear the trademarks of the serial in mood and technique as described in Phase I--the innumerable fight scenes, outlandish weaponry, many chases, captures, and escapes, etc., etc.--all preceeding the final dramatic clash wherein the superhero is victor over the dark forces of evil. It would have been heartening indeed to see a superhero film that does not stray into the serial format, but then again it would not be the superhero genre were it not for the way the films wove themselves into. In fact it is difficult to imagine what the motion pictures would be like without this clichéd style, probably dreary affairs. But after SPACE GREYHOUND, the Japanese do not delve any further into the feature format for the superhero film, so any progression in that area is not realized, at least not for the

present, for following GREYHOUND the Japanese turn their attention to the production of superhero serials for television where the superhero finally achieves the success he's struggled so hard to attain.

FILMOGRAPHY

SUPERGIANT: Produced by Fuji Eiga Co. Ltd. and Shinto Co., Ltd.; Distributor for Japan: Toho Co., Ltd.; Films in the series: **SUPERGIANT #1** (1956), **SUPERGIANT #2** (1956), **KOTETSU NO KIOJIN—KAISEIJI NO MAJYO** (1957), **KOTETSU NO KYOJIN—CHIKYU METSUDO SUNZEN** (1957), **JINKO EISEI TO JINRUI NO HAMETSU** (1958), **UCHUTEI TO JINKO EISEI NO GEKITOTSU** (1958), **UCHU KAIJIN SHUTSUGEN** (1958), **AKUMA NO KESHIIN** (1959); **DEVIL INCARNATE:** Director: Chogei Akasaka; Length: 5255 feet; Released on March 17), **DOKUGA OKOKU** (1959; **KINGDOM OF POISON-MOTH:** Director: Chogei Akasaka; Length: 5054 feet; Released April 25); Series directors: Teruo Ishii, Akira Mitauwa, Chogei (Koreyoshi) Akasaka; Series screenplay: Ichiro Miyagawa; Series photography: Takashi Watanabe; Series music: Chumei Watanabe; Starring: Kon Utsui, Junko Ikouchi, Shoji Hakayama, Minoru Takada, Kan Hayashi, Chisako Tahara, Akira Tamura, Fumiko Mitata, Reiko Sato, Kani Asita, Shinsuke Miki-koto, Mihako Tamada; Filmed in black and white; U.S. television releases (corresponding Japanese title and release dates unknown): **EVIL BRAIN FROM OUTER SPACE**, **ATTACK FROM SPACE**, **ATOMIC RULERS OF THE WORLD**, **INVADERS FROM SPACE**; Running times for each American release: 83 minutes; Originally released to U.S. television by Walter Manley Enterprises, Inc. in 1964; Current U.S. distributor: Teleworld, Inc.; (Editor's note: In France three new feature films were made from the compilation of the nine SUPERGIANT episodes, each themselves of feature length, and are titled: **THE INVINCIBLE SPACEMAN**, **SPACEMAN VS. SATELLITES**, and **THE ATTACK OF THE FLYING SAUCERS**. Lastly, for **DEVIL INCARNATE** and **KINGDOM OF POISON-MOTH**, Chogei Akasaka is given sole credit for direction.)

INVADERS OF THE SPACE SHIP (YUSEI OJI; U.S. television release title: PRINCE OF SPACE): Production company: Toei Co., Ltd.; Director: Eihiro Wakabayashi; Idea: Sanohiko Sonoda; Original story: Masaru Ito; Screenplay: Shin Morita; Photography: Masahiko Iimura; Special effects: Shozo Muroki; Lighting: Kenzo Ginya; Art direction: Shuichiro Nakamura; Assistant director: Hajime Sato; Sound: Shozo Hirokami; Music: Katsuhisa Hattori; Theme song: Toshiba Records; Words: Shu Igami; Melody: Katsuhisa Hattori; Vocal: Yoichi Ohe; Editing: Ko Nichii; Filmed in black and white and ToeiScope; Part one running time: 57 min.; Part two running time: 64 min.; Part one released March 19, 1959; Part two released May 26, 1959; Released in the U.S. to television by Walter Manley Enterprises in 1962 as a compilation of both films; U.S. running time: 83 minutes; Current distributor: Teleworld, Inc.; Starring Tatsuya Umemiya, Ushio Skashi, Nobu Yatsuna, Ken Sudob, Joji Oka, Hiroko Mine, Takashi Kanda; (Editor's note: Castle of Frankenstein, Vol. 6, no. 2, lists a 121 minute running time—a total of the two films' lengths—and also lists the film as a color release, though I am quite positive that the film was released in black and white only.)

SPACE GREYHOUND (UCHU KAISOKU—SEN; U.S. television release title: INVASION OF THE NEPTUNE MEN): Production company: Toei Co., Ltd.; Director: Koji Ota; Executive producer: Hiroshi Okawa; Screenplay: Shin Morita; Photography: Shizuka Fujii; Starring: Shinichi Chiba, Shinjiro Ehara, Mitsue Komiya, Kappai Matsumo-

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to, Ryuko Minakami; Filmed in black and white and Toei Scope; Original running time: 74 minutes; U.S. running time: 82 minutes; Japanese release date: 1961; U.S. release date: 1962; Originally released to U.S. television by Walter Manley Enterprises, Inc.; Current distributor: Teleworld, Inc.; American version by Pro-Pix, Inc.; (Editor's note: Comparison of U.S. and Japanese running time reveals a lengthier American release. Perchance THE FINAL WAR effects footage was added to the film after it was purchased for U.S. television distribution to pad length.)

TO BE CONTINUED



GHI-PT. DRAH TWO

Tony Malanowski & Duncan

At the clinic tests are being run on the Martian/Princess who is strapped to a table with complex electrical apparatus connected to her.

"Increase to twelve," Dr. Tsukamoto orders, "fifteen...twenty."

The doctor and Shindo bend down over the girl and examine her. "What do you think, doctor?" Shindo asks as the doctor unstraps the girl. "Can she be cured?"

"Huh? Cured?" the doctor exclaims looking up from his work. "There's nothing wrong with her. She's perfectly normal. You can shut down the machine now."

Shindo gasps. "You say she's normal, doctor? Why does she keep saying she's a Martian?...You mean she really is a Martian?"

"I don't imagine so," Tsukamoto chuckles. "We'll find out more when she talks. I have a new medicine...a new hypnotic drug."

While the doctor talks to Shindo, and the assistants scurry about their own work, the girl sits erect on the table. "Why does no one pay heed to my warning? The entire human race will perish from the Earth. Where the monster Ghidrah passes only flaming ruins are left."

"Ghidrah?" Tsukamoto utters in awe.

"Centuries ago," the girl explains, "the monster appeared in the skies of Mars. Within a month the culture of Mars had been wiped out completely. The civilization on my planet had reached a stage of development which you people will not achieve for a long time. Centuries...at least. Today, because of the space monster, it is a dead world...dead and unpopulated."

"It would be a bad situation if that creature came here to Earth," Tsukamoto admits.

"It's worse," the girl intones solemnly, "because he's arrived!"

In the streets not far away a car with a loud speaker mounted atop it spreads the alarm: "Attention! Attention all citizens! The space monster discovered in Kurobe Gorge last night has been identified...It is...Ghidrah! All proper measures are being taken to render him harmless. However, in the interest of public safety the city must be evacuated at once."

The people close their shops up quickly. Customers flee without a moment's hesitation. People watching from the rooftops for Ghidrah view a winged form nearing the city. The lightning-like breath of the monster razes buildings instantly as it enters the city's limits.

Back in the clinic Dr. Tsukamoto prepares to give the girl the new drug. Administering the drug,

the doctor reassuringly says to the girl, "Well, don't worry and rest quietly."

A bulletin comes over the public address system to break the silence: "Attention! Attention! Godzilla and Rodan are heading this way. Evacuate at once!"

Godzilla wades through the water followed by Rodan, both heading for the city where they can continue their battle. But Rodan doubles back and slams his huge bulk into Godzilla's massive frame. The concussion of the force throws Godzilla into the water, but he quickly regains his footing.

In a building hastily made into a headquarters for high-ranking Japanese officials, a conference is called to discuss the threat of Ghidrah. "Dr. Murai," a speaker drones on, "has told us how this dreadful monster, this calamity which befell our nation, grew right before his very eyes. In the recent past we have had Godzilla and Rodan...and now Ghidrah. What will the government do now? How will it deal with this new crisis? The people want to know, and they want to know now!"

The program is being televised across the nation. People watch, eyes transfixed to their sets.

"So I call upon the Ministry of Defense, the Ministry of Interior, for a serious and responsible answer to the question."

"General Modo," another speaker says, requesting a reply to the previous statements.

The general stands up and begins his speech: "The Ministry of Home Defense is maintaining a very close watch on the movements of the monsters, both Godzilla and Rodan. As for this new one, Ghidrah, we are working on a new, technical approach to this problem. As soon as we finalize this new approach, we will, of course, implement it without delay." He stiffly returns to his seat.

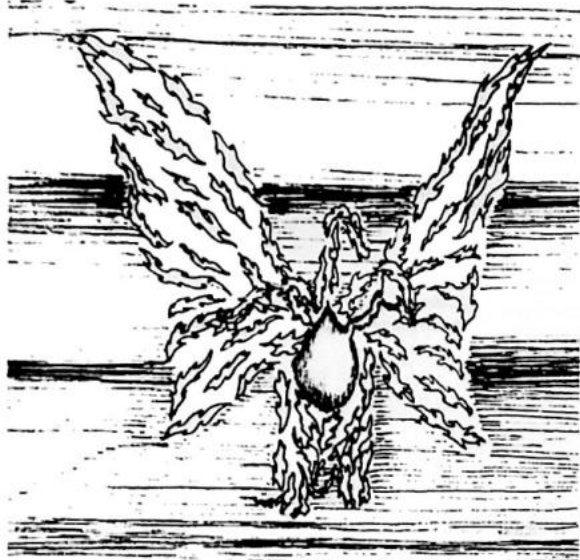
"The Ministry of Defense is making excuses," one of the officials accuses.

"What are these plans you're developing? We want to know how you propose to destroy these monsters!"

"Well, General?"

The general stands again and clears his throat. "May I remind you this problem is not one we face alone. The entire world is watching us. We cannot assume responsibility for authorizing the deployment and use of atomic weapons." His voice takes on a more serious tone. "Gentlemen...we need whatever help we are able to obtain. In this case it makes no difference where we finally get that help from! Again he sits down."

Shindo breaks in: "If you please, I have brought some people here who I believe might help us. In the



TERRY SPIDLE '72

words of the General, 'It makes no difference where we get the help from,' so I ask your permission, Mr. Chairman, may I bring them in?"

"Of course!"

Shindo signals to a guard who opens a door to allow Naoko, carrying a wooden box, to enter. She sets the box down on a table in the center of the room and opens it.

In a restaurant the assassins watch the meeting on a television. One points to Shindo on the screen and says, "Hey, that's the one who..."

"Shut-up!" Malness commands sharply as he strikes the man's hand.

Back in the conference room Shindo presents his plan. "May I present Miss Naoko Shindo of Toya Broadcasting. And here, gentlemen, we have the world-famous twin fairies of Infant Island."

"Well, this is quite a surprise," an official says with a smile. "You didn't go home after all."

"That's right. We stayed with the prophetess instead," they answer.

"What prophetess?" he asks. Then remembering, "Ahh, that Martian girl. What happened to her? Where is she?"

"We left her in the clinic with Dr. Tsukamoto," Naoko replies.

"So that's where we'll find her," one of Malness's henchmen murmurs.

"Yeah," Malness interjects. He and his men leave the restaurant for the clinic.

"Now, as you know," Shindo continues with his plan, "Mothra and Godzilla once had a fight. And as all of us know, Godzilla lost that fight. I think Mothra might help us in this fight against Ghidrah, if the fairies ask him for us."

"What do you say?" the chairman asks the twins. "Would you do it?"

The twins look at each other. "But...Mothra's only a little caterpillar now. I don't think it could beat Ghidrah."

"Then you won't be able to defend your peaceful island from Ghidrah, either," Naoko suggests.

"Uh-huh. That's what I'm worrying about," they sadly confess. "But..."

"But what?" Naoko inquires. "Tell me what were you going to say?"

"There's a way that might work."

"What way? Go on!" implores the chairman. "Tell us!"

"If Mothra, Rodan, and Godzilla all cooperate." The men at the tables are stunned. "Well, if they got together some way, they might be able to overcome Ghidrah." Everyone listens, snared in the web of doubt.

"Yes, but who could persuade them to cooperate?" the chairman demands.

"Mothra might. If we ask him, he will. Oh, I hope that Mothra can make them both agree to work together," the twins respond pessimistically. "Or it will be the end."

The ominous flapping of huge wings shatters the silence of the room. Ghidrah flies over the city, spewing deadly bolts of pure energy from his ugly maw. They explode the buildings instantly into thousands and millions of undistinguishable fragments. Towers, bridges, rides at a fair all fall prey to the monster. Ghidrah's destruction knows no bounds, as the beast from space, the eternal juggernaut, continues his dissection of mankind. He passes by a transmission tower, never once touching it. Not that it matters for the suction created by his wings pull the tower over like it were less than nothing.

Back in the building which stood the monster's attack is a chairman in panic: "It's the only solution open to us. Call Mothra! Call him right away!"

"Please call Mothra, won't you?" pleads Naoko.

The twins rise, look at the terrified humans and then at each other. They nod and begin to sing the chant of Mothra.

On Infant Isle Mothra acknowledges the call with a roar and squirms past the natives into the beckoning ocean waters.

Atop the sacred mountain of Japan, Mt. Fuji, which had previously been desecrated by the duel of King Kong and Godzilla, Rodan and Godzilla continue their own personal war. A burst of radiation from Godzilla strikes Rodan who shrugs it off and rises on massive wings, flies over Godzilla, and pecks sharply at his head, while Godzilla tries to swat the air-borne assailant away.

In the clinic Shindo speaks to Dr. Tsukamoto: "Doctor, how is she? Is that the effect of the hypnotic drug?"

"Uh-huh. Will you draw the curtains, please?"



he asks one of the nurses. One closes the blinds while the other pulls the curtains around the table closed. "I won't need you now. You'd better leave the area," he adds, thinking of the nurses' safety,

After the nurses leave, Dr. Tsukamoto anxiously states, "Well, let's see, maybe now we'll find out who she really is."

"You're in a deep sleep," Tsukamoto intones, "but your brain is awake, isn't it?" The girl nods. "Now, then, who are you really?"

"I...I am a Martian," she responds hypnotically to the question, much to the doctor and Shindo's amazement.

"Yes, of course," continues the doctor recovering from the shock. "But then...they're not very many of you Martians here on the Earth. How did you come here?"

"A certain few Martians who escaped to Earth on the day Mars died," she retorts.

"How long ago?"

"Oh, several millenia."

"Three-thousand years!" the doctor translates, quite astounded by the response. "And you've been living here ever since then?"

"Of course not. Not one of them is alive. Those were our ancestors who reached Earth. As they gradually became Earthlings, their highly developed minds degenerated. And only one instinct remained as a legacy from them."

"Instinct?" inquires Shindo. "For what?"

"The power to tell what the future holds."

Outside the clinic Malness and his gang drive up and begin their walk toward the building housing the Princess/prophets.

"Do you believe still that this poor girl is really the Princess?" the doctor charges.

"Of course I do, doctor, I know she is."

"Well...I suppose we can try shock treatment."

"Shock treatment?"

As the killers approach the building, a voice proclaims a solemn message to the area civilians: "Attention! All persons evacuate the area immediately. Godzilla and Rodan are heading this way. Evacuate immediately!"

"What do we do now?" one of Malness's henchmen inquires.

"We're here at last. We'll carry out our orders."

In the laboratory Shindo is worried about the approaching monsters. "Is it safe to remain here, doctor?"

"We must remain here. We can't stop the process



GURNEY

now."

As they progress with the treatment the girl shows no sign of change.

The worried doctor makes a decision: "Go into the next room and increase the voltage to five-hundred."

"Alright."

"No more than five-hundred. It would kill her."

"I understand." While Shindo starts toward the room, the assassins, who have just entered the room through a window, run for cover. Shindo sets the dial for five hundred, looks around, thinking he feels a presence, but leaves thinking it must be the pressure that has his mind working overtime.

One of Malness's men poises a gun at Shindo but the evil leader's hands stop him.

"What's going on?"

"I'm gonna let them do the job for us," Malness explains. He comes out of hiding and turns the dial all the way up.

"Three thousand volts?"

"Why not? The minute he throws that switch..."

"Shindo, check those connections again."

The populace is fleeing in horror as Godzilla and Rodan, both doing battle with one another, come into view. Rodan doubles back and sends Godzilla to the ground in a thundering crash. He then turns his attention to the spikes on Godzilla's back. Flying over him, Rodan's claws grasp the slippery fins and lift the angered and humiliated Godzilla into the air, higher and higher with each flap of Rodan's great wings.

"Everything checks, doctor," Shindo retorts.

"Good. Let's start."

Rodan takes Godzilla to a lofty position over the main highway.

"You set the voltage at five-hundred?"

Rodan's claws spread wide releasing the massive hulk of Godzilla which plummets down toward a giant power line.

"Right, doctor."

Godzilla's frame smashes into the lines receiving thousands of volts; However, instead of stunning the monster, the power merely tickles and infuriates him.

In the clinic all power stops. Shindo and Tsukamoto look at each other, stunned.

"What the...?" Tsukamoto says dazedly confused.

"Power's gone," Shindo groans. "Let me check it."

JERRY
#FILE '72





"Very good."

Shindo enters the room and a hail of leaden death greets him. Shindo returns the fire and makes a warning to Tsukamoto. "Watch out, doctor! The killers are here!"

As the battle rages, Naoko and Chief Detective Okita pull up in a car. Okita hears the shots and warns Naoko to stay at the car with the Ailenas, who they brought along with them.

Okita, standing by the doorway of the clinic, wraps one of the murderers over the head with a wrench. The man screams and staggers back into the fracas. His friend, who is behind a machine and is shooting at Shindo, pulls him back. Both then climb out the window to rejoin their comrades, and they make good their escape.

"It's all clear, doctor, bring her out," Shindo yells. They take the Princess outside and join Naoko and Okita.

"How's the girl?" the chief asks.

"Thank you, thank you. She's alright," replies a very grateful doctor.

Shindo gets his last shots off as the killers roar away in their car. Then Naoko comes running up.

"Naoko, you fool! What are you doing here?"

Shindo scolds.

"Mothra's coming to help!"

"Really!"

An excited group of people jam themselves into the car.

Not very far away Godzilla and Rodan call their defiance to each other. And Rodan takes to the air once again to peck on Godzilla's head. Godzilla, prepared for such tactics, turns and flails his tail at Rodan. After one heavy swat Rodan falls to the ground stunned. Godzilla crumples Rodan and hurls the bird-beast headlong into an outcrop of rocks. In spite of the tremendous beatings, Rodan is able to keep his strength and takes the initiative by grabbing Godzilla's tail, shaking it like a huge prehistoric worm. Godzilla turns his head as far as he can and lets go a bolt of radiation. The flame is too much for Rodan and he lets go of the tail. Rodan regains his footing and moves over to Godzilla for close quarter fighting. Rodan starts to flap his immense wings, forcing a wind of hurricane proportions toward Godzilla, who is unable to keep his balance. The prehistoric biped falls back, but soon regains his balance and begins kicking huge boulders at Rodan.

The car with Tsukamoto and the others nears the scene of battle, but they are stopped by a policeman.

"Oh, doctor, is there anyone left at your clinic?"

"No. Everyone is out. And my staff too."

Satisfied, the policeman leaves the group to themselves.

"Hey, didn't she say Mothra is coming?" Shindo asks.

"Uh-huh," answers Naoko.

"Well, what's he gonna do?"

"We're hoping he can fight Ghidrah."

The conversation is interrupted by an outcry from the Princess. "Escape from here! Death and destruction are coming soon to this place!"

Ignoring the plea completely, Naoko calmly asks, "Hey, at the clinic what'd you find out about her?"

"Only that she's a Martian," replies Shindo.

Again the conversation is interrupted, but this time it is from the Ailenas. "Stop the car. Mothra's coming. He's nearby."

"Who is that?" Shindo asks slightly unnerved.

"It's the fairies talking," Naoko calmly explains. "They said 'Stop the car. Mothra is here.'"

"Where?"

"On the other side of the hill."

They get out of the car and begin the arduous task of climbing the hill. They encounter a man who guides them up the steep slope. "Come this way. There is a path here."

Naoko hands the box with the twins to Shindo. "Will you carry this, Shindo, it's heavy?"

"Of course."

Another monster enters the scene: Mothra. He rumbles up to Godzilla and Rodan. Godzilla kicks rocks at the mammoth Rodan, but the beast's wings send the rocks back to Godzilla. Mothra merely watches. Godzilla places a solid kick to one of the rocks, but Rodan butts it back. And Godzilla returns it by knocking it back with his arm. Back and forth the rock travels until Mothra intervenes. Mothra spews forth the sticky cocoon-making substance around Godzilla's ugly face. Rodan, rather humanly counters this incident with a laugh at Godzilla's misfortune. But Mothra eventually sprays him too, at which point Godzilla returns the laugh to Rodan's embarrassing predicament.

The doctor and the others watch from the hill top. "Here hold this," Shindo says, handing the Aileen box-home to Naoko.

Mothra moves in closer to reason with the battling monsters.

Naoko sets the box down. "Good, good heavens, it looks like they're having a conversation." She opens the box for the twins to see.

"Why Shindo," Naoko continues, "what do you think they're saying to each other?"

"Huh? How would I know? Do you expect me to understand monster talk?"

"Hey! The fairies do!" Okita reminds them. He bends down to the fairies and asks them: "What's he saying?"

"He's trying to persuade them," they reply in unison. "but he's having trouble. They won't agree."

The group watches the three behemoths as the twins translate.

"He's saying 'All three of us must fight together against this new monster to save the Earth!'"

"And what is Rodan saying?" Naoko inquires as the monsters begin their ghastly utterings.

The girls answer: "He says it's none of their business if the Earth perishes. And Godzilla agrees with him. Now Rodan says he'll just fly away. And Godzilla says they have no reason to try to save mankind. They've always had trouble with men and men hate them. And Rodan says, 'Yes, he's right.' But Mothra is still trying."

Godzilla claps his claws happily as he thinks of mankind being destroyed.

The assassins meanwhile have forced their car through a throng of evacuating people. As the car moves along the cliff road, Ghidrah nears the scene. The three-headed abomination releases one of its lethal lightning-like rays from its grotesque maw. The ray strikes the rise of the cliff just above the car. Massive boulders crash down on Malness and his men as Ghidrah continues his destructive spree. A bloodied hand protrudes slowly from the smashed car and falls limply on the door. Resolvedly, doggedly, Malness pulls himself from the crumpled heap of steel and armed with a rifle staggers off on his mission of death. Ghidrah, tired of his air attacks, lands in a park and wreaks untold havoc.

The fairies: "Oh, it looks like it's no use. Godzilla and Rodan want to fight each other. They're both so bull-headed, but Mothra is still trying."

"Ahh, these monsters are as stupid as human beings," Shindo feels compelled to say. And a friend grunts an approval.

People evacuating the city have reached Shindo and the others and inform them that a landslide has blocked the road and that the only way to safety is to move further up the mountain.

Frantic, Naoko asks more of the fairies: "Oh, fairies, are the monsters still arguing?"

"Yes, and Mothra's still talking."

"He is?" Naoko, filled with anxiety turns to Shindo. "Oh, Shindo, we'd better move up higher."

"Alright" And up they trod.

Feeling that safe distance has been achieved, at least as far as this mountain is concerned, for the only real safe place would be on the other side of the world, they stop.

"Let the fairies tell us what they're saying now."

Ghidrah releases bolt after bolt of blinding energy on the park. He strikes an arch of oak with one blast, and the refugees watch the ancient structure buckle and crumble to the ground.

"Are they going to fight Ghidrah? Are they? Do they agree?"

In answer to the many questions, the girls reply: "Not yet. Mothra says 'The Earth belongs to us as much as it does to man.'" Godzilla claps again in total elation. "Oh, Godzilla, what terrible language!"

"Mothra says it's their duty to defend the Earth and is pleading with them. But they refuse to cooperate at all."

"What will Mothra do now?"

The twins' voices blend solemnly: "Mothra's go-



ing to fight Ghidrah without them."

"What?" Naoko panics. "That's impossible!"

Mothra turns from the two monsters and moves past them toward Ghidrah. Godzilla and Rodan look down at Mothra as he valiantly oscillates toward Ghidrah. Nearing the loathsome monster, Mothra is being watched by Ghidrah out of the corner of his eye. He strikes the caterpillar into the air with one zap of his ray. Godzilla wants to clap and laugh at Mothra but something holds him back. The furnace in his reptilian belly stokes up. Feeling Mothra has about had enough, since you shouldn't pick on someone smaller than you, Godzilla links a silent communication with Rodan, and they both start down the hill to meet the mighty Ghidrah.

Ghidrah strikes first at Godzilla with a lethal bolt of electrical mace, but Godzilla's mighty tolerance allows him to continue forward. As they lock in combat, Ghidrah keeps Godzilla moving backwards by using quick, short blasts and brute force. Godzilla tumbles back crushing a bridge with his tremendous frame, pulling the bridge from its foundation in a mountain, releasing an avalanche of tons and tons of rock and stone. Having gained the advantage, Ghidrah fires a volley of rays at Godzilla, who, in spite of the barrage, manages to struggle to his feet, and sure of his footing, rumbles toward the mighty foe.

Watching from the hill, the group realizes that the Martian/Princess is missing, lost in the shuffle of moving to higher ground. As they search for the lost girl, Rodan takes his turn to attack Ghidrah.

JFFJ/31

Flying in low while the multi-headed prodigy centers its awesome strength on Godzilla, Rodan kicks Ghidrah unexpectedly. Ghidrah checks his attack on Godzilla and takes to the air after Rodan. Covering ground quite quickly in the air, Ghidrah and Rodan are trying to be kept up with by the monsters below. Godzilla, realizing Mothra cannot move as fast as he, offers him his tail to help Mothra up the incline of the mountain they now face. Mothra clamps on the tip, and Godzilla trudges up the slope. Overhead, Rodan, using his lead turns around to meet Ghidrah head-on. The two deafeningly crash into one another and plunge headlong to the ground. Ghidrah rams a massive stone and remains inert, stunned by the impact. Rodan has made a more successful landing behind a rock. Less groggy from the collision, he begins to play his own version of "Peek-A-Boo, I See You" behind the enormous rock, teasing Ghidrah, and allowing Godzilla and Mothra to move in from the rear unnoticed. As Ghidrah tries vainly to strike a bobbing Rodan with his firebolts, Godzilla picks up very large boulders and throws them at the three-headed beast. Ghidrah has had his fill of the too-nimble Rodan and so turns his attention on the

Mothra which again flings him through the air. An enraged reptile advances toward the three-headed monstrosity.

On the ledge Shindo has wrapped the wound in the Princess's head in a cloth bandage.

Reappearing opposite them is Malness, freshly loaded and ready for bear. He fires a volley of bullets. The Princess is safe where she is, thanks to Shindo. And the graze she received brought her out of the hypnotic-like trance she had been under since her contact with the aliens. The Princess, no longer the prophetess, begins shouting at the killer, "Traitor! Malness! Traitor! Why are you shooting at me?"

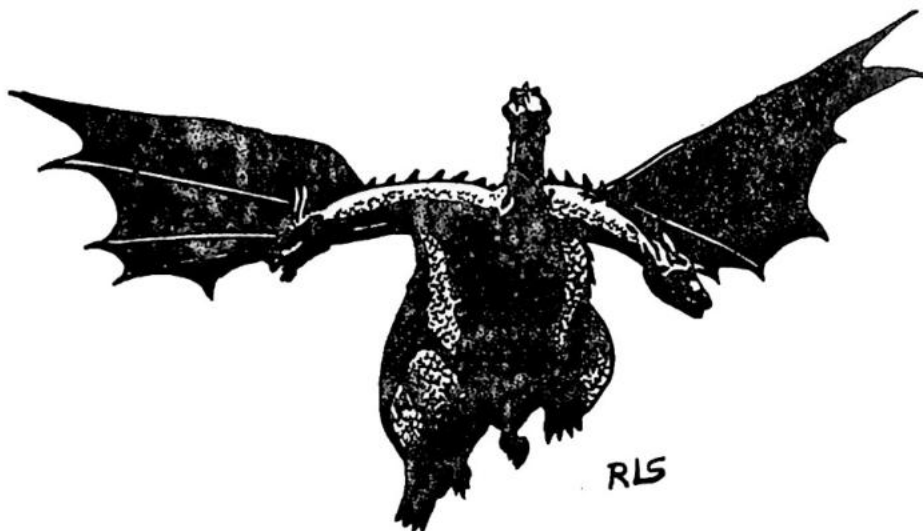
"You've regained your senses, Princess!" Shindo says perplexed.

"Who are you? Where am I?"

"I'm a policeman and I'm trying to keep you alive."

A crack breaks the monotonous sound of brawling monsters, and the pistol flies out of Shindo's hand.

Above Malness the battling behemoths near the ledge. And as Malness, believing the situation is now his, grins an evil grin of satisfaction and takes



menace from the roar.

On the ledge of a cliff the Princess stands, her arms raised. "Oh, Mighty Lord, creator of the universe, look upon this planet and save it from destruction. Oh, Lord, save this planet from the calamity which threatens it."

Malness crawls from the bushes on the opposite cliff and spots the Princess. He aims his rifle at the unprotected figure across from him and fires. Shindo sees the Princess and runs to her side, but he is too slow, for the bullet grazes the girl's head, and she falls to a lower ledge of the cliff. Shindo rushes to the edge and peers over to see what happened to the Princess. He is amazed to find her on the ledge not too far from him. He removes his jacket and climbs down after her. He pulls the girl to safety behind a clump of foliage and begins to return the fire that Malness has been peppering them with. Having fired all his shots, Malness recedes behind the trees to reload.

Godzilla continues throwing rocks at Ghidrah in an attempt to quell the beast once and for all. But his movements are all in vain as Ghidrah releases more hell-fire on Godzilla. A bolt of energy hits

dead aim at the helpless Princess, a stray bolt of power from the maw of Ghidrah hits the palisades above the insane killer. Tons and tons of rock shower down upon Malness--a cleansing cascade of earth and stone that removes all traces of a contamination that once defiled it.

"What's that?"

"It's my brother's raincoat," answers a distraught Naoko.

"Are you sure?"

"He must have fallen down here!!!" Naoko cries.

"Shindo? Are you there?"

"Hello," wells weakly up from the ledge below.

"Run back to the hut half way up the hill.

Bring a rope!"

Waiting for the rope, Princess Salno wraps a rag around Shindo's wounded arm. But the wait is a short one, and soon both are rescued from their peril.

Rodan flies in toward Ghidrah while a lively Godzilla continues his close-quarter battle with the triple-domer. Mothra, whose size allows him little chance in combat, clamps onto one of Ghidrah's arrow-head-tipped tails. A perplexed Ghidrah turns one of

his heads to hit Mothra with a blast of his ray, but the charge goes astray. Ghidrah the fearsome, Ghidrah the mighty is slowly losing the intense struggle. He now turns on Godzilla and roasts his buttox with tremendous amounts of heat.irate and insulted, Godzilla turns and swiftly moves down the mountain slope. Ghidrah laughs in triumph at Godzilla's fate, but the elation is short-lived as Godzilla quickly returns to avenge his honor. Mothra releases Ghidrah's tail and begins to spin a cocoon around the huge space beast. Rodan, eager to help in the battle, sees that the web does not fully cover Ghidrah, and so he lands and lets Mothra climb on his back. The two fly toward Ghidrah and hover over the partially entombed monster. Towering over Ghidrah, Rodan and Mothra now have the alien gargantuan in a cross-fire between them and Godzilla. Mothra now has the height advantage, thanks to the aid of Rodan, and can begin the task of finishing the shroud the three Earth monsters have planned for Ghidrah's death. Mothra webs Ghidrah's heads and wings together. Unable to move he is grabbed by the tail by Godzilla who pulls Ghidrah toward the edge of the cliff. The triple-headed threat, gummed up in the web of the wingless warrior, Mothra, is hurled over the side of the cliff by Godzilla. The reptile, not simply content with a drowning, fires rocks down on the unprotected Ghidrah. But the web enclosure breaks allowing Ghidrah to escape. Having felt defeat, and not liking the taste, Ghidrah flies off into the airless void of space from whence he came.

In the lobby of an airport the Princess prepares to leave. Naoko and the others are interviewing her.

"Now, Princess, do you have a few more words to say before you leave?"

"Oh, yes. I wonder if it is really true that I called myself a Martian?"

"Oh, yes," Tsukamoto answers her. "And though you were perfectly normal in all respects, you had an instinct for telling the future. An instinct that no Earthman possesses."

"Is that what brought me back to normal, then?"

"Right! It was shock—a mere shock. When the bullet grazed you here, it brought you back to us."

"How very interesting. Do you think that one day I might regain that Martian instinct for prophecy?"

"I'm afraid the answer to your question is beyond our present intellectual development."

The Princess then walks over to Shindo to thank him. "I thank you so much, Shindo, for saving my life three times at least!"

"Then you know?" he asks surprised.

"Mm-hmm. Once at the hotel. The clinic was two. And the mountain was three."

"But do you remember what happened then?"

"Well...I...I'm not sure about most of it. Just that...just that I owe you my life." She continues to express her gratitude: "I want you to know I'll never forget you."

The Princess walks over to Naoko. "Thank you. Thank you for everything."

"It was nothing," Naoko smiles.

"Oh, yes," the Princess sighs having forgotten something very important to her. And she turns to Shindo and kisses him.

Shindo, Naoko, and Tsukamoto walk the Princess to her airplane. The three watch it depart, carrying someone very special to them—carrying her home, home to her country and her people.

After the plane is gone from their sight, Naoko and the others start to leave the observation deck.





But Shindo stops and remains behind as Naoko and Tsukamoto move on.

It is time too for the twin fairies of Infant Island and Mothra to return to their home, their people. Standing on Mothra's back as he moves through the ocean waves are the Aelinas who call to the remaining monsters, Godzilla and Rodan.

"Goodbye, Rodan! Goodbye, Godzilla! We're going back to Infant Island! Goodbye, everybody!"

Mothra gallantly plods home—honored to have brought a new kind of peace to the world. Rodan and Godzilla watch as a speck finally disappears on the horizon.

The two stand alone high on a mountain. Hunted and hated they may remain, but the Earth is indebted to them and one another. Greatly indebted.

Perhaps more than a monster could ever hope to expect...

GHIDRAH, THE THREE-HEADED MONSTER (MONSTER OF MONSTERS, GHIDORAH - Original English title; SANDAIKAI-JU OHIJO SAIDAINO KESSEN - Japanese title); Release dates: 1964 (Japan), 1965 (USA); Produced by Toho Co., Ltd.; Executive producer: Tomoyuki Tanaka; Directed by Inoshiro Honda; Screenplay by Shinichi Sekizawa; English dialog by Joe Bellucci; Director of photography: Hajime Koizumi; Art director: Takeo Kitta; Set decoration by Akira Watanabe; Sound recorder: Fumio Yanoguchi; Sound technician: Osamu Chiku; Lighting supervisor: Shoshichi Kojima; Lighting by Kuichiro Kishida; Music by Akira Ifukube; Song "Call Happiness": words by Tokiko Iwatani and music by Yasushi Miyagawa; Sound effects by Hisashi Shimonaga; Additional music and sound effects by Filmsounds, Inc.; Film editor: Ryohei Fujii; Production manager: Shigeru Makamura; Assistant manager: Tadashi Koike; Special effects supervisor: Eiichi Tsuburaya; Special effects photography by Sadamasa Arikawa and Mototaka Tomioke; Optical photography by Yukio Manoda and Yoshiyuki Tokumasa; Additional optical photography by Film Formatico, Inc.; Matte process by Hiroshi Mukoyama; Post-production consultant: Ray Angus; Assistant to the director: Ken Sano; Assistant director: Akiyoshi Nakano; Print by Movielab, Inc.; Filmed in Tohoscope and Eastmancolor; A Walter Reade-Sterling Inc. Presentation; Distributed in the U.S. theatrically and to television by Continental Distributing, Inc. Running time: 92 mins. (Japanese release), 85 mins. (U.S. release); Cast: Yosuke Matsuke (Shindo), Yuriko Hoshi (Naoko), Hiroshi Koizumi (Professor Murai), Takashi Shimura (Dr. Tsukamoto), Eni and Yumi Ito (The Aelinas), Akiko Wakabayashi (Princess Saino), Hisaya

Ito (Malness), Akihiko Hirata (Chief Detective Okita), Kenji Sahara (Chief Editor Kanamaki), Haruya Sakamoto, Tetsu Ibuki, Kozo Nomura, Yoshiyumi Tajima, Hideyo Amamoto, Yoshio Kosugi, Minoru Takada, Yuriko Hanabasa, Haruya Kato, Ikio Sawamura, Nakajiro Tomita, Shigeaki Ishida, Shin Otoma, Yutaka Nakayama, Senkichi Omura, Sensho Matsumoto, Kazuo Suzuki, Senya Aozora, Shoichi Hirose, Henry Okawa, Iunichiro Mukai, Toshiko Furuta, Shoji Ikeda, Hideo Shibuya, Keiichi Katsumoto, Katsumi Tezuka, Koji Uno, Daisuke Inoue, Toshio Miura, Tomami Urayama, Takuzo Kumagai, Mitsuo Tsuda, Yoshio Hattori, Kenji Tsubono, Kazuo Inai, Saburo Kadowaki, Kenzo Echigo, Toku Ihara, Bin Furuya, Jun Kuroki, Yutaka Oka, Haruo Nakajima, Koji Urugi, Susumu Kurobe (who plays one of Malness's henchmen later went on to the role of Hiya/Ultraman in the TBS television series ULTRAMAN in 1965).

Tony's Review

GHIDRAH, THE THREE-HEADED MONSTER is the concluding film of a cycle in the Japanese fantasy cinema. This cycle, begun in 1963 with the release of KING KONG VS. GODZILLA, concerns the use of above-average special effects, good character development, and well-written scenarios. In the middle of this phase lies GODZILLA VS. THE THING (1964) where Japanese special effects reach their highest peak of quality. In this film several scenes during the rigorous battles of Godzilla and Mothra contain what seem to be experimental animation on the part of the late king of Japanese cinema trickery, Eiichi Tsuburaya. With this vanguard of what apparently is a test of some animation footage, it would have been logical to assume that improvements of this technique would follow in the next of the series, GHIDRAH, for it appears that as the plots of the Japanese films remain pretty much constant, the special effects are going to improve. However, in spite of these expectations regarding effects, as well as story line and character development improvements, GHIDRAH unveils the finish of the cycle because a decline in these three factors is evident, and films succeeding GHIDRAH display a disintegration of these same qualities which exemplify the three films in the cycle.



THE MONSTERS

Godzilla loses his ludicrous bell shape in GHIDRAH to become instead extremely and unnecessarily thin, and his face, looking more like a dog than a reptile, seems to have been pushed in while the rubber was drying and cooling. He bounces around the set flailing his arms, gripping rocks and throwing them in a quite human fashion with that never-explained thumb. Those un-monster-like antics are evident in the battle sequences with Ghidrah where Godzilla reveals, unfortunately, what a clown he has become. Godzilla runs into Ghidrah with a clenched fist and is rebuffed with a punch in the nose from one of Ghidrah's heads. When the triple-dome, who becomes entangled in Mothra's web, is shoved off a cliff by Godzilla, the pushing motion is most unbelievable. The exaggerated clownish look used to be disguised in the earlier films by slow-motion, but here it appears that Toho has managed to lose the techniques that enabled them to accomplish so much in the manner of creating the illusion that great monsters do exist. This effects failure occurs too often in GHIDRAH to make one believe that these deviations are accidents or expedient cinematography due to harsh filming conditions.

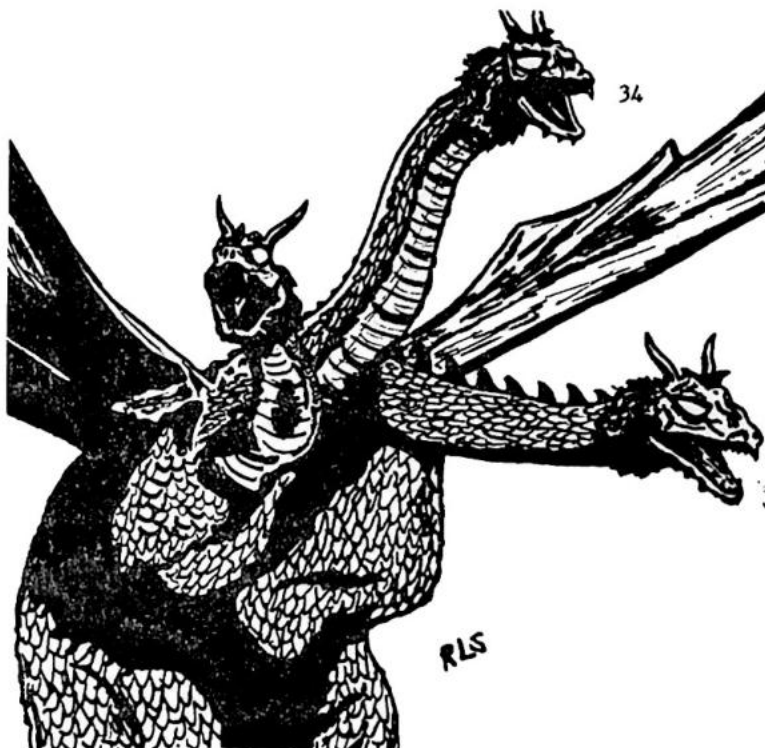
Not all of Godzilla's scenes are painful to view. His first scene is indeed his best. In the dead of night his black, water-soaked form rises from the opaque water and incinerates a nearby ship

Lots of excitement is engendered in this import that features four creatures from the world of the unusual, as well as a story about some would-be killers of a royal princess. The special effects again demonstrate Japanese expertise, and there's fast-paced action, etc., to be found in this entry that should do okay as part of the show. A bit of extra exploitation should insure better boxoffice returns. The use of color is an added asset. (Reprinted from the October 20, 1965 issue of Motion Picture Exhibitor.)

while emitting his famed throaty roar. This scene, filmed in fast motion (to later become slow motion when the film is run at regular speed), adds fine realism to the entire effect—visions of Godzilla from his first film when he slowly rose upright from the inky depths with his arms at his side (the way most dinosaurs maneuvered), opened his great maw, and flooded the screen with light from the flames and the glittering spines on his back.

Next is Rodan. Being a traditional "man-in-suit" monster, he makes a terrible prehistoric version of our modern day birds. Rodan does not look real when flying because he has a few hundred feet of log sticking out behind him. When landing, he appears merely to be lowered to the ground by wires instead of descending gradually to the earth in an arc. And instead of perching, Rodan stands. Motion on the ground was impossible for reptile birds and limits modern day birds to quick hops. In each case, Rodan merely walks. He is not authentic because he is neither built nor executed properly, contributing to a total lack of realism in each scene that he is included.

Ironically, the most realistic monster of the film is Mothra. The giant caterpillar appears convincing in light of the fact that he is not a costumed extra. Operated by motors and manipulated by wires, Mothra comes from his island to save humanity from Ghidrah by uniting the other great



beasts. And no attempt is made to explain the strange disappearance of the second Mothra, the twin who helped his brother defeat Godzilla in GODZILLA VS. THE THING. It seems that one Mothra is sufficient to save the world and make humans examine their consciences for faults and frailties. There is a touch of waiting humility when the fate of mankind is given to the Ailenas and then Mothra, evident in the scene following the action that occurs in the conference room where the Japanese officials plead to the fairies to summon Mothra. As Mothra leaves Infant Island, a large congregation of natives gather at the shore—a scene like anyone may witness when a loved one goes off to war.

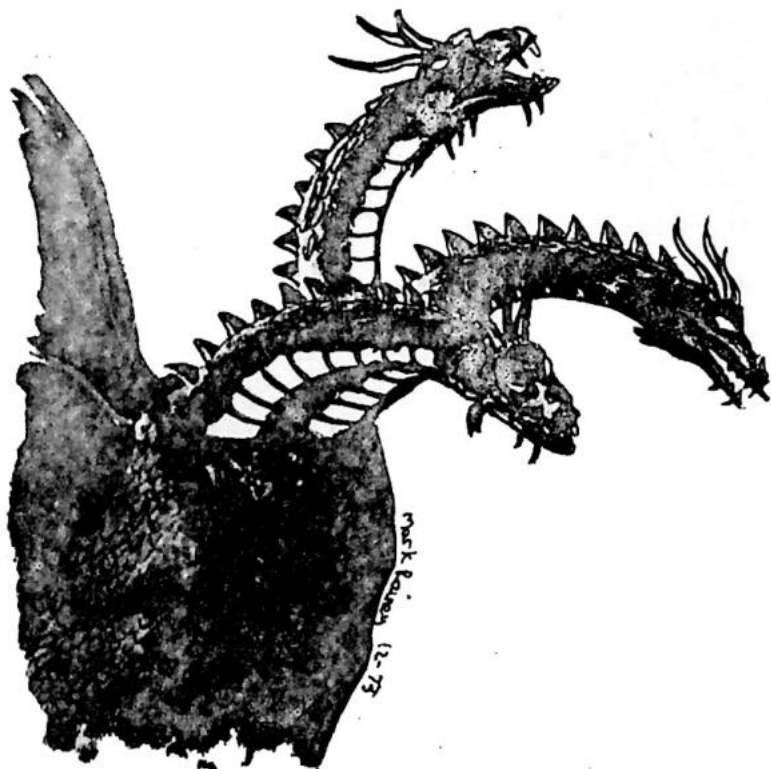
Ghidrah, the star: The pressbook says that he is "equipped with four legs, coliseum-sized wings and three heads," and that he can "spew out three times as much destruction at a crack as the Earth-born monsters can do singly in a month of Sundays." Clarification is necessary. Ghidrah in the film has three heads with fierce, protruding teeth, three horns on each head, spiny necks that reach into a rather large reptilian torso covered with scales from which branches out two huge, veined wings, two tree-trunk legs, and two arrow-tipped tails.

THE FILM

As exhibited in the preceding filmbook and on the screen or TV, the film relies heavily on Ghidrah, therefore a comment on the special effects of the triple threat's presentation is due. Succinctly, he comes off rather well. He is motorized by one sinewy Japanese in a rubber suit for one can ascertain that the man's arms are folded in front of himself giving Ghidrah that jutting topsection, while the necks, heads, tails, and wings are operated by wires from above the set. This latter method doesn't always work. The necks and tails on occasion bend at various junctures along their lengths in both directions—a physical impossibility. The heads have elastic jaws and the pointed teeth make the mouths impossible to close while the wires shake and writhe them about, giving Eiji Tsuburaya an opportunity to have rays emit from any of Ghidrah's mouths when the bolt of fire is later printed on to the pre-filmed footage.



Remember the one scene where Ghidrah lands in the background of a huge, beautiful Japanese arch? While two heads fire their ray aimlessly, the third appears to pivot toward the arch sending it a death-dealing blast which causes the structure to buckle and collapse in slow motion.



This brings the review to the screenplay of GHIDRAH, the primary negative factor of the film. True, the storyline is different with the inclusion of several subplots, for example the Martian/Princess development, the assassins from the Princess's country who are trying to kill her, and the love triangle of the three leads, though understated, but in spite of these twists and turns, GHIDRAH remains confusing and disjointed. Even the monsters, who make the film more tedious with their boring meeting atop the mountain where Mothra attempts to persuade (for hours it seems) Godzilla and Rodan to help save Earth, cannot lift the film from the mire the scenario has created for it.

A saving grace for the film is its character development, lessened in impact from the outstanding

"Too many space predictions once laughed at as wild imaginings have developed from fantastic fiction into amazing fact"—so says Ei-ji Tsuburaya, Japan's top special effects expert. Luckily there's little hope of this latest package release developing into amazing fact.

Twenty years after Republic's meteorite from Mars comes Toho's meteorite, smouldering and sparkling until it hatches a fireball that shapes into a three-headed, two-tailed, flying dragon. Flapping its great batwings, the draught from which blows over buildings, Ghidrah makes for the big city, blasting rays of fire from its three mouths at everything in sight. The Japanese are about as prepared for this as we are when the annual snow strikes; you'd think they'd know better by now.

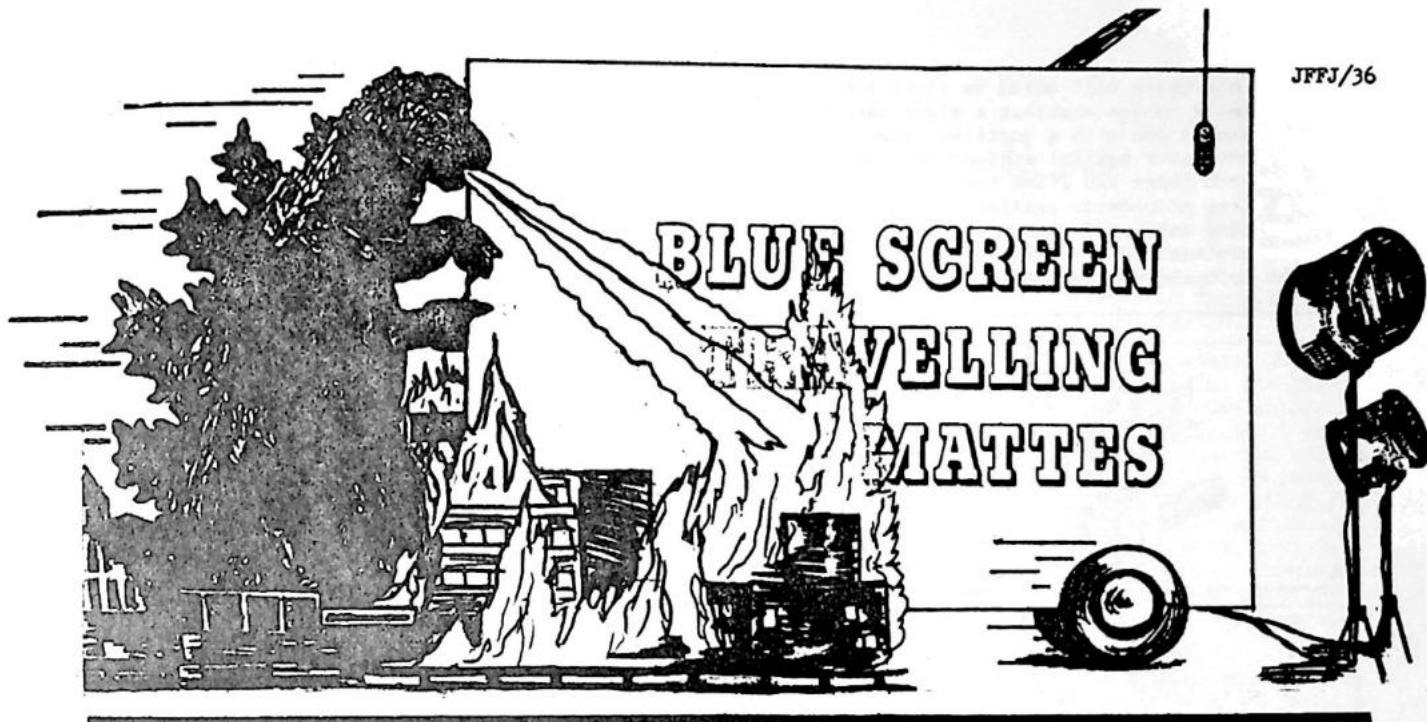
Then with the superb subtitle "Aroused by all the noise," who should come round the mountain but Godzilla! The fight starts in earnest; Ghidrah's red hot rays just tickle our hero's tummy!

After a momentary set back, crashing down a bridge and mountain side, Godzilla returns to the fray, bringing with him his old sparring partners, Mothra and Rodan. Like three musketeers, the creatures combine forces to rid their stomping grounds of the intruder, and the extract ends with Ghidrah flapping off into space, apparently defeated.

This absolute orgy of destruction, lightened with laughter, is almost a must; I say almost, as it is here presented in a squeezed Cinemascope picture that makes everyone, monsters included, look like those nostalgic ads for Instant Postum. Director—Ishiro Honda, of course. (Reprinted from England's Movie Maker on a review of the GHIDRAH, THE THREE-HEADED MONSTER home movie release.)

approach used in GODZILLA VS. THE THING one year before, though the character studies in GHIDRAH are of a high caliber. The interplay between the Princess, Naoko, Shindo, and Professor Murai works very well.

In spite of its failings, there is a positive indescribable feature that allows GHIDRAH to attain a high level of escapism and attention that others in the genre do not reach—no matter how unethical Rodan may be, no matter how much Godzilla jumps around jovially, nor how many times Ghidrah's heads bump together, GHIDRAH still succeeds. The film brings the curtain down on the era of above-average Japanese films. But how will Godzilla, Rodan, and the rest look without Tsuburaya? Only time will tell if GHIDRAH, THE THREE-HEADED MONSTER is indeed the last entertaining Japanese monster motion picture. **END**



Why, you may ask, does Godzilla's son have a blue halo around his head? Does he, perhaps, think that he is holier than his father? Why do Godzilla's foes exude a blue fringe when they've been kicked in the butt? Could they be blue with rage? Why does the "Green Slime" emanate blue ooze? Why doesn't Ghidrah wear blue suspenders? The answer to all these questions and more is to be found in this chillingly pedantic article on blue screen travelling mattes.

What is a matte? If you expose a film twice, say, first to a miniature set of a city and then to a monster in front of a black backdrop, you will get a double exposure of a semi-transparent monster trying to rampage a city--a shot worthy of the Great Bert I. Gordon, I would say. If you wished to have the monster appear solid, you would have to arrange it so that the portion of the movie frame where the image of the monster will be remains unexposed. This is accomplished by means of a travelling matte, travelling because it must move and conform to the shape of the foreground objects, which is a strip of film which consists of solid black silhouettes of the monster on a clear background. This matte is then placed in contact with the pre-filmed and developed film strip of the background, the city, in a motion picture printer. The resulting sandwich composite of black silhouette over background footage is then copied (re-photographed) onto raw film stock. This undeveloped but once exposed film is then rewound to its former position and exposed again but this time to a different "sandwich" of films, using the counter-matte, which is the negative of the matte, that is, clear in the silhouette and opaque in the background, and the footage of the monster. The result is a convincing, if you don't look too closely, composite of the monster in a city.

When I was young and hot for the black mysteries of how the wizards of film did their magic,

this was as far as my reasoning would take me. I knew that there must be some photographic device that allowed for the making of a black silhouette of an actor or monster so that he could be superimposed without being double-exposed and thus appearing transparent. I kept imagining the actor being filmed in front of a black backdrop or white screen. But I couldn't see how the portions of the person's body that matched the light intensity of the background could be photographically distinguished from the backdrop. Thus I couldn't see how the fully detailed image of the actor and his silhouette could be produced from the same strip of film.

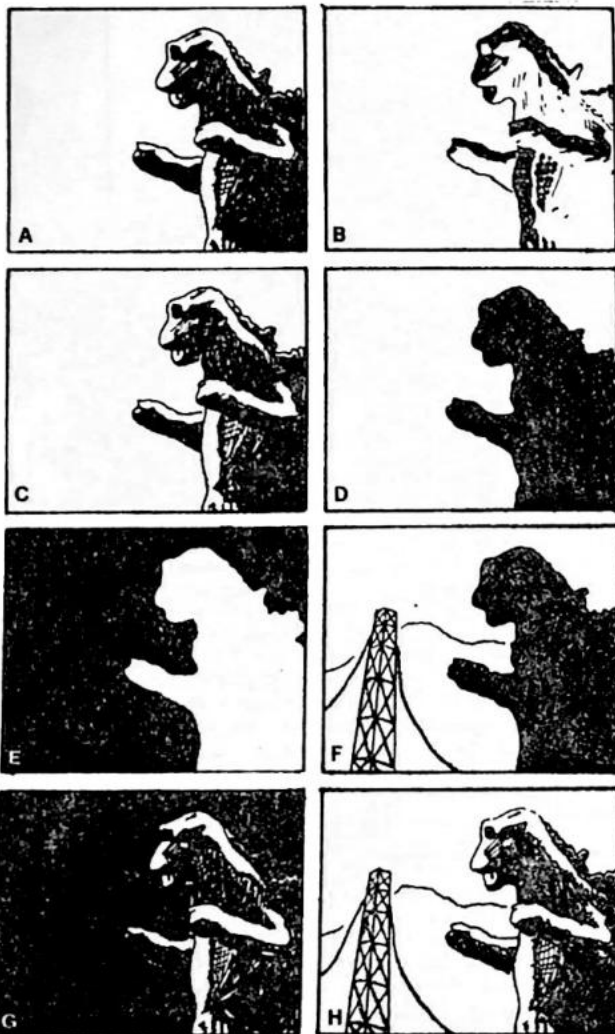
The answer finally came to me after reading Raymond Fielding's excellent book, The Technique of Special Effects Cinematography (Focal Press, 1965). The backdrop turns out to be distinguishable from the actor because it is a different color than the actor, namely blue. It is beyond the scope of this article to give complete and accurate details of the lab techniques used in making the mattes, but here's the basic theory behind their production.

The developed footage of Godzilla in front of a blue backdrop is rephotographed onto black and white raw stock, b&w film just as it comes from Kodak, through a red filter. The result, when developed, is a negative image of the monster against a clear background. The red filter absorbs the blue light from the backdrop and leaves the background unexposed and thus clear in the negative. Next the original footage is again rephotographed onto b&w raw stock but this time through a blue filter. The result is a negative image of Godzilla against a black background. This is then rephotographed to produce a positive image of the primal oriental menace against a clear background.

Now we have two useful film strips, the first with a negative image of the mythical behemoth--in

—BY MIKE NATALE—

this one his black tail would be clear and his whitish belly opaque--against a clear background and the second one with a positive image of Toho's little moneymaker against a clear background. If you sandwich these two films together you will obtain a black silhouette against a clear background--a travelling matte. If you make a negative copy of it you have the counter-matte--a clear silhouette against an opaque background. Use them both to-



Gumen '74

Printing steps in the preparation of a conventional "blue screen" travelling matte as described in the text. Illustration A shows the scene as originally photographed on color positive with the monster posed in front of a blue backing. The completed male and female travelling mattes together with foreground and background master positives are combined through bi-pack optical printing to produce either a color or black and white composite, illustration H.

gether and you have a film of Japan's number one urban renewer doing what he loves best.

There are other ways of producing travelling mattes, but the only type I've ever seen used in Japanese films is the blue screen process. Eiji Tsuburaya has made good use of it in such films

as RODAN, THE FLYING MONSTER. In RODAN there are shots where people are shown being tossed about by the hurricane force of the monster's wings. These shots were accomplished in two different ways. The first had the actors in a room with blue walls and a well lit blue floor. Tsuburaya instructed the actors to careen and wave their hands wildly while he tilted and panned the camera downward. The result, when matted over the footage of the miniature city being torn apart, was that the actors were being blown upward. In other shots the actors were strapped in harnesses and hoisted by wires in front of a blue screen. Because the blue screen travelling matte process tends to make fine details in foreground objects disappear, the wires became invisible and thus the actors, in the final composite, again appear to be blown by the wind.

Another interesting thing I saw Tsuburaya do was in KING KONG ESCAPES. In one shot he had about twenty men run across the floor of a laboratory which was actually a miniature set. In this shot just the silhouettes of the men are shown. As I said before, fine details tend to get lost in this matte process and when the actors are small in the frame of the film, as they were in this shot, they tend to be too tiny to come out well. In order to reduce the degradation of the images of the actors Tsuburaya may have decided to just use the travelling mattes to represent the actors and not jigsaw in their details. Or it might have been that Tsuburaya didn't have a large enough blue screen for the men to run in front of. So he might have decided to dress them darkly and have them run in front of a white background and thus obtain their silhouettes directly.

Oh well! Back to the original questions. Godzilla, et. al., sometimes have a blue haze--a matte line--around them because of lack of precision in the registration of the machines--optical and contact printers--that make their mattes. The blue line is actually a portion of the original backdrop that isn't completely masked by the counter-matte. And Chidrah doesn't wear blue suspenders because blue suspenders would be invisible suspenders and invisible suspenders would be about as welcome as a drunken Godzilla in a Japanese pagoda.

END

RIGHT: The first two scenes from BATTLE IN OUTER SPACE (Toho, 1959), using the blue screen method, and the third from RODAN (Toho, 1956), visually illustrate the author's explanation of the destruction of the miniature cities matted with live action footage, footage shot of live actors performing before a blue screen, the final elements having been matted together in an optical printer after having gone through the steps in a laboratory process illustrated on this page. The bottom photo comes from FRANKENSTEIN CONQUERS THE WORLD (Toho, 1965). The monster has thrown a tree which arcs into a wooden hut, destroys it and frightening two campers who sit before the primitive dwelling. The entire set is in miniature. Only the figures are real having been matted into the scene by the blue screen method. Note the lack of shadow on the ground of the figure in the foreground exposing the optical trickery.

FANZINE CORNER cont.

from Amicus, "An Interview with Peter Cushing," "An Interview with Robert Quarry," "Werewolves on Screen," a preview of GOLDEN VOYAGE OF SINBAD, film reviews, "UFO," "TOWER OF EVIL," a tribute to Glenn Strange, new films from Hammer, "KILL THE BEAST."

Fantasmagoria #2 (Gordon Reid, 265 Rebecca St., Oakville, Ontario, Canada; \$1; published irregularly; offset; 52 pages; 8½x11) Contents: "James Bernard Interview and Mini Biography," film reviews, letters, Forrest Ackerman interview conducted by Neil Leadbetter (excellent), fanzine reviews, obituaries of genre actors, first part of BLACK FRIDAY filmbook, "DRACULA: A Closer Look," editorial. Some very good and some very bad artwork. Reviews dated now due to lateness of this review. Editors are wont to publish writings on the fantasy genre by the novice. A policy I heartily condone. Very informal, fannish feel.

Japanese Giants #1 (Mark Rainey, 1023 Indian Trail, Martinsville, Va. 24112; 50¢; published irregularly; offset; 18 pages; offset) Competition strikes! Reviewing such a publication is quite difficult. Much better than the first two issues of JFFJ, easily, and as such is a good beginning for a fanzine. Personally, I find the price a bit steep for the length and contents of JG. But rather than to deny Mark his due, I suggest you pick up a copy of #1 to determine its actual merit. Contents: Editorial, "ULTRAMAN," DESTROY ALL MONSTERS filmbook part 1, "JOHNNY SOKKA AND HIS FLYING ROBOT," final remarks. Name of mag may change to Fantastic Monsters with the release of #2 in order to broaden the pub's approach. DAM filmbook concludes in #2.

Cinemonsters #1 (Charles Sachetta, 214 Springvale Ave., Everett, Mass. 02149; 50¢; published irregularly; mimeo; 8½x11; 22 pages) Problems with layouts stem from previously typed stencils for a half-size fanzine used instead for CM #1—a spur of the moment decision to go full size and change the name from Screen Monsters. The zine needs work, but Charles's much needed support could let him attain a better product for which he strives. Contents: GOLDEN VOYAGE OF SINBAD review, BATTLE FOR THE PLANET OF THE APES review, HOUSE OF FRANKENSTEIN filmbook, several pages of fan art, editorial. #2 is now available; a nice progression.

Horror Pictures #1 (Gerard Noël, 90, Rue Gandhi, Route de Peyrat, 46000 Cahors, France; offset; 3 Francs, U.S. denomination unknown; 11 3/4x14; 12 pages) An impressive new publication in a tabloid format, but on very good white stock. Reproduction of this French language pub is excellent and contains photos blown up to large proportions. Center photo (approx. 22"x14") of Lon Chaney as the wolfman makes a great poster. Some very bizarre artwork also. Contents cover a wide range of material, but articles are very short, as is the length of the zine. If only The Monster Times could look this good!

Midnight Fantasies (Bill Pugmire, 5115 South Mead St., Seattle, Wash. 98118; free; offset; published every 4 months; 8½x11) A personal zine of very good quality that deals primarily with Lovecraft, Bloch, Derleth, Arkham House, et. al. An informal zine—a meandering sort of publication. Send for Bill's current issue, but print run is limited so you may have to wait for a copy.

Cinefan #1 (Randall Larson, 774 Vista Grande Ave., Los Altos, Calif. 94022; \$1.50; published



CREATURE FEATURES



JFFJ

GORATH

NEXT ISSUE

FANZINE CORNER cont.

Irregularly; offset; wraparound; 8½x11; 60 pages) Contents are listed in his ad elsewhere in JFFJ. It's a terrific lineup of material—all well written and visually presented. And what can one say when he has his article on Toho films published in this very same magazine, hmm? Lots of photos, too. A collector's item.

A final note: Due to the irregularity in the publication schedule of JFFJ, I would recommend sending *sae's* to the editors before actual purchase is attempted. Issues may be long sold out by the time this magazine is mailed out. This suggestion is also meant to apply to classifieds and display ads in JFFJ as well.

Give at least one new *sine* a chance. It will be a good investment. **END**

FAR EAST REPORT

JFFJ/40

BY

TOSHIYUKI SHIGETA

The following is a late entry from my new contributing editor, Toshiyuki Shigeta, who has only recently agreed to help me in the gargantuan task of reporting on the current fantasy cinema scene in Japan. Toshiyuki is an invaluable aid to me, JFFJ, and the legions who support this fanta-film genre. "The Light Fantastic" will eventually be combined with "The Far East Report" to present a complete picture of production from the four major studios, the independents, and the television networks. I wish to thank Toshiyuki in print for his eagerness in working with me and for his invaluable assistance which he has so far supplied.--Editor

Currently in release from Toho:
GOJIRA TAI MEKA-GOJIRA (GODZILLA VS. MECHAGODZILLA): This film celebrates the 20th anniversary of Godzilla in fantasy films. Released March 21, 1974.

CHI O SUU BARA (THE BLOODTHIRSTY ROSES or THE VAMPIRE ROSES): Producer: Fumio Tanaka; Director: Michio Yamamoto; Cast: Toshio Kurosawa, Mariko Mochizuki, Kunie Tanaka, Shin Kishida (vampire); Mika Katsuragi (vampiress); Released July 20, 1974. The film takes place in 20th century rural Japan where a vampire is a president of a girls' school. The vampire and vampiress exist on the blood of the girls attending the institution but meet their demise by being stabbed by a poker. Inferior to the former LAKE OF DRACULA also directed by Yamamoto.

NOSUTORADAMUSU NO DAI-YOGEN (CATASTROPHE-1999 or THE GREAT PROPHECY OF NOSTRADAMUS): Producer: Tomoyuki Tanaka; Director: Toshio Masuda; Effects: Shokei Nakano; Cast: Tetsuro Tamba, Kaoru Yumi, Toshio Kurosawa; Released August 3, 1974. The dramatization is loosely based on The Centuries by Nostradamus.

1975 productions scheduled by Toho:
ESUPAI: Producer: Tomoyuki Tanaka, Fumio Tanaka; Director: Jun Fukuda; Effects: Shokei Nakano; Cast: Hiroshi Fujioka, Kaoru Yumi, Yuzo Kayama, Masao Kusakari. This film, a sf-actioner with an ESP theme, is based on the novel Esupai by Sakyo Komatsu, the author of Submersion of Japan and the first man of Japanese sf-dom. Linda Blair, who visited Japan to promote THE EXORCIST in July of '74 was asked to appear as a guest star in the film. It appears that her manager was against the idea in spite of Linda's desire to do the part. The film has been released with an English title of ESPY. Release date unknown.
ZOKU NIPPON CHINBOTSU (SUBMERSION OF JAPAN, PART II): Director: Shiro Moriya; Effects: Shokei Nakano.

MEKA-GOJIRA NO GYAKUSHU (COUNTERATTACK OF THE MECHANICAL GODZILLA): Director: Yoshimitsu Sekano; Effects: Shokei Nakano.

TBS television shows currently on the air:
SUBMERSION OF JAPAN: Produced by Toho Eizo Corp.; Director: Kiyoshi Nishino; Cast: Takenori Murano, Keiju Kobayashi, Kaoru Yumi, Noboru Nakaya. A successful color 60 minute TV show spinoff based on the popular feature of the same name from Toho.

SARU NO GUNDAN (THE APES CORPS. or CORPS. OF THE APES): Director: Sumito Fukazawa; Cast: Reiko Tokunaga, Masaaki Kaji, Tetsuya; Effects: Tsuburaya Productions. A 30 minute color series made on a low budget and imitating the PLANET OF THE APES film. END



A collage of scenes from the TBS television network series from Japan, THE APES CORPS, a takeoff on guess which popular motion picture series?

MAD MOVIES (Jean-Pierre Putters, 248 Bd de Stalingrad, 94500 Champigny/Marne, France; 7 F 50; biannually; mimeo/offset; 8 1/2 x 11 3/4; 60 pages, some glossy stock) A French language fan publication reminding one somewhat of the first series of L'Ecran Fantastique, but improved due to the use of photos interspersed throughout MM on glossy stock paper. Photos are well-reproed. Issue #8: Roger Cornman interview, Michael Gough article and filmography, Dennis Price article and filmography, films on invisible beings, letters, editorial, more. Issue #9: article on Christopher Lee and filmography (takes up most of the issue), more. Contains some excellent material. American denomination of cover price is unknown, so write to Jean-Pierre for info.

FANDOM'S FILM GALLERY (Jan Van Genechten, G. Van Deurnelaan 71, 2100 Deurne, Belgium; irregularly; offset; 8 1/2 x 6; 68 pages on glossy stock) Copy price unknown. Entire issue devoted to HORROR OF DRACULA. Illustrated with art and frame blow-ups. Next issue: Romero's LIVING DEAD.

JFFJ/41
from the editor
POSTSCRIPT

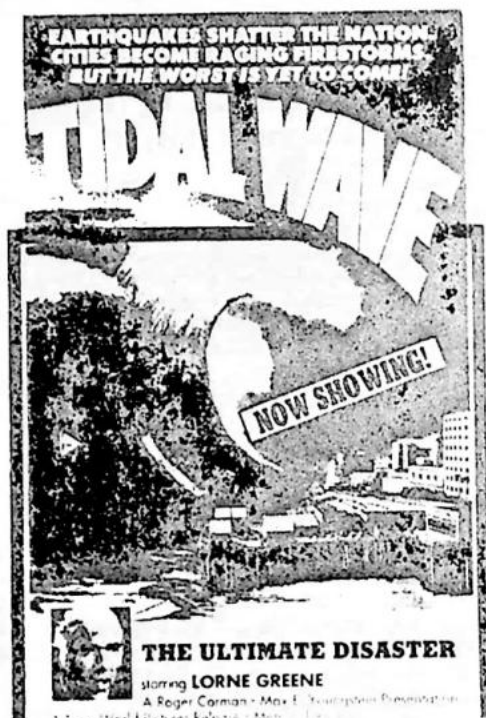
I had not intended to include the usual final comments this issue due to a lack of space--or so I thought. Through various rearrangements of page sequencing incorporating display ads, I ended up with 1 blank page. This is actually a stroke of good luck for it allows commentary appropriate to Japanese fantasy cinema (and an assortment of non sequiturs I believe pertinent to JFFJ's readers) to be written for updating this rather unduly late issue, an issue whose whereabouts you would still be pondering were it not for a certain good friend, smoking confidant, and Rolling Stones freak bar none whose access to an offset press has abetted my offbeat hobby by providing his wizardry on the Multigraphic 2850. Late of the Armed Services, Ray Cowley graciously offered to do my printing and has done a great job in spite of the inadequacies of my layouts. A second dedication then I feel is necessary, and it is directed at Fast Ray, Loose Ray or Ray Dar (Golden Earring thanks you), whichever nickname his many friends have selected to title this naturally "speeding" dude. Thank you, Ray, for everything!

Next year, 1976, the summer of, Toledo will be hosting a Star Trek convention. August is the target month. I have not been a participant in the planning stages, but I hope to get involved as soon as time allows it. For further information contact STAR-Toledo, P.O. Box 8554, Toledo, Ohio 43623. Be sure to include an SASE (self-addressed-stamped-envelope) for a reply or you won't get an answer. Promising an assortment of ST personalities, films, huckster's tables, etc., the con should be even more exciting due to the rebirth of the show as a feature and possibly a TV series. I shall be at the con, hopefully as a participant, and would like to meet any of JFFJ's readers should you attend. See ya here!

SUBMERSION OF JAPAN has finally reached our shores, were you unaware of the opportune happening, in the guise of a new title, TIDAL WAVE, in distribution by Roger Corman's New World Pictures and Youngstein Enterprises. Some Japanese footage has been deleted and new American scenes have been added starring Lorne Greene as a United States ambassador propositioned by a Japanese emissary to receive hundreds of thousands of Japan's citizens fleeing the cataclysm of their sinking nation, a dying country, and to wield his influence among the world's leaders to receive the rest of the millions of refugees. The footage, obvious due to lips moving in sync with the voices as opposed to the poorly dubbed Japanese footage, is unnecessary since the original Japanese film had similar scenes (without Greene) but all in the Japanese tongue. Mr. Greene is a "name" for the creation of an American desire to view the film, basing the assumption that U.S. audiences would not attend a motion picture using an all-Japanese cast since not once in the advertising by New World is there mention made of Japanese actors or the country itself, instead it's an "international cast" and a "threatened country." Had Lorne Greene not been played up in the trailers, radio spots, and even in the film itself ("Lorne Greene in...TIDAL WAVE...with..."), the hoax could have been overlooked, but the fraudulent appeal greatly disgruntled me, a Japanese film fan who has grown scar tissue from previous bouts with American handling of the films and who should be accustomed to these revisions, so one can imagine what the non-Japanese fantasy film-goer felt as he witnessed TIDAL WAVE. Ahh, I remember well the comments and grumbling the film precipitated as "The End"

flashed on the screen when I viewed the film on May 21, the premiere date for Toledo and several other cities in the U.S. The fact that the tidal wave of the film encompasses scenes totalling 3 minutes in length did little to avert further ill feelings on the part of the audience. The resulting affect could only keep alive the harbored negative thoughts Americans on the whole retain toward Japanese fantasy cinema--Japanese cinema of any kind for that matter--and decrease any chances of our ever witnessing the large amounts of fantasy material so far unavailable to us: GODZILLA VS. GIGAN, GODZILLA VS. MEGALON, GODZILLA VS. MECHAGODZILLA, MECHAGODZILLA'S REVENGE, ESPY, CATASTROPHE 1999, and many more!

After all the ballyhoo associated with SUBMERSION and the very pro review of the film at its showing at Cannes last year, I had hoped for a better production than that which I observed at the small theatre screening the film. Increasing my anxiety were the reviews which appeared in two local papers which labelled TIDAL WAVE "trash" and criticised the



film in their dissection quite harshly. I don't honestly believe any film is "trash," and I have wondered if either reviewer saw TW for I found their criticisms quite baseless on occasion, lacking defense in their extremely subjective viewpoints. Surprisingly there were excellent moments in the film, moments that correlated with Variety's comments. Me-thinks perhaps that the advertising is at fault here and the reviewers, like myself, saw one film expecting to see another and in retribution slaughtered the film. I can only suggest that each and everyone of you judge the film for yourself, but go expecting less than you've been promised.

For those of you who have or are thinking about sending me letters regarding the new monsters, etc., the following is for you. First, the apo-masked spaceman in MECHAGODZILLA is called Blackhole. The robot in MEGALON is called Jet Jaguar. King Seeser (King Shisar) is the lion-like beast in MECHAGODZILLA. Hope that tides ya over.

Till next time...

CineFan

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