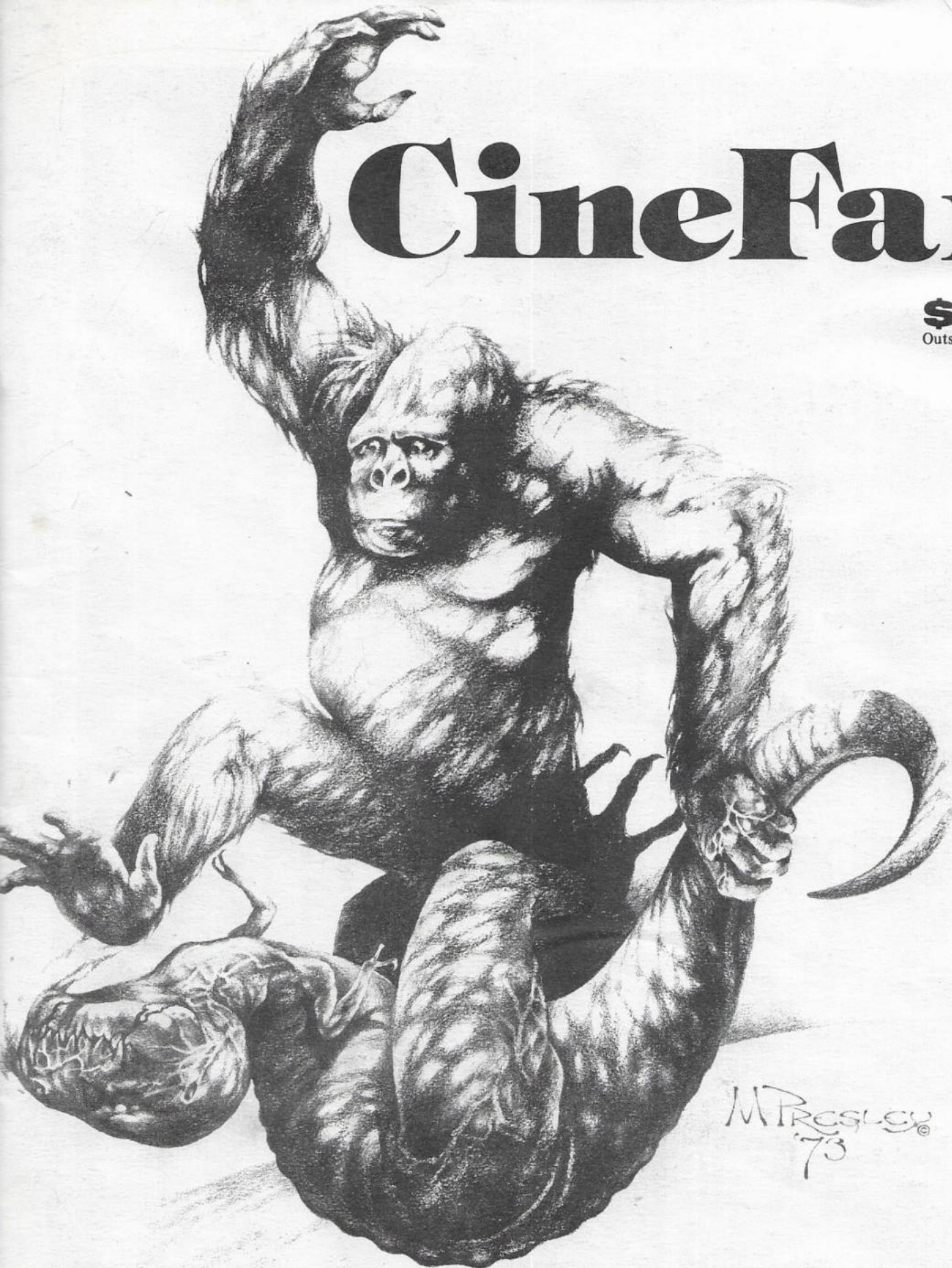


# CineFan

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**King Kong • Max Steiner • 2001 • Lesley Ann Warren**  
**A Romantic's View Of The Toho Legend**







# CineFan

## Cinefan #1, July 1974 issue

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COVER: A pencil rendition by Mike Presley of the classic scene from KING KONG.

BACK COVER: David L. Carson's montage from the 1925 version of THE LOST WORLD.

OPPOSITE: A rare behind-the-scenes photo of Haruo Nakajima as Godzilla, taking a break on the set of GODZILLA VS THE SMOG MONSTER. Nakajima has played GODZILLA in all of the films as well as some of their other monsters, as well as appearing in small roles in other Toho films (i.e., SEVEN SAMURAI, et al).

ABOVE: Jim Garrison's rendering of Fay Wray and Bruce Cabot in KING KONG.

BELOW: A beautiful closeup of the dragon built by Wah Chang for Jim Danforth's animation in THE WONDERFUL WORLD OF THE BROTHERS GRIMM.

Pandom Unlimited Crest by Jim Garrison.

## The Editorial Page

by Randall Larson.....4

### A Romantic's View of the Toho Legend

by Greg Shoemaker  
Part one of an informal history and review of the fantasy films of Japan's Toho Film Company.....5

### An Interview With Max Steiner

Two interviews with the late maestro have been combined to form this interesting discussion with the "Dean of Film Music" (Interviewed by Anthony Thomas).....14

### Harris & Landis: SON OF BLOB & SCHLOCK!

by Randall Larson  
The films of distributor/producer Jack H. Harris, with particular emphasis on SON OF BLOB and John Landis' SCHLOCK, with incorporated interviews with both.....17

### CinePAN: Shlock in the Cinema

by Clay Holden and Randall Larson  
A devastating and merciless slaughter of one of the great travesties of all time, THE LAND UNKNOWN.....23

### Performers in the Horror/Fantasy Cinema:

1950-1960, by Howard Clegg  
Part one of an analysis and checklist of the major actors and actresses who appeared in the fantastic films of the fifties.....27

### An Interview With Lesley Ann Warren

A lengthy discussion with the actress on her previous work, future plans, ideas and opinions (Interviewed by Fred Gillespie and Randall Larson).....34

### Film Reviews by Jerry Weddle, Mark

Verheiden and Eddy C. Bertin.....40  
SEE NO EVIL.....40  
MAGNUM FORCE.....40  
NIGHT WATCH.....41  
PAT GARRETT AND BILLY THE KID.....42  
THE LEGEND OF HELL HOUSE.....42  
SISTERS.....43  
WESTWORLD.....43  
HITLER: THE LAST TEN DAYS.....43  
ENTER THE DRAGON.....44  
THE LONG GOODBYE.....44  
HORROR EXPRESS.....46  
NA KOMEPA (ON THE COMET).....46  
GODSPELL.....46  
SOYLENT GREEN.....47  
A FISTFUL OF DYNAMITE.....47  
DELIVERANCE.....48

### THE GOLDEN VOYAGE OF SINBAD

by Mark D. Wolf  
A lengthy and profusely illustrated review of the new model-animated film from special effects expert Ray Harryhausen.....48

### Who Killed King Kong?

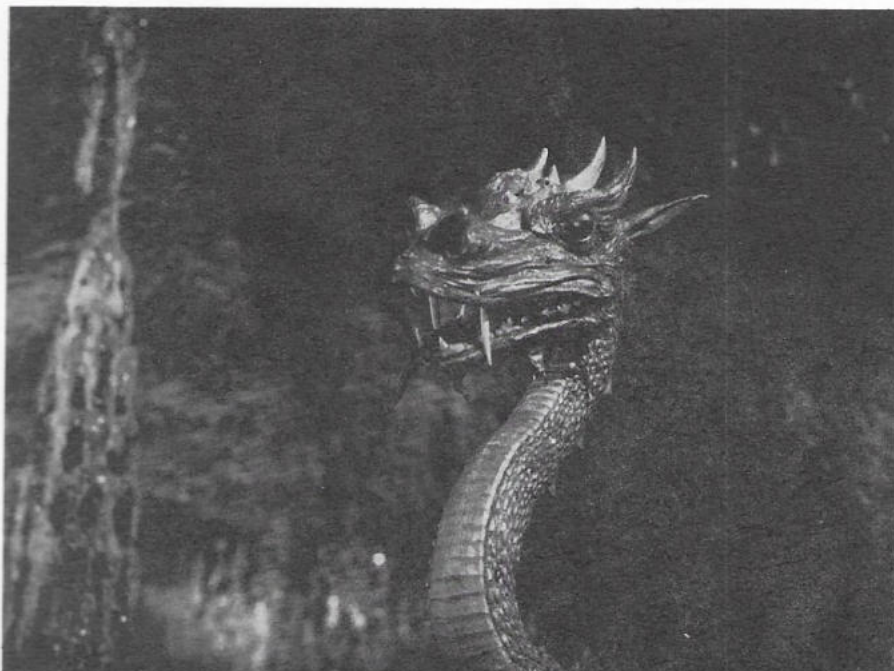
by Loay Hall  
A brief look at the four KONG films in comparison.....52

### An Editorial Opinion: 2001

by Ernest D. Farino  
A brief discussion of the special effects work in Stanley Kubrick's 2001: A SPACE ODYSSEY, in regard to their un-originality.....55

### European Nightmares

by Eddy C. Bertin  
A review of the Belgian television series, Contes Fantastiques (Fantastic Stories).....57







# THE EDITORIAL PAGE

By Randall Larson

First off, I want to welcome you to the first issue of *Cinefan*. It's been a long time in preparation, and I thank those of you who've been waiting for your patience and apologize for the delay. As anyone who's dealt with F.U.E.'s advance orders before is aware, publication delays are nothing new around here; but I am certain that any such delays that come up will only result in a better final product. Hopefully, future issues of *Cinefan*, as well as *Pandom Unlimited*, shall appear more frequently than in the past.

I want to thank all those who contributed to the publication of this first issue by sending in the material which comprises it. It goes without saying that I couldn't have done it without them, not unless I wanted to start producing sketch books. And I urge readers to send in material, articles, reviews, artwork, whatever, for consideration. A fanzine subsists on the material sent in by the fans, and there's an open market here. (Due to the nature of my publications, and the financial status, contributions are not paid for other than by a copy of the issue in which your work appears). Material is also needed for *Pandom Unlimited*, which deals with the serious discussion and evaluation of comic books and fantastic literature, and for the upcoming *Zeppelin*, a smaller, more limited and informal fanzine dealing with just about any subject.

The *Cinefan* review section is open to old as well as new films, and submissions of reviews, and any other quality articles dealing with cinema are greatly encouraged.

Some technical information may be in order: as usual, any comments inside of a double set of parenthesis ((...)) are those of the editor; and the photo captions, and any opinions stated therein, may be blamed on the editor.

I would like to call attention to two advertisements which appear somewhere in the issue, which I eagerly recommend: Sound Track Album Retailers is a mail-order outfit which has an excellent selection of quality soundtracks at remarkably reasonable prices, considering the rarity of many of the albums. I've been dealing with STAR ever since I first became interested in film music, and I've been quite happy with their services. See their ad in the classified section; if you're seriously interested in film music as a collector, I'd encourage you to write for their catalogue.

The other ad may be found on the inside back cover, and is for Walt Lee's monumental Reference Guide to Fantastic Films. This is an overwhelmingly complete project, containing a monstrous list of all films which are to be considered fantastic (i.e., science fiction, fantasy, horror, etc.) and why they are so; with massive cast/credit lists, synopsis and cross references. An excellent information source handsomely bound in three volumes (the third is due out any time now) which is deserving of your interest.

I'd also like to indicate the insert on the second page of the HARRIS/LANDIS article this issue -- notice the "real" blob discovered in Texas recently. How much of Paramount's 1958 release, *THE BLOB*, was fiction, eh? Interesting that the Dallas Blob was red in color, just as Steve McQueen's nemesis was. And no doubt a coincidence that the woman who found it was named Harris, just as the film's producer was. Certainly the Dallas phenomenon was no more than an unusual mutation, but -- as the article points out -- the possibility is there.

"Nothing is impossible," a friend of mine once said. "Improbable, yes. Impossible, no."

Other publications available from Pandom Unlimited Enterprises include:

*Pandom Unlimited #1*, published in October of 1971, our first publication is still available for \$1.00 per copy. F.U. #1 deals with comics and science fiction, and features an exclusive interview with Fredric Wertham, M.D., wherein he discusses his views of comic book violence as put forth in his book *Seduction of the Innocent*. Also included is an interview with author Robert Bloch, articles on comics, science fiction and fanzines, plus art by Jim (Alan) Hanley, D. Bruce Berry, Bill Rotsler, Mario Navarro, Jim Garrison, et al.

*The Robert Bloch Fanzine* is still available in limited quantities for \$1.00 each. This is the magazine about Robert Bloch. It's been praised as a collectors' item by fans and dealers, and the second edition (photo offset, revised) is almost sold out. Containing articles on and by the author of *PSYCHO*, *NIGHT WORLD*, and other novels, short stories and films like *ASYLUM*, *STRAITJACKET*, etc.; a complete bibliography of his published work, an extensive interview combined from four sources, and other material by Sam Moskowitz, Loay Hall, Samuel Peeples, Joe Pumlila and others; with artwork by Jim Garrison, Mario Navarro, Tim Kirk, Bill Rotsler, et al.

*Pandom Unlimited #2* is at last in preparation and should be out before long. You can reserve a copy for \$1.00 now. Featuring an extensive history-review (part one) of H.P. Lovecraft's weird-horror series, *The Cthulhu Mythos*; an in-depth interview with Fredric Wertham, M.D. on the subject of screen violence; an autobiography of C.C. Beck (artist of the Golden Age CAPTAIN MARVEL); a poll on the Comics Code Authority, and other material, including fiction by Gordon Matthews, and Loay Hall & Terry Dale. Artwork is by Mike Presley, Bil Stout, Don Newton (a beautiful centerpiece!), John Romita, Jim Pinkoski, John Fanticchio, Jim Garrison, C.C. Beck, Jim Hanley, John Pound, Tim Kirk, Bill Rotsler, Mario Navarro, Dan Adkins, Vincent DiFate, and many others.

The second issue of *Cinefan*, publication date unset, is due out before too long, you can reserve a copy anytime for \$1.00. Features include the conclusions of this issue's Toho and 50's Performers articles, as well as a detailed and profusely-illustrated article on animator Jim Danforth, discussions on the Wolfman, *FANTASTIC PLANET*, "The Movie Morality", the screenwriting career of Robert Bloch, and much more.



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# A ROMANTIC'S VIEW OF THE TOHO LEGEND

By Greg Shoemaker

## PART ONE

Let us go way back to 1954, not really a great year for filmmaking in general, but an outstanding year nonetheless for one film company in particular, a Japanese outfit with that memorable, sing-songy name, Toho -- more precisely, Toho Motion Picture Company.

Yes, 1954 was a landmark year for the technicians and actors at Toho due to the popularity of a certain motion picture filmed on the Toho lots -- a film which gave that studio a financial lift and a name-to-remember by film audiences around the world. But it wasn't until 1956 when that same Toho film burst on the screen in the United States did Toho find a niche in the fantasy film genre in good ol' U.S.A. And the motion picture that accomplished this spectacular feat -- GODZILLA, KING OF THE MONSTERS, of course.

Not attempting to slight the success of GODZILLA, mention must still be made of a fantasy movie also produced in Japan by Toho in 1954 titled THE INVISIBLE MAN, alternately titled THE INVISIBLE AVENGER. A question arises as to this film's release date in regards to that of GODZILLA. If before, GODZILLA cannot be termed the success everyone labeled it for it took Toho two attempts to get its fantasy films off the ground. If after, Toho can be commended on GODZILLA for being the first but blowing their success with AVENGER. In fact, little is available from any source on AVENGER, but it's quite definite that Eiji Tsuburaya handled the special effects chores on the film. More likely than not, THE INVISIBLE MAN probably preceded GODZILLA and failed to click.

Two additional assumptions could be made in regards to GODZILLA's popularity. First, had it not been for the success of Ray Harryhausen's BEAST FROM 20,000 FATHOMS, Toho might not have made GODZILLA in the first place. Second, had it not been for the vast campaigning of Joseph E. Levine who purchased GODZILLA for release in the U.S., both GODZILLA and Toho might have remained nonentities to this day.

As one can see, the beginning of the fantasy film in Japan is shrouded in supposition. But it was GODZILLA, KING OF THE MONSTERS which started it all. It was Toho who produced the first successful fantasy motion picture from the "land of the rising sun." And it is to them and one especially talented film craftsman, the late Eiji Tsuburaya (1901-1970), master special visual effects technician, that this article is dedicated.

For the novice to this film, GODZILLA featured a monster awakened after centuries of sleep by hydrogen bomb explosions. His "rebirth" resulted in the destruction of Tokyo and the death of many hundreds of Japanese citizens. Witnessed by Steve Martin, an American reporter, who had befriended two Japanese, he induced one, a girl, to persuade her Japanese scientist-friend to use his new invention -- an agent that will destroy the oxygen in water -- in the sea where Godzilla retreated after his rampage on the land. The scientist relented, and Godzilla was destroyed in the sea which bore him up.

TOP LEFT: An atmospheric scene from one of Toho's horror/mystery-formula fantasies, H-MAN. Yumi Shirakawa cringes from the watery hydrogen being.

CENTER LEFT: Momoko Kuchi and Akira Takarada in GODZILLA, Toho's best known fantasy film. CENTER RIGHT: Akira Takarada (left) and Takashi Shimura (center) watch as Akihiko Hirata prepares to use his oxygen destroyer which will eventually do away with the monster in GODZILLA. Shimura, best known for his excellent performances in Akira Kurosawa's SEVEN SAMURAI, IKIRU, and others, appeared in numerous Toho fantasies, including GODZILLA, GIGANTIS, THE MYSTERIANS, GHIDRAH, and others.

BOTTOM LEFT: GODZILLA, KING OF THE MONSTERS rages through Tokyo (the first time this mighty city had been crushed by Toho's monsters, by the way). Note the miniature work on the set, and compare the atmosphere of this original film with that of Toho's later films, particularly the GODZILLA MEETS SO AND SO travesties.





**GODZILLA, KING OF THE MONSTERS** was a dynamic film at the time of its initial release, though repetition of its concept in other films over the years had dimmed much of its uniqueness. The film was quite shocking and horrifying in many sequences, most notably the effectual buildup of tension created by Raymond Burr who reported the destruction of Tokyo onto a tape recording. Godzilla eventually approached the building in which Burr had stationed himself and literally shook the hell out of the structure causing a beam to fall and pin Burr to the floor. The first appearance of Godzilla in the film cannot be discounted either, for its shock value when his head jutted over the top of a gargantuan hill frightening the natives into hysteria. Probably the fact that director Inoshiro Honda waited to show the monster until midway into the motion picture, and then only at night, helped to create fear in the viewer when watching **GODZILLA** -- it created a horrific mood sorely lacking in later efforts of Toho.

Most everyone knows how Tsuburaya created his effects for **GODZILLA**, so there is really no need to go into any depth on this matter. In fact, the main star of the film is the photography of the man-in-suit monster through the use of low camera angles, excessively slow motion, low-key lighting, and minimization of human movements by the individual in the Godzilla suit. As I said before, it is unfortunate that Toho has unlearned all the basics of filmmaking which they used so well in creating a virtual reign of terror from 1954 up until 1964 or '65.

To appeal to the American audiences non-Japanese footage was added to **GODZILLA** in its U.S. release, which starred Raymond Burr. He played his role extremely well. In his scenes Japanese-Americans were used as his companions, all speaking good English. But when Burr would speak to the Japanese stars, stand-ins would communicate to Burr with their backs to the camera. When the Japanese actors were by themselves in a scene, English dubbed voices were used. This method of seeming to combine the American actors with the Japanese stars succeeded, making it the best example of this machination to date.

Dubbing was merely average for the film. The most obvious faults appeared in two sequences. In the first, Takashi Shimura is explaining to a group made up of scientists, the press, and so on, the reasons for Godzilla's existence. Throughout this footage the dubbing voice continues to read the word "phenomenon" as "phenomenon," destroying the seriousness of the situation. And second, in the scene where Akihiko Hirata shows Momoko Kuchi his invention for removing all oxygen from water, the dubbing voices of both characters change to different voices and then return to the original ones. Both mistakes show how the fate of a motion picture rests in the hands of a dubbing studio. If the work is shoddy, the film suffers extensively. Luckily, the gods favored **GODZILLA** and the film overcame the errors in dialogue, lack of synchronization and voice expression.

For **GODZILLA** the sum was greater than each part. The whole thing worked. It worked so well that Toho said "Far out!" and began planning a sequel.

The sequel, like **GODZILLA**, was filmed in black and white. Toho, no doubt still unsure of their success, decided to keep the budget down by using the less costly film stock. Then, too, special visual effects, mostly along the lines of stationary and traveling mattes, were easier to execute for matching the matte segments, since color control in black and white was not a problem and the "halo" around matted elements was less noticeable. Also, like **GODZILLA**, the sequel's monster scenes took place primarily at night which benefitted concealment of mistakes and provided a mood for the film.

In **GIGANTIS**, the sequel to **GODZILLA**, two friends are using seaplanes to locate schools of fish. One of the friends, Kobayashi, ditches his plane near an island when the craft develops engine trouble. His friend, Tsukioka, flies to the rescue and both decide to spend the night on the island, but from out of a silence a roar is heard which startles the two. Both see a life and death battle being waged between Gigantis (Godzilla) and Angerus, a four-legged beast similar in appearance to a prehistoric ankylosaurus (resembling a modern-day armadillo). Tsukioka and Kobayashi escape the wrath of the two warring behemoths in Tsukioka's plane. The monstrous battle continues until both monsters plummet over a cliff into the sea. The beasts emerge sometime later on land and continue their battle until Gigantis eventually does away with Angerus. Then he turns his attention on the city. He is impossible to stop. The destruction completed, Gigantis returns to the sea and the safety of another island. He is spotted by a plane which informs the military of Gigantis' whereabouts.

Navy jets are dispatched to the island and bomb the snow-covered mountains surrounding the beast which causes avalanches of snow and ice. Gigantis is buried beneath tons of debris never to menace mankind again.

Footage from **GODZILLA** (Yes! Gigantis was actually Godzilla with a new name created by Warner Bros.) appeared in **GIGANTIS** in a scene where Dr. Yamani showed a gathering of scientists what to expect from the creature. The scenes covered Godzilla barging through electrical high tension lines, shooting his ray at tanks and the high tension supporting towers, standing on a train track whereupon a train crashes into his foot, and Godzilla clamping a train car in his jaw. Some close-ups of his feet smashing everything in their path were also included.

**GIGANTIS**, or **GODZILLA RAIDS AGAIN** among other numerous alternate titles by which this film has been known, featured no new American footage as in **GODZILLA**, though the possibility had been discussed before the film's eventual U.S. release some four years after its production. Supposedly, Forrest J. Ackerman, editor of *Famous Monsters of Filmland*, was questioned about a possible choice for someone to script the new footage. FJA recommended Ib Melchior ((known as a director and/or writer for *ANGRY RED PLANET*, *REPTILIOUS*, *JOURNEY TO THE SEVENTH PLANET*, et al)) who began to formulate a new script called **THE VOLCANO MONSTERS** bringing together Gigantis and Angerus in the Philippines later heading for America. But the added cost and work of all this new footage caused the idea to be abandoned. Finally, in 1959 the film was re-released as **GIGANTIS, THE FIRE MONSTER**. Fraudulent advertising?

**GIGANTIS** followed **GODZILLA** with continued high production qualities. And despite the monster vs monster theme, the character development of the human actors was a major part of the scenario. In fact one of the heroes of the film lost his life when the

final attempt to destroy Gigantis was made. It all helped the film overcome its "monster meets monster" status. Though not the first film to pit one giant beast against another, it was the first in 1955 to have the battle between two monsters fought in a city. **GIGANTIS** was, and still is, the finest example of the Toho "meet" films, and was one of the best films Toho has made.

1955 also brought forth another new Japanese creation in the form of a giant gorilla-like beast, with modifications by the Toho makeup department. He wandered amidst the Japanese Alps in this Nippon version of the Abominable Snowman legend. In this film the story went as follows: A half-human, half-beast creature is discovered by a university student whose findings result in a search by a group of anthropologists, believing that the creature may be a missing link in the evolution of man. During the attempts to ensnare the beast (a circus owner becomes involved in his own search for obvious reasons) the monster's son is killed and the enraged Snowman hurls men and trucks over a cliff. His wrath unappeased, the creature demolishes a lost village hidden in the Alps. At the climax the beast, in a skirmish with a girl from the lost village, falls off a cliff and is killed. The scientists then take the Snowman's son back to their university for scientific study.

The snowman was the star of Toho's **HALF HUMAN**, originally titled **THE SNOWMAN**, which

LEFT: Gigantis (Godzilla) fights with Angerus in the first of what was to become a tradition with Toho: monster meets monster, from **GIGANTIS, THE FIRE MONSTER**.

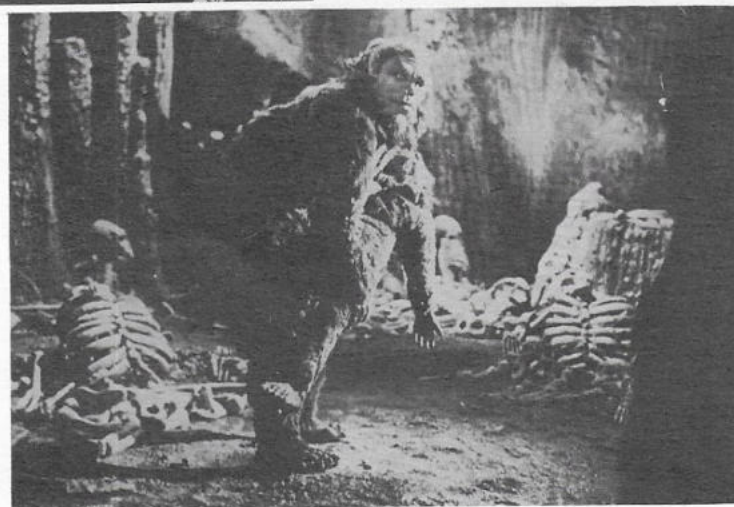
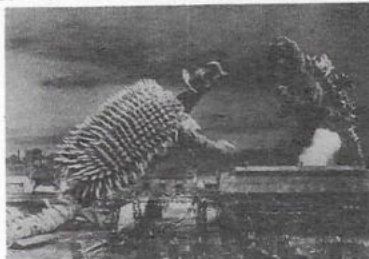
CENTER LEFT: **GODZILLA** approaches the electrified power lines that were set up in an attempt to stop him. They didn't.

CENTER RIGHT: Soldiers prepare for the coming of **GIGANTIS** on the island.

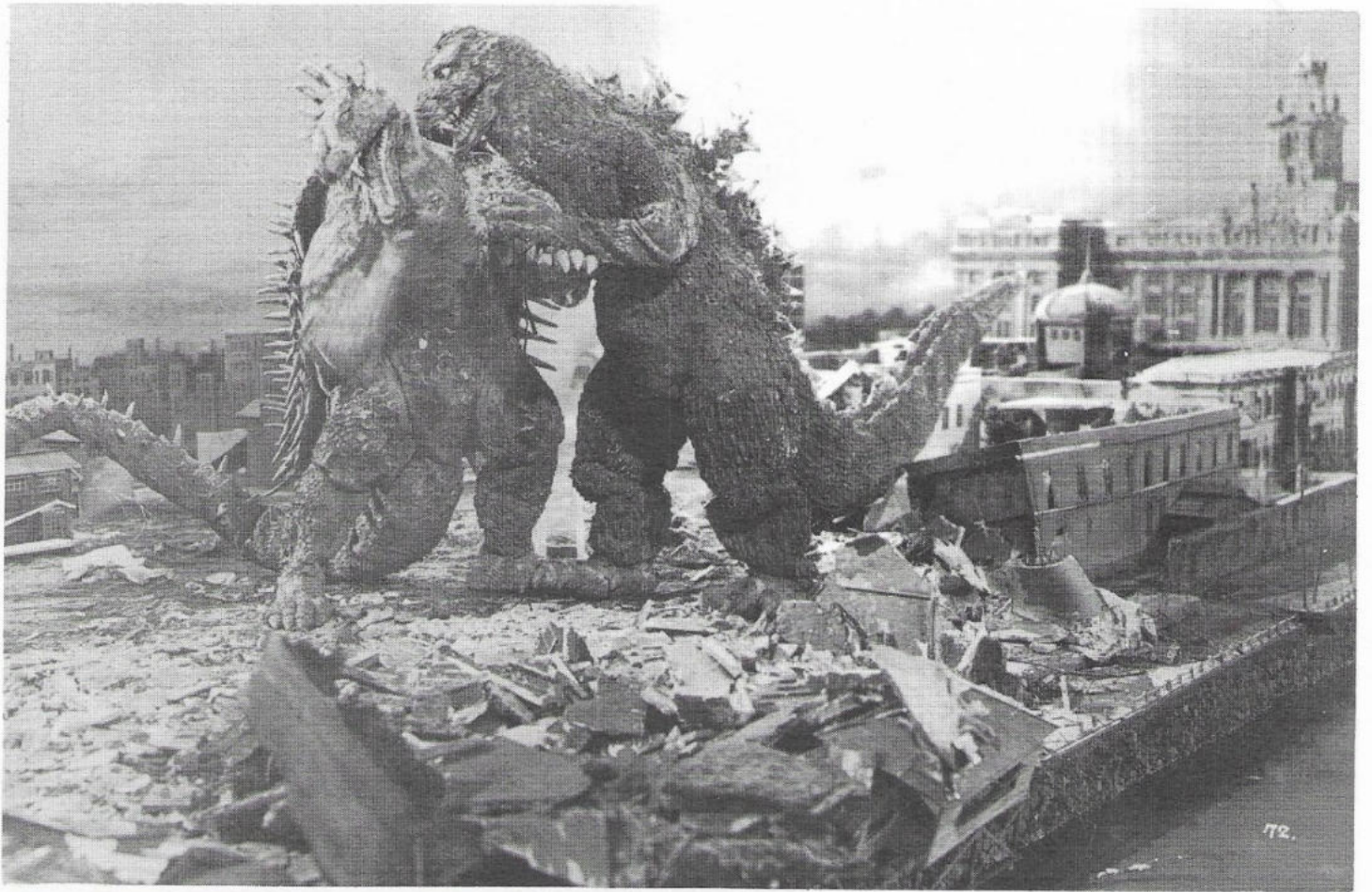
BOTTOM: A rare still from **HALF HUMAN**, one of Toho's more inwardly-sensitive films.

OPPOSITE PAGE, TOP: A remarkably clear photo of the battle in **GIGANTIS**. Note the fine detail given to the set and costuming, and backdrop painting. For some reason, no doubt economy, Toho's more current Godzilla efforts have all lacked in this detail (with the possible exception of some miniature work) and none have had the craftsmanship that went into their earlier films.

BOTTOM: Another example of early Toho miniature and effects work, from **RODAN**. Note the wind-torn buildings, and wildly-splashing water in the river, and the detail given to the miniatures.









was released in the States on a double-bill with the grade-Z quicky **MONSTER FROM GREEN HELL**. Like many of the earlier Toho fantasy films, distribution was limited, and because of this, information on **HALF HUMAN** was, and is, rather scarce.

The fault with the distribution lay with Distributors' Corporation of America who accomplished the releasing of **HALF HUMAN** in the U.S. in 1958. Assuming the film was unpalatable to American audiences, DCA followed GODZILLA's play of filming new scenes with American actors to intercut with the Japanese footage. The new footage featured John Carradine, Morris Ankrum, Robert Karnes and Russ Thorson as American scientists who discuss the action of the beast.

The film was described thusly by Paul V. Beckly in a review he wrote for the *N.Y. Herald Tribune* on November 27, 1958: "The development is generally slow and the outcome disappointing. There are some sequences of merit, among others -- that in which the Snowman...his skin somewhat baggy but looking otherwise like a fairly happy Neanderthal...picks up a truck and tosses it like a handball over a cliff."

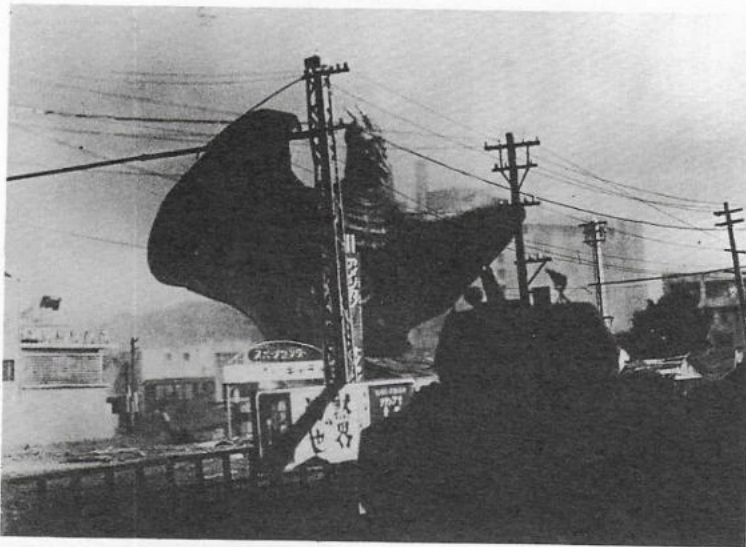
Stills from **HALF HUMAN** backed Beckly's criticism regarding the baggy suit, but the slow pace of the film was due to the talky American explanatory footage which boringly described plans of the scientists and the actions of the Snowman. Had DCA left the original footage intact, the pace, thanks to Honda's direction, would have been quite good. What was most startling was the fact that even with all the new footage, the U.S. release ran 25 minutes less than the original Japanese release print! With all that film deleted, the American release still appeared slow. DCA's news scenes were really deadly.

Percance a plea by Toho, **HALF HUMAN** was a depressing motion picture. Wandering amidst the alps the Snowman, for the most part a non-violent creature by nature, enjoyed this freedom with his son. From below, from the "civilized" world, came the scientists to capture the beast for study. Not only did the Snowman see his son die because of the interfering humans, but he himself was a victim of molesting man. Not realizing what havoc they had wreaked, the scientists added insult to injury by moving the dead Snowman's son to a sterile laboratory for dissection and study. Might there be a message involved here? I believe so.

**RODAN**, **THE FLYING MONSTER** swept out of the Japanese skies in 1956, the same year GODZILLA was released in the United States. This blockbuster film was the introductory vehicle for yet another new Toho manufacture -- a pterodactyl-type giant, and his mate. Rodan's awesome power, aside from his tremendous flying speed, was a by-product of air being either forced over his wings as he flew or pushed from flapping wings as he stood upright on the earth. Whatever method Rodan used to create this colossal tornado-like wind, he was able to whip trucks, busses, and people about as if they were toys and demolish a building as if it were made of twigs.

This, the first Toho color fantasy, was also the first to feature a great bird as the menace "star". Like the earlier monster films, **RODAN** did contain much monster footage, but attention was still paid to the live actors whose life-style was being affected by the monster, which thus allowed the audience to empathize with the humans and feel a part of the perilous situation being projected on the screen -- something most monster films, and the majority of the later Toho films, failed to incorporate into their scripts.

The story went as follows: H-bomb tests are being conducted in the Pacific. A coal mine becomes flooded with water and two miners are missing. A search party finds the body of one of the miners, his body has been badly mutilated by ugly wounds, and the other missing miner is blamed for the killing. A later search party finds the body of the second miner murdered in the same way. The party is attacked by a huge prehistoric-appearing caterpillar. The Army and police are called in to destroy the monster, and a fight takes place in the mine, in which a cave-in reveals a hollow filled with more giant insects and many eggs. The caterpillar is killed by one of the miners who releases a car full of coal which races down the track and finally crushes the monster and causes a new cave-in which buries the monster and the eggs. Could it be the flood and underground cave-in was caused by the atomic shocks, and eggs millions of years old are suddenly beginning to break open and hatch? Soon, an unidentified flying object of supersonic speed is spotted on a radar scope. Flares are sent to intercept, but they cannot out-manuever it and are all destroyed at the huge flying object smashes them in mid-air. Entire herds of cattle and people begin missing, then the shell of a huge egg is found near the quiet volcano at Mt. Aso. Scientists realize that



the shocks from the H-Bomb tests have caused the release of a prehistoric bird with a wing span of 270 feet who weighs over 100 tons, from a sleep of 200 million years -- they call it "Rodan". The monster ravages and destroys cities, and then another Rodan appears. The Japanese Defense Forces, in an attempt to destroy the beasts, locate the breeding place of the monsters and fire rockets into the cave. Explosions rock the cave of the Rodans which result in giving life to the long dormant volcano. Finally, the explosions, the billowing smoke, and the boiling lava overwhelm the Rodans.

The climax to **RODAN** was a sad one indeed. The one mate was dead, and the other, with a slim chance of escaping a similar fate, decided that not only in life but also in death not to leave his mate's side, and so ends his life in the fiery explosions of the boiling volcano.

The other fantasy (?) effort of 1956 was a mystery titled **THE VAMPIRE MOTH**. The movie was concerned with a detective who solves a

series of murders in which the only clues were teeth marks found on the victims' bodies and a blood-stained moth which crept over the corpse. The denouement revealed the murderer as not being a vampire.

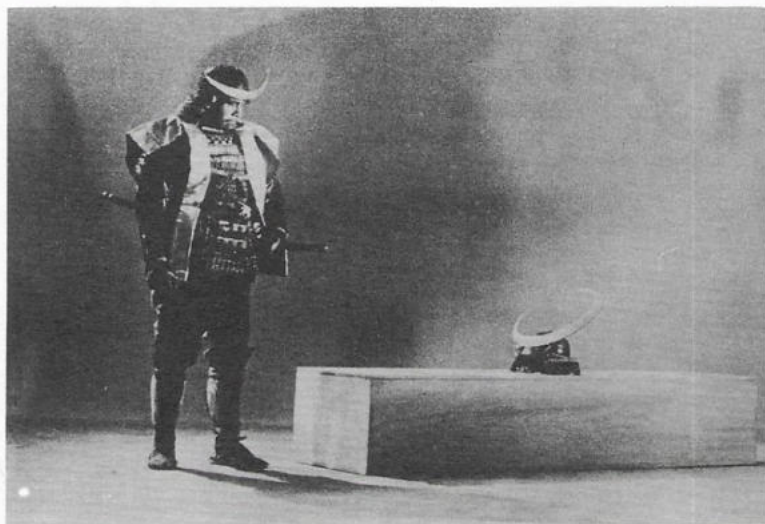
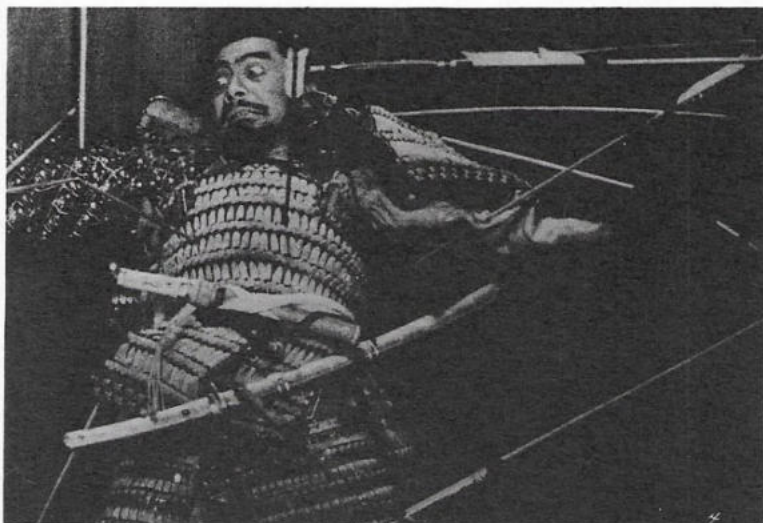
TOP: **RODAN** lands on the ground and causes great windstorms by flapping his wings as Japanese defense forces move in.

CENTER, LEFT: Akihiko Hirata (with glasses), Kenji Sahara (2nd from right) and Yumi Shirakawa (far right) observe **RODAN**.

CENTER, RIGHT: Early in **RODAN**, Kenji Sahara and Yumi Shirakawa flee from the giant caterpillar found in the cave.

BOTTOM: Akira Kurosawa's classic **THRONE OF BLOOD**, which might be termed a semi-fantasy. Here, Toshiro Mifune (right) and his fellow samurai discover the Weird Woman (Chieko Naniwa).





Stills from Akira Kurosawa's *THRONE OF BLOOD*, based on Shakespeare's *Macbeth*. Pictured, Toshiro Mifune.

Akira Kurosawa, the gifted Japanese film director, in 1957 lent his talented approach to filmmaking on his version of Shakespeare's *Macbeth* released in the U.S. as *THRONE OF BLOOD*. Kurosawa, who directed such stunning films as *SEVEN SAMURAI*, *YOJIMBO* and *RASHOMON*, took Shakespeare's play for his theme and set the story in old Japan during the turbulent era of the civil war. The film itself, photographed in the stylized Noh tradition, cannot really be classified as a true horror film since the only macabre aspect in the movie was the witch who prophesized Macbeth's destruction. But a film listing of Japan's fantasy films not mentioning *THRONE OF BLOOD* would not be complete.

The second 1957 Toho production was the rarity titled *THE LEGEND OF THE WHITE SERPENT*. Never released in the United States, this Teuburaya-embellished fantasy epic was adapted to the screen from a Chinese legend called *The Legend of the White Snake* after five long years of preparation. The motion picture was a joint effort of Toho in Japan and Shaw and Sons in Hong Kong. Filmed in Eastmancolor, *WHITE SERPENT* won for Teuburaya an award for his special photographic effects at the Berlin Film Festival.

The synopsis of *WHITE SERPENT* went as follows: "One rainy day, Hsu Hsien, a poor Chinese youth, lends his umbrella to beautiful Madame White. She falls in love with him and asks him to marry her, giving him money to prepare for the wedding. Hsu Hsien is elated but when he opens the money-container he sees, to his horror, that it is the silver that had been stolen from the government warehouse the night before. He is accused of the crime and is condemned to exile in Soochow. Madame White follows him there and the hate that has smoldered in his heart turns to love again when he sees and talks with her. They live happily together until Hsu Hsien discovers that Madame White is really the spirit of a snake. Shocked by the revelation, he takes refuge in a temple. Madame White loves Hsu Hsien so much that she cannot give him up and she goes to the temple and entreats him to return to her. When she realizes that he will never listen to her, she invokes her magic power and causes a flood. When Hsu Hsien is on the verge of drowning, Madame White relents and saves him, but she herself is caught in a counter current and dies. All too late, Hsu Hsien realizes how great her love for him had been, and he is torn with grief."

Lastly for 1957, but not least by any means, was *THE MYSTERIANS*. Other than *BATTLE IN OUTER SPACE* ('59), and to a lesser extent *ATRAKON* ('63), *THE MYSTERIANS* was the best example of Teuburaya effectsmanship -- and was perhaps one of the best effects films ever made. *THE MYSTERIANS*, one of the few lavish s.f. films Toho has produced, was, to paraphrase Carlos Clarens in his book, *An Illustrated History of the Horror Film*, "an eye-drugging fantasy of destruction, bolting and bombing with color, special effects, and a big budget." The plot of the film involved aliens from the planet Mysteroid who kidnapped Earth's women for mating purposes. But the Earthlings forced the Mysterians to leave through the use of electronic weapons. Hopefully, a sequel will be filmed since a few of the Mysterian saucers made their escape at the climax.

With the release of *THE MYSTERIANS* Toho brought to the silver screen their second major fantasy formula, the spectacular, and with the exception of George Pal's *WAR OF THE WORLDS* there may not be a finer example of s.f. spectacle than *THE MYSTERIANS*.

Similarity to *WORLDS* was obvious as neither film relied on character development to prove their point. More precisely, the phenomenon was the most important ingredient of the story-line, and all other plot devices submitted to this central statement. Visually, this becomes obvious when in the first five minutes of the film director Inoshiro Honda introduced the characters and set the story in motion when a fire was discovered in





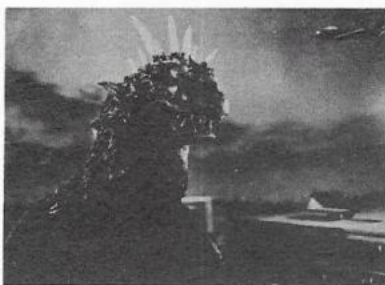
a nearby forest -- a fire burning from the roots of the trees up -- hinting that there would be far stranger and more unusual events taking place later in the film.

Toho, believing that monsters were a necessity to their filmmaking, as they did with GORATH ('62) when they introduced a giant walrus as a sub-plot development, enlisted the aid of a gargantuan robot which annihilated animal, vegetable, and mineral with blasts of its ray machine located in its eye sockets. But the robot was destroyed when a bridge, rigged with dynamite, blew up causing the giant death machine to plummet to its end in the chasm below.

From Gary Garani's review of THE MYSTERIANS which appeared in The Monster Times #17: "Plotwise it seems to borrow liberally from THIS ISLAND EARTH, WAR OF THE WORLDS, EARTH VS THE FLYING SAUCERS, and several others, but it is unique in its depiction and satisfying in its result. MYSTERIAN elements pop up in many of Toho's later space operas, most notably MONSTER ZERO and ATRAGON, but none of these have the style or charm as their predecessor."

Not all of Toho's films were successes, as this article may imply, because in 1958 Toho released its first "failure." To clarify this, in '58 Toho completed BARAN, later named by Toho VARAN, THE MONSTER OF THE EAST. Baran was a four-legged monstrosity who had the ability to fly due to folds of skin attached to both front and back legs on both sides of his body, similar to that of a flying squirrel. The BARAN story went as follows: "A schoolboy captures an 'unearthly' butterfly while vacationing in northern Japan. A group of scientists set out to investigate the area and locate an eerie lake not listed on their maps. Out of the depths of the hidden lake emerges Baran, a prehistoric creature that had been assumed extinct for tens of millions of years. Baran kills all the scientists, and eventually the terrifying news reached an agonized nation. All-out efforts are made by Japan self-defense forces to hunt down and kill the elusive reptile which flies off into the Pacific Ocean after having caused havoc in various attacks. Conventional weapons, however, fail to penetrate the tough hide of the monster. Then the murderous creature starts to smash its way toward Tokyo. It is decided to use a new powerful explosive as a last resort. Realizing that the most effective way to destroy the beast would be to kill him from within, cans of the explosive are sent up into the sky tied to balloons in the hopes that the creature will gobble them up. As Baran swallows the explosives, deafening explosions occur and the reptile sinks into the slick waters of Tokyo Bay."

Filed in black and white and Tohoscope, BARAN waited until 1962 for its American release by Crown-International who changed the name of the film to VARAN, THE UNBELIEVABLE, a film which bore little resemblance to the original Japanese print as new American footage was incorporated into the Japanese film. More precisely, an American film was produced and shots of the beast, panic scenes, etc. from BARAN were edited into it. The new film went as follows: "In a salt water lake located on a small island in the Japanese archipelago, Commander James Bradley commences with his experiments to convert salt water to fresh. His Japanese wife, Anna, objects



ABOVE, TOP: A scene from Toho's VARAN, THE UNBELIEVABLE, a fantasy film that was marred tremendously by editing and added scenes done by the American distributor, Crown-International. ABOVE, CENTER: Tsuruko Kobayashi as Anna and Myron Healy as Commander James Bradley in the American version of VARAN. Neither of these characters were in the original Toho version. ABOVE, BOTTOM: VARAN. BELOW, LEFT: From the depths of a salt water lake rises VARAN -- this still illustrates some of the quality that was still present in the special effects of VARAN. The major flaw in Toho's special effects, at least in the later films of the 60's, seems to be the concept of the man-in-suit monster, as the still at top points out. BELOW, RIGHT: Yumi Shirakawa clings to Kenji Sahara in H-MAN.

due to the legend that a grotesque prehistoric reptile has inhabited the lake from time immemorial and will remain at peace if not disturbed. But Bradley ignores the warning and his tests arouse the monster. Total destruction follows and all attempts to destroy the beast fail as it heads for a large city. Commander Bradley orders evacuation of the populace and every modern weapon is to be used -- but to no avail. Trying a new approach, Bradley reasons that if a chemical was responsible for the beast's awakening, perhaps a heavier concentration exploded directly on the monster will destroy it. A truck loaded with the chemical is automatically set to crash into the creature. The explosion occurs and the monster retreats into the water but one knows if it is dead or if it will appear again."

VARAN was much below par of any previously released Nippon film that was either left intact for its American release or had U.S. footage tacked on to it, and the film had so little Oriental celluloid that the end product could be classified an American film similar to Curtis Harrington's PLANET OF BLOOD which used a smattering of footage from a Russian space opera.

The original BARAN promised further new excitement, just as past Toho films had, and no doubt would have proved correct had BARAN been released properly. But Crown-International's scheme fell flat on its face. Teuburaya's effects saved the film from obscurity, but most Toho fans would agree that VARAN would be better left forgotten.

A review by "Tube" of VARAN appeared in Variety on December 19, 1962, and the proof that the Japanese footage was so scarce was evidenced in the review when not once did the reviewer allude to the fact that VARAN was a Japanese motion picture. "Tube's" review went as follows: "Uninspired monster meller... Another in a long line of looney leviathans to emerge from sleep in the deep and indulge in some 20th century style destruction is VARAN THE UNBELIEVABLE. The production follows in the prodigious footsteps of such formidable beasts as GODZILLA, GORG and DIOSAURUS, but adds nothing new to the genre. It is hackneyed, uninspired carbon copy... Production contributions are not especially satisfactory. Photography is too dark, editing is jagged. Neither Harris' scenario nor Baerwitz's direction of it can sustain interest."

If one had seen VARAN, one knew that the review was describing the American footage for it could be assumed that the plot twists and technical work in the Toho version would have assured a quality product to be enjoyed and remembered.

The third Toho formula was non-spectacle science fiction of which mold H-MAN ('58), HUMAN VAPOR ('60), SECRET OF THE TELEGLAN ('60), and no doubt THE INVISIBLE AVENGER ('54) were created.

THE H-MAN, unlike many of the previous Toho films, had no spectacular rumors regaled about it, no American footage was edited to it, no dastardly evil monster was starred in order to draw audiences. What H-MAN did have was an above average scenario and outstanding technical work, especially in the realm of direction. H-MAN was, and is, a sleeper of Toho fantasy cinema. Possibly someday people will reminisce about Toho's past and will realize what power this little motion picture had.

The synopsis concerns the results of a series of hydrogen bomb tests. Shortly after the tests the Japanese police are baffled when several people mysteriously vanish, leaving behind only the crumpled remains of the clothing they were wearing. Eventually scientists theorize that a being made of





water, living in water, and subsisting on human flesh evolved as a result of the H-bomb tests. The theory is confirmed when the police trace the disappearance of a young dope thief to his nightclub-performer girl friend who witnessed the disintegration of another victim by a strange liquid substance. Once it is learned that the creature is living in Tokyo's underground sewers, plans are made to flood them with flaming gasoline. Meanwhile, the leader of the dope ring abducts the young nightclub performer and forces her into the sewers where he hid his heroin. The girl is rescued in time, but the gasoline fire destroys both the dope thief and the hydrogen creature.

So as not to feel that this author's criticisms are blown out of proportion regarding H-MAN one has merely to read a review of the film by "Ron" in *Variety* of June 3, 1959. Unlike a majority of the Toho epics, this film fared tremendously well with the critics, but the *Variety* review aptly summed the film up:

"Good story, well made...The story is reminiscent of last year's Paramount release, *THE BLOB*, and while recollective science fiction addicts may pooch-pooch the idea of an Oriental copy, they should be pleased with the quality of the replica...Its one effect--namely, the disintegration of the human body--is skillfully and terrifyingly adept...The screenplay is effective and Honda's direction takes full advantage of the story, the special effects and the terror generated by both. Culturally, it is unfortunate the West has made such inroads in the Orient that a Japanese picture, such as this one, looks more like an American film with Japanese actors."

The effect that impressed "Ron" so in his review was accomplished by the use of life-sized dolls made of rubber balloons. Air was let out of the balloons as the cameras turned at high speed ((creating slow motion on the film)). When the completed footage was projected at the normal speed, the effect gave the illusion that the people attacked by the hydrogen creature were wilting into nothingness. A smart lot those Japanese!

In 1958 Toho released the largest number of fantasy productions of any single year of their history. Two of the films already covered had the incomparable Bijii Tsuburaya at the special effects directorial helm. The two remaining features for the year, of which one also contained effects by Bijii, were based on ancient Oriental myths and legends. Neither of the releases had any American distribution, and other than the titles and synopses of the films, nothing else has ever been printed on the films.

The Tsuburaya film, *SUN WU-KUNG*, had as its basis material from *Saiyuki* (*Chronicle of Western Travel*), a famous Chinese legend, and had Kajiro Yamamoto, a prominent director of comedies, in charge of that aspect of the production.

From the press sheet: "This picture is a stupendous masterpiece of film entertainment, bubbling over with imagination and adventure. It features an all-star cast."

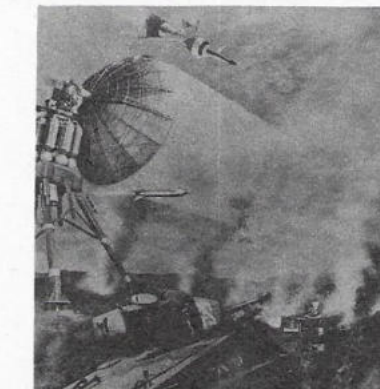
"The story portrays in widescreen and color the adventures of a priest and his three loyal followers during their journey to distant India to seek the Buddhist scriptures needed to save the country from calamity."

"Startling new effects have been adopted in both trick photography and in the unfolding of the story, adventurous episodes of laughter and thrills."

The other film, *THE AGE OF THE GODS*, reviewed the mythological history of Japan. It brought to the screen all the gods and goddesses familiar to the Japanese people. This spectacular was directed by Kiroshi Inagaki and was concerned with the life of Prince Takeru Yamato. Because of his extraordinary skill at fighting, he was dispatched by his father, Emperor Keiko, on expeditions to subjugate and conquer the peoples of Kumaso (Kyushu) and Yezo (Hokkaido). Prince Takeru was the victim of death, unfortunately, and was unable to return home in triumph. His exploits, love, and sorrows were portrayed in *AGE OF THE GODS*. Toshiro Mifune played the role of Takeru Yamato and Yoko Tsukasa the part of his wife, Princess Oto Tachibana who threw herself into the sea to calm the angry waves.

Neither film was fully described in either synopsis to any great detail, but the limited information hinted that both motion pictures might prove interesting viewing due to the subject matter -- Japanese mythology and Chinese legends, neither of which is familiar to Western audiences. The fantasy angle enveloped within each film, quite unusual for the norm for Toho, held a promise of unique viewing entertainment.

Toho was the distributor in 1958 for two independently-made short subjects, both animated cartoons, produced by Otogi-Pro, *THE TOP HEAVY FROG* and *THE SPARROW IN A GOURD*. Each of the cartoons featured a frog in the



lead and were moralistic in content with fantasy overtones to make the lessons more enjoyable. Both cartoons were produced, written and photographed by Ryuichi Yokoyama, a well known cartoonist in Japan.

The arrival of 1959 brought ISHIMATSU *TRAVELS WITH GHOSTS*, a Toho ghost film never released in the United States. The title connotes a jocular approach to the ghost film which Shinto Co. began producing in the mid-fifties to build their failing audience support. A large question mark has hung over this film since its title was uncovered some years ago as there was no other printed matter released on it. ISHIMATSU may not be a Toho film at all, but until further evidence proves otherwise, it must be included as a possible fantasy release of Toho's past.

To close on the decade in grand style, a jewel of a.f. was released, *BATTLE IN OUTER SPACE*. Like *THE MYSTERIANS*, effects were everything. Dialog was kept to a minimum. Character development was nil. But wow! The pulse pounding pace of the film complemented the outstanding visual effects and earth-shattering sound effects which created an overwhelming force that penetrated the mind, enthralling the viewer with scenes and sequences of explosions and space ships and space travel that bordered on art. But while *THE MYSTERIANS* seemed to outrank *BATTLE* in all these categories, *BATTLE* was a definite close second.

The plot was simple. It went as follows: "A series of mysterious accidents and catastrophes sweeping the globe causes the world scientists gathered in Tokyo to conclude that beings from another planet are attacking the Earth. Two space ships sent from Earth to the Moon discover that attackers are gathering on the far side of the satellite. Before the ships can return to Earth, they are fired upon by Natalians and only one ship makes it safely back to Earth. An emergency order is sent to all factories to construct fighter rockets to prepare for the attack of the spacemen and their flying saucers. Although the invaders wreak heavy damage in large cities, they are eventually repulsed and the Earth has a victory -- but no one is certain whether or not the enemy will strike again."

While *BATTLE* fared about as well with the critics as *THE MYSTERIANS*, each receiving an average rating, the key factor for *BATTLE* and for *THE MYSTERIANS*, agreed on by the reviewers were the tremendous special effects.

Said Howard of the *New York Times* in his review on July 9, 1960: "...the Japanese have opened a most amusing and beguiling bag of technical tricks, as death-dealing saucers whiz through the stratosphere like fireflies...The climatic 'battle' as missiles from both planets slug it out, is lively, loud, colorful -- and ridiculous. The animators must have had a field day."

Comparing *BATTLE* IN OUTER SPACE to *THE MYSTERIANS* was quite easy -- right down to the last all-out attack for the security of

FROM TOP: Two stills from *THE H-MAN*, during the final scenes in the tunnel. Yumi Shirawaka escapes as her captor meets his demise at the hands of the hydrogen man.

*THE MYSTERIANS*, Kenji Sahara (2nd from left) and Takashi Shimura (4th from left) are among the participants at a Japanese Intelligence meeting.

*BATTLE IN OUTER SPACE*, Toho's last fantasy film of the decade, was a vehicle for spectacular effects work, just as its predecessor, *THE MYSTERIANS*, had been.

*BATTLE IN OUTER SPACE*, The interior of one of Toho's spaceships.

BELOW: A publicity montage from *THE MYSTERIANS* gives one some idea of the spectacle created in this film.







ABOVE: Earth fights back against THE MYSTERIANS.  
RIGHT, TOP: Momoko Kuchi and Akihiko Hirata in THE MYSTERIANS.  
RIGHT, CENTER: Toho's space station orbits the earth in BATTLE IN OUTER SPACE.  
RIGHT, BOTTOM: And yet another still from Kurosawa's magnificent THRONE OF BLOOD -- Toshiro Mifune realizes that the prophesy is true and death is inevitable.

the world whereupon the effects department opened both barrels. In fact BATTLE had the same alien saucers that were used previously in THE MYSTERIANS.

Though clinched and lacking in inventiveness in expanding the story line beyond being a straight actioner, as explained before, BATTLE was not made to be anything more than an out-and-out action film.

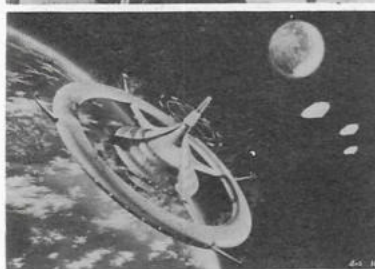
What BATTLE did have was a large budget, beautiful photography, outstanding direction, terrific sets, driving music, and special effects that wouldn't quit. These plus factors proved BATTLE IN OUTER SPACE was no low budget, mediocre effort. One hell of a lot of work went into creating a masterpiece of fun, excitement, and most important of all -- entertainment. One left the theatre marveling at the grand time he had watching the blackguards overwhelmed by the combined efforts of peaceful coexisting world. A dream. A fantasy. A trip of the highest calibre. A film that visualizes the phantasmagoria of one's flights of fancy that he has envisioned in his mind since he let his imagination roam.

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The conclusion of the "Toho" article will appear in the next issue of Cinefan. It deals with Toho's fantasy films from 1960 up until the present.

Greg Shoemaker is the editor and publisher of a very good specialized film magazine, The Japanese Fantasy Film Journal, which is available from him at 3235 Collingwood, Toledo, Ohio 43610. JFFJ costs 75¢.

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## Filmography 1954-1959

Films are listed chronologically by their Japanese release date. Titles in parenthesis are, respectively, alternate titles and Japanese-language title.

1954 THE INVISIBLE MAN (THE INVISIBLE AVENGER alt; TOMEI NINGEN)  
Dir: Motoyoshi Oda  
Special Effects: Eiji Tsuburaya  
Starring: Seisaburo Kawazu, Miki Sanjo, Minoru Takada  
71 mins, black & white.

GODZILLA, KING OF THE MONSTERS (GOJIRA)  
Dir: Inoshiro Honda  
Prod: Tomoyuki Tanaka  
Screenplay: Takeo Murata and Inoshiro Honda  
Photography: Masao Tamai  
Music: Akira Ifukube  
Special Photographic Effects:

Eiji Tsuburaya  
Akira Watanabe  
Miroshi Mukoyama  
Kiichiro Kishida

Japanese version starring:  
Takashi Shimura, Momoko Kuchi, Takeo Oikawa, Akira Takarada, Akihiko Hirata. (In this, and subsequent films, Godzilla was played by Haruo Nakajima; see photo on page 2)

American version also starring:  
Raymond Burr  
American version presented by Joseph E. Levine, directed and edited by Terry Morse, photography by Guy Roe.  
98 mins; black & white. Released in the U.S. by Transworld in 1956. U.S. version: 80 mins.

1955 GIGANTIS, THE FIRE MONSTER (THE VOLCANO MONSTERS, GODZILLA RAIDS AGAIN, RETURN OF GODZILLA alt; GOJIRA NO GYAKUSHU)

Prod: Tomoyuki Tanaka  
Dir: Motoyoshi Oda  
Scr: Takeo Murata, Shigeaki Hidaka  
Effects: Eiji Tsuburaya  
Photography: Seichi Endo  
Music: Masaru Sato  
Starring: Hiroshi Koizumi, Setsuko Wakayama, Yukio Kasama, Minoru Chiaki, Takeo Oikawa  
82 mins, black & white. Released in the U.S. by Warner Bros in 1959. U.S. version: 78 mins.

BELOW, LEFT: The late Eiji Tsuburaya, creator of Toho's special visual effects, supervises a miniature set.

BELOW: Producer Tomoyuki Tanaka, who produced the majority of Toho's fantasy films throughout their history, also co-produced many of Kurosawa's films, including YOJIMBO (1961), SANJURO (1962), HIGH AND LOW (1963) and RED BEARD (1965).





HALE HUMAN (THE SNOWMAN, alt; JUJIN YOKIOTOKO) 1958 VARAN, THE UNBELIEVABLE (BARAN; VARAN THE

Dir: Inoshiro Honda  
 Prod: Tomoyuki Tanaka  
 Scr: Takeo Murata  
 Photography: Tadashi Iimura  
 Effects: Eiji Tsuburaya  
 Music: Masaru Sato  
 Japanese version starring:  
 Akira Takarada, Momoko Kuchi,  
 Kenji Sahara  
 American version also starring:  
 John Carradine, Morris Ankrum,  
 Robert Karnes, Russ Thorson  
 American version directed and edited  
 by Kenneth G. Crane, photographed  
 by Lucien Androit.  
 95 mins, black & white. Released in  
 the U.S. by DCA in 1957.  
 U.S. version: 70 mins.

1956 RODAN, THE FLYING MONSTERS (RADON)

Dir: Inoshiro Honda  
 Prod: Tomoyuki Tanaka  
 Scr: Takeo Murata, Takeshi Kimura  
 Effects: Eiji Tsuburaya  
 Photography: Isamu Ashida  
 Music: Akira Ifukube  
 Starring: Kenji Sahara, Yumi Shira-  
 kawa, Akihiko Hirata  
 85 mins, color. Released in the U.S.  
 by DCA in 1957  
 U.S. version: 72 mins.

THE VAMPIRE MOth (KYUKETSU GA)

Based on a novel by Seishi Yokomizo  
 Starring: Ryo Ikebe, Akio Kobori,  
 Asami Kuji, Kinuto Ito.  
 90 mins.

1957 THRONE OF BLOOD (THE CORWEB CASTLE, alt;

KUMONOGU - DOJ)  
 Prod: Akira Kurosawa and Seijiro  
 Motoki  
 Dir: Akira Kurosawa  
 Scr: Akira Kurosawa, Hideo Oguni,  
 Shinobu Hashimoto, Ryuzo  
 Kikushima  
 Based on Shakespeare's Macbeth  
 Photography: Asaichi Nakai  
 Music: Masaru Sato  
 Starring: Toshiro Mifune, Isuzu Ya-  
 mada, Takashi Shimura, Minoru  
 Chiaki  
 109 mins, black & white. Released  
 in the U.S. by Brandon in 1961.  
 U.S. version: 105 mins.

THE LEGEND OF THE WHITE SERPENT (BYAKUFUJIN  
 NO YOREN)

Prod: Tomoyuki Tanaka  
 Scr: Toshio Yasumi  
 Dir: Skiro Toyoda  
 Effects: Eiji Tsuburaya  
 Photography: Mitsuo Miura  
 Music: Ikuma Dan  
 Starring: Ryo Ikebe, Shirley Yamagu-  
 chi, Kaoru Yachigusa  
 104 mins, Eastmancolor

THE MYSTERIANS (CHIKYU BOEIGUN)

Prod: Tomoyuki Tanaka  
 Dir: Inoshiro Honda  
 Scr: Takeshi Kimura  
 Effects: Eiji Tsuburaya  
 Photography: Hajime Koizumi  
 Editor: Hiroichi Iwashita  
 Music: Akira Ifukube  
 Starring: Kenji Sahara, Akihiko Hi-  
 rata, Yumi Shirakawa, Takashi  
 Shimura, Momoko Kuchi  
 87 mins, Eastmancolor & Tohoscope.  
 Released in the U.S. by MGM in 1959.  
 U.S. version: 85 mins.

MONSTER OF THE EAST, alt; DAIKAIJU  
 BARAN)  
 Prod: Tomoyuki Tanaka  
 Dir: Inoshiro Honda  
 Scr: Shinichi Sekizawa  
 Effects: Eiji Tsuburaya  
 Photography: Hajime Koizumi  
 Music: Akira Ifukube  
 Japanese version starring:  
 Kozo Nomura, Koreya Senda, Ayumi  
 Sonoda, Akihiko Hirata  
 American version produced and directed  
 by Jerry A. Berwitz; Screenplay  
 by Sid Harris; Photography by  
 Jack Marquette; Edited by Jack  
 Ruggiero; Music Editor: Peter  
 Zinner  
 American version starring:  
 Myron Healy, Tsuruko Koboyashi,  
 Clifford Kawada, Derrick Shimatsu  
 88 mins, black & white, Tohoscope.  
 Released in the U.S. by Crown-Intern-  
 ational in 1962.  
 U.S. version: 70 mins.

THE H-MAN (BIJO TO EKITAI NINGEN)

Prod: Tomoyuki Tanaka  
 Dir: Inoshiro Honda  
 Scr: Takeshi Kimura; from a story  
 by Hideo Kaijo  
 Effects: Eiji Tsuburaya  
 Photog: Hajime Koizumi  
 Music: Masaru Sato  
 Starring: Kenji Sahara, Akihiko Hi-  
 rata, Eitaro Ozawa, Yumi Shira-  
 kawa, Mitsuru Sato  
 87 mins, Eastmancolor & Tohoscope,  
 Perspectra Stereophonic Sound. Re-  
 leased in U.S. by Columbia in 1959.  
 U.S. version: 79 mins.

SUN WU-KUNG (SON GOKU)

Dir: Kajiro Yamamoto  
 Effects: Eiji Tsuburaya  
 Agfacolor and Tohoscope.

THE AGE OF THE GODS (NIPPON TANJO)

Dir: Hiroshi Inagaki  
 Starring: Toshiro Mifune, Yoko Tsu-  
 kasa, Akira Takarada  
 Agfacolor and Tohoscope.

THE TOP HEAVY FROG (FUKUSUKE)

Produced, written, photographed and  
 edited by Ryuichi Yokoyama.  
 18 mins, Eastmancolor. An Otogi-Pro  
 Production.

THE SPARROW IN A GOURD (HYOTAN SUZUME)

Produced, written, photographed and  
 edited by Ryuichi Yokoyama.  
 55 mins, Eastmancolor. An Otogi-Pro  
 Production.

1959 ISHIMATSU TRAVELS WITH GHOSTS  
 (?)

BATTLE IN OUTER SPACE (UCHIDAI SENSO)

Dir: Inoshiro Honda  
 Prod: Tomoyuki Tanaka  
 Scr: Shinichi Sekizawa  
 Effects: Eiji Tsuburaya  
 Photography: Hajime Koizumi  
 Music: Akira Ifukube  
 Starring: Ryo Ikebe, Kyoko Anzai,  
 Minoru Takada  
 93 mins, Eastmancolor and Tohoscope.  
 Released in the U.S. by Columbia in  
 1960. U.S. version: 90 mins.

BELOW: When Eiji Tsuburaya died in 1970, Shokei  
 Nokano took over Toho's special effects direc-  
 tion, starting with GODZILLA VS THE SMOG MONSTER.



TOP: Akira Takarada, Toho's most popular  
 leading man. CENTER: Director Inoshiro  
 Honda. BOTTOM: Veteran actor Toshiro Mi-  
 fune, best known from the Kurosawa films  
 and other Japanese-made samurai movies,  
 appeared in several fantasy films from  
 Toho, including THRONE OF BLOOD ('57),  
 THE AGE OF GODS ('58), THE THREE TRE-  
 SURES ('60), LOST WORLD OF SINBAD ('63),  
 and THE ADVENTURES OF TAKLA MAKAN ('66).



"What manner of man is this, who, with his music, could so excitingly, lift a bomber off a runway, capture the scent of magnolias, create a ballet for a basset hound, say 'Hello,' 'Goodbye,' and 'I love you' with such incredible feeling, and sometimes do it all in the same reel!"..... N. Ruby

# AN INTERVIEW WITH MAX STEINER

by Anthony Thomas

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The following is a compilation of two interviews with Max Steiner, conducted by Anthony Thomas of the Canadian Broadcasting System, the first (which comprises the first six questions) in 1961 and the second in 1967. Cinefan is grateful to the Max Steiner Music Society for granting permission to print this previously unpublished discussion with the maestro who is rightfully called "The Dean of Film Music."  
\*\*\*\*\*

Max Steiner was born in Vienna on May 10, 1888. He grew up in a musical and theatrical environment. Steiner left Vienna in 1908 and went to London, six years later to New York, all the while working as an orchestrator and conductor for various musical theatres. He arrived in Hollywood at the end of 1929, and immediately began work arranging and conducting music for films. More than anyone else, it was Steiner who paved the way for original dramatic music in movies. He realized the need and saw the opportunity for a new kind of composition. Steiner has contributed his music to more than 300 pictures over the past 40 years. Most of his best scores were written for Warner Brothers. He joined that studio in 1937, and his first score there was for the spectacular, historical-adventure picture starring Errol Flynn at the start of his dynamic career in *THE CHARGE OF THE LIGHT BRIGADE*.

Max Steiner is the "Dean of Hollywood Composers," the warmly regarded "Granddaddy of Picture Scoring." His three Oscar winning scores are *THE INFORMER*, *SINCE YOU WENT AWAY* and *NOW, VOYAGER*, and more than 15 scores were nominated, and countless other awards were bequeathed upon him. His "magnus opus", *GONE WITH THE WIND*, failed to win the Oscar in 1939, but it has since become one of the best-loved scores ever written.

Among Max Steiner's film scores are *SYMPHONY OF 6 MILLION*, *KING KONG*, *THE LOST PATROL*, *DARK VICTORY*, *THE LETTERS*, *CASABLANCA*, *SARGEANT YORK*, *ADVENTURES OF MARK TWAIN*, *THE CAMEL DUTY*, *JEEBELL*, *THE BIG SLEEP*, *SHE*, *INTERMEZZO*, *ALL THIS AND HEAVEN TOO*, *THE BEAST WITH FIVE FINGERS*, *THE TREASURE OF THE SIERRA MADRE*, and many others.

Max Steiner died in 1971.

THOMAS: It's often occurred to me, why would a man with such an enormous gift for music limit himself to entirely motion picture scoring?

STEINER: Because my family has to eat and so do I. It's a bad habit to have acquired. And to go into symphonic business, let's say symphonic business advisedly so, because it's a business too. But it's an awfully tough job to get played, get it published, and you can't sit around and wait. It's a very few successful composers that made any money in the last period, maybe Stravinsky, Copland. But some of the others, to my knowledge, the income is so little. And unless a man is set up in another way, like Lenny Bernstein, for instance, who has a conducting job, with the New York Philharmonic. He writes music -- all categories. And he composes his own songs, and so forth. Now from compositions to classical compositions -- classical may not be the right word -- symphonic compositions, I'm sure he wouldn't live.

THOMAS: What about music for the theatre? With your gift for melody, you certainly could have written musical comedies.

STEINER: Well, nobody's ever asked me. I used to write, because I was in the business, and I was in show business all my life. I was conductor of London Opera House years ago. I was in the Hippodrome, the Phillip Davies Theatre. I opened the Palladium in London. I was all over the United Kingdom, all over Germany, and born in Austria. I was in Africa with a show. And this was my business with my last showing in New York. And I came out in 1930 with *SONS OF GUNS*, which I had written some of. But I was mainly used as a conductor.



THOMAS: Looking back over the years, and the list of pictures, it was an enormous amount of music that you wrote -- 8,7,9,10 scores a year. How did you score all that?

STEINER: The most I ever did one year was ten pictures. And that's murder, because it means day and night. I wrote *GONE WITH THE WIND* and *INTERMEZZO* and "Symphony Moderne" (from *POOR WIVES*) for Warners all the same time within 12 weeks. And *GONE WITH THE WIND* had 3 hours and 14 minutes of music in it! I had to have the doctor come every evening to give me a benzadrine injection so I didn't fall asleep. I see some credits now on television that I can't even remember.

THOMAS: What are the most recent scores? STEINER: Well, there's *HANGING TREE*, and I did *JOHN PAUL JONES* in England, and then *THE FBI STORY*, *SUMMER PLACE*, *CASH MCCALL*.

THOMAS: What about *JOHN PAUL JONES*. Was this a nice subject for you, medieval, historical....

STEINER: Oh, sure it is. I liked this picture. It's, you know, costume pictures....

THOMAS: You've done so many of them. All those Errol Flynn pictures, you know. What type or pictures do you most enjoy scoring -- the romantic, dashing, historical films....?

STEINER: I like pictures like *NOW, VOYAGER* was years ago when I won the Academy

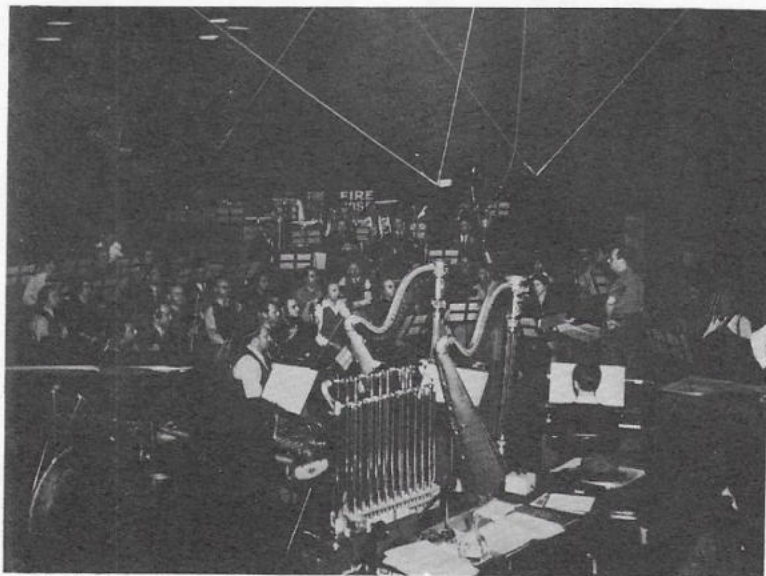
Award with. You know, I liked *SINCE YOU WENT AWAY*, and I also won the Award with it. And I like *SUMMER PLACE* very much; I mean from my point of view. As for Indians scalping and cowboys shooting and lots of arrows, you work and you hear those day and night. And finally you hear nothing but boom boom boom boom boom. I mean it's an awful lot of work and a lot of grief, and then you don't hear anything. I've done every kind of picture that you can ever think of.

THOMAS: One of your earlier scores was *KING KONG*....

STEINER: That was a picture which was made for music. Just like *THE INFORMER* was, and that's the reason it won the Academy Award. It was built for music. And *KING KONG*, of course, you had a great chance to really do anything you wanted to from dissonances to nice melodies and so forth. And I didn't say put it on a map. I think the picture that put film music on the map, if I may talk about myself which I don't like to do so much, was a thing called *SYMPHONY OF 6 MILLION*, years and years ago.

THOMAS: That was 1932, wasn't it?

STEINER: Yes. I was a baby in arms in those days. And David Selznick, who was then my boss, saw the picture and says "Max, do you think you can put some music behind this thing? Do you think it might help it?" And I said "Yes, I think so." He says, "Well, I'll tell you what, let's try. Do one reel and show me what you can do. What you think should be done. And then if you don't feel like you want to do it, we'll get somebody else to do it. But try -- try it and see what you can get." Because in those days we did not use any music as underscoring, unless you saw the source. Unless there was an orchestra portrayed on the screen or a piano or a harpsichord or an organ or what have you, people said you can't use music because people will say where's the music coming from? This was the first underscoring done. When I wrote that reel where Gregory Ratoff, the father, dies, and we recorded it, Selznick looked at it and Frank Newman, who was a theatre owner in Seattle, they went out of their minds, and said "My God! What you've done with this thing is just wonderful. Why don't you write the rest of the picture?" I said "I thought you were gonna get somebody else." And they said, "No, we don't want anybody else, just you." And I scored it. And, it was quite a success, it proved that underscoring helps the action sometimes. Well, there can be, of course, wrong underscoring. And God help you if that happens! I mean the starting of music. You're leading me into something, Tony. The hardest thing



Max Steiner (right, arm on hip) recording on a sound stage in 1933.





Max Steiner, circa 1927. (Photo reprinted courtesy of the Max Steiner Music Society).

for a motion picture scorer is to know where to start, where to stop. The location of your music. That you don't play the wrong scenes, and then, of course, there's the wrong type of music. Music can slow up an action that should not be slowed up. And music can also speed up an action where it should be speeded up. To know when you do that -- that makes a good picture scorer. And I've always tried to submerge myself, to, ...I can't find the word now....

THOMAS: To subordinate?

STEINER: That's it, to subordinate myself to the picture. A lot of picture scorers make a big mistake. They think that this is a concert platform in which they show off what they can do. The minute a man does that the composer is a dead duck. Because this is not the place. That is on the concert platform. In a motion picture the music should be heard, but not seen. The old story was in the days when I first started, everybody said a good picture score is one you don't notice. And I've always said what good is it if you don't notice it? I mean, it's silly. But what they didn't understand was that the music could be so bad that it distracts and takes away from your action or from your story. Of course, then it's wrong. Therefore, I have noticed some scores where very good composers -- we have some very good composers in this business -- they show what they know about counterpoint, they want to show construction. The guy will take a melody and then record it as is and then they figure out what to do now. Then they put violin solos over it, transfigurations and trappings or whatever you call them, and decorate this thing. And it's hard enough to understand the melody behind dialog, much less with all this baloney going on over it. That is not for the screen. That's why some of the composers we have now lose out. It gets too

decorative, it gets too complicated. By the time you get through all you hear is counterpoint and you lose your melody. And by this time you lose your appeal for emotions, or whatever it is. And so I cannot believe that a motion picture composer, especially in Hollywood, is a man who comes out and sits down at the piano and writes a story. That is not true. The ones who have been successful in our business are students and men that have studied all their lives. For instance, I'm a graduate of the Imperial Academy of Music of Vienna. I'm a winner of the Emperor's Medal. I've studied with some of the greatest professors that ever existed like Gustav Mahler, Herman Grover, Felix Weingarten, Brenner. And I did -- there was a course of 7 years there, and I did the 7 years in one year, and won a gold medal.

Vienna was the Cradle of Operettas, you know, like "Merry Widow," and in those days "Waltz Train." Even to Gilbert and Sullivan shows -- "Mikado", "Pirates of Penzance" and Offenbach, "Orpheus and the Underworld." And my father produced most of these things, and my grandfather produced Johann Strauss things like "The Night in Venice" and "Fliedermause" or "Bet" as it's called here.

My grandfather found Johann Strauss. He was playing violin at Frazenbergers in Oheir Brun near the castle. And my grandfather, Maximilian Steiner -- by the way the same name as mine -- took him to Vienna and made him start writing for the theatre. Up to that time he had written a lot of waltzes and so forth.

THOMAS: So you were born into this musical environment....

STEINER: I conducted an American operetta called "The Belle of New York" which was by Gustav Kyrker when I was 12 years old.

THOMAS: You conducted professionally?

STEINER: I conducted with my father's theatre. When Kyrker came from New York he met me; I was still going to school. He said "Max, this is better than I did in New York. Why don't you give up and come as a boy wonder?" And my mother put her foot down and says "All musicians and waiters stink."

THOMAS: Your mother said that?

STEINER: Yeah, my mother had three restaurants. She was wonderful, she was supposed to be the most beautiful woman of Vienna, which she was. When my father married her she was in the chorus in my grandfather's theatre. Papa fell in love with her. That's why I'm here annoying the audiences in Hollywood. And Kyrker wanted me to come with him.

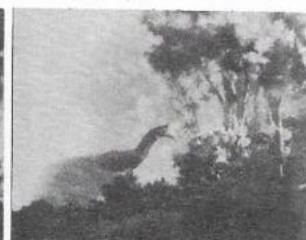
And then Souza came to Vienna and we were so impressed with him. I went out of my mind with this big brass band. He had about 65 men with him and these lousy black uniforms and these horrible caps. But a concert I'll never forget. He played a few marches of his. Nothing happened, the audience had ap-



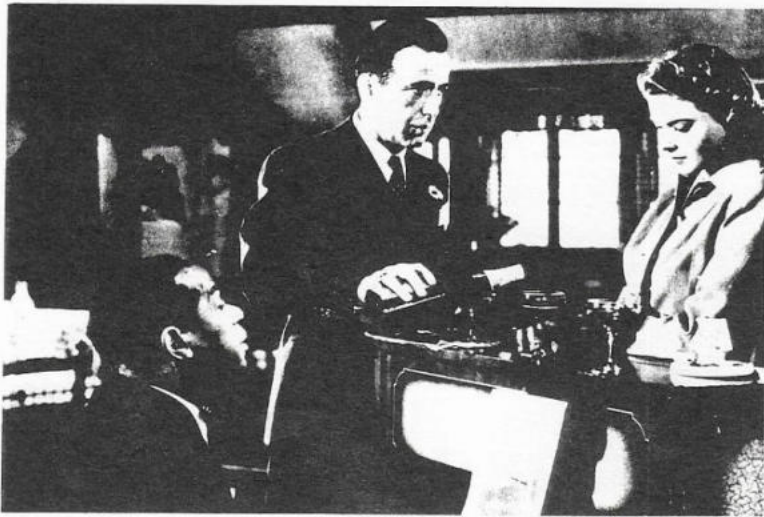
Max Steiner's "magnum opus", GONE WITH THE WIND (1939), though it isn't his best score, it is easily his most popular. Though he failed to win the Oscar for best score with this film, it remains apparent that Steiner's music contributed a great deal to the film, and without it, the film no doubt would not have had the impact that it did.



Steiner's music added immensely and gave life to one of the screen's most classic fantasy films, KING KONG (1935). It was, as Steiner said, "a film made for music."







Left to right: Dooley Wilson, Humphrey Bogart and Ingrid Bergman from CASABLANCA (1942). Steiner's music from this film, and other Bogart films, were recently re-recorded by RCA for an album called CASABLANCA: Classic Film Scores for Humphrey Bogart.



Left to right: Humphrey Bogart, Walter Huston and Tim Holt from THE TREASURE OF THE SIERRA MADRE (1948). Steiner composed the music for a number of Bogart's films, and this one remains one of the best.

plauded very politely. And then he played the "Blue Danube." And such a performance you never heard. I thought the Viennese went out of their minds.

THOMAS: John Philip Sousa played Viennese music in Vienna?

STEINER: Oh boy, and how! Only it was -- it was so wonderful. To this day I'll never forget the "Blue Danube." And, you know, the Viennese know how to play a waltz, and so did Sousa. Believe it or not with all his marches. Well they went just absolutely nuts. I think he played it 4 times; the whole darn waltz takes 10 minutes. That was the end of the concert. Of course everybody loved him and me too. The reason I'm talking about it, is he, too, came to me and he said he saw me conduct -- it was at the same time -- and he says "Why don't you let me take Max home to America and see what we can do there?" My father says, "No, he's gonna finish school."

THOMAS: Is it true that you wrote an operetta when you were 14?

STEINER: No, I was 15.

THOMAS: Was it called "Beautiful Greek Girl?"

STEINER: "Beautiful Greek Girl", yes. And we had my father -- there's quite a story to this. My father has a stage manager by the name of Carl Toschl. And Toschl left him and leased a theatre called Orpheum, near Josefstrasse. My father then owned the Theatre An Der Wein. He had "Venice" in Vienna, a very big park something like Disneyland only not, of course, that big. By the way, he built that giant ferris wheel that you see

in....

THOMAS: ...in the Plaza in Vienna.  
STEINER: Yes, my father built that. And I wrote him -- Papa was awfully mad at Toschl because he left him -- and I wrote this. I wrote the music and I wrote the script; but I didn't finish the script myself, because I couldn't do that. A man by the name of Julius Wilhelm finally finished the script. And we took it to my Daddy when we finished it and Papa said it stank. It was no good. He didn't want to have any part of it. So I said, "Why don't we go over to Toschl?" Toschl took it, produced it. I conducted the opening night. The show was dirty. It was a really dirty, pornographic sort of a thing. (laughs) And it ran a year! And that's how I got my first motorcar and my first motorcycle.

THOMAS: A 15 year old boy....

STEINER: A 15 year old boy, and I've got the music to prove it.

THOMAS: Max, how did you get to Hollywood?

STEINER: On a train.

THOMAS: I mean what -- what brought all this about?

STEINER: Well, I was doing a show. Oh, I did a lot of shows. I worked for everybody -- Gershwin, Kern, Herbert, and everybody, orchestrating. And I did a show called "Sons of Guns," which was produced by Karley and Swanson. And William LeBaron, who was then the president of RKO, came to the office at the Imperial Theatre in New York and I had an orchestra of 35 men. And every one of my

men played about five different instruments. And we had at one time -- we had 30 violins, then we had 20 trumpets, and I did all the orchestrations and everything. And he was out of his mind. When the show was over, he came down to the pit. I was playing the exit march and he says, "Max, will you come and see me tomorrow at 4 o'clock in the RKO building?" And I said, "Yes, I will." And I went and he said, "You've got to come to Hollywood. I've never heard such a performance in my life." I says, "Alright, what's in it?" And he told me. And two weeks later I came to Hollywood.

THOMAS: When was that?

STEINER: That was in 1929, Christmas.

THOMAS: Did you enjoy writing for GONE WITH THE WIND?

STEINER: Yes, I loved it. I thought it was one of the greatest pictures I ever saw.

THOMAS: That's your kind of story?

STEINER: That's my kind of story. Besides, I was red hot for Vivian Leigh so -- in those days I was young enough to be that way. Now I don't care even for Phyllis Diller -- doesn't interest me any more. (laughs)  
THOMAS: But GONE WITH THE WIND is full of historical romance. It has passion, emotion and color.

STEINER: I think it's still best. And I'll tell you another picture my poor David -- I loved him -- David Selznick didn't get enough credit. I thought SINCE YOU WENT AWAY was a charming picture, a wonderful picture.

THOMAS: You must have believed in the picture, because you wrote beautiful music for it.

STEINER: It's a peculiar thing, Tony! In GONE WITH THE WIND everybody won an Academy Award except me. I was the only one that didn't win. And in SINCE YOU WENT AWAY nobody won. I was the only one who won -- with music. So we got even, you know.

THOMAS: Yet of all your scores, it's possible that GONE WITH THE WIND is the best loved, best remembered.

STEINER: Yeah, well sure. The picture helps the score, don't you know? You could have the greatest music that ever was written. You could have Richard Wagner -- I don't care who -- but if the picture stinks they'll say that the score will fall down. Music will help a picture; it can never save it. They keep on saying no music ever saves a picture. Music saves a picture in the case of MY FAIR LADY, but that music was a hit before MY FAIR LADY. I mean long before that, and it was beautifully done. And I'm not plugging Warners, but I think it's one of the best pictures I've ever seen in my life. But on a regular, dramatic picture you could never save a picture. You could help it.

## THE MAX STEINER MUSIC SOCIETY

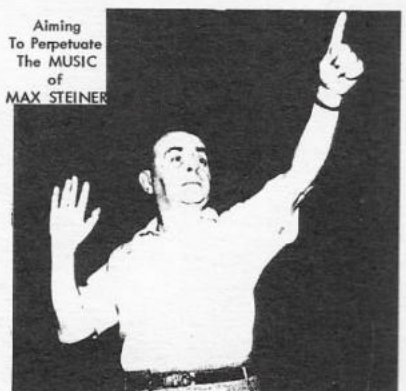
"The Max Steiner Music Society was formed in 1965 in Bridgeport, Conn. by Albert K. Bender to perpetuate the music of Max Steiner. Our main aim was to spread his musical works around the world to places where it may never have been heard. We have also strived, over the years, to get major recording companies to issue more discs of Max Steiner's music and we feel that our prayers have been answered in the past year with the glorious music that is now being issued not only by RCA but so many others. The MSMS is a labor of love and it has a close knit family of members in all parts of the globe."

-Albert K. Bender, 1974.

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Aiming  
To Perpetuate  
The MUSIC  
of  
MAX STEINER





# HARRIS & LANDIS: SON OF BLOB & SCHLOCK

by Randall Larson

Ardent fantasy-film fans are no doubt aware of a couple horror film satires which came out in recent years; the most publicized being John Landis' *SCHLOCK*, and one year before that, Anthony Harris' *SON OF BLOB*. Unfortunately, a lot of people were unable to see these films due to extremely limited distribution, but for those that did, it was a very enjoyable experience. *SCHLOCK* and *SON OF BLOB* weren't handled by any big studio, they were both independently produced by their creators, and then purchased by a distributor for theatrical release. The distributor is Jack H. Harris Enterprises, Inc.

Jack H. Harris, president of J.H.H. Enterprises, is best-known for making *THE BLOB*, *4-D MAN* and *DINOSAURUS* in the late 1950's. Lately, he's been responsible for producing *EQUINOX*, *SON OF BLOB*, and has handled distribution of *LEGEND OF HILLBILLY JOHN*, *THE ASTRO ZOMBIES*, *SCHLOCK*, and others.

Harris, who confined his movie making to the East before coming to Hollywood to make *DINOSAURUS* in 1959, has been making films for ten years, but 41 or his 47 years have been spent in show business, beginning with his tramping at the age of six as a member of the Gus "Ukelele Ike" Edwards' Kiddie Revue, and maturing via a successful career in film exhibition and distribution.

"I believe I know what folks want on a movie screen," says the producer. "I've been listening to their comments in theatre lobbies for more than twenty years."

"*THE BLOB*," Harris says, "was a two-year dream come true and it still remains my best credit." Released in 1958, *THE BLOB* involved teenagers Steve and Judy (Steve McQueen and Aneta Corsaut) who see what looks like a shooting star blaze to earth. Upon inspection, they find an old man writhing in pain, his hand covered with a gelatinous substance. They rush him to a doctor who is perplexed, then alarmed as he sees the substance spread before his eyes. The doctor goes to fetch a nurse and when they return the old man is gone, and they are confronted by the Blob. The Blob consumes the nurse and a few other people, growing larger by the minute. Steve and Judy and their teenage friends have returned to the spot where the old man was found and discover the outer shell, a hot rock, that had contained the Blob. After several trials to convince the police that their reports of the Blob are not hoaxes, the Blob appears in town and is finally vanquished by extreme cold. It is frozen and transported by the government to the Antarctic forever. Produced by Jack H. Harris and directed by Irvin S. Yeaworth from a screenplay by Theodore Simonson and Kate Phillips, which was taken from an idea by Irvine H. Millgate, the film is noted for introducing Steve McQueen (one of the few actors to achieve continued success after a beginning



Producer/Distributor  
Jack H. Harris

in fantasy films -- see "Performers in Horror/Fantasy Cinema" article this issue), included some fine miniature work, and has become a "classic" of its genre.

"*THE BLOB*, my first production," says Harris, "was intended as my answer to the quick-and-dirty s.f. clinkers being dumped upon the public in the late 50's. Our premise was simple: make the audience care for the characters and the monster will become real."

"Each of my science fiction productions, including *DINOSAURUS*, *4-D MAN* and *EQUINOX* had something unique to say. The character of *THE BLOB*, as demonstrated in the sequel, is the distillation of evil bringing out the good in people."

*4-D MAN* (1959) had the same basic crew -- Harris produced and Yeaworth directed from a screenplay by Theodore Simonson and Cy Chermak, and starred Robert Lansing, Lee Meriwether and James Congdon. Re-titled *MASTER OF TERROR* for Harris' current distribution list, it is the story of physicist Tony Nelson (Congdon) who goes to work with his famous scientist brother Scott (Lansing). Working in close quarters with Scott's assistant and fiancée, Linda (Meriwether) Tony begins to fall in love and discovers his feelings are being returned by the girl, much to Scott's chagrin. Working late one night in the lab, Tony discovers a fantastic new process which allows solid objects to pass through each other; Scott uses it on himself. Knowing that Linda now intends to marry Tony, and discovering that she is trying to steal his ideas, Scott's mind becomes twisted with hate, and he embarks on a mad rampage of murder, replenishing his "life force" while killing others.

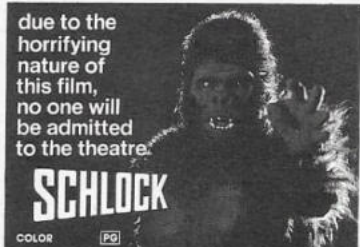
*DINOSAURUS* (1960) tells the story of an American construction crew on a tropical island, who unwittingly discover the submerged bodies of a brontosaurus, a tyrannosaurus and a prehistoric cave man (Gregg Martell), preserved by having been frozen since the ice age. Their bodies are raised and left on the beach, until a lightning storm brings them back to life. Starring Ward Ramsey, Kristina Hanson (both making screen debuts here) and Paul Lukather, Harris produced, Irvin Yeaworth co-produced and directed from a screenplay by Jean Yeaworth and Dan E. Weisburd. Special photographic effects, which were the high point of the film (rivalling, perhaps, the cave man's adventures in the house!) were created by Tim Baer, Wah Chang and Gene Warren.

An estimated 250 sounds were tested by Harris and his technicians to select those used as prehistoric dialog between the tyrannosaurus and the brontosaurus. Among the weird noises checked were snake hisses, combined with bear growls, squealing brakes mixed with the screech of an owl, and the moans of a wild pig.

"We also experimented with a variety of animal noises combined with sandpaper scraping, jet planes and human sneezing," remarked Harris. "We sought maximum effect rather than authenticity. After all, who's going to be able to tell if the sounds are correct or not?"



LEFT: *SON OF BLOB*, *4-D MAN* and *SCHLOCK*.  
BELOW: Steve McQueen (right) and his friends in *THE BLOB*.  
RIGHT: Three scenes from *DINOSAURUS* featuring Gregg Martell as the re-awakened cave man and the battle between the dinosaurs.  
BOTTOM RIGHT: Ad for the original *BLOB*.





MY SON THE VAMPIRE (also known as MOTHER RILEY MEETS THE VAMPIRE), a 1952 film starring Bela Lugosi which Harris bought distribution rights to in 1963, is about a criminal (Lugosi) who thinks of himself as a vampire, and wears a cape, sleeps in a coffin to fit the role. MASTER OF HORROR is a 1960 Mexican film which Harris bought in 1966, and is based on Poe's "Cask of Amontillado" and "Strange Case of M. Valdemar." THE ASTRO ZOMBIES, a horrible 1968 film, originally released by Genani Film Distribution Co., is now handled by Harris. This is another one of those garbagemen films which succeeded in buying the talents of John Carradine, one of the genre's finest actors, and is about a series of mutilation murders which are occurring with increasing savagery in a city. The nature of these murders - vital organs ripped from the victim's bodies - leads a CIA investigator (Wendell Corey) to the conclusion that the former chief of the Astro-Space Laboratory, Dr. DeMarco (Carradine) has succeeded in creating an Astro-Man, a zombie with a defective brain. More adventures, murders, stupid looking zombies and the expected "world-saving, nick-of-time" rescue fill up the remainder of this classic. ASTRO ZOMBIES was produced and directed by Ted V. Mikels from a screenplay by himself and Wayne M. Rogers. Mikels, according to Harris' press-book, has created or worked on so many films that it is almost impossible to pick up a motion picture trade paper or magazine that does not credit his name as having worked on a particular film in some capacity. "Various described by knowledgeable people in the motion picture industry as a one man



TOP: One of the many tasteful and enervating scenes from THE ASTRO ZOMBIES. LEFT-TO-RIGHT: MY SON THE VAMPIRE; with Bela Lugosi; John Carradine in ASTRO ZOMBIES; MASTER OF HORROR. BELOW: Mrs. Marie Harris pokes at her backyard Blob.

## Mysterious pulsating Blob investigated

((from: The Palo Alto Times, May 29, 1973))

DALLAS (UPI) -- The Blob appears to thrive on punishment. When it was drowned out by rain, it returned in three different places. When samples are cut from it, it quivers, and then fills the void with more Blob.

Despite the pokings and proddings of scientists, the Dallas Times Herald reported Monday, the Blob was multiplied itself by 16 times in a week.

The Blob is a membrane, containing blackish mucus inside and reddish, thick bubbles on top. It turns colors when punctured and when the bubbles burst it appears to be bleeding red and purple inside.

And Blob was the only name available for the pulsating, multiplying organism found last week in the back yard of Mrs. Marie Harris's house in suburban Garland.

Arnold Dittman, scientist with Growth International (GI), a Colorado-based firm, cut specimens from the Blob and shipped them to Colorado for analysis. Results will not be ready for 10 days.

"Yes, it's growing," Dittman told the Times Herald. "We put samples in a jar and before long we noticed pressure was building up inside."

"Bacteria -- if it is bacteria -- have tremendous growth potential. Bacteria have more than 1,000 genes in each organism and under proper conditions can change to a completely different species in a few seconds."

"Maybe that's what the thing is -- a new mutation. But really we don't know what it is."

Dittman confirmed that some bacteria can grow from one billion spores to one billion tons in 24 hours. The Garland Blob had not done that, but the possibility was there.

"Yes, that's true," he said. "With its ability to mutate, bacteria can adapt to any change or deficiency in growth conditions. I'm not saying that happens all the time."

The Times Herald received two other reports of blobs from Mrs. Edna Smith, who lives eight miles from Seagoville -- another Dallas suburb -- who saw a similar mass creeping up a telephone pole near her home.

"It was red and pulsating like the one I read about," she said. "For heaven's sake, what is it."

A North Dallas resident who refused to give her name asked the Times Herald if any progress was being made in controlling the Garland blob.

"No," she was told. "Why do you ask?" "I'm scared to death," she said. "I have the same thing on my hedge. I can't kill it."

### 'The Blob' is dead—victim of home-brewed insecticide

((from: The Palo Alto Times, May 30, 1973))

DALLAS (AP) -- "The Blob" has been pronounced dead after a Texas housewife doused it with a home-brewed insecticide, but a researcher says he may attempt to recreate the mysterious growth for further study.

Arnold Dittman, a member of the waste-recycling firm Growth International, said his preliminary examination showed the membranous material to be a harmless bacteria-like substance.

Dittman picked up samples of the growth but the specimens died.

"We haven't been able to revive them. We're trying to produce the same effects that Mrs. Harris has in her yard. You never know, but this appears to be nothing more than a mutation of common ordinary bacteria or fungi, or a combination thereof."

"The Blob," as Dallas area residents came to call it, attracted worldwide attention when housewife Marie Harris of Garland found the pulsating growth seeping up through her backyard lawn two weeks ago.

The mysterious ooze congealed up images of horror movie creatures impervious to the combined power of the armed forces. But Dittman discounted such imaginings and Mrs. Harris put a stop to the Blob with a bucket of tobacco water.

"People fear the unknown," Dittman said. "If they don't know what it is, they naturally fear it. We all dream, and we probably all would like to see something from outer space. But I doubt if this is anything like that."



Mrs. Harris said a woman called her to suggest using a tobacco and water gruel to kill the multiplying Blob. The woman described the mix as an old-time remedy for ridding the garden of insects.

"I figured I had nothing to lose and tried it...it started to dry up and this is what's left," she said, pointing at a white, crusty material.



studio," the pressbook goes on, "this human dynamo also writes for the screen, is a bonafide cameraman, and is also a fully credited motion picture editor, both picture and sound. Acutely conscious of the possibilities of the horror film in the current film market, he has managed to cram every frightening angle into *THE ASTRO ZOMBIES* in hopes of satisfying fans of this type of film fare." Well, no doubt it satisfied his pocket book, as *ASTRO ZOMBIES* is obviously a money-making vehicle and nothing else. Poor John Carradine....

*EQUINOX* (1971) dealt with supernatural horror and devil worship, starring Edward Connell and Barbara Hewitt (former Rose Parade Queen). Jack H. Harris produced, Jack Woods directed from his screenplay, which was based on a story by Mark Thomas McGee. *EQUINOX* is dominated by magnificent special effects, created by Dennis Muren, David Allen and Jim Danforth.

"The devil published a record of his procedures which is not intended for human eyes" is the premise of the film. Three years of research and production work were taken up by creator Jack Woods, sparing no effort in producing the film with careful attention to detail and probability of facts presented as accurately as possible. The research staff attended seances, devil worship ceremonies, and other organized black magic demonstrations. A high point of the film is a duel between four humans (Connell, Hewitt, Frank Boerg Jr. and Robin Christopher) and a high emissary of Satan.

*EQUINOX* was originally an amateur film which Harris purchased for theatrical release with additional scenes photographed. "EQUINOX had poor story and performances but excellent special effects when I met it," Harris explains. "The additional scenes made the story exciting and logical and were most difficult to achieve because all of the actors were older with changing weights and heights."

The film's aim, Harris says in the film's pressbook, is to reunite mom & dad with the kids in a row of theatre seats. How does he plan to do it? "By cutting down on sex and violence. Overemphasizing these two elements has been the main cause of a decrease in popularity of movies about science-fiction, horror, and westerns, too."

"Film producers have tried to outdo each other in the field of sensationalism, adapting the raw approach to love and engulfing the story with the blood of overdone scenes of violence. The former makes a movie unacceptable for children; the latter makes it unpalatable for adults."

J.H.H. Enterprises also handled the distribution for two Jack Nicholson westerns, *THE SHOOTING* and *THE WHIRLWIND* (both 1971). *THE SHOOTING* was produced by Nicholson and Monte Hellman, and directed by Hellman from a screenplay by Adrien (FIVE EASY PIECES) Joyce. Co-starring Millie Perkins, Will Hutchins and Warren Oates, it is the story of several people who are crossing a desert, with a slowly-developing plot-line dealing with character-relationships, mystery and suspense. *RIDE IN THE WHIRLWIND* was also produced by Hellman and Nicholson, and directed by Hellman from Nicholson's screenplay. It, too, stars Nicholson and Millie Perkins, supported by Rupert Crosse and Cameron Mitchell. The story deals with three cowhands riding to a roundup who stop at a lone shack to water their horses, have a hot meal and spend the night in the corral, unaware that their hosts are a band of desperate thieves. A posse arrives, burns down the shack and wipes out the thieves. The three cowhands escape in the crossfire, only to be mistaken for other members of the outlaw gang, and thus are hunted and chased by the posse throughout the film in an intense comment on justice and ironicism which is similar, in essence, to *THE OK-BOW INCIDENT* and *HANG 'EM HIGH*, two other westerns which have had harsh comments on justice.

*THE LEGEND OF HILLBILLY JOHN* (1973) stars songwriter Hedge Capers, Susan Strasberg, Percy Rodrigues and Severn Darden. Produced by Barney Rosenzweig and Anthony J. Hope (executive producer), directed by John Newland from Melvin Levy's screen adaptation of the book "Who Fears the Devil" by Manly Wade Wellman. Special effects were directed by Gene Warren, who also worked on *DINOSAURUS*.

Opening in the hills of Appalachia, the film tells the story of a young hillbilly (Capers) who joins his father's intent to call out the devil and face him down, but the ritual ends with the bizarre death of the elder John. Heart-sick, young John vows to take up where his father left off, and he seeks out the Devil in modern-day America.

The film was a totally-independently-made film, which Harris purchased for distribution. The film won a Gold Medal at the Atlanta Film Festival.



ABOVE, CLOCKWISE: Warren Oates hits Jack Nicholson in *THE SHOOTING*; Fritz Leiber in *EQUINOX*; Jack Woods as Ranger Asmodeus in *EQUINOX*; Frank Boers, Jr. and Robin Christopher in *EQUINOX*; Montage from Jack Nicholson's *RIDE IN THE WHIRLWIND*. Below: *THE LEGEND OF HILLBILLY JOHN*, Hedge Capers.



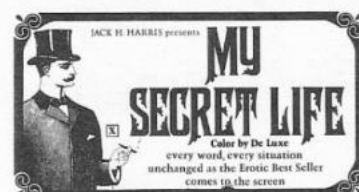




Hagman learned his directorial experience by directing several episodes of his tv-series *I DREAM OF JEANNIE* and *THE GOOD LIFE*, and he puts it to good use in *SON OF BLOB*. Aside from the general plot-line of the film, there are innumerable bizarre situations added to give the film even more insanity -- including Berman's hair-stylist cameo, Burgess Meredith and Del Close as hobos, Hagman as an over-worked boy scout leader driven "mad" by the toy swinging-marbles which all his scouts have brought along on their hike, and the opening scene involving Cambridge's consummation by the Blob as he watches the 1958 *BLOB* on television.

Jack's son, Anthony Harris, produced the film under his father's executive hand, and Hagman directed from a screenplay by Jack Woods and Anthony Harris. When asked about the film's creation, Jack Harris replied "SON OF BLOB" was conceived by Richard Clair and myself ten years before it was ever produced. Anthony Harris added some fine-line story aspects."

Again colored a bright red, the Blob was created for the sequel by special effectsmen Doug Beswick and Tim Baar -- Barton Sloane handled the special effects for the first film. The earlier film -- which was quite unique at the time -- used the concept of a shapeless, invincible, unemoting "blob" to create the horror of the successful film. Jack and Anthony Harris use that same premise to create the "suspense relief" in the hilarious sequel. *SON OF BLOB* is supposed to be re-released with *SCHLOCK*, and this author hopes that both films will have the widespread distribution that they deserve.



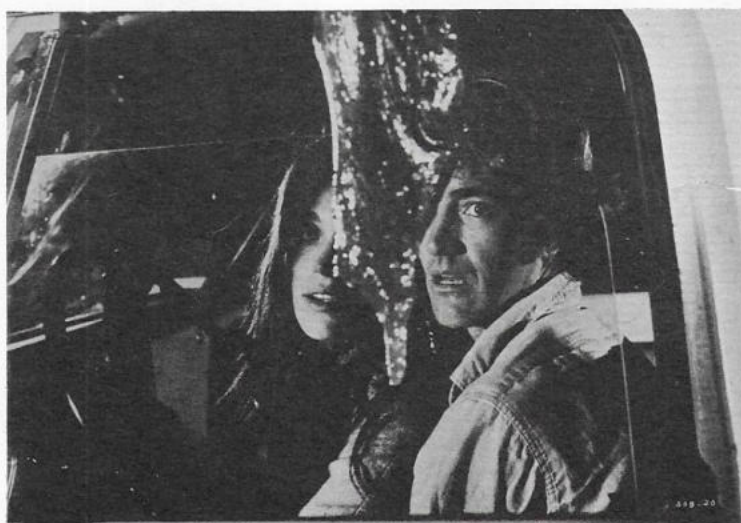
Harris has also handled the distribution of a number of sex-comedy films, including *PARADISE*, a 1962 "nudie" movie about a mild British professor who is bequeathed a pair of seemingly ordinary sunglasses which, when worn, allows him to see through people's clothing. This sex/fantasy is interesting as it was photographed in 3-D.

*GATE OF FLESH* (1964) is a Japanese sex drama about prostitutes. *THE OLDEST PROFESSION* (1967) is a French film which Harris also produced, and it too deals with prostitutes. It stars Raquel Welch, Jeanne Moreau, Elsa Martinelli and Anna Karina. Michel Legrand (*SUMMER OF '42*) composed the music. *MY SECRET LIFE* (1971) is Harris' only X-rated film, a screen version of the erotic best seller, written anonymously in 1890 and unpublished publicly until 1966. Jack Woods, who made *EQUINOX*, and co-scripted *SON OF BLOB*, starred with Leon Jervis, and Rod Stewart. *NYMPH* (1974) stars Peggy Kramer and Burton Dunning and deals with sex between two teenagers and interference by redneck hunters. Other films handled by Harris include *UNKISSED BRIDE* (1966), *WITHOUT A STITCH* (1970), *THE HETEROSEXUAL* (Les Biches - 1971), *PLAYMATES* (1971), *HOUSE OF MISSING GIRLS* (1971), *HONKY* (1972), *HUNGRY WIVES* (1973), *SIXTEEN* (1973) and *HOUSEWIFE* (1973).



Which brings us to *SON OF BLOB*, a 1972 sequel to Harris' original *BLOB*. Originally titled *BEWARE: THE BLOB!*, and premiering at the first annual Fantasy Film Convention in Los Angeles, *SON OF BLOB* was a hilarious satire of genre films. Taking off where *BLOB* left off, it tells of geologist Godfrey Cambridge, who unwittingly brings home a small piece of the frozen Blob from the North Pole, and accidentally lets it thaw, after which it creates havoc among humanity until it, too, is frozen in an ice-skating rink. Or is it....

The story line is almost identical to *THE BLOB*, 2 teenagers (Robert Walker and Gwynne Gilford) discover the threat of the Blob, they try to warn the police officials (Richard Webb and J.J. Johnson) who, of course, don't believe them until the Blob actually shows up in town. But there the similarity ends. Whereas *THE BLOB* was handled completely seriously and ended up that way, *SON OF BLOB* was intended to be a comedy, and it definitely ends up that way. Added to the cast in bizarre roles are Carol Lynley, Shelley Berman (in a hilarious role as a hair-stylist -- a sequence which he wrote, directed and produced himself for the film) and Larry Hagman (who also directed the film).





Jack H. Harris said earlier that each of his science fiction films had something unique to say, and when I questioned him as to exactly what this was, he gave me this reply:

"THE BLOB - a menace threatening all mankind could cause universal cooperation to destroy it; DINOSAURUS - man adapts easily to more civilized surroundings (plus her life style of the caveman); 4-D MAN - mind power is limitless; EQUINOX - Lucifer can take any form to do his dirty work." Although SCHLOCK was not his production, Harris gives this as his feeling about what it had to say: "The establishment kicked in its 'SMUG DIGNITY' by today's youth."

Jack and Anthony Harris had planned to do a third sequel, CURSE OF THE BLOB, but that project has been scrapped. Jack Harris is handling an award-winning 7-minute cartoon called JOSHUA AND THE BLOB. Directed by 21-year old John O. Lange and produced by Lange and Bob Greenberg, the cartoon won first prize for "animated films for children" at the Zagreb, London, Broadway and Hollywood animated film festivals. Lange has been doing animation since he was 17, and the year before he submitted JOSHUA IN A BOX to the Animated Film Festival in Paris, which also won first place. The story involves a little brown creature who tangles with a sticky red mass -- which eventually turns into a woman!

Harris' latest film for which he is handling distribution, is DARK STAR, a science fiction film made by two cinema students at U.S.C., John Carpenter and Dan O'Bannon. Again, limited distribution has left the film almost in obscurity.

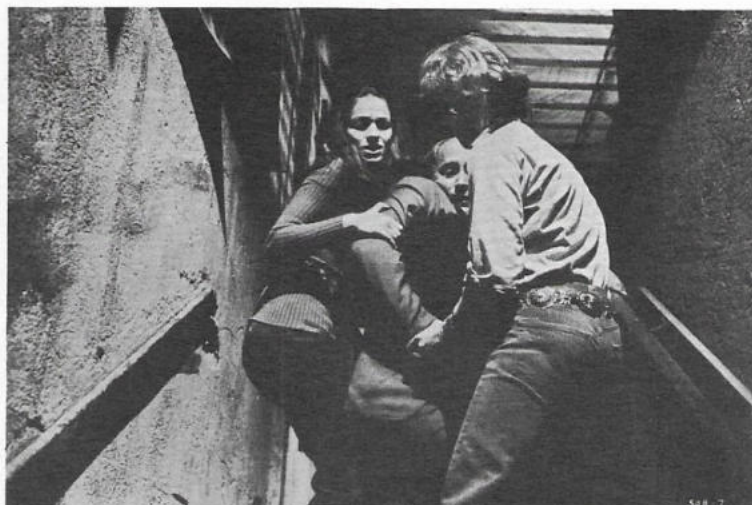
SCHLOCK was created by 21-year old John Landis and 28-year old Jim O'Rourke. These two young filmmakers tried in vain to obtain professional Hollywood backers to finance their project, and finally grew tired of knocking on studio doors, so they decided to make the film themselves. So they did, raising about \$100,000 from friends and relatives, and using a young and mostly novice cast.

The main point behind SCHLOCK, as brought out in an interview in Cinefantastique magazine, was that most fantasy films are terrible. "And that's what SCHLOCK is all about" says Landis. SCHLOCK pokes fun at fantasy films in almost every way possible. Containing innumerable funny burlesques of films like 2001, KING KONG, FRANKENSTEIN, EVIL MADIGAN and others, SCHLOCK is essentially the story of a missing link, the Schlockthropus, who goes bananas and kills everyone in sight until he falls in love with a beautiful blind girl who thinks he's a dog. Simple, eh? SCHLOCK is similar to SON OF BLOB in that, aside from the basic story-line, there are countless insane situations thrown in to completely destroy even the most stout viewer. There are ice-cream brawls, a hilarious 2001 parody, a piano concerto, and logical dialog which has really got to be listened to to be appreciated.

The humor in SCHLOCK is at many levels. First there are the obvious parodies of other fantasy films, which are almost like "in-jokes" to fans of the genre. Then there are the ridiculous sub-plots and sub-situations. There is the general story-line, which in itself is diabolically crazy. And then there is the outrageous dialog, which is on a level of insanity more intense than the previous types of humor. We have the running characters, Detective Wino (Saul Kahan); Mindy, the beautiful to-be-cured blind girl (Eliza Garrett); Cal, Mindy's boyfriend (Charles Villiers); and there are the other characters who wander in and out of scenes creating endless humorous confusion -- most memorable being Eric Allison as a tv-announcer, and make-up expert John Chambers in his screen debut as "The Captain". And their dialog, either in what they are saying or in the way their words are put together is hilarious in most instances. One particularly outrageous example takes place as Schlock sneaks up on a pair of ditch diggers. One of them is commenting to the other, "I was reading in Amazing Virility Magazine...." That is only one example of countless others.

OPPOSITE PAGE, TOP, LEFT TO RIGHT: Hedge Capers in THE LEGEND OF HILLBILLY JOHN; The mild mannered professor from Harris' sex comedy PARADISO; Peggy Kramer and Burton Dunning in NYMPH; Raquel Welch in THE OLDEST PROFESSION. CENTER LEFT: (Clockwise) Hedge Capers, Susan Strassberg, Severn Darden, Sharon Henesy from THE LEGEND OF HILLBILLY JOHN. RIGHT: Ad for MY SECRET LIFE; Scenes from SON OF BLOB featuring Robert Walker, Gwynne Gilford, and Shelley Berman as the hair stylist.

ABOVE: Gwynne Gilford and Robert Walker run from SON OF BLOB; Godfrey Cambridge holds the frozen specimen; Carol Lynley from SON OF BLOB. ABOVE RIGHT: JOSHUA AND THE BLOB cartoon.



Landis himself played the Schlockthropus, dressed in a costume designed and constructed by 20-year old Rick Baker. Rick is the son of artist Ralph Baker, and has studied with Dick Smith, veteran makeup artist (THE GODFATHER and LITTLE BIG MAN) and assisted him on THE EXORCIST. Baker collaborated on "Cotoman" with Douglas Beswick before making the special suit and ten-piece rubber face for SCHLOCK. His experimental designs and constructions gave exceptional mobility to the ape-man's body and face. This flexibility was needed to execute the action of the chase scenes and to express Schlock's reactions to the modern world and his love for a teenage girl.

Landis got the initial idea for SCHLOCK when he went to see a film called TROG. The picture did two things for him: it absolutely outraged him, and it inspired him. "I was insulted that the filmmakers had such a lack of concern for their audience," he said in Cinefantastique magazine. "It's one of the worst movies I've ever seen -- the ultimate stupid movie. It angered me so much that I went home and got the germ of the idea for SCHLOCK, and I wrote the screenplay in one night."

"The difference between SCHLOCK on the screen, and the way I originally conceived it is that the monster is the hero now -- the most intelligent and sympathetic character in the picture. The audience identifies so strongly with him that bad parts in the movie, due to my inexperience as a director, are carried because Schlock has such audience sympathy going for him."

I asked John a few questions, regarding his film, and this is what he had to say:

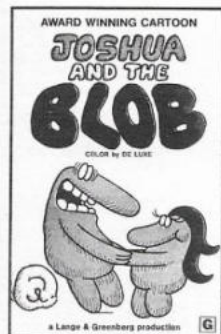
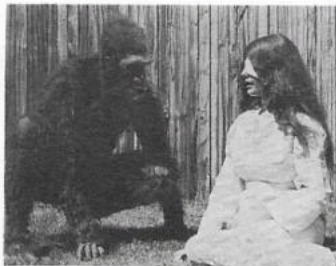
RDL: How did you become involved in the motion picture industry?

JL: I became "officially" involved in the industry I suppose when I became a mail boy at Fox in 1968. This was quite a deliberate move on my part to actually get near film production and learn as much as I could. RDL: Though SCHLOCK is primarily a comedy, are there any "hidden messages" or such within it?

JL: There are numerous comments on the more insane aspects of our society I suppose in there somewhere, but I don't feel it's my place to point them out.

RDL: Throughout the film, you have amusing parodies of certain fantasy films -- 2001, FRANKENSTEIN, KING KONG. Are there any other such parodies in the film?

JL: My count of specific references to other films numbers well over 300. I've discovered since filming, to my delight, that so many of the things we joked about are so cliched that they apply to many other movies I've never even seen!



ABOVE: Saul Kahan ponders the SCHLOCK case, as deputy eats vital clue; Eliza Garrett as the blind girl who falls in love with Schlock, thinking him to be a dog. LEFT: Filmmaker John Landis in a special photo taken especially for Cinefan: "Mask by Rick Baker, Photo by Machine in Newberry's in Westwood Village."



RDL: SCHLOCK is quite similar, in essence and execution, to a previous Jack H. Harris release, SON OF BLOB. Did you get any inspiration from it?

JL: I had never even heard of SON OF BLOB until I met Jack. It has now become a sort of cross for us to bear as it failed totally at the box office, and, as Harris has his own money in it -- well, an exhibitor has to take BLOB or he can't get SCHLOCK.

RDL: You finished SCHLOCK in only fifteen days! Good Lord, how was that accomplished?

JL: On a movie location, time is literally money. And as we had so little money....

RDL: What are your plans for the immediate future?

JL: Right now I am writing a teleplay of a Gothic Romance for Filmways. Dumb, but profitable. I have recently acquired an agent and am at present pursuing a directing assignment along the more traditional Hollywood ways. Things, however, look bright.

RDL: Do you plan to remain in the fantasy genre with your future films?

JL: I hope to work in all genres, fantasy being an element I'll no doubt introduce even in the most dusty western. A singular love of mine are musicals, and if I could even make a film as satisfying as SINGING IN THE RAIN or THE WIZARD OF OZ I'd die happy. You'll notice I even worked in 2 musical numbers in SCHLOCK! Actually, there were three, but I cut one out because I wasn't happy with it.

RDL: Do you intend to remain on the more-or-less "independent" level that you made SCHLOCK at, or do you intend to make films in the fashion that most feature films are made? (That is, with massive crews, gargantuan budgets, miles of red tape, nice professional touches like that....)

JL: I'll make films any way I can. The motion picture is undoubtedly the most expensive art form. The most difficult aspect of film making is getting the money. So in order to make my pictures the way I'd like, I'm afraid I'll do almost anything. One also must remember that Fellini could not have made his SATYRICON without four million dollars. And he got the money from people who gave it to him because they believed they would make a profit. I cannot allow myself to lose sight of the dollar end of the "motion picture industry" if I want to continue making movies.

Harris acquired distribution rights to SCHLOCK after post-production. As part of the distribution agreement Harris put up the money for an additional day and a half of shooting. This added three scenes to the picture, which were also produced by Jim O'Rourke and written and directed by Landis.

The film won the top award, the Golden Asteroid, at the 11th Trieste International Science Fiction Film Festival. "This award was felt merited due to Landis' inventiveness and his film knowhow" Gene Moskowitz wrote in Variety. SCHLOCK also won the 1973 prize at the Cannes Festival in May and the Annecy Animation Film Festival in June.

Landis' future plans include further collaborations with producer Jim O'Rourke. One is called AN AMERICAN WEREWOLF IN PARIS which "is very funny and very frightening." TEEN-AGE VAMPIRE is another one in the works. "I have always wanted to make Island of Dr. Moreau since I was four, and I intend to, also, A Connecticut Yankee in King Arthur's Court."

In conclusion, one might sadly notice that one of the problems with SON OF BLOB and SCHLOCK, and practically all fantastic films, is that the majority of moviegoers and film "critics" (I use the term loosely) consider the fantasy genre as juvenile, or films made for children. And that is an opinion ardently disagreed upon by fans of the genre. Harris responds to the opinion by saying that the films he's produced are "for the kid in everyone." John Landis gives his answer:

"I hardly consider fantasy as juvenile. SCHLOCK in particular was aimed at kids 8-16, but so were the Our Gang Comedies, which I love. I think it's really a matter of perspective. One really can't call 2001, CLOCKWORK ORANGE, 1984, A Connecticut Yankee in King Arthur's Court and on and on, juvenile. Whereas certain "adult" books are decidedly childish. I think I should make clear, also, that to me "King Kong" has as much value as "Lawrence of Arabia" as both films make grand use of the viewer's imagination. One should not equate imagination with immaturity."

Here, here!

\*\*\*\*\*  
Randall Larson, aside from being an avid fan of cinema, film music, science fiction and weird-fantasy literature, has written various stories and articles for several fan-zines. And, if anyone hasn't noticed by now, he's also the editor of Cinefan.



TOP: Getting the jump on the opposition in SCHLOCK, the Schlockthropus invades a high school dance. LEFT TO RIGHT, FROM TOP: A satire on a scene in Universal's FRANKENSTEIN is only one of a great number of fantastic film parodies in SCHLOCK; Moron automobile driver gets his just reward; Television newscaster greets an idle pedestrian, unaware that his life is really in Schlock's hand; Schlock cools off an obnoxious theatre-goer; An example of some of SCHLOCK's advertising slogans; Schlock escorts a youngster out of the theatre -- note the film that's playing. LEFT: Ditch-Digger is getting up in the world, as Schlock gives him a face-lift.



# CINEPAN

## SCHLOCK IN THE CINEMA

BY CLAY HOLDEN & RANDALL LARSON

One of the most interesting ideas in the science fiction/fantasy genre was first penned by Sir Arthur Conan Doyle in his novel *THE LOST WORLD*. The thrilling suspense of discovering a lost prehistoric land hidden deep within the unexplored depths of this world. Once Waterson Rothacker had made the novel into the classic film of 1925, producers and screenwriters began to become "artistically inspired" by this first effort, and a flock of imitations belched forth in the years to come. Some were very well done -- in one aspect or another -- others were fair to poor. And then there was *THE LAND UNKNOWN*.

This epic film originally came from the hands of Universal-International ((Ghod, I hope they washed them!)) in the Year of Our Lord 1957. Lasso Gorog wrote a screenplay well-deserving of the schlock that was eventually to be produced as this film. Producer William Alland totally corrupted himself by dabbling with this winner. Alland, as you may recall, produced some very fine science fiction films -- *TARANTULA*, *THIS ISLAND EARTH*, *IT CAME FROM OUTER SPACE* -- as well as *THE CREATURE FROM THE BLACK LAGOON* series, *THE DEADLY MANTIS*, *THE SPACE CHILDREN*. Why Alland ever expressed interest in this travesty we'll never know. I guess we all have to eat. The special effects by far dominated this film, and if anyone even cares who created the pathetic "effects" they can check the cast/credits following the review.

The film opens in a building in a large city. Some schmucky naval officer lectures underlings on the preparation of an expedition to the Antarctic. Suddenly, Margaret Hathaway, the film's ROMANTIC FEMALE, enters the room and gets the complete attention from the men, which rouses forth some totally moronic dialog, such as:

"Not Bad!"  
"She's got a head on her shoulders, too!"  
"I always love to meet men!" Margaret chimes.

"Ma'am, you just say the word and I'll fly you to the moon!" Allan, our hero, says with pseudo-dramatic acting.

Shawn Smith plays Margaret Hathaway, the film's token woman and newspaper columnist.

TWO MONTHS LATER the expedition leaves in a small barrage of ships. After several boring exterior sea-voyaging shots and a rousing romantic dialog between Margaret and Allan

(highlighted by Margaret's unforgettable line, "Do you have to be so technical?"), the lead ship arrives in Antarctica. Soon, Marg, Allan, Jack (the handsome helicopter pilot) and Steve take off in a helicopter for the mainland. As soon as the location shots of the helicopter taking off from the ship are over, a bargain basement tin can helicopter is used for close shots with the other shamed models. As Jack searches for the reported warm-water region, Margaret points out A GROUP OF PENGUINS with this original line, "Looks like they're all wearing tuxedos!"

"Nope. All females" Allan makes a hit with this fitting statement.

As soon as the Tonka-Toy Helicopter has found the warm-water region, they are ordered to return to base. A STORM IS BUILDING UP! Jack turns the Copter around and finds himself niftily heading straight for the storm. (!) In a HIGHLY DRAMATIC SCENE they learn that they are low on gas and can't land anywhere. And they're beyond the point of no return!!! (gasp!) Jack searches for a break in the weather, and the special effects man promptly complies. He sends the Copter through, WHEN SUDDENLY a cardboard pterodactyl which does not have any moving parts, pulled along on a string, offs the helicopter. Radio is dead!! Loosing altitude!! Jack faces the facts: "Only way we can go is down!!" Copter still in storm cloud, altitude drops below zero, temperature rises. Jack is AMAZED as the altitude continues to drop. Still in cloud!! Temperature rises to 91 degrees.

DEEP IN THE ANTARCTIC... MONSTERS FROM THE DAWN OF TIME!

## The Land Unknown

The story of four people who probed deeper into Science's greatest mystery--only to become trapped in a forbidden valley of pre-historic monsters!



Margaret sighs -- she is finding it hard to breathe, too much humidity. They break through the cloud at 2500 feet below sea level and find themselves in the midst of a lavishly finger-painted prehistoric jungle. The helicopter is so obviously phony that it shakes on the wires it is held up by as it plops down bouncily on its wheels.

All is quiet as the camera pans around wrinkling trees and a FANTASTIC PREHISTORIC SETTING -- all conveniently obscured by pretend fog (either that or the studio forgot to post their no-smoking sign...) Damage to the Tonka-copter is fair, they just need to repair one part. But, as the audience expects, the part is ruined when Steve tries to fix it. Steve wanders off, ashamed.

Allan and Margaret daringly take a walk through their surroundings. Marg doesn't care that they won't be here long, as Jack earlier assured her. Margaret stops for some reason, her back to the tentacled plant that moves about menacingly. Allan tells her to wait there (he doesn't see the plant, of course) and for some equally inexplicable reason he WALKS AWAY. Stupid rubber cannibal plant -- hot for the woman's body -- grabs tentacly for her. One could easily see where wires were attached to it. Allan, meanwhile, has found a bubbly volcanic pool (bubbles no doubt created by hidden special effects men blowing through straws into the water) and stops to SCIENTIFICALLY INVESTIGATE. Margaret walks over to where he stands, DELIBERATELY DISOBEYING HIS ORDERS, leaving the cannibal plant by itself.



The sound of a TERRIBLE RUBBER FLYING THING is heard and arouses the anticipated attention of our heroes.



Shawn Smith greets Jock Mahoney as Douglas Kennedy (Left) and William Reynolds ogle respectively.



They return to the copter, viewing the landscape. The basic set of the canyon gives the effect of a first grader's rendering of the prehistoric era. As they leave, the pool begins to bubble even more, which meant that either something was surfacing menacingly or that one of the special effects men sneezed. Fade out picture, superimpose "MONSTER MOVIE", cut to Cream Cheese commercial.

At last, the movie is back, and: Jack is trying to fix the radio and tonka mobile as Allan and Margaret return. Allan is confident that search planes will come in a few hours. Margaret says he's a brilliant commander and a naval officer, but a very poor liar. Allan smiles and supervises unloading of supplies. Gorgeously dramatic music sets in.

That night, when everyone is asleep, Steve (who isn't) SECRETLY climbs in the copter, calls MAYDAY on the radio. My hero! To his dismay, he gets no response.

THE NEXT MORNING everyone awakens to the sound of another cardboard pteradactyl, flying plastically through their acrylic canyon. Luckily, the Land Unknown is full of fog, so the painters could leave out a lot of detail. The folks realize they are in a prehistoric surrounding (Allan's pretty bright...). "Water tastes like rotten eggs!" Jack announces, and keeps on drinking.

SUDDENLY, they hear planes, and race to the Copter. Jack gets on radio. Above, in search plane, 2 guys look intently at the fog. They sadly shake their heads, and fly on. One of the film's better moments...

Jack cannot make the radio work -- there is not enough power. "But we had the power last night!" Steve is upset because he used it up secretly last night, and grabs a flare gun, fires it into the sky. He's ashamed -- the flare's only good for 400 feet.

Margaret is dressing behind a blanket after a bath when Jack walks in on her. "Sorry" he says, after he gets a good view. Steve has gone somewhere. The others start to do something. Steve drinks from a water hole, suddenly spies something AWFUL, races to others. It is a dead pteradactyl! "What a smell!" Jack breathes deeply. "We'd better get back to camp, it isn't safe here!" Allan declares. As they do, they hear growling, and look to a nearby clearing. REALISTIC DINOSAURS are tearing at each other (actually lizards without even the benefit of makeup as they had in Irwin Allen's LOST WORLD or the original ONE MILLION B.C.) until finally one wins. As the dubbed-in lion growls subside, the victor lizard approaches the party. The group runs off, as the lizard continues to walk toward camera.

Then a HORRIBLE Tyrannosaurus Rex appears and walks toward them. Looks like somebody wobbling around with a cardboard box over his head. You can smell the paper mache, you can see the ribbing they stretched the green paper over. It seemed that the "actor" in the suit was struggling to keep from falling over or dying from embarrassment. Also, he slobbered. Very tacky character. Jack starts



Hunter (right) and Margaret (left) row towards CERTAIN DOOM, unaware of the MONSTROUSITY OF TIME which lurks scant feet below them!

the Tonka-Copter as Rex screams in warning (it looks more like he was yawning -- his mouth flaps open, somebody cues the lion growls, and the mouth flaps shut). The Copter is stuck, it won't move. As Rex approaches, the propeller blades slice him and he backs off. SUDDENLY a horn blares out, Rex turns, and stumbles away into the forest. Jack cuts the motor. They get out and go to get their food -- decide its safest to stay in the Copter. But, SOMETHING STOLE IT ALL! "But there weren't any humans in this age!" Allan explains. Margaret is dismayed that there is no chance of escape from the Land Unknown. DRAMATIC SCENE: Allan explains the expedition will probably leave without them. Arggh!

"Hell's Chimney" Jack sentimentally calls the land. Steve finds a small monkey which is supposed to be some kind of prehistoric mammal. Allan tells the animal specie's life story, for the film's educational aspect ("Look, Ma, I'm learning!") Then he predicts how the monkey will evolve into man.

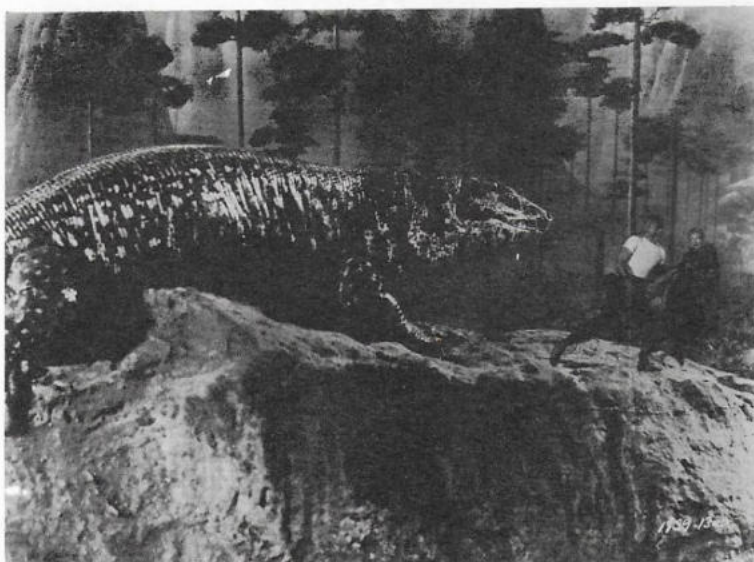
Margaret takes the monkey to get a drink of water when another dinosaur-iguana appears. Margaret drops the monkey and runs. The monkey somehow gets hurled into the rubber cannibal plant -- this guy won't evolve into man! Margaret is somehow captured by SOMEONE, carried to a boat, and taken away as Allan stands around calling her name. Cut to eggplant commercial.



Jock Mahoney and Shawn Smith cling fully to each other as a huge prehistoric Tyrannosaurus Rex charges in rage. Tyrannosaurus is on the right.



Tough looks are emphasized by top-cast members Jock Mahoney, Shawn Smith, Phil Harvey and William Reynolds as the handsome helicopter pilot.



Jock Mahoney and Shawn Smith run in TERROR from a realistic dinosaur in the bowels of THE LAND UNKNOWN.



A tender moment gives a brief respite from the horrors of this bygone age as Shawn Smith (left, sitting) embraces Jock Mahoney (right) in this scene from the classic Universal travesty, THE LAND UNKNOWN.





A huge prehistoric monster, obviously created by the talents of a Harryhausen or an O'Brien, races madly toward Jock Mahoney (foreground, left) and Shawn Smith (foreground, right) in *THE LAND UNKNOWN*.

Allan, Steve and Jack are searching for Margaret. Steve finds a piece of her clothing conveniently hanging on a bush. They find footprints made "by a being physically very much like us." Allan deduces that it was he who carried Margaret off. (We told you he was bright). They trace the tracks to the river. Allan, with another milestone deduction, says "he's on this river somewhere." Meanwhile, the BEING PHYSICALLY VERY MUCH LIKE US has reached the other side, which is a rocky cliff-wall, he carries Margaret inside. The others approach. Margaret awakens in a cave, gets up. The BEING PHYSICALLY VERY MUCH LIKE US is bending over making a fire. He turns to her. This dude looks better than a lot of wines and dervishes around. In fact, he looks better than anyone else in the cast, except that he's on a bizarre ego trip. He thinks he's God of his cheap little set. And, for having spent 10 years there, his hair and beard sure are short...

"You're one of us!" Margaret informs him. Guy tells her it's his valley -- everything in it is his, including her.

"Where are the others?" Margaret asks.

"They're dead!"

Margaret gasps. "You killed them!"

"One of the beasts did it for me."

Margaret sobs, turns to window (actually a hole in the plastic cave), sees her three comrades clamoring forth in a rubber raft. Margaret turns back to the BEING PHYSICALLY VERY MUCH LIKE US and keeps him busy with questions. "It's my intelligence that keeps me alive." To demonstrate what a sharpie he really is, he shows her a shell with which he emits a sound that the animals, including the Jankasaurus Rex, fear. They get into an argument, and the BEING PHYSICALLY VERY MUCH LIKE US attacks Margaret as the other three enter. "Don't move, Cave Man!" Allan warns, obviously a racist.

"You won't call me Cave Man after you've been here 10 years!" We find out that the BEING PHYSICALLY, etc., is one of the 4 who crashed here in 1945. His name is Carl Hunter.

"After what he's been through it's no wonder he's like this," somebody sez.

Hunter tells them he can replace their copter part, and the three can leave but Mar-

garet must stay here. Unfortunately, they refuse, and all four leave as Hunter THREATENS THEM HORRIBLY.

LATER, Hunter is destroying two dinosaur eggs when Mama returns. He blows horn and she stomps away -- after a VERY TENSE DRAMATIC MOMENT.

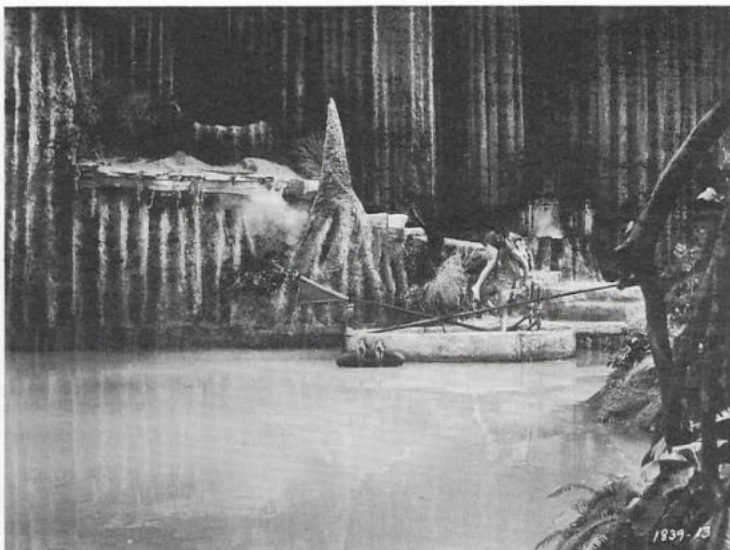
Returns of Jankasaurus Rex and then the rubber cannibal plant again, are inserted to stave off the total emotional stupor of the long-suffering audience. Rex is waiting when Allan and Margaret return to camp. Breathing heavily, he approaches them, yawning ferociously. Allan tells Margaret to run and he decoys Rex toward him with a gun. Rex waddles ridiculously after him. Allan hides in a ditch, Rex saunters over it and into the woods.

Meg is back in front of the rubber cannibal plant (in the same footage as before) and this time the tentacle artichoke gets her. Allan races up, and finds her on the ground, a tentacle chopped neatly in two (the plant's, not hers!). Hunter had saved her! (sigh) Margaret, sobbing courageously, tells him she'll stay here and let Allan, Jack and Steve escape from the Land Unknown!

Steve is certain the expedition is going to leave without them. "We're all going to die, because of her!"



Hunter, the insane enraged cavemen scientist, holds up the VITAL PART which our heroes need DESPERATELY if they are to escape from this land of hidden terror and ageless monstrosity.



Realistic sets adorn this scene as Hunter (upright) carries Margaret (folded) into his MAKESHIFT boat.



Steve and Jack take off to try to find the '45 wreck, where the replacement part is. Allan hunts too, and Margaret follows him. Allan is talking at her as he walks on, but does not see that she runs off. She reaches the river and rows the rubber liferaft toward Hunter's cave. ((How does she know where it is? She was unconscious last time...)) Allan, realizing that a brilliant conversationist he ain't, discovers that Margaret has run off. He runs back to search for her. As Margaret rows up the river (actually, is might just as well have been down the river, it's hard to tell since the bath-tub waters didn't move in any direction), something spies her from its MURKY DEPTHS!! But Hunter is watching, and sees the hidden DENIZEN OF THE RIVER, and rows out in his own raft to save her. Before he goes, he places two torches in SPECIALLY CONSTRUCTED CLAMPS on the front of the raft. In front of Margaret as she rows on, her back facing ahead, a MONSTROUS PLESIOSAURUS (by far the film's best effect, almost approaching mediocrity) approaches her mechanically. The prehistoric serpent's head wobbles downward, ready to chomp on her with shaky lips. From behind the plesiosaurus, Little Boy Hunter blows his horn. Margaret turns, and sees the paper mache monster, and SCREAMS!! Hunter blows the horn again. The plesiosaurus turns and floats toward him, mechanically plasticized fins bouncing up and down for shock effect. Splash Splash Splash. Hunter fights the MONSTROSITY OF TIME with the long torches he has foresightedly brought along. We think this scene was intended as a CLIMAX OF SUSPENSEFULNESS, latching the audience to the edges of their seats. In our case we fell off -- laughing! You'll have to see it yourself to truly understand how tensely dramatic and suspenseful it really is!

Steve, Jack and Allan have heard the horn and are running to SAVE THE DAY. They reach the scene just as the Plesiosaurus returns to the waters, its mouth melting from the flames of Hunter's torches. Hunter ties Margaret's rubber liferaft to his large economy model (plastic) and rows back to his cave. A relieving health food commercial spares us for a few moments. But, all good things cannot last forever, and thus the film returneth:

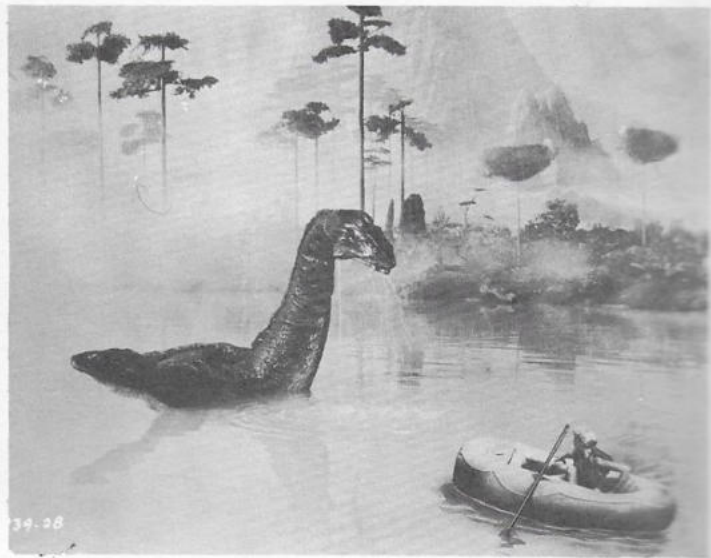


Steve fites with the BEING PHYSICALLY VERY MUCH LIKE US.





ALLAN SAVES THE DAY and puts Steve, who is ashamed, in his place, as Margaret and Jack look on, amazed.



Shawn Smith cringes in TERROR as she notices the GROTESQUE WOBBLING BARGE MONSTER which has been pursuing her.

In the cave, Hunter awakens the unconscious Margaret with water-in-the-face, acting out one of the audience's fondest desires. Steve appears at the cave door, rites with Hunter. Hunter pushes Steve away, grabs a torch. Steve fires his gun, but it is empty and he is ashamed. Hunter whips the torch about, eventually setting the CAVE ON FIRE (!) Then, they switch to knives, Steve wins and grabs the torch. A cardboard knife, a well-chosen prop, is used since otherwise the actors might cut off their own fingers. "Where is that wreck?" Steve demands.

"NO!" Margaret pleads in full melodramatic pleasure. Allan and Jack appear on the scene and confront Steve. "Get outta my way!" Steve threatens him with the torch. Allan glances at Hunter; "You're not gonna touch him." Eventually Steve surrenders the torch. He's ashamed. Steve and Jack help Hunter. "I don't want your help, or your pity," Hunter says.

But Allan replies "We all need pity, and we all need help." This movie sure does.

Hunter gives them a map to the '45 wreck, and tells them to leave him alone. Allan says "You can live among beasts without becoming a beast, but you can't live among humans without becoming affected by their humanity." Margaret stays with Hunter and Steve. Allan and Jack hunt for the wreck. On their way, they pass three graves. After looking at them MOORNFULLY for a while, they pass on. They find the wreck, and the NEEDED PART.

"It'll work!" Steve announces knowledgeably.

Margaret is caring for Hunter. Steve, Jack and Allan are repairing the TonkaMobile. Jack tries the engine, it works putterily (The sound man probably warbled the sound effects tape...) Margaret and Hunter hear this, then the sound stops. Margaret wants to go back to her friends. "Something's happened to them!" she says twice. As she heads out the cave door, she is confronted by the plasticosaurus. Hunter catches her as she falls and carries her out of the cave. The plesiosaurus has apparently submerged...

Meanwhile, the tin miracle helicopter starts to work, and we get another confrontation with the cardboard-and-cloth drool machine. Rex returns, yawning profusely, as the Copter groans. (Members of the audience, too, were beginning to groan.) Steve hops out and adjusts the rod as Rex approaches (he -- Rex -- walks like a 3-year old on roller skates). A VERY DRAMATIC SEQUENCE, this! Steve carefully adjusts the rod, as Junkasaurus Rex gracefully comes closer. Flap Flap Flap. Closer. CLOSER!!! "I'll need a little more time!" Steve declares in one of the great comedy statements of all time. Hunter and Margaret row forth towards them. Allan fires the gun. Steve finishes, the propeller blades start up. The Copter starts to rise, just as Rex reaches them. He yawns in aggravation, drooling like a cretin. Hunter and Margaret see the Copter hovering down on them. Everybody stops. Jack lets down a rope, which carries Margaret in. Hunter rows away.

The plasticosaurus returns and sneaks up on Hunter. Hunter eventually hears its fins splashing and begins to ROW FASTER. The Saur gains on him. Hunter grabs a torch, and jabs at it. The Saur submerges as Hunter grins proudly. Then, as expected, it SUDDENLY comes up under the raft, overturning it. Hunter SWIMS FOR HIS LIFE, and the Saur pursues him.

Margaret sees this, "Oh, Look!" The Plasticosaurus crushes Hunter with a fin and knocks him unconscious.

"Jack, get as close as you can." Allan says. "Want to see what this baby can do?" Jack's expression eagerly conveys. Jack does, and Allan fires a flare gun into the Saur's mouth, killing it. AS JUSTICE TRIUMPHS, Allan dives into the water and rescues Hunter. Jack's rope hoists them both into the Copter. Jack sends the Copter up into the fog, and out of THE LAND UNKNOWN!!

Nope, it's not over yet! In one beautifully photographed sequence, the helicopter flies sideways and backwards through the sky, bringing the party back to the ship (which, conveniently, is still where it was when they got here). "We're comin' in" Jack announces. Hunter awakens, looks about.

Appropriately enough, the cheapo helicopter runs out of fuel and crashes about 5 feet from the ship they're about to land on. Everybody is fished out of the water and rescued.

Of course, Margaret wants to quit her job and marry Allan, our hero, and spend her life raising kids, the dream of every young woman. Fade into climax music. Hurry up with that cream cheese commercial!

From this summary, it's obvious the film is a classic of its kind and must not be missed.



A huge plasticosaurus wobbles menacingly as it arises from the depths.

#### THE LAND UNKNOWN

##### CAST

Commander Allan Roberts....Jock Mahoney  
Margaret Hathaway.....Shawn Smith  
Lieut. Jack Carmen.....William Reynolds  
Hunter.....Henry Brandon  
Steve Miller.....Phil Harvey  
Capt. Burnham.....Douglas R. Kennedy

##### CREDITS

A Universal-International Film  
in Cinemascope  
Directed by.....Virgil Vogel  
Produced by.....William Alland  
Screenplay by.....Lassie Gorog  
Director of Photography....Ellis W. Carter, A.S.C.  
Art Direction....Alexander Golitsen and  
Richard H. Riedel  
Set Decorations....Russell A. Gausman and  
Ray Peifers  
Sound.....Leslie I. Carey and  
Corson Jowett  
Film Editor.....Fred MacDowell  
Make-Up.....Bud Westmore  
Optical Effects....Roswell A. Hoffman  
Special Effects created by Fred Knott,  
Orion Ernest and Jack Kevan  
Music Supervision by Joseph Gershenson



Shawn Smith barely evades climbing into the JAWS OF DEATH as she exits from Hunter's "cave".





# PERFORMERS IN THE HORROR/FANTASY CINEMA: 1950 - 1960

## AN ANALYSIS AND CHECKLIST by Howard Clegg

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This article by Howard Clegg is the product of more than a year's research, and is -- to our knowledge -- the only such analysis to deal in such depth on the subject. Due to a lack of space, the analysis will appear in Cinefan #1, while the checklist will be presented in the second issue. A great deal of thanks must go not only to Howard, but to the following people who, directly or indirectly, gave assistance to either the compilation of the checklist or the acquiring of stills: Jim Garrison, Greg Shoemaker, Walt Lee's Reference Guide to Fantastic Films, Kanji Matsuka and Randall Larson.  
\*\*\*\*\*

### PART ONE

The checklist of performers who appeared in fantasy films from 1950 to 1960 is now complete. One might wonder what possible service this feat would accomplish and what benefits it might attract. Indeed, the decade of the fifties churned out numerous horror vehicles from which not many good films were present, let alone classics. As producers realized the rekindled interest in the horror film and the cry was for more, they were happy to give them more, at the expense of quality and of excellence. Thus the viewer was treated to such works of "high standard" as *TERROR FROM THE YEAR 5000*, *QUEEN OF OUTER SPACE*, *ATTACK OF THE 50 FOOT WOMAN*, *EARTH VS THE SPIDER*, *THE UNDEADLY* and many, many more. Certainly other decades enjoyed their share of terrible films but most of us identify especially with the 1950's products when the topic of low grade thrillers are brought up. We remember the 50's for this reason even though there were memorable productions such as *THE THING*, *WAR OF THE WORLDS*, *THEM!*, *INVASION OF THE BODY SNATCHERS*, but they were far, far outweighed by the dozens of poor films that were made mainly for profit. As a result, is it any wonder editors of fan and professional magazines devoted to the horror genre generally ignored the Grade "C" clinkers? Naturally readers desired information on their favorite films, which hardly included the low-quality ones and the editors dutifully concentrated on the classics. What few articles there were of bad films were merely items of curiosity.

Devotees of fantasy cinema certainly have more than their share of inferior motion pictures to view each year either on television or in the theatres. Unfortunately, we have no way of knowing whether the film will be to our liking or not. Reading a synopsis is no good as film is an entirely different medium. Judging by the title isn't a fine idea either (For example, *MONSTER OF THE ISLAND* sounds enlightening by itself, and the fact that Boris Karloff stars makes it purely irresistible. Could there be further doubt that this title sounds like something we've been waiting for? Viewers of the film will know it definitely is not!) and reviews are worthwhile only to hear what that reviewer has to

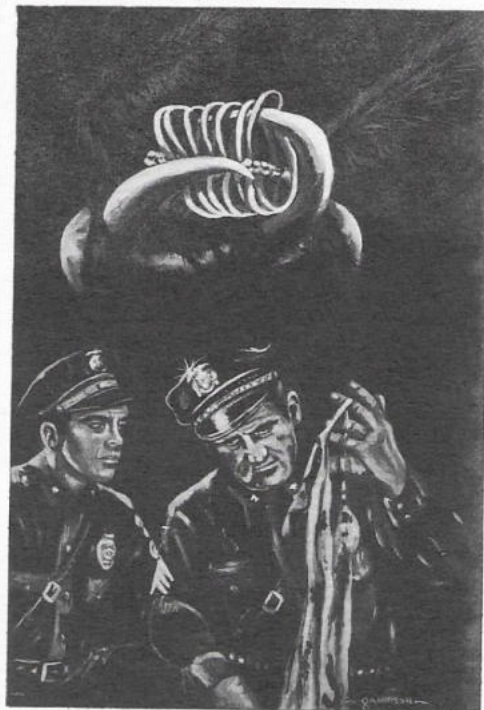
say. So the only thing one can do to see if a particular film works successfully for oneself is to sit and watch a sufficient portion of the film for better or for worse.

Thanks to this tedious process, a lot of us wind up watching many films that we normally wouldn't care to see. And because of the astounding ratio of bad films to good ones, that adds up to a lot of awful films we see.

What does all this have to do with a fantasy actor checklist of the fifties?

I remember one time a local TV station brought out a dozen or so films from the 50's made by American International and similar studios. The titles were very strange and foreign at the time...I had never heard of them before. How could such films as *THE KILLER SHREWS*, *THE FOUR SKULLS OF JONATHAN DRAKE*, *TEENAGE CAVEMAN*, *GIANT FROM THE UNKNOWN* exist with my complete ignorance of them while I so cleverly knew all about the overly rerun *HOUSE ON HAUNTED HILL*, *THE GIANT BEHEMOTH*, *AMAZING COLOSSAL MAN*, *VOODOO ISLAND*, *THE GIANT CLAW*, and others. Of course, the former group of films and similar examples were never released around my area before, but my complete lack of knowledge on these films came quite stunningly. Why had I never read about these films, I wondered...not having a recollection of even the faintest mention of any of them bothered me. (Even to this day, coverage of these films are quite limited. Examples are occasional checklists such as the *Castle of Frankenstein Movie-guide*, *The Monster Times "Mushroom Monsters"* piece, review sections of films such as *Soren's Forgotten Fiends*, etc. But the situation is definitely improving as magazines such as *Photon* are bringing out articles on minor 50's classics which makes for fascinating reading thanks to the rarity of the subject.) So the best way to learn about such mysterious movies was to watch them and I made a good effort to do so. Regardless to mention, a lot of these films turned out to be the Grade B rubbish I expected all along. But some of them delighted me, they carried a magic somehow deserving of bigger, better pictures. (Someone else obviously thought so to remake an amount of these inferior but imaginative little thrillers. For example, *DAY THE WORLD ENDED*, *IT CONQUERED THE WORLD* and *INVASION OF THE SAUCERMEN* were reworked to wind up with even more inferior "thrillers" as, respectively, *YEAR 2889*, *ZONTAR THE THING FROM VENUS*, and *THE EYE CREATURES*.)

TOP RIGHT: Artist Jim Garrison's rendering of James Whitmore and fellow policeman from the 1954 Warner Bros. science fiction classic, *THEM!*  
BELOW, LEFT TO RIGHT: Yvette Mimieux is menaced by Morlock in George Pal's *THE TIME MACHINE* (MGM '60); Christopher Lee as the monster in the 1957 Hammer film, *CURSE OF FRANKENSTEIN*; Bela Lugosi in 1959's *PLAN 9 FROM OUTER SPACE*; Leslie Nielsen as the Commander from *FORBIDDEN PLANET* (MGM 1956).



Then I wanted to know more about these films and the people who made them. It became clear to me that I really didn't know as much as I had thought. Information on the old celebrities of terror -- Carradine, Lugosi, Chaney, Karloff, etc -- could easily be found. But where do we go for the especially ignored horror veterans of the 50's, Whit Bissell, Robert Clarke, Morris Ankrum, and others. There was and still is so much to learn, but the knowledge is not easily obtainable when it comes to material of this period (Unless one is lucky enough to have an enormous library of books, magazines and records devoted to fantasy in his/her possession). Since I did not have the reference material available the only way to learn was to teach myself. The first step, I decided, was to make a list of actors who appeared in films of horror from 1950 to 1960, and from there to the present.\* This way I could learn about the unknown actors by observing the number of pictures they made and by referring to them when the need arose. The process took more than a year, with additions still continuing, but the results were worth it. Many things were brought to light that I would not have noticed ordinarily as a cause of this research.

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\* The term "horror film", as used here, actually refers to all fantastic films, whether they be horror, science fiction, or fantasy.  
-RDL







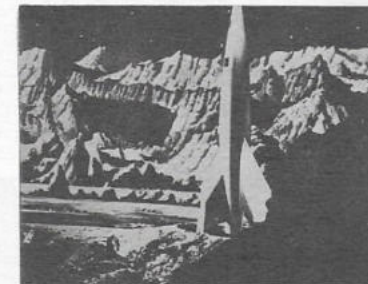
A very peculiar thing apparent in the 50's fantastic film is the fact that most of its actors are identified with this decade. A lot of the actors faded away by 1960 to be heard of infrequently if at all later on. People such as Richard Crane, Phyllis Coates, Nestor Paiva, Arthur Space, King Donovan, Arthur Franz, Mara Corday, Faith Domergue, Cathy Downs, to name a few, gained fame at least in the horror genre during the 50's period and then disappeared. For example, Allison Hayes made a number of thrillers as a star, but the best she could do after the decade was over was a minor part in *THE GRIMING HAND* (1963). The quality-forsaking studios which employed these actors and actresses filled in their movie producing schedule with quickie western and crime dramas along with their horror flicks as it appears these types made the most money at the time. So it's not unusual to see these named juggled around in different types of films and it is difficult to limit these actors to one genre alone. Generally speaking then, these performers not only faded away in the horror field in years after 1960 but in the other fields as well. One reason for this could be with the arrival of the sixties the familiar film mold of the fifties was broken. Directors started experimenting with ideas and methods startlingly different than what they had attempted before. Roger Corman, famed for his low budget, imaginative thrillers in the 50's put out an excellent series of Edgar Allan Poe adaptations, scripted by Richard Matheson, unlike anything he had done before. Bert I. Gordon, director of films identifiable only to the 50's decade, such as *THE AMAZING COLOSSAL MAN*, *EARTH VS THE SPIDER* and *CYCLOPS* did something completely new with *THE MAGIC SWORD*. With the coming of new people in the 60's along with the fact most of the actors of the 50's films were extremely unprofessional people it is to no one's amazement that these actors were rarely heard from again.

Another concept of the 50's horror film was the role of the hero. Never before was the hero of a horror film given more screen time. Comparatively speaking, the presence of the hero of horror films in the 30's and 40's was primarily to provide the love interest and to insure the viewer that the heroine would be saved from inevitable danger at the end. In these earlier decades, the role of the hero was immensely overshadowed by the horror giant(s) playing opposite him. In *THE RAVEN*, *THE MUMMY*, *THE BLACK CAT*, *THE MAN WITH NINE LIVES*, *THE MUMMY'S TOMB*, and *DEVIL BAT* who even remembers the hero? But with the advance of the 50's, this situation was changed.

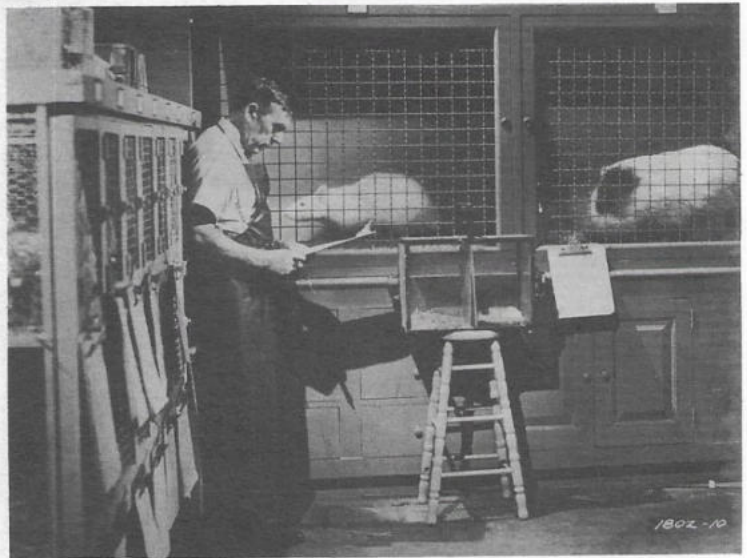
New, different horror ideas were on the way. For the first time the monster was not the creation of a scientist or the resurrection of the dormant, predictable formulas of the 30's and 40's used on a mass scale, but instead, attacking creatures from outer space, hostile underground-sea civilizations; products of nuclear power; dangerous stowaways on space ships; even falling "monolith monsters." Rare was the time when the hero or a character who was a normal human being in the story turned into or portrayed a creature. This idea was extremely popular in the 30's and 40's with *WHITE ZOMBIE*, *THE WOLFMAN*, *THE APE MAN*, *JUNGLE CAPTIVE*, *THE RETURN OF DR. X*, etc. There are exceptions in the 50's, too, such as *THE HEEDFUL SUN DEMON*, *THE NEANDERTHAL MAN*, *THE WASP WOMAN*, *THE 4D MAN*, *THE WEREWOLF* but the monsters in films of this decade were more likely uncredited people in costumes (*GODZILLA*, *INVADERS FROM MARS*, *THE*

LEFT, TOP TO BOTTOM: Researchers ponder the news of a giant prehistoric monster alive in London in *THE GIANT BEHEMOTH* (1958); The awakened prehistoric Preying Mantis is atlast killed in a tunnel - *THE DEADLY MANTIS* (1957); Ray Harryhausen's magnificently-animated Cyclops prepares to feast over one of Sinbad's men in *THE 7TH VOYAGE OF SINBAD* (1958); Peter Cushing as Dr. Frankenstein inspects his creation (Christopher Lee) as Robert Urquhart watches in *CURSE OF FRANKENSTEIN* (1957); Dinosaurs animated by Willis O'Brien and Ray Harryhausen depicted the prehistoric era in *THE ANIMAL WORLD* (1955); Margaret Sheridan and Kenneth Tobey pose in a publicity shot from the 1951 science fiction classic, *THE THING*.

RIGHT, TOP TO BOTTOM: Ward Ramsey (right) confronts Fred Engelberg as Kristina Hanson and Paul Lukather look on, from *DINOSAURUS* (1957); Faith Domergue is carried away by a mutant of Metaluna in *THIS ISLAND EARTH* (1955); Publicity photo from the 1951 *LOST CONTINENT*; Grant Williams manipulates a matchstick in *THE INCREDIBLE SHRINKING MAN* (1957); The rocket-ship rests on the moon in *DESTINATION MOON* (1950); Giant locusts invade a city in *BEGINNING OF THE END*.



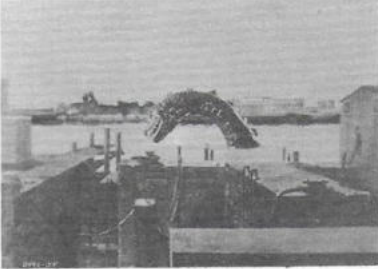




TOP LEFT: Gene Barry talks to Ned Glass, whose suitcase has been knocked open by a mob of people during the evacuation of Los Angeles in George Pal's *WAR OF THE WORLDS* (1953). Barry also appeared in *ATOMIC CITY* (1952) and *THE 27TH DAY* (1957). TOP RIGHT: Scientists and Navy men fight off a giant caterpillar-like creature in *THE MONSTER THAT CHALLENGED THE WORLD* (1957). CENTER LEFT: Faith Domergue and Donald Curtis, who provide the love interest in 1955's

*IT CAME FROM BENEATH THE SEA*. CENTER RIGHT: Leo G. Carroll, recognized from television's *MAN FROM U.N.C.L.E.* series some years back, appeared in only one fantastic film during the fifties, as the professor in *TARANTULA* (1955). BOTTOM LEFT: Joan Taylor and Hugh Marlowe in a publicity shot from *EARTH VS. THE FLYING SAUCERS* (1956). BOTTOM RIGHT: Richard Denning and Mara Corday (on right) discuss their dilemma with military and news men in *THE BLACK SCORPION* (1957).





**MOLE PEOPLE, IT! THE TERROR FROM BEYOND SPACE, THE CREATURE FROM THE BLACK LAGOON;** results of stop-motion photography (20 MILLION MILES TO BARTH, IT CAME FROM BENEATH THE SEA, THE 7TH VOYAGE OF SINBAD), or any type of non-converted-human threat (THE BLOB, KRONOS, THE MAGNETIC MONSTER). To face these new menaces, the hero, with the heroine bravely at his side to help him go on in a lot of the cases, fight to conquer the wanton, unknown force with the help of principled science. Thus we have a film with a large portion of it explaining the ultra scientific mumbo-jumbo details to the awed agast viewers. Many of these films were not terribly exciting as a result, and sometimes downright boring as proven in **TOBOR THE GREAT, KRONOS, GOG, THE DEADLY MANTIS, RIDERS TO THE STARS, THE MAGNETIC MONSTERS** and many others, thanks to the lengthy science lessons. But this gave the hero and the heroine a lot more time together as now they didn't have to depend on the love and rescue-danger scenes alone. In fact, when the special effects scenes weren't on, they were the whole film! This scheme is in sharp contrast to the practice taken up in horror films of the 30's and 40's where the villain or other characters dominated. In the 50's, the hero's role as protector also changed. He could be heroic not only by saving the girl but by saving his town, city, or the world. Sometimes the hero would be the scientist himself, and at other times he would be the stronger man carrying out the findings of his scientist-friend (usually the heroine's father). In the latter case he may have been a special type of utilized hero, the military man (**MONSTER THAT CHALLENGED THE WORLD, INVISIBLE INVADERS**) where he could depend on the extra advantage of arsenals to rid the invaders or monster by.

Why were these new threats, different from old, accepted formulas (the evil scientist and his creature, for example), so much more abundant in this period? Time is an answer as space travel, nuclear mutants and other modern ideas grew intriguing to the public. The old formulas were simply old-fashioned or even outdated. Another reason is the established masters of horror, who more than counterbalanced the old, dull heroes with their roles of villainy were most inactive during the 50's. It was **Karloff's** least productive decade with only seven fantasy-oriented films. **Carradine** spent a large part of his time on the stage, **Jugosi** sank into near-obscurity, **Chaney** did more drama, western and non-horror items. **Cushing** and **Lee** were just getting started while **Price** fared better than most. The few films these men made still reflected their old traditions. Notice **FRANKENSTEIN 1970, CORRIDORS OF BLOOD, BRIDE OF THE MONSTER, THE TINGLER** and **THE UNDEADLY**, where the scientists caused the trouble, not conquered it; and **THE INDESTRUCTIBLE MAN, THE BLACK SLEEP, HOUSE OF WAS** and **THE HAUNTED STRANGLER** where the monsters were real men, intelligent or animalistic, just like in the old films.

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**KERWIN MATTHEWS · KATHRYN GRANT**

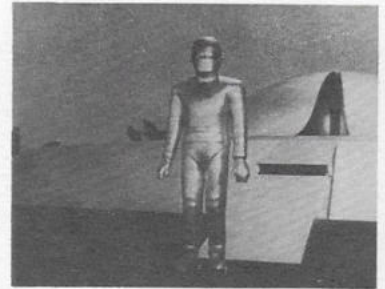
**RICHARD EYER · GENE · TONY THATCHER**

**Technicolor**

With the masters absent, there were few actors who filled in and became more famous for the "human villain" role. **Whit Bissell** is one bad example. It's clear this type of role was unpopular and old-hat when the public clamored for things from outer space that whisked into the Earth bringing forth new perils that fertilized their imaginations. Because these were unknown forces, we had to relate to someone who rid the world of such evils, and this is where the scientist/hero came in. With so many scripts in this vein, studios needed actors to fill these parts. But the only major difference between the old horror heroes and the 50's hero was the fact that the 50's hero would get first billing. There was no **Karloff** or **Jugosi** to get that main credit -- the evil force the hero was up against may not have even been a person in a costume but a lifeless, destructive meteor. It's easy to see the hero's role was of vital importance, of such a proportion the horror film had never known before.

With so many horror films, actors who played heroes prospered in number. Here was the perfect chance for the 50's hero to get away from that predictable, dull pattern set by previous actors in hero roles. Since there were more openings for the hero, the actor had a wonderful opportunity to create and experiment with a more colorful character. Very few succeeded; many others, such as **George Nader, Tim Holt, David Love, Rock Madison, Don Sullivan** could not make it and after 1 or 2 tries at it they disappeared from view, at least in the area of the horror film. Luckier people, who at first glance might seem equally talentless, were more fortunate. **John Agar** for one played heroes in almost a dozen films in the fantasy vein and other types of films too, mostly westerns. Agar was apparently so popular he had the good fortune to continue his hero role into horror and war films of the 1960's. Only a terribly small minority of 50's actors have been able to move into the 60's and still be recognized in the type of role that made him famous, **Peter Graves** and **Kerwin Matthews** being examples. Many consider Agar a mediocre actor although he did show signs of talent in his **BRAIN FROM PLANET AROUS** and **INVISIBLE INVADERS**. The only reasonable conclusion that can be drawn from his success therefore is that Agar was a rather spectacular exception of a line of untalented actors who never quite made it.

The more gifted actors yielded better results with their role as hero or semi-hero. **Richard Carlson**, who got his start in the early 40's, tackled interesting variations of the hero role and always played these convincingly. It was surprising to see someone, who in all appearance looks and acts as your familiar tough-but-soft-hearted "big lug" but instead handle different situations in ways more realistic. Carlson battles monsters in **IT CAME FROM OUTER SPACE** as your fearless, dedicated hero-scientist but with a human



**TOP LEFT:** Kenneth Tobey in **THE BEAST FROM 20,000 FATHOMS** (1953). Tobey is also known for his similar roles in **THE THING** (1951), **IT CAME FROM BENEATH THE SEA** (1955) and **THE VAMPIRE** (1957). **LOWER LEFT:** Willis O'Brien supervised the animation in 1958's **THE GIANT BEHEMOTH**. **CENTER:** Ad for **THE 7TH VOYAGE OF SINBAD** (1958). **ABOVE:** **THE DAY THE EARTH STOOD STILL** (1951) is one of the best known s.f. films, involving a peace emissary (**Michael Rennie**) from another planet who visits earth. One of the best remembered scenes is the first appearance of **Gort, Rennie's robot**, who acts automatically when **Rennie** is shot by soldiers (he lies in lower left of the bottom photograph.)





#### WINGED HORROR GRIPS NATION!



factor added to it...erring, getting nervous, excited along the way. The viewer can relate to his failing, succeeding efforts and enjoy the film to a better degree whereas if a more predictable actor (Kenneth Tobey, Grant Williams) dealt with the role, the viewing experience may not be as satisfying. Carlson's talent was allowed to come through in more semi-heroic roles as in *THE MAZE* and *RIDERS TO THE STARS*.

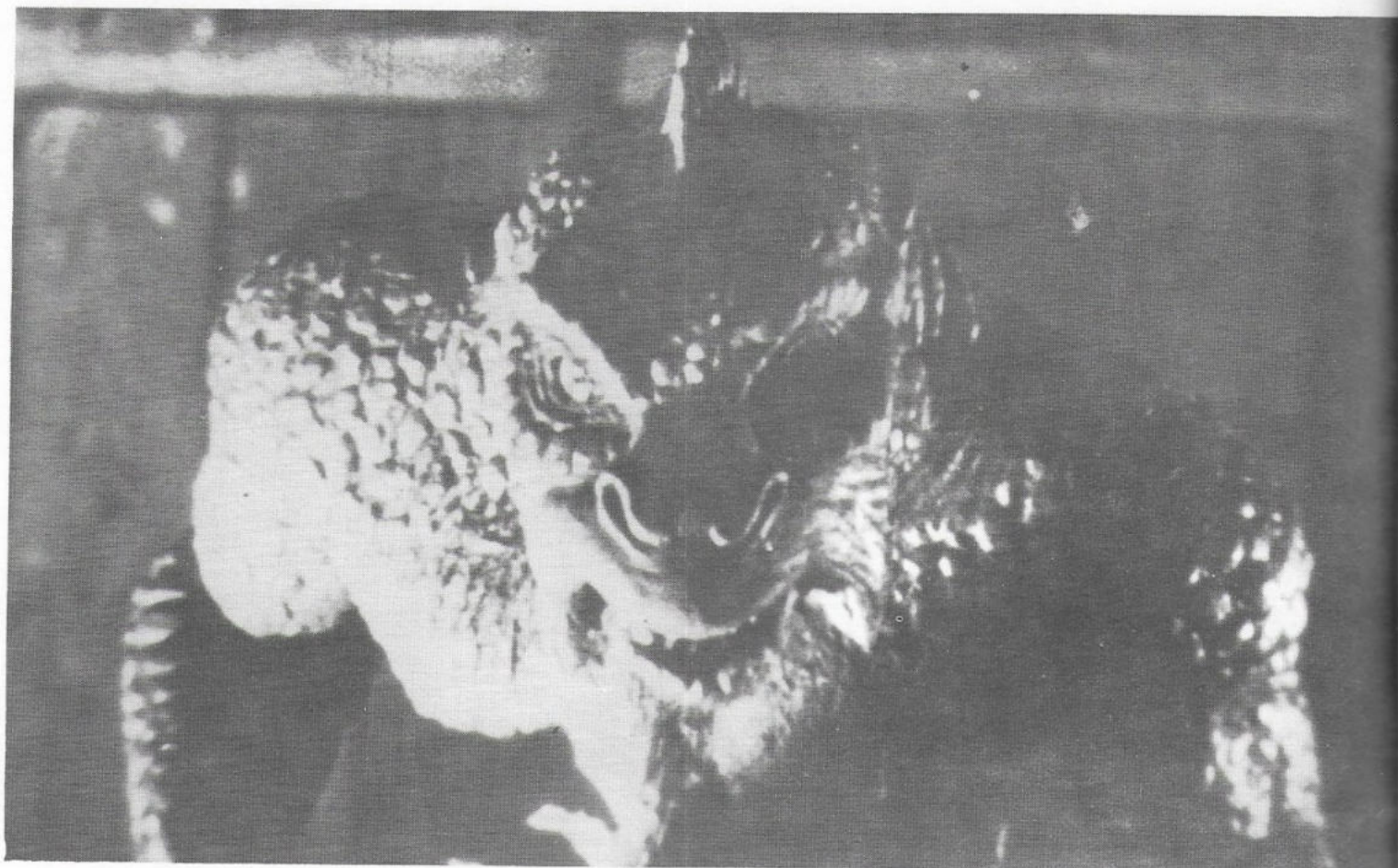
Jeff Morrow, another actor who managed more interest into his roles fared very well in *THIS ISLAND EARTH* and *THE GIANT CLAW*. In the latter, Morrow portrayed a scientist devoted to the riddance of a destructive giant bird-like creature. This was ordinary 50's horror fare with unexciting special effects. The rest of the film was concerned with the team of Morrow and Mara Corday struggling for the weapon that would annihilate the bird. This flick has so many things going against it, if not for Morrow's and Corday's performances it may well have been a total failure. Morrow, like Carlson, brings himself down to Earth and the result is a hero one could more readily identify with. An interesting aspect here is Morrow's innocence, an almost boyish quality revealed in his times of discovery, when he's with Corday and other instances. Carlson had this nature throughout *IT CAME FROM OUTER SPACE* but he could be more forceful and dynamic when it was called for. This type of hero did get more exposure in the 50's as Hugh Marlowe followed a very similar example in *EARTH VS THE FLYING SAUCERS*. A scientist who combats unknown forces from outer space, Marlowe comes across as a calm, quiet person ignorant of the foreign science but determined to learn so a weapon can be developed to repel the invaders. Like Carlson and Morrow, Marlowe also has that magic innocence, something not present in horror heroes of the 30's and 40's possibly because the scripts of those times did not allow for different behaviors. Thus, the 50's did help in the development of the horror film hero to some extent. However, more of the actors who played the heroes in the 50's depended on the traditional screen hero characterization, the tough guy with a soft spot business. People like John Wayne, Errol Flynn, Gary Cooper have used this type of image which works well with them as they have their very own special trademarks. It was fine for the 50's actor to rely on this type of hero portrayal but the reason why a John Agar or Richard Denning is not well remembered is because they have failed to expand their characterizations, to give themselves a distinct identity. A lack of talent is the most natural cause of the 50's horror actors' inability to gain fame by trying out something new.

There was one type of hero unmistakably separated from any other type which only the 50's could claim. The teenage hero. A horde of teenage actors were released upon us with *TEENAGE ZOMBIES*, *EARTH VS THE SPIDER*, *INVASION OF THE SAUCERMEN*, *THE BLOB*, *TEENAGERS FROM OUTER SPACE*, and others. The heroes in these films usually consisted of a group of teenagers out to rid the world of some monsters to which sometimes the grownups would scoff at. This group was led by one boy (gen-



**TOP LEFT:** Kathryn Grant and Kerwin Matthews in a romantic moment from *THE 7TH VOYAGE OF SINBAD* (1958); **TOP RIGHT:** (Left to right: William Hopper, Alix Talton, Craig Stevens and Donald Randolph track the path of the giant insect in *THE DEADLY MANTIS* ('57); **CENTER, LEFT TO RIGHT:** John Bromfield tackles the reptilian creature in *REVENGE OF THE CREATURE* (1955); The brainwashing sequence from *EARTH VS THE FLYING SAUCERS* ('56); **BELOW:** Jeff Morrow and Mara Corday from the same film ('57). **BOTTOM:** Leslie Nielsen (3rd from left) confronts Walter Pidgeon in *FORBIDDEN PLANET* as Jack Kelly (far left) and Warren Stevens look on.









usually just as uninteresting as the rest of the gang) and his girlfriend who seemed always eager to help out. The teenage hero was not a scientist, a military man but an ordinary kid who only had courage to stand up to unknown evils. He didn't have knowledge or weapons at his disposal; only guts and the desire for adventure. Not only did he have the monster to worry about, but also the extra burden of the disbelieving adults around him. This factor no doubt added immensely to the popularity of these films among the younger audiences. The actors who appeared as the teenage heroes fared worse than the usual breed of heroes as many only had one chance (these people were new at the movie game, many with no previous acting experience) and were understandably never heard from again. Steve McQueen, Michael Landon, Frank Gorshin were among the few who survived, largely because they were the few who had talent.

Without the heroine, the horror film would not be complete. When the screen time was expended for the hero, he would spend this time with the heroine and just as there was a need for actors to play heroes, there was an equal demand for fresh new actresses to play heroines. The 50's didn't do very much for the horror film heroine. There was no established queens of horror pics emerging from this decade although some actresses did specialize more in this field. Barbara Shelley was very popular and has enjoyed a career in both horror and other types. She is one of the few who have progressed into the 60's successfully. Debra Paget, Susan Castle, Colleen Gray, Gloria Talbott, Peggy Castle, Faith Domergue all made a number of horror films balanced out with non-horror movies as well, e.g. westerns. The more talented people, Barbara Rush and Beverly Garland, to name two, are making TV comebacks although they haven't been heard from for some time. The heroine's role in the 50's was extremely limited, as is the familiar case, and her primary function was to be beautiful, urge the hero on, and be a nuisance at times. Because of the first reason, producers usually cast their heroines for essentially physical reasons. Talent seems to have come secondary (otherwise there would have been much better actresses than is apparent) and perhaps this isn't as unreasonable as it sounds when one considers the silly, predictable role of the heroine. This type of role did not change with the coming of the 50's horror film unfortunately. Heroines did basically what they did in the 30's and 40's...appear very much in love with the hero, however superficial it might seem (the need for a love interest has been a burden, or a curse, in many horror-science fiction fars), scream or faint at the first sign of the menace, become threatened by the monster only to be rescued at the end, and other familiar items.

The role of women in horror films did endure slight changes, though. In good favor was the idea of beautiful women living in manless societies (QUEEN OF OUTER SPACE, FIRE MAIDENS FROM OUTER SPACE, UNTAMED WOMEN). Women were rarely used as the monsters in the 30's and 40's -- exceptions being DRACULA, BRIDE OF FRANKENSTEIN, DRACULA'S DAUGHTER, CRY OF THE WEREWOLF, CAT PEOPLE and the Universal JUNGLE CAPTIVE series. In the 50's new doors were opening for female creatures in such films as BLOOD OF DRACULA, BLACK SUNDAY, PLAN 9 FROM OUTER SPACE, CAT GIRL, THE WASP WOMAN, FRANKENSTEIN'S DAUGHTER, ATTACK OF THE 50 FOOT WOMAN. The 50's was not very kind to diabolical villainesses in the human sense although this is understandable as this was not the decade for human threats. Louise Lewis came close in BLOOD OF DRACULA but she did not be-

come recognized as a specialist in wicked woman parts. The 30's and 40's, like the 50's, did not have the female equivalent of a George Zucco or a Lionel Atwill either, and the queens of horror were more likely heroines, such as Fay Wray and Evelyn Ankers. Things picked up a bit later, however, as the 60's boasted of evil women characters in such films as CURSE OF THE CRYING WOMAN, CASTLE OF EVIL, DIE! DIE! MY DARLING. Ironically, the grand, old movie heroines like Bette Davis and Shelley Winters specialized in such roles.

And of course the average horror film has its fill of the dependable side characters as your town sheriff, doctor, military commander, middle-aged scientist, newspaper reporter, etc. In the 50's there were lots of people taking care of such roles, most famous being Les Tremayne, Morris Ankrum, William Hopper and Michael Ripper. Many of these people also faded with the coming of the 60's although some still continued, Les Tremayne being one. The kinds of films in which Tremayne would appear in the 60's were made by the absolute cheapest film companies of the 60's, such as Azalea, and he had to resort to embarrassing roles like the bum in THE SLIME PEOPLE. Tremayne was last heard doing voice-overs for cartoon specials (Chuck Jones' Cricket in Times Square) and probably commercials. Michael Ripper is doing well as his main company, Hammer Studios, does not refrain from using their old talented veterans. Ripper's starring roles, however, are scarce.

It is always interesting, I would believe, for almost all of us, to hear and to learn about little-known Grade B films and the people who made them. To pay them too much attention would be unjust but to pay them very little or no mind at all would be impractical. While we have heard many details on our favorite classics, some of these low grade movies lay completely forgotten, some for very good reasons but others not deserving of such a fate. There is quite a lot of new things to be learned, and in the 50's at least is a whole new reservoir of untapped knowledge. Let us hope such research will not end here and that more care will be given to these films.

\*\*\*\*\*  
The checklist, which will appear next issue of Cinefantasy, includes performers in films made between 1950 and 1960. The list is based on a minimum of 2 fantastic films from each performer in this period. Some, but not all, of those listed have additional films containing their work in other decades. This checklist is as complete as can be according to our resources, but is still imperfect as new additions come up from time to time. As it stands now, however, it should be of invaluable aid to fans and researchers alike.



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AN AVAILANCE IN YOUR LAP!  
A HELICOPTER OVER YOUR HEAD!  
A SPACE SHIP TOUCHING AT YOU!

PRECEDING PAGE, TOP: A remarkable closeup of Ray Harryhausen's Ymir from TWENTY MILLION MILES TO EARTH (1957). BOTTOM: A rare still from THE CREATURE FROM THE BLACK LAGOON (1954).  
THIS PAGE, TOP LEFT: Steven Ritch as the title character in Columbia's THE WEREWOLF (1956); TOP RIGHT: James Arness (center) and Joan Weldon search for giant mutated ants in THEM! (1954); CENTER RIGHT: Ad for IT CAME FROM OUTER SPACE; BELOW: The most famous movie robot of all, Robbie the Robot, on the set of FORBIDDEN PLANET. Robbie has also been seen on THE INVISIBLE BOY (1957) and later on one episode of tv's LOST IN SPACE.  
BELOW, LEFT: Michael Rennie as Klaatu in THE DAY THE EARTH STOOD STILL (1951).





"Lesley Ann Warren burst onto the national consciousness as the beguilingly innocent Cinderella of the Richard Rodgers-Oscar Hammerstein II television special. However, there are also those who think of her as seethingly sensual, having viewed her version of Galatea, the statue brought to life by the sculptor Pygmalion, when she appeared in Paul Sill's ribald *Metamorphosis* at Los Angeles' Music Center. Her career began at age fourteen -- almost -- when she won the ingenue lead in the National Company of *Bye Bye Birdie*. However, her parents wouldn't let her undertake the assignment because of her youth. A short time afterwards, she won out over 300 other girls for the second female lead in the hit musical *110 in the Shade*. She was cheered by critics when she played the female lead in the musical *Drat! The Cat!* in which she starred with Elliott Gould. Despite the personal raves for her performance as the cat burglar of the title, *Drat! The Cat!* failed to find its audience and had a Broadway run of only one week. Miss Warren later scored in a series of guest spots on such television series as *Gunsmoke* and *Dr. Kildare*. Then Walt Disney cast her in his hit musicals *THE HAPPIEST MILLIONAIRE* and *THE ONE AND ONLY, GENUINE, ORIGINAL FAMILY BAND*. She was a regular on *MISSION: IMPOSSIBLE* and starred in a number of tv-movies before appearing in another film, *PICKUP ON 101*. Recently, she starred as Scarlett O'Hara in a stage musical version of *Gone With the Wind*, playing opposite Pernell Roberts as Rhett Butler." --*Gone With the Wind* program notes.

## LESLEY ANN WARREN



### Interviewed by Randall Larson and Fred Gillespie

I have always been impressed by the work of Lesley Ann Warren, who is certainly one of the finest, and most attractive, young actresses in the business. With the company of a friend, I had the pleasure of interviewing Miss Warren backstage on two occasions in November of 1973, while she was in San Francisco performing in a musical adaptation of *Gone With the Wind* at the Curran Theatre. The two interviews, put together for this publication, I feel offer a very good insight into this actress, her work and her ideas. I very much enjoyed talking with her, sharing some of her opinions and sharing her enthusiasm for her future plans. I must give my extreme thanks to Theresa Loeb Cone, for her help in arranging the interview, Gordon Pashgian at the William Morris Agency for his help in supplying illustration material and, of course, Miss Warren herself for granting (and putting up with) the two sessions. -RDL

LARSON: Miss Warren, is it true that you've been working on Broadway since the age three?

WARREN: No, I started studying dancing when I was about 3, and really started studying seriously when I was about 6, but I didn't work professionally until after I graduated from high school, when I was 17. But I was still studying dancing, going to auditions, and taking singing and acting in New York in between.

LARSON: You've done singing, dancing and acting off and on. Is there any one of these you especially prefer?

WARREN: I especially don't prefer dancing! Which is interesting because I studied it my whole life, and I think that's kind of the way things go. You know, when you've been into it for so many years, you just don't care about it any more. I love to sing, and I really love to act. I guess that would be my favorite thing. But I would like to do a combination of both, a career that encompasses both.

LARSON: You started off on Broadway, then you did some television guest spots, the Disney musicals, then back to tv-movies. How did you get from Broadway into television and motion pictures?

WARREN: The last show I did on Broadway was *Drat! The Cat*, and I came out to L.A. to screen test for *THE HAPPIEST MILLIONAIRE* which was the Disney film. I had already done *CINDERELLA*, which was a television musical special, and I got that by auditioning in New York. Then I came out here and screen tested for *THE HAPPIEST MILLIONAIRE*, and I got it, so I moved out here and then I had about two or three months before the film started. So my agent started getting me some television shows. It was easy to get me tv shows because I was new in town, I was from Broadway, which people are very impressed by out here, and I was also set to do a film. So it wasn't very difficult to break into television. ((laughs)) To break out of television is more difficult! It swallows you up. I did some episodic tv, then I did the films, then I went back to television after

ABOVE, RIGHT: Lesley Ann Warren and Jack Albertson from American-International's *PICKUP ON 101*, originally called *A TIME FOR EVERY PURPOSE*.

LEFT: Buddy Ebsen and Lesley Ann Warren from Walt Disney's *THE ONE AND ONLY, GENUINE, ORIGINAL FAMILY BAND*.



that, and I got married and had a baby, and started back in tv movies, which is a whole new kind of thing.

LARSON: Is there anything you prefer in stage acting as compared to film or television acting?

WARREN: I prefer film acting; as far as acting goes, not as far as performing goes. Being *Gone With the Wind* has really given me an opportunity to make a choice based on the magnitude of the role, and it's an enormous role, it's very demanding, it's a terrific role, a fantastic role. And yet the repetition is something I don't look forward to. And I think after doing this, I probably won't go back and do any more theatre. I like to do live performances, concert work and rock, kind of. I want to do my own kind of music, but that's different than live performing, in terms of a stage show which is the same thing every night. I don't really enjoy that. I like the spontaneity of new things. I also like the intensity and intimacy of film, and you don't need to push as much and overdo things as much because of the obvious distance of having to reach people in the back row. Somehow I feel you can get more across in film, in a more subtle way. It appeals to me more.

But not television! The demands of television are so incredible and the speed and the lack of quality for the most part, because of the timing, and that's so rough. I did a series and it....taught me. There's very little you can really accomplish.

LARSON: How about technical differences, like work habits, between Broadway and Hollywood?

WARREN: Enormous differences. Theatre, whether it's on Broadway or the kind of thing that I'm doing here, theatre is so different for me than Hollywood, I don't even know where to begin. First off, it's sort of based on different things, you generally get the job in theatre because you're the best for that particular role. That doesn't hold water in Hollywood; it's based on the look, the quality, it isn't necessarily based on talent or ability. Because film is a very different thing, you can get by with a fabulous film performance without doing anything. If you just happen to be right physically, or something. And you've got all the elements right around you. In stage, you're pretty much out there by yourself, and if you can't back it, it's gonna show right away! There's nothing really to support you. A camera can cut away, but you can't on stage. So people are more dedicated in a way, they work harder in a different kind of way; it's not as many hours, but they work many more years in preparation for it. Because they have to be able to....you're out off a lot in film, at the neck, and you don't really have to have a knowledge of body movement, or a whole bunch of other stuff you really have to know in order to work on stage, so it's a different kind of thing.

LARSON: You started out, in Broadway, mainly by auditioning?

WARREN: Yeah. The first audition I did under an assumed name! I just picked a name out of my mind, and I went and auditioned for *Bye, Bye Birdie*, and I got it. It was the National Company and it was a dance audition for the chorus, but my mother wouldn't let me go because she wanted me to finish high school. So then I started auditioning when I was about 16; I auditioned for *The Sound of Music*, which I didn't get, and *My Fair Lady*

which I did get but that was in the chorus and I didn't want to do that, and then I auditioned for *110 In The Shade*, which was the ingenue role, and there were 300 girls auditioning, it was a harrowing experience! And it was over a couple of months, they kept calling us back and calling us back. And I finally got it, so I did it. That was my first show, we started rehearsal in the summer after I graduated High School.

LARSON: This is more or less the way you got CINDERELLA?

WARREN: Same thing, I went and auditioned for Richard Rodgers, up in his apartment, he was auditioning people, and I was awful. Because I was so scared, I was scared to death -- you know, this man, his reputation -- and I went up and sang and I was just terrible. And he told his directors no, but the director had seen me in *110*, so he said, you have to see her again, give her another chance, she was probably really scared. And they sent me a script, and I came back, and I read, and I sang for him, he sat me down at

the piano, and played "My Funny Valentine," he taught it to me, the way he wanted to hear it, and I sang it for him, and I got it.

LARSON: When did you first start studying, what sparked your initial interest?

WARREN: Well, I don't know what started it off in dancing, because I started dancing when I was about 3, which was very early. I always wanted to be a ballerina, and when I got into acting I got into a young peoples workshop, when I was about 14, and I just loved it. So I continued it. And I'd always wanted to be in theatre. I can't ever remembering to do anything else. And I've always enjoyed the studying, I went from the young peoples workshop into a man who had studied with Louis Strassberg, and then I auditioned for Actor's Studio, and studied with Louis.

LARSON: When you first started out like that, did you have hopes of becoming a well-known actress?

WARREN: Well, the well-known part I don't know about, but....



ABOVE, LEFT: Stuart Damon (Prince Charming) and Lesley Ann Warren (Cinderella) from the Rodgers and Hammerstein television musical special that first brought wide recognition to Miss Warren. ABOVE, RIGHT: Lesley Ann Warren poses to talk with crew members between scenes of Disney's *THE ONE AND ONLY, GENUINE, ORIGINAL FAMILY BAND*.

ABOVE, LEFT: Lesley Ann Warren and Udana Power in the stage musical version of *GONE WITH THE WIND*, produced in Los Angeles and San Francisco after a slightly different version in London (with a different cast). ABOVE, RIGHT: Miss Warren sings a solo number, "Valentine Candy", in the Walt Disney musical *THE HAPPIEST MILLIONAIRE*.



LARSON: Successful?

WARREN: That wasn't so important to me as doing the things I wanted to do. I always was very adamant about the quality of the type of work that I did.

LARSON: What is your basic approach to acting, and the other fields. Do you have any particular "technique?"

WARREN: I guess you'd call it the method; I've done most of my major studying with Louis Strassberg, who I think is a genius, and I guess that I use his method the most. It's pretty complicated to get into -- it's a craft, a craft like any other form of exercises. It's based on a lot of sensory work, sense memories, emotional memories, it's internal, as opposed to external.

LARSON: What did you think working on the Disney musicals?

WARREN: It was terrific fun, it's a lovely studio, but I found it very restricting, as far as being an actress is concerned. They have a package that they present to the world, it's what works for them, but as far as being an actress it's very confining. Because they only want to show a certain side of life. And there's no where to go once you've presented that; and they don't want to show any of the uglier sides of life.

LARSON: You were a regular on MISSION: IMPOSSIBLE. How did that come about?

WARREN: I had done a movie for television called LOVE HATE LOVE with Ryan O'Neal, and I played a fashion model in it. And I had to look a lot of different ways. They were looking for somebody on MISSION, it was done at Paramount, which is the same studio that produces both, and they saw me looking all these different ways, which is part of the MISSION concept, the spy being able to take on all the disguises and everything. And I went in and met them, and talked to them, and we made the deal. It wasn't an easy decision for me because, number one, I'm stepping into somebody else's shoes, and that's always rough because people are always going to compare you with whoever created the part, even if you're totally different. And also it had the possibility of a long commitment, and I wasn't sure about it, and it turned out that I wasn't very happy on it, I did it for a year. That, too, I felt was very confining, it made me crazy, it was so much work without really the rewards, you know, so I wanted to leave, and they felt that if I was unhappy there was no point in doing it, so that's why I only stayed a year.

GILLESPIE: What kickback happened from it?

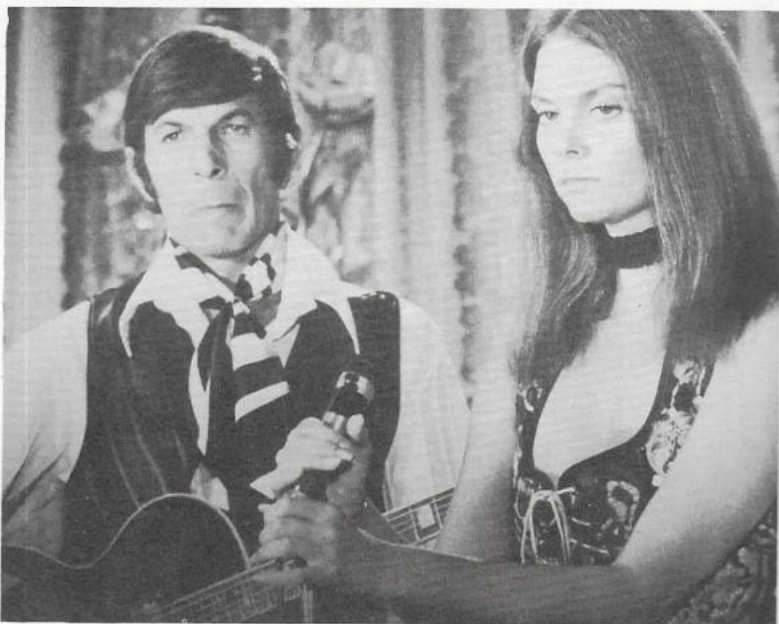
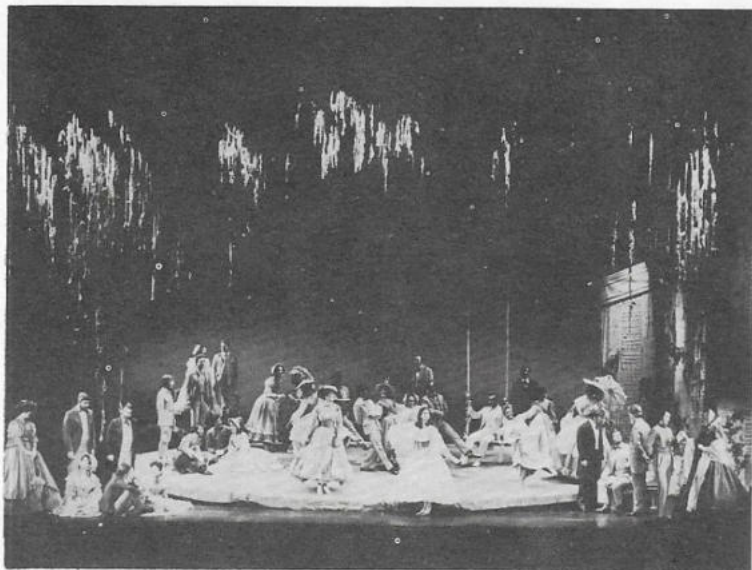
WARREN: You mean as far as creative....

GILLESPIE: Creative, publicity....

WARREN: Well, publicity is funny. I mean, my biggest publicity has been from things I don't really care about, that I haven't cared about in my own career. Things like CINDERELLA, MISSION: IMPOSSIBLE. That's what's been seen the most, so publicly that's what the public identifies most with me, so the things that I'm most proud of may be things I've done on the stage, a few little tv things here and there, a few moments in some films, but that doesn't seem to matter. People just seem to go with the mass, to go with the most popular kind of image, so it did very well for me publicity-wise. After it was over, it didn't do anything in terms of creativity. I mean, everything I've ever done has established my name, more and more, and so that helps, and in a funny way it doesn't help, because people always like to discover people, so people think I'm much older than I am, mainly because I've done so much in the amount of time that I have worked. I constantly work, I never stop, and I've always gotten bigger things, so people somehow imagine that I've been in the business since I was three (chuckling), you know, and it's always a shock to find out that it hasn't been. It's been long but it hasn't been that long.

GILLESPIE: Did you do a lot in high school?

WARREN: I was studying always professionally, I was very snobby about high school productions and all that, because I was always studying for real. I was at the Actors' Studio and going to professional ballet classes and all of that, and I really didn't have time to get involved in those kind of productions. And besides the fact that I went to professional schools; I went to a school in New York called Professional Children's School, and they don't do that there, because



TOP: Joe Layton's stage musical presentation of GONE WITH THE WIND. Miss Warren is in center foreground, Parnell Roberts sits in swing. CENTER: Leonard Nimoy and Miss Warren in an episode of MISSION: IMPOSSIBLE. BOTTOM: In THE DAUGHTERS OF JOSHUA CABE, a tv-movie co-starring Karen Valentine (left), Buddy Ebsen, Sandra Dee (right) and Jack Elam (Not pictured).



everybody's so busy trying to get real jobs that they don't have the time to do the high school thing; although I did lots of productions in camp, and stuff. I did The King And I and did all that, so in a funny way I worked it out there.

LARSON: You mentioned a minute ago that you don't particularly care for the ones you're well known for. Why is this?

WARREN: I'm just not thrilled with the project itself. They're not the kind of roles that really excited me -- it's just my own particular taste, really, my taste doesn't go in those areas. It's just a matter of taste, it's nothing to do with the quality of the work.

LARSON: In comparison to the musical roles and the Broadway shows, what are the main differences between that and dramatic acting, like in PICKUP ON 101?

WARREN: There's nothing really different, and that's what's interesting. As far as I'm concerned, someone who does comedy really well, is as creative and as bright and as talented as someone who does Medea really well. For me it's the same base, it's just a different approach; it pisses me off because people will really respond to something if you tear your hair out and yet they won't respond in the same way to something, you-know-what-I-mean, they don't put it in the same kind of category as far as the technical craft and all that. And yet for me it's...when I see a performance by someone equally as respected, who is terrific in comedy as well as in drama, there is no difference. As a matter of fact, comedy is harder, I think -- it requires an acute kind of sense of timing a lot of people don't have.

GILLESPIE: Do you hope for this show, Gone With the Wind, to continue to Broadway?

WARREN: No, not especially. As far as I'm concerned, I've gotten out of it what I want to get out of it, and wherever it goes is fine. I have a commitment for a year, and I'll finish up that commitment and then I want to do other things. If it went to Broadway I wouldn't stay with it anyway, past a year.

GILLESPIE: Because of the odd hours, monotony....

WARREN: Well, it's not so much that as it's just the experience of doing a major show like this is a major role. I've had it, it played in Los Angeles and now it's really here, you know? It's a job, and it's rewarding because people love it, they just love it, it's terrific and you feel that and it's nice and everything, but I really want to go into other areas.

LARSON: Is most of your talent and that built up through the past, a natural thing, or learning from other people?

WARREN: Talent is such a....who knows how to describe what that is, really, but I think that you have a talent for a certain thing, then I think it has to be developed, by experience and also learning, I mean going to school. I still do a lot of studying, and I'm a firm believer in studying, and a lot of people say that studying spoils your natural ability and it's garbage. It's like anything else, you have to grow and perfect a craft, because that's what it is, in addition to a talent. And then working with other actors, of course, but that's a different experience, that's like street work, it's like getting out there and just learning how to deal with different people, and different personalities, and what they're going to give you, or not give you. But I think you come to your work with your own background and your own ability.

LARSON: What did you think of working with long-time established actors like Buddy Ebsen, Jack Elam, and others?

WARREN: Oh, it's great! And usually they're the most fun, because they don't have any of the pressure that young actors have, you know, "if this doesn't make it am I going to go down the tubes?", and so they're much more relaxed in their attitude and they have much more fun with things. I was lucky to be involved with people like that, in the beginning. Greer Garson, Fred MacMurray, they were fabulous, just terrific.

GILLESPIE: Did you learn a lot from them?

WARREN: No, because I was in such a state of fright! It was such a shock for me that I was so intent on my own thing. Although I did learn, but I think my learning was through osmosis, I wasn't consciously aware of learning. Now, I'm much more able to step back from myself and observe and pickup, because I don't have the pressure any more myself but back then it was so new and I was thrown into starring roles at a very young age, which is a lot of pressure and a lot of responsibility. So it was all frantic.

GILLESPIE: How about Pernel Roberts? WARREN: How about him? (laughs) What do you mean?

GILLESPIE: He's your leading man in Gone With the Wind, how does that work out?



Various publicity shots, from THE ONE AND ONLY, GENUINE, ORIGINAL FAMILY BAND (top and bottom) and THE THREEPENNY OPERA.

WARREN: Well, it's alright, we're very different people, very different personalities, and we respond to things very differently, and we're both very emotional and very sensitive. So it's been difficult, we both are very volatile, and our feelings are very close to the surface, and we respond differently to that, which makes it hard to communicate. But, now that it's all over, the opening and all of that is over, we have bases we can touch on. Away from the theatre everything's fine, we get along and it's fine, but it's tricky. Theatre people....performers are very sensitive, they're super sensitive, and their feelings are very close to the surface, they get hurt very easily, and they tend to respond differently to being hostile, some people get withdrawn; you just have to find where you can communicate; it's the same in life but it's a little more intense. You-know-what-I-mean? Because you're together so many hours, rehearsing twelve hours a day for five weeks, every day, we didn't have a day off, that's a lot of work. And a lot of time to be together. So it was difficult at first, but it's okay now.

LARSON: You mentioned a while back that you weren't intending to do much more stage work. What do you intend to do?

WARREN: I want to get into my singing career, which is something not too many people are aware of, mainly because I haven't done much of it, but I'm very into rock and contemporary kind of music, and I want to do concert work, and night club work....in that area. And I also want to do films. I never really cared before about contributing, and I really do now. I mean I only cared about working. I only wanted to work a lot, now I really want to do things that I really feel say something about what I believe. So that's what I want to do.

LARSON: You prefer rock, popular music over the "musical music" like what you're doing here?

WARREN: Oh, yeah. I never like musical music, because I never go see them (chuckles) and that's true. I don't go to see them, and I don't play the records ever! Which is funny because that's where my whole background is. My head is in an entirely different place. But people don't know that. I did a Johnny Carson show, it was on a couple weeks ago and I sang songs like that. And it really freaked people out. They weren't sure quite how to take it.

LARSON: On POLICE SURGEON you did a song that was unusual for you....

WARREN: Yeah, and that's not even it at all! That's still, to me, in that kind of middle-of-the-road bag.

I want to produce my own films. I want to get into the production end of it.

LARSON: Can you elaborate on that?

WARREN: I don't like to be dependent on other people, too much, and I don't want to wait around to do the things I want to do, and there are books that I really would like to make into films, and be a part of. And I would also like to get into the development of the property, there's a book that I'm trying to buy and I have a whole idea about doing it, really in terms of women, and having a woman director. It's about a woman, and it's written by a woman, and I think it's exciting, putting together something and really seeing it evolve. Just being an actress is a very debilitating experience, because you're always at the mercy of somebody else, the director, the producer....the editor; I mean it's really difficult, and you can only really contribute a very small part to something.

LARSON: Do you want to direct as well as produce?

WARREN: I don't think so. Right now I don't have any desire to, but it may change.

LARSON: But you do intend to act in the films you produce.

WARREN: Oh, yeah. That's the whole purpose, to do the things that I really want to do, and maybe they wouldn't be done, or maybe they would be done in a way that is, you know, not the way I would see them.

LARSON: Do you intend to try to go into this immediately following Gone With the Wind?

WARREN: Well, I'm trying to put together this one project, but probably what I'll do first is get into my act, because that'll give me a lot of money (laughs), if it's successful....

LARSON: Your singing act?

WARREN: Yeah, I'll be singing and dancing, and it'll also give me a lot of exposure, in a different kind of audience that I haven't really had, which is also good if I do get into production of film -- more people will be interested in seeing it, it's that simple. So I'd imagine the next step would be the act.

LARSON: Can you talk some more about that act? What would it be like?

WARREN: Well, it's hard to put labels on things, but....some kind of stuff like Carole King, but also....Diana Ross, a combination, rock-oriented, but songs that say things. Something with a contemporary backing.

LARSON: Exactly what type of act, a concert, or what....

WARREN: Yeah, a concert kind of thing. When I say concert, I don't mean like Joan Baez or Judy Collins, more like Bette Midler. That kind of a one-woman show.

LARSON: As far as films, as far as the dramatic angle, are you especially fond of any genre....

WARREN: Zelda. That kind of woman, F. Scott Fitzgerald, his wife. I would love to make a film of her. But there are terrible problems in getting the rights to the book, so I don't think it's going to get done. But that kind of woman is what I want to play -- women who are trying for something, and succeed or don't succeed. I believe in the women's movement, and I just want those kind of women to be seen, more learned about.

LARSON: You said you wanted to contribute more, you mean bring about your own message?

WARREN: My own personal message, whatever that is. I mean I'm not crusading or





LEFT: Demonstrating her dancing ability in Disney's FAMILY BAND. Walter Brennan watches from bandstand.  
CENTER: With Pernel Roberts in the stage musical, GONE WITH THE WIND.  
CENTER, BOTTOM: With Fred MacMurray in THE HAPPIEST MILLIONAIRE.  
BELOW: PICKUP ON 101, with Jack Albertson.



you've got going right now, Gone With the Wind?

WARREN: Yeah, and you know I've never planned ahead, it's really funny, people are always, especially in their business, they're very panicky about their next job, and I've never planned ahead and something always comes up -- and when I least expect it. I don't ever think about the future.

GILLESPIE: Just sort of take it as it comes....

WARREN: Yeah.  
LARSON: Can you say something about The Three Penny Opera?

WARREN: Yeah, it was great! It was really fun, it was an Actors' Studio Production, and Paul Winfield, the black actor who was in SOMMER, he was my Mac, and it was just a terrific cast. We were all from the Studio, so we all worked the same way, which was very nice, because usually you get people who work different ways and it's a little harder. And Lee Grant, who directed it, she's brilliant, and exciting. It was wonderful, I loved doing it. I had a great time.

LARSON: Getting away from stage, do you have any feelings on the current state of films and television?

WARREN: I think films are very exciting, I think more and more is being done that's exciting and innovative, and I think the same of tv, really, apart from the episodic tv, the series that keep going on and never seem to change, there's some terrific stuff that's being done on public television and also some of the movies for television, they're really wonderful. There was one on with Peter Boyle, about a troubled child and a social worker, I mean it was incredible. They incorporated Gestalt Therapy and things that are far out, that most people don't get a chance to see, and this was a very commercial project that was seen by millions of people, and I think that's really important.

LARSON: What about violence in films?

WARREN: I don't object to it, if it's there for a purpose. I think it's definitely a part of life, and I think to pretend it isn't is crazy. They sent me a script once, for a film with Jim Brown, and it was just insane. It was just violence really for the sake of it. With no purpose in mind, no nothing. That kind of violence I pass on; but violence is a part of life and I think that everything that is a part of life has a right to be shown, and viewed, and experienced. And hopefully it can be done in such a way that it can possibly bring about an alternate way.

LARSON: They seem to be showing a lot more of that these days than they were in the '50s....

WARREN: Violence?

LARSON: They're showing the extent of it.  
WARREN: Well, they're doing that with everything, people are more demanding of the truth, it seems. They don't want to escape, and if they do they're very aware that they're doing it. It's like an escape, like a Bette Midler. It's such a total departure from what's real.

anything, it's not like that, it's just that I won't any more do things that I really can't get behind, in terms of my own belief, somewhere, however small it may be. I don't want to perpetrate nonsense, there's too much of it. I won't do any films where I'm just a sex object, and that's all. So it's not as if I'm fighting for a cause, in any one of these things, just my own personal feelings.

LARSON: Are there any special actors or directors you'd especially care to work with?

WARREN: Oh, yeah. I would like to do a film with Bertolucci, he directed LAST TANGO IN PARIS, and I would like to work with Robert Redford, who I think is fantastic, and Alan Pakula, who's a director. These are people at the top of my list, of course I would love to work with Brando, but I don't know how many more films he's going to be doing....Al Pacino, there are a lot of exciting, talented people around.

LARSON: This is mainly because of your appreciation of them for what they've done...

WARREN: Yeah, the kind of work they do especially attracts me. Alan Pakula does some terrific films about women, he did THE STELLIE CUCKOO and he did KIATE, he really seems to get into women's psyche; and Bertolucci's mind just fascinates me, and also his work is so beautiful to look at; and a lot of European directors I would love to work with, I may go over and live there for a while.

LARSON: One of your stage appearances which, er, apparently gave you a change of image was Paul Sill's Metamorphosis....

WARREN: That was a fantastic experience. It was one of the best experiences I've had since I've been working. We would take class, I don't know if you know who his mother is, her name is Viola Spolin and she's very famous, in acting, she's written many books and all that. And we'd have to take class every morning for two hours from her, and then start rehearsal. And it was a complete departure from anything I'd ever done in terms of the kind of work it is, it's a combination of mime and improvisation, all kinds of different ways of working, and we were doing the different myths, and one of the stories that I was involved in -- everybody played many parts, they were interchangeable, there were no stars, it was a company kind of thing -- I did a thing with Avery Schreiber, "Egyptian and Galates", so I came out in a body stocking, which is practically nude, and that changed my image....right away! I didn't have to open my mouth; it was all over, Cinderella was out the window! And I think that's what most people remember, because it was shocking, although you really couldn't see anything, it looked like you could. But the

work, for me, the work that was involved in the kind of show was really exciting. He's a crazy man, Paul Sill, really crazy. Have you ever heard of "Second City"? It's an improvisational group that started in Chicago, and Alan Arkin and Barbara Harris and Mike Nichols and all these famous people came out of it, and Paul Sill created it. He's really a genius, and crazy....(chuckles)

LARSON: Your first Broadway show was 110 In the Shade, was that a musical?

WARREN: Yeah, it was the musical version of The Rainmaker, which was a play.

LARSON: What did you think of that, it being your first actual big appearance?

WARREN: Well, I was really lucky, I never had to be in a chorus, and my first role was a big one. I had a really great number in it, it was fantastic, I felt very lucky, and I liked it for the first six months and then I went crazy; because I was in it for about 14 months, and it got really hard to keep coming back every night, and doing it over and over, but it was a terrific experience, and I worked with a lot of good people, the first time out, which was very lucky.

LARSON: And your last show on Broadway was Drat! The Cat! That closed after one week, do you know why?

WARREN: I know exactly why, it was the producer; On a Clear Day -- that opened a week after ours -- and it was his show also. That was a much bigger show, and it demanded that much more money be put into it to keep it open, and he had to choose between the two, because they both got mixed reviews, and in order to keep a show open long enough for the audience to catch on, you have to put more money into it. So he chose that one; because he felt that Barbara Harris had a bigger name at the time, he just made a choice. So we had to close. I loved that show, I loved the part.

LARSON: You were well-received in it, too.

WARREN: Yeah, it was one of the best-received things I've ever done. It was really a terrific part, so it was a shame. But I came right out here and did the Disney films so at least things work out.

GILLESPIE: Are you still under contract to Disney?

WARREN: Oh, no. I broke that years ago. I had a contract I think for four pictures or four years, I don't remember what it was exactly. I just wasn't really happy with it, and they don't really want you there if you're not happy. So it was kind of a mutual thing, so I dissolved it.

GILLESPIE: This is the only engagement



LARSON: What do you think of some of your earlier tv, the GUNSMOKE and DR. KILDARE, as compared to your return after the Disney films. Were you any more prepared?

WARREN: Well, you know as you get older, you grow. You'd better! And so my most recent work is going to be better than my earlier work. Better in that I'm more of a grown up, I've got more to give, and my awareness is that much more, and all of that. Some of my early work I love. For where I was when I was there, that was the best that I could do at that time. You know what I'm saying? There's nothing that I've ever done that I wouldn't not show to anybody or want to hide, or any of that stuff. I may not like the way I look in it, or this or that, small, kind of superficial things, but as far as my work goes, I've always given as much as I could when I was there, at that time.

LARSON: You said you preferred television movies over episodic tv, and this is why you got into television movies and out of episodic tv?

WARREN: Yeah, I swore I wasn't going to do any, for like a year, any more episodic television, but sometimes something comes along that's so good that you really want to do it. But it's mainly that there isn't enough time in a show. And from the lack of time consequently there is a lack of quality. And it's that simple. A lot of times in episodic tv they keep hiring the same tired old directors, you know, that really don't have any fresh point of view and don't care, except that they get it in on time, and that's all the studio cares about. Budget becomes the most important thing.

LARSON: You were in American International's PICKUP ON 101, how did that happen?

WARREN: I was doing Metamorphosis for Paul Sills, and we went to New York; I had done it for six weeks in L.A., and I was ready for a change, and this film came up, and at that time it wasn't with AIP, it was just an independent film. And I went and read for it, and the people that were in it, Martin Sheen and Jack Albertson were two actors that I really respected and think are fantastic. I wasn't bowled over by the script, but somehow I thought to work with them would really be a terrific experience. Well, I didn't get it, somebody else did, and I went to New York, and started rehearsals for the opening there of Metamorphosis, and they called me, and said that the girl had a big fight with the director and she wasn't going to do it, and would I like to do it? And I did, I really wanted to work with them, and I was bored with the show and I didn't want to be in New York, so I ended up coming and doing it. It was a terrific experience, in that way. Did not get along with the director, also, and so in that way it was a bad experience...he was an asshole. And consequently he ruined the picture. He took what was a very nice, simple story that could have been really nice -- it should have been a movie for television, it was that kind of film, and it could have been a very nice film that left you with good feelings, and blech! just destroyed it, made it pedestrian and boring and tasteless. They ended up selling it to AIP, who saw commercial kind of thing in it, they played up the sex angle, which there was none of, and that's what's so hysterical....

GILLESPIE: It's in the name, too....

WARREN: Yeah, but that wasn't the name! The name that I went to do the film under was "A Time For Every Purpose," and that's a whole different feeling than "Pickup on 101," and what they did was...the story, I don't know if you're aware of it, it's just a girl who runs away from college, meets up with a folk singer on the road, and they meet up with an old kind of tramp guy, and they, all three of them, go from one place to another, for different reasons, and end up sort of changing each other's lives. And there was no sex involved! There was a kind of little romance between the girl and folk singer, but it was very innocent, and it didn't work out. And, yes, they did travel the highway, so they called in PICKUP ON 101, which was just superficial, so completely blown out of shape. And then AIP bought it and did whatever they did with it, I don't know, they buried it somewhere, which was just as well, because it wasn't....although I did some good work in it. I'm not unproud of it, it's okay, it's just that they butchered it so that there's no purpose in it.

LARSON: I'd like to talk about your tv appearances; one of my favorites has been THE DAUGHTERS OF JOSHUA CABE -- how did that come about?

WARREN: I did a pilot for a man named Leonard Goldberg, who was the head of Screen Gems at that time, it was a pilot for CAT SKELTON, a television series, and from that I got, I mean....I've just worked for him ever

since. He just really liked my work a lot, we're very good friends now. So he called me, and sent me a script, and I liked it 'cause I got to play a hooker in it, you know, and it was a departure for me, on television. So I took it. And it was really fun, and I laughed from beginning to end. Karen Valentine is one of the funniest ladies around, it was really a pleasure.

LARSON: What did you think of the NIGHT GALLERY episode you did, "Death on a Barge?"

WARREN: Oh, I loved the NIGHT GALLERY! First of all, it was directed by a friend of mine, Leonard Nimoy, and we had the best time, he's a fantastic director, and I wish his directing career could get off the ground, he was terrific. And we really tried things in that, that you don't get to do on tv, you don't get to try because people usually don't take the time. I had a great time doing it and I loved it. I loved what I did on that show!

LARSON: That was a role very different from some of your past roles....

WARREN: Oh, yeah. Well, not really. You know? It was a love story, essentially, that's what it was. And that's part of the reason I took it. And also, the other reason was Leonard Nimoy was directing it. But, interestingly enough, I didn't play it with anything else in mind except that it was a love story. It was a strange one, about a strange lady, but I think the most bizarre things can be treated, as far as acting goes, the way anything else can be, the simplest, as long as there's some kind of basis of realities somewhere in the script, it can be approached the same way.

LARSON: You did a tv-special called SAGA OF SONORA....

WARREN: That was a musical special, and I did that for a friend of mine, as a favor, because it was a piece of junk. But I came out really well in it, and Zero Mostel was in it and he was terrific.

LARSON: There was THE LETTERS....

WARREN: That was another for a friend of mine, too! It was nice, it was good, it wasn't thrilling....

LARSON: Can you say something about ASSIGNMENT: MUNCH?

WARREN: Horrible! I hated Germany, just hated it. It was cold, the whole time. It was just so freezing and I hate the cold! So I really was just unhappy because of that. It's funny, because Pernel was in it. But I just wasn't happy there, I didn't like the part, and I just didn't like it. Period! That's the kind of thing I won't do anymore.

LARSON: What was it about?

WARREN: I played the daughter of a man who got killed, and the whole syndicate was after me, you know, so....yeahhh. It was a big chase, that's what the whole thing was about, really. And a love story, minor kind of love story, but just boring.

LARSON: Sounds like the usual television fare....

WARREN: Yeah, garbage.

LARSON: How about SEVEN IN DARKNESS?

WARREN: That was fun because it was a challenge, playing a blind person. It was a physical kind of thing, and I had to do a lot of work on it, and that was very interesting, I liked that. I went to the Braille institute, and got very friendly with a young girl there, and I learned a lot. I like things that I can learn from.

GILLESPIE: When you play a part do you get out, like the blind person, get out and try to feel the part?

WARREN: Well, it depends. If it requires something that I really don't know anything about, like that, kind of physical handicap, yeah, I have to go and really study it, watch the movements.

LARSON: During your whole career, you've done a wide variety -- musicals, westerns and all that. Is there any one type of film that especially stands out?

WARREN: No. I want to do musicals, too. And I love period movies, but not period 1890's, period 30's and 40's, in that area. I've done a lot of period films, like the 1890-type thing, the costumes (indicates a closet full of costumes behind her) drive me insane, they're so....bleuechh! And they're heavy and awkward and everything. So that's what I don't want to do. I enjoy everything, I really do; I really enjoy westerns, I enjoy all of them, I mean, if there's something to do. I don't enjoy playing a sex object, and I don't enjoy playing the leading man's girl, you-know-what-I-mean? It bores me, and I turn those parts down, and I won't do them anymore. I turned down a film that I, well, in a funny way it could have made me a film star, if I wanted to, but I don't want that. I don't want to sacrifice what I believe in to do that.

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ABOVE: In FAMILY BAND with Walter Brennan (back toward us) and Buddy Ebsen. BELOW: With Larry Merrill (unconscious) and Fred MacMurray in THE HAPPIEST MILLIONAIRE.



#### Lesley Ann Warren: A Filmography

##### Stage

110 in the Shade (Debut, musical. Broadway, 1964)  
Dra! The Cat! (Broadway, 1965)  
Metamorphosis (Los Angeles Music Center, 1971)  
The Threepenny Opera (Musical, 1972)  
Gone With the Wind (Los Angeles and San Francisco, 1973. Musical version of novel.)

##### Television

For the People (1964-guest appearance)  
Dr. Kildare (1965-guest appearance)  
Gunsmoke (guest appearance)  
Cinderella (CBS musical special)  
Mission: Impossible (regular for one season)  
Night Gallery ("Death on a Barge", 1972)  
The Daughters of Joshua Cabe (ABC tv-movie, 1972)  
Seven in Darkness (tv-movie)  
Love, Hate, Love (tv-movie)  
Police Surgeon (1973-guest appearance)  
The Letters (tv-movie, 1973)  
The Saga of Sonora (tv-special, May 3, 1973, musical)  
Johnny Carson Show (1973)

##### Motion Pictures

The Happiest Millionaire (Disney, 1967)  
The One and Only, Genuine, Original Family Band (Disney, 1968)  
Pickup on 101 (American-International, 1973)



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# REVIEWS

## SEE NO EVIL

reviewed by Jerry Weddle

Richard Fleisher's *SEE NO EVIL* is an abject lesson on how to make a thriller a thriller, on how to establish suspense in the genre by making the viewer experience all the fear and apprehension of the film's characters.

Sarah (Mia Farrow) was recently blinded in an equestrian accident. She is going to take a vacation at her rich uncle's house, with her aunt, cousin, and their gardener. The first thing Sarah does in her blind state is mount another horse, showing that she is not as fragile as she looks, just stupid. Her rich uncle is driving home that day when his tires splash mud on a pair of polished cowboy boots with a gold star on the front. The occupant of these boots is thereby prone to homicidal mania, angered from being so insulted by that rich you-know-what. So he goes to the house with his shotgun while Sarah is out riding and shoots her rich uncle in the bathtub, her aunt in the living room, her cousin in the bedroom, the gardener in the lobby, and knocks over a glass jar that shatters on the kitchen floor. When Sarah comes home that night she cannot see the corpses and assuming that everybody is asleep, she makes supper, walking across the floor in barefeet just missing the glass a number of times, plays the stereo, and has her nightly cry. In the morning, Sarah cooks breakfast, still narrowly avoiding the glass on the floor, and fills the tub. When she steps into the tub there is silence, and when it finally dawns on her that she is not alone in the tub, Sarah screams, loudly. In the course of her panic travels throughout the house, Sarah trips over the gardener, who is not quite dead yet. He gives her a vital clue: the killer's bracelet with his name on it. But of course, Sarah can't read it, and when the maniac comes back to reclaim his bracelet, Sarah flees through the kitchen, this time not missing the glass, out the back door and to the stables, where she mounts her unsaddled horse and takes off. The maniac chases Sarah across the countryside for about an hour before getting what he deserves.

At 29, Mia Farrow is the most diligent performer and delightful personality in the gallery of screen actresses. She is a star, but a star who does not depend upon personality alone to carry her through a film, as lesser actresses (Dyan Cannon, Ann-Margret, Raquel Welch) do. Ms. Farrow stares blankly and moves with the uncertainty of a person who has not yet become habituated to blindness, and speaks in a querulous voice that clearly states a blind person's emotional troubles and dependence upon others. It is natural for Ms. Farrow to project a quality of childlike innocence -- Polanski recognized it as a vital element in *ROSEMARY'S BABY* -- and this quality makes the film work for her. The ordeals that Ms. Farrow experiences are ghastly. How can such awful things happen to such a nice little kid? And she keeps the lids over those zombie eyes for a change.

*SEE NO EVIL* is written by Brian Clemens, who, as everybody should know, was responsible for that long-running and highly acclaimed BBC trite, *THE AVENGERS*. His other screenplays include *THE GOLDEN VOYAGE OF SINBAD* and *DR. JEKYLL AND SISTER HYDE*. *SEE NO EVIL* shows that Clemens is a damn good writer -- and what's more, a writer who understands horror -- when he comes up with something original rather than tampering with a classic, like *SISTER HYDE*. Clemens thought his story out neatly, and plots it in the twisty, relentless style of a real suspense film.

Clemens indicates that his maniac is influenced by the pornography and violence found in books and movies (does he include *SEE NO EVIL*?). It is a feeble delve into the profound, but there may be some truth to it. Two years ago Boston newspapers reported that two sixteen year olds walked the city streets at night, poured gasoline on drunks who were too drunk to fight back, and set fire to them. The kids got the idea from seeing the comedy film *FUZZ*. Hopefully, they will never see *SEE NO EVIL*.

*SEE NO EVIL* is directed by Richard Fleisher, who loves to make movies about lady killers (*COMPULSION*, *THE BOSTON STRANGLER*, *10 RILLINGTON PLACE*), and I don't mean Don Juan. Fleisher is a knowing director. There are no shock-cuts to broken bodies; the camera follows Sarah's movements, incidentally revealing whatever it is that crosses her path. We, the viewer, experience the blind girl's terror because we are blind too, blind in that we never see the maniac's face and do not know who he is. Fleisher does this by showing us his boots, and later up to his waist, and towards the end a brief shot of him up to the shoulders. Terror and suspense are not necessarily the same emotion, and *SEE NO EVIL* works on both.

I think it is suspenseful at the expense of good taste, however. The sight of an innocent blind girl wallowing in mud puddles, staining her hands in other people's blood, slicing her feet on broken glass, bathing with a corpse, getting knocked off a galloping horse by an overhanging branch, wandering aimlessly through the woods, all the while screaming for help that isn't coming and pursued by a crazed killer, tests your nerves as well as your stomach. Clemens enjoys torturing the heroine, and Fleisher drags it out as long as he can without being boring. But that is why *SEE NO EVIL*, called *BLIND TERROR* abroad, has merit. It really is a good, solid suspense film.

*SEE NO EVIL*, Columbia 1971. 89 minutes. Producers: Martin Ransohoff and Leslie Linder; Director: Richard Fleisher; Screenplay: Brian Clemens; Director of Photography: Gerry Fisher; Music: Elmer Bernstein (Originally, Andre Previn -- Mia Farrow's husband -- had written the score, but it was rejected); Editor: Thelma Connell. CAST: Mia Farrow (Sarah), Robin Bailey (George Rexton), Dorothy Alison (Betty Rexton), Diane Grayson (Sandy Rexton), Norman Ashley (Steve Reding), Brian Rawlinson (Barker)

## Eastwood Magnum Force

PARAMOUNT-TECHNICOLOR® Film from Warner Bros.®  
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reviewed by Mark Verheiden

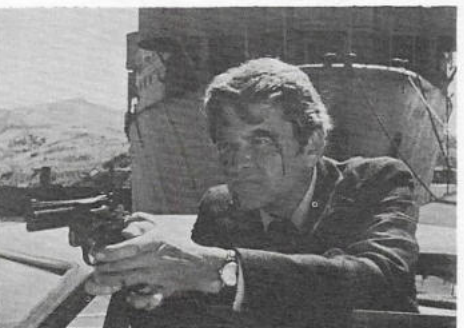
Movies featuring the police are often guilty of what I tend to call the "movie morality", an exact balance of good and bad traits which look great in a movie but would seem utterly outrageous in real life. *DIRTY HARRY*, along with *THE FRENCH CONNECTION*, were the real dam-busters in a trend which has now spawned *HARRY*'s first sequel, *MAGNUM FORCE*.

*DIRTY HARRY*, which featured Clint Eastwood as the incredible Harry Callahan, dealt with Harry and his rather unorthodox police methods. Harry did his thing any way except legally, blasting the rats in careless abandon and racking up a body-count any psychopath could be proud of. Directed by the talented Don Seigel (*INVASION OF THE BODY SNATCHERS*, *CHARLEY VARRICK*) the first *HARRY* was a fast-paced, violent and relatively well-acted action adventure.

Apparently, *MAGNUM FORCE* has escaped the sequel curse by being nearly as successful as *DIRTY HARRY* and in some ways surpassing the original. It seems a group of policemen have decided to take the law into their own hands and murder felons let free by "stupid technicalities", and Harry, ever the alienated good guy, finds himself right in the middle.

Perhaps the most interesting aspect of *MAGNUM FORCE*'s script is the very fact that Harry is caught between the murderers and their victims. Anyone who has seen the first film knows full well that if anybody would organize such a group, it would be *Dirty Harry* Callahan. A man with no use for "dumb" laws, Harry can pull the trigger with the best of them and feel no remorse for the bodies lining the halls. But here Harry has some real reservations against going after the legally free bad-guys and does his best to stop the rampaging police.

RIGHT, TOP TO BOTTOM: Mia Farrow as the blind girl Sarah in *SEE NO EVIL*. Mia reaches for a fallen spoon, unaware that one of her friends lies dead in the next room. Clint Eastwood as *Dirty Harry* in *MAGNUM FORCE*, and Hal Holbrook (bottom) from the same film.





Still, discounting this character "flaw," **MAGNUM FORCE** is still a lively detective story. Perhaps the most effort went into Callahan's short character building anecdotes which punctuate the main plot line, right down to swiping a sequence from **DIRTY HARRY** where our intrepid detective discovers a crime in progress while munching on a sandwich. The dialogue is both witty and suspenseful, and Eastwood gives his lines just the right dramatic touch.

In fact, acting in this edition is almost uniformly superior to **DIRTY HARRY**, with Hal Holbrook taking particular delight in his role as Harry's excitable superior. Holbrook, noted for his role on television's "The Senator", obviously enjoyed every minute of this feature as he rants and raves at everyone's favorite cop. Eastwood also gets good support from Felton Perry, his young black partner who was last on view in the forgettable **WALKING TALL**.

Even the music this time out is well-done, with an excellent (if not downright superb) score by Lalo Schifrin playing over the film. Schifrin, noted for his "sound effects" in some of his scores, gives a very eerie tone to the opening sequences.

Perhaps the only flaw in an otherwise taut detective story is the good but sometimes pedestrian direction by Ted Post, perhaps best known for **BENEATH THE PLANET OF THE APES** and **HANG 'EM HIGH**. While thoroughly professional (read: slick) Post's work isn't particularly impressive or noteworthy. Shots of the villains' feet are old-hat and the car chase, while exciting, doesn't really move. But Post does put his actors through their paces respectfully and to his credit doesn't get overly artsy, a real detriment to a detective film.

All in all, though, **MAGNUM FORCE** is a superlative follow-up and leaves one wishing for more. While violent, **MAGNUM FORCE** isn't sordid and seems to be one of those rare adventure movies you can leave without wanting to rinse your mouth out.

## Magnum Force

reviewed by Jerry Weddle

We are staring down the long barrel of a huge gun. "This 44. Magnum is the most powerful handgun in the world," a timberless voice snarls with pleasure. "It can turn your head into hash. I don't even know if it's loaded." The hammer is pulled back until it looks into place and a finger tightens on the trigger. "Do you feel lucky, punk?" Bang! We lose. So begins **MAGNUM FORCE**, a worthy sequel to Don Siegel's **DIRTY HARRY**.

**DIRTY HARRY** (1971), a superior commentary-action-suspense film, dealt with vigilante justice made necessary by the liberals who immobilized San Francisco's police department with their generous, non-committal rule books. Harry Callahan, a homicide detective, was forced to take the law into his own hands in order to protect the public. An abnormally cruel and unemotional introvert, Harry was as dangerous as the criminals he was supposed to catch. With **MAGNUM FORCE**, the screenwriters still have no illusions about their character, only their critics do. They make a point of telling us that Harry is a rotten person, surrounded by self-righteous politicians, glory-seekers and nutcases, in a rotten world. The San Francisco Police Dept. uses him as their killing machine, cleaning up after their mistakes and taking on the cases that no one else wants to touch. They call him Dirty Harry because he's always given the short and muddy end of a crooked stick. He hates their hypocrisy but likes his work. Harry's unconventional methods of enforcing the law have not endeared him to his superiors. The police aren't supposed to fight fire with fire. But they need him and both parties know it. Harry is not a hero and his actions are not glorified.

**MAGNUM FORCE**, like its predecessor, maintains a level of intelligence and integrity while all the other genre films are making martyrs out of quarterbacks and exploiting racial tensions and social issues. It has a cynical point of view that some people may find distasteful. **MAGNUM FORCE** states the issue: should the police department or the individual assume judicial power in order to bypass a lethargic legal system? Some may think it is a pointed question, others may not. Judith Crist thought it was "moron-ap-peal rhetoric," and she adopted the very attitude **MAGNUM FORCE** is condemning. Either way, the society that is depicted in **MAGNUM FORCE** is so hopelessly corrupt that we can only answer yes -- let Harry and his department become fascists for the good of society. Women begging Harry for his body and his getting away with all that he does stresses believability to the breaking point. But Harry is a fictitious character; we must allow license.



No one could portray Dirty Harry Callahan with the same conviction as Clint Eastwood. "Clint Eastwood isn't offensive; he isn't an actor, so one could hardly call him a bad actor. He'd have to do something before we could consider him bad at it." Pauline Kael, writing in *The New Yorker*, doesn't seem to realize that Eastwood has gained experience since his Italian western days. He's developed into a fine, persuasive actor. Eastwood performs with inner feeling and with voice inflections. He doesn't need to show reaction. If he did, we'd never believe that Harry was a loner. With his graceful movements, wolf-like features and tall, thin build, he's the epitome of the world-weary tough guy. A particularly engaging facet of his personality is that he projects a soft dramatic quality within the external toughness. Eastwood has an acting style indelibly his own and that's why he's guaranteed box-office.

The story in **MAGNUM FORCE** cleverly metamorphoses the story of Watergate and advances the principles set down in **DIRTY HARRY**. Lt. Briggs (Hal Holbrook) is investigating the deaths of several of San Francisco's syndicate criminals. He's not making any progress and both he and Harry know who's needed for the job. After Harry prevents a hijacking and stops a grocery store hold up, killing several men in the process, Briggs is forced to turn the case over to Harry and his partner (Felton Perry, the film's sacrificial lamb). We have already seen a traffic cop commit the slayings but his face was never shown. At first Harry suspects a fellow detective who's down on his luck. But after the detective is killed, Harry is sure that the murderer's a crack-shot rookie (David Soul) who beat him at the police department annual shooting match. Meanwhile, Briggs has been obstructing the investigation because he doesn't approve of Harry's methods. Harry sets up a situation that will prove this rookie is the murderer. He winds up facing four of them -- four Nazi-like traffic cops -- young and inexperienced, who are trying to clean up the world by shooting all the vermin. They offer Harry a partnership, and when he refuses they attempt to wipe out their opposition.

Like the policemen, Harry hates the system, but unlike them he's willing to stand by it until something better comes up. When Harry takes the law into his own hands, it is because there's no other way. His boss and the audience know it. Harry and his superiors tolerate each other; they use him as the patsy and that's alright with him because he cares. Harry agrees with his enemies that "there's nothing wrong with shooting as long as the right people get shot" and the "right people" are ones who would shoot Harry if he didn't shoot them first. The policemen's principle is that you can sacrifice a few lives to save



TOP: Clint Eastwood demonstrates the force of his .44 Magnum.

BOTTOM: Felton Perry, Clint Eastwood, and Hal Holbrook converse in **MAGNUM FORCE**.

a greater number, that the end justifies the means. Harry's reply: "Next you'll be killing a hundred people to save a thousand, and a thousand to save a million. Before you know it you'll be shooting people just for jaywalking." Harry's no murderer. **MAGNUM FORCE**'s world is so hopelessly violent and corrupt that the policemen don't seem so disillusioned after all. Their arguments for being the jury and executioners make a disturbing kind of sense. And critics like Paul D. Zimmerman (who thinks that Harry is dying to "join this chummy group of sharpshooters") do not.

Ted Post has been a television director for almost twenty years and he's directed a total of 700 TV shows, including segments of Eastwood's **RAWHIDE** series, a year's worth of **PEYTON PLACE** and several mini-movies (including **NIGHT SLAVES** and **DR. COOK'S GARDEN**). One would think that after so many years in the business, and having made four motion pictures; **HANG 'EM HIGH** (1968) with Eastwood, **BENEATH THE PLANET OF THE APES** (1970), **THE BABY** (1972 unreleased) and **THE HARRAD EXPERIMENT** (1973) he would have learned the difference between television direction and motion picture direction. Robert Altman, Paul Wendkos and Joseph Sargeant have learned the difference, so why hasn't Post? Post, who's been detrimental to every film he's made, is mediocre at best. He's at his best in **MAGNUM FORCE** and that's no compliment. Dale Winogura, writing in *Thriller*, accurately describes Post's capabilities: "Ted Post's boringly loose, uncertain handling of camera and editing, especially with long, pointless tracking shots and needless over-exposition of scenes everywhere." Post gives his films a diffused, shaky structure, and there are times when his lack of good taste plunges **MAGNUM FORCE** into vulgarity. Post is so used to the quick-running times of television mini-movies that he is unable to sustain the thematic element of a two-hour story with coherency. But he always gets good performances from the cast and uses the locales to give the films a brisk, fast look. Post's filming of the action sequences, though quite exciting, have over-complicated and inappropriate camera placements.

**DIRTY HARRY** was a tense film and the scenery served as an integrated part of the film's meaning, not just a backdrop for events. It was directed by Don Siegel with his usually taught, fluid manner. They are both successful blends of action and commentary, ironic humor and sadistic violence. Although **MAGNUM FORCE** is not as technically polished, suspenseful or scenic as its predecessor, it is nonetheless a frequently exciting and gutsy film. There are three excellent scenes: Harry's argument with his boss ("Everytime you pull your gun out my paperwork backs up three months"), his shooting match with the killers at the police station, and the anticlimax in which they confront each other.

**MAGNUM FORCE**, like **DIRTY HARRY**, can be called a right-wing fantasy. Its world is surrealistic; you can't compare it to the real world. Keep it in that perspective and you'll enjoy it.

**MAGNUM FORCE**, Warner Bros, 122 minutes. Released December 26 1973. Producer: Robert Daly; Director: Ted Post; Screenplay: John Milius, Michael Camino, from a story by Milius; based on the character created by Harry J. Pink and Rita M. Pink (and uncredited, Milius). Music: Lalo Schifrin; Director of Photography: Frank Stanley. CAST: Clint Eastwood (Harry Callahan), Hal Holbrook (Lt. Briggs), Mitchell Ryan (McCoey), David Soul (Davis), Felton Perry (Earl Smith), Robert Urich (Grimus). Technicolor.



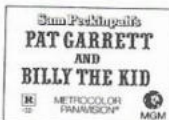
reviewed by Jerry Weddle

This is the one about the hysterical spinster who claims to have seen a dead body and no one believes her. Naturally her husband is having an affair, the police inspector has an ulcer, and the man next door digs coffin-shaped ditches in his garden. Is the wife a nut case or did (are you ready for this?) she really see the corpse of her first husband with a slit-throat sitting in an armchair in front of the second story window of the haunted house next door? ((whew!)) Or are the husband, lover and psychiatrist conspiring to drive her nuts so that he can remember after she's committed? Who cares? The film tries to play with the audience by dropping hints, which isn't necessary because the astute viewer will figure out the plot twist an hour and a half before it twists. It relies on gimmicks for suspense: the flapping shudder, flash of lightning, crash of thun-



der, knife on the counter, sedative in the coffee and scream of the heroine, all of which arrive right on cue. Liz Taylor, perfectly cast as the screaming shrew, gives an excellent performance as a bad actress. The late Laurence Harvey (still wearing those turtle-neck sweaters), Billie Whitelaw and Bill Dean invainly try to give the film some depth. Peter Mutton's sets are elaborate and stylish and Billy Williams' photography is very atmospheric. Brian G. Hutton's direction is heavy-handed, the script is clichéd, its dialogue banal, and its characters stereotyped. You've seen it all before and there's no reason to see it again.

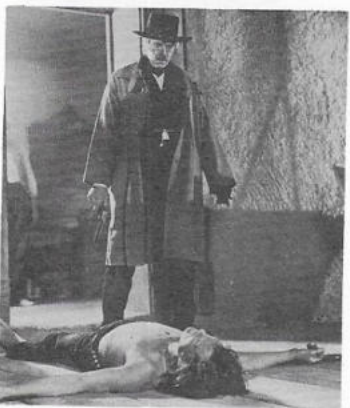
**NIGHT WATCH**, Avco-Embassy, 1973. 97 minutes. Technicolor. A Joseph E. Levine and Brut Productions Presentation. Director: Brian H. Hutton; Producers: Martin Poll, George W. George, Bernard Strauss; Screenplay: Tony Williamson, with additional dialogue by Evan Jones, based on a play by Lucille Fletcher. Director of Photography: Billy Williams; Editor: John Jypson; Music: John Cameron. CAST: Elizabeth Taylor (Ellen Wheeler), Laurence Harvey (John Wheeler), Billie Whitelaw (Sarah Cooke), Robert Land (Appleby), Tony Britton (Tony), Bill Dean (Inspector Walker).



reviewed by Jerry Weddle

With **PAT GARRETT AND BILLY THE KID** the American western film acquires a new maturity. Brilliantly conceived and stunningly executed, the film disarms the Hollywood factory western myths with its credible and perceptive interpretation of two tragic people, what motivates them, their way of life, the era in which they live, how society molds them and decides their fates. Of the fifty or so American films made on the subject, Peckinpah's is the definitive interpretation. There are no glorifications, fictionalizations or exaggerations. The story is a simple, down-to-earth, easily understandable one. Sam Peckinpah is a very personal director and he had found with Garrett and Billy the perfect subject in which to express himself. Billy the kid (played in a straightforward manner by Kris Kristofferson) is the last of a dead breed living in a society that shuns that breed. He's lived by the gun and can't change his ways. Pat Garrett (James Coburn giving a powerful performance), whom the film is really about, is just the opposite. He's accepted the changing times because they are unavoidable, and while he doesn't like them, it's a living and he'll not risk losing it. Garrett has to kill Billy because he's a threat to a west that is being colonized. And when Billy dies, a part of Garrett dies, too. The essence of the story is its themes: survival (Garrett) as opposed to individualism (Billy), the intervention of impersonal circumstances (the law) in a personal situation (Billy had once been like a son to Garrett), and the only solution to the conflict is one of violence (one must shoot the other) means. Peckinpah emphasizes his themes with such force that the film is a gut level experience and not an intellectual vacuum. A simple story is given depth by its themes. The themes are the substance, the message, and we are fascinated by them. The violence in the film is neither gory nor irrelevant. Peckinpah has learned, since he made **THE WILD BUNCH**, how to control himself, and there is a subdued, gripping, manly quality about his violence. Peckinpah has an eye for autumnal colors, volatile imagery and authentic sets -- the film looks as if it were photographed by Matthew Brady for National Geographic. The supporting cast includes such old favorites as Chill Wills, Slim Pickens, Jack Elam, Katy Jurado, Jason Robards and even Bob Dylan (who provides the film with lovely music). Although MGM cut out 16 minutes, rearranged some scenes and prevented Peckinpah from shooting others, **PAT GARRETT AND BILLY THE KID** has a haunting quality that really makes an impression upon the viewer. Peckinpah's film is an object lesson on how to turn embellished history into credible fact. As such, it is a masterpiece.

**PAT GARRETT AND BILLY THE KID**, MGM-EMI 1973. In Metrocolor and Panavision. Running time: approximately 105 minutes. Different prints vary in length. Producer: Gordon Carroll; Director: Sam Peckinpah; Screenplay: Rudolph Wurlitzer; Director of Photography: John Guillon, B.S.C.; Music: Bob Dylan. A Gordon Carroll-Sam Peckinpah Production. CAST: James Coburn (Pat Garrett), Kris Kristofferson (Billy), Bob Dylan (Alias), Richard



ABOVE, TOP TO BOTTOM: Elizabeth Taylor in **NIGHT WATCH**. James Coburn, after he has shot Kris Kristofferson in **PAT GARRETT AND BILLY THE KID**. Rita Coolidge (left) as Maria, and James Coburn as Pat Garrett; Kris Kristofferson as Billy (left) and Bob Dylan as Alias in **PAT GARRETT AND BILLY THE KID**. Roddy McDowall (left) and Gayle Hunnicut in the McDowall haunted house film, **LEGEND OF HELL HOUSE**.

Jackel (Sheriff Kip McKinney), Katy Jurado (Mrs. Baker), Rita Coolidge (Maria), Chill Wills (Lemuel), Jason Robards (Governor Wallace), R.G. Armstrong (Ollinger), Luke Askew (Eno), John Beck (Poe), Jack Elam (Alamosa Bill), L.Q. Jones (Black Harris), Slim Pickens (Sheriff Baker).

## The Legend of HELL HOUSE

reviewed by Mark Verheiden

A good horror movie is almost as rare as a working automobile clock, a prophet once said, and since only one car in ten has a working clock, then only one horror film in ten is a working movie. **THE LEGEND OF HELL HOUSE** works splendidly.

Unlike the disturbingly graphic **EXORCIST**, **HELL HOUSE** is a remarkably refined, intelligent, and indeed almost documentary-like haunted house flick. Written by Richard Matheson (whose superb television work -- including **DUEL** and **THE NIGHT STALKER** -- has been doing incredibly well) who apparently had seen a copy of Shirley Jackson's *The Haunting*, **HELL HOUSE** dwells on the basic conflict between the world of science and the world of the occult.

Clive Revill, playing Dr. Lionel Barrett, is offered \$100,000 to stay a week in "The Belasco House," a mansion reportedly being the "Mt. Everest of haunted houses." Barrett takes with him his wife and two mediums, one a mental spiritualist (Pamela Franklin) and the other a physical medium (Roddy McDowall). Working with this admittedly clichéd plot, director John Hough runs his actors through some very credible paces.

Both McDowall and Franklin turn in excellent performances, the former finally shedding his ape make-up and emoting remarkably well. Franklin, playing the molested and child-like Florence Tanner, has the right combination of curiosity and fright. Even Revill, a stolid actor, turns in an acceptable job.

Around his actors director Hough builds a taut, forbidding atmosphere, replete with oddly out of place chairs and creaking doors. Perhaps more than any other recent film, **THE LEGEND OF HELL HOUSE** is made by competent people. Not spectacular, not esoteric, but pure professionals who obviously know their craft and can make good pictures.

Matheson's book dwells almost repulsively on the sexual perversions of the spirits in the Belasco house, and thankfully most of this explicit detail has been left out of the film to make way for a P.G. rating. It's always been a much heralded maxim that the implied is far more horrible than the graphically depicted, and it's proven here with **HELL HOUSE**. While Franklin is molested by the ghost, she isn't exhibited as Matheson has her in his novel.

Special effects are also good in this semi-remake of **THE HAUNTING**, with one particularly good scene where Revill, sitting at a dinner table, is pelted with dining room crockery and furniture and finally watches with amazement as the fireplace belches out a huge flame across the room. The voice of the demon is impressive, reminding one of the Mercedes McCambridge voice in **THE EXORCIST**. One should keep in mind that **HELL HOUSE** was released some time before the latter picture; the scenes of chairs and tables floating about and the deeply hideous voice of the spirits make one wonder where Friedkin found the inspiration for some of his more graphic effects.

There are a few faults, notably a terribly contrived ending. Matheson also seems determined to hoke up the proceedings with a lot of Star Trekish gadgetry; interesting in itself but out of place in this startling superior shocker.

Good horror films are hard to find, when one comes it should be supported. Apparently **HELL HOUSE** has been dying at the box office, a sad sign of things to come, perhaps. See it and enjoy it.

**THE LEGEND OF HELL HOUSE**, 20th Century Fox 1973. Producers: Albert Fennell and Norman T. Herman; Executive Producer: James H. Nicholson; Director: John Hough; Screenplay by Richard Matheson, based on his novel *Hell House*. CAST: Pamela Franklin (Florence Tanner), Roddy McDowall (Ben Fisher), Clive Revill (Dr. Lionel Barrett), Gayle Hunnicut (Ann Barrett), Michael Gough (Emeric Belasco)





## Sisters

reviewed by Jerry Weddle

Brian DePalma's *SISTERS* is a difficult film to evaluate. DePalma has taken another filmmaker's ideas and remolded them to suit his own personal vision. It is the story of a severed Siamese twin told in the Hitchcock tradition. In order to criticize the film fairly, it must be judged on its own terms and then compared to Hitchcock.

The first half of the film is coherently presented, but the second half becomes rather confusing. Danielle Breton (Margot Kidder) meets Philip Woode (Lisle Wilson) on a TV quiz show called *The Peeping Toms*, where she wins a cutlery set. He is invited to spend the night with her at her apartment. The next morning he awakes to the sound of angry voices. Danielle and her sister Dominique are arguing about their birthday behind a closed door. Danielle asks him to leave and fill a drug prescription for her, and he returns with the pills and a birthday cake (ironically inscribed "Happy Birthday Danielle & Dominique"). Danielle (or is it Dominique?) is sleeping face down on the bed; Philip places a knife from the cutlery set in her hand and wishes her Happy Birthday. Guess what she does with the knife? Danielle's husband, Dr. Emil Breton (Bill Finley) wants to protect his unbalanced wife/patient, so he cleans up the mess. A woman reporter, Grace Collier (Jennifer Salt), who is well known to the police (as a troublemaker...), witnesses the murder but the police refuse to believe her. So she conducts her own investigations, and learns that Danielle was Canada's first Siamese twin who was severed on the operating table by Dr. Breton. Dominique was the mentally unstable sister who died on the operating table. From here on the film becomes confusing, but there are enough shocks and surprises to keep one interested.

Just as Norman Bates was haunted by his dominating mother, Danielle is haunted by her dominating sister. They are haunted by the dead. Whereas Detective Arbogast never confirms his suspicions, Grace Collier is positive, but she is used by Dr. Breton to defeat her own purpose. Danielle becomes homicidal when her sexual desires are satisfied -- a cheap excuse to show nudity -- and when she doesn't take the medication that will enable Dr. Breton to dominate her. Hitchcock's theme of dual and dominating personalities is the very essence of *SISTERS*.

*SISTERS* is definitely a DePalma film, but a DePalma film that is Hitchcockian in nature. DePalma has taken several of Hitchcock's themes and premises, utilized his directing methods and camera techniques, followed the plotting and characterizations of *PSYCHO*, and reworked them into a simplification of *PSYCHO* and, say, *REAR WINDOW* (both of which are the embodiment of all that is Hitchcock). Therefore, *SISTERS* is neither imitative of nor homage to Hitchcock. Rather, it is an endeavor on the part of one artistic filmmaker to re-interpret in his own way the concepts (themes, premises, plotting, characters, suspense established by his mentor. Jennifer Salt is appropriately frustrated and determined as the reporter, Charles Durning is appropriately amusing as a bumbling detective, and Bill Finley is appropriately villainous as Dr. Breton. Margot Kidder (of James Garner's *NICHOLS* on NBC-TV) gives a superb performance as Danielle. Her French mannerisms and accent are perfectly characterized and she makes a fetching nut case. MovieLab's color processing looks cruddy.

*SISTERS* is a Hitchcock film without Hitchcock, and it is what the master would call "pure cinema". *SISTERS* would never succeed on the printed page as it does on the celluloid because the film's effects cannot be described in words. A good example is the flashback, a television documentary filmed in black-and-white that details the growing up and hell of the Siamese twins. The scene is strictly DePalma's and there is nothing Hitchcockian about it. Hitchcock would never use nudity and gore for its own sake, as DePalma does. He would never use the split screen, and DePalma uses it with purpose in all scenes except one (Danielle's interrogation by the police). DePalma has Hitchcock's eloquence, skill and realization, but not his force, craftsmanship and depth. Bernard Herrmann's chilling, visceral music score underlies the tone and tempo of the film. *SISTERS* is one of 1973's best horror films -- it is a psychological suspense thriller in the true sense of the word.

*SISTERS*, AIP 1973. Color by MovieLab, 92 minutes. A Pressman-Williams Enterprises Production. Producer: Edward R. Pressman; Director: Brian DePalma; Screenplay: Brian DePalma and Louisa Rose, based on an original story by DePalma; Director of Photography: Gregory Sandor; Editor: Paul Hirsch; Music by Bernard Herrmann. CAST: Margot Kidder (Dan-

ielle Breton), Jennifer Salt (Grace Collier), Charles Durning (Private Investigator), Bill Finley (Emil Breton), Lisle Wilson (Phillip Woode), Bernard Hughes (Magazine Editor).



reviewed by Jerry Weddle

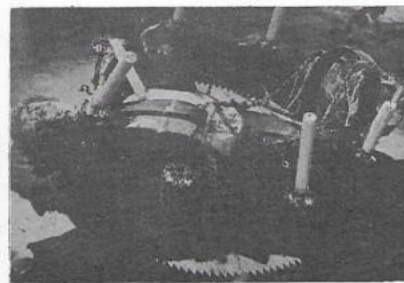
Michael Crichton's *WESTWORLD* is a mixed bag. I dislike Crichton's novels because they are more mechanical than literary, and who enjoys reading textbooks? Crichton claims that his novels are more cinematic than literary, and this may be so. So he's turned to the writing and directing of motion pictures and is barely adequate at both. As a director he is all technique and empty rhetoric, like his books, and his story of *Westworld* is predictable. James Brolin and Richard Benjamin can live out their fantasies along with thousands of other tourists for a small fortune per day in a care-free resort that is a replica of the old west. What can possibly go wrong with the computer-controlled robots who provide the tourists with their pleasure? What do you think? Yul Brynner, always a dependable actor, is appropriately stone-faced as the robot who chases Benjamin. Note the brief appearance of Majel Barret, wife of Gene Roddenberry and actress who played Nurse Chapel on tv's *STAR TREK*. *WESTWORLD* is a flawed film, but if you just sit back and stop thinking about it, it can be a lot of fun.

*WESTWORLD*, MGM-EMI, 1973. 89 minutes, Metrocolor. Producer: Paul N. Lazarus III; Director and Screenplay: Michael Crichton; Music: Fred Karlin; Director of Photography: Gene Polito. CAST: Yul Brynner (Gunslinger), Richard Benjamin (Peter Martin), James Brolin (John Blane), Norman Bartold (Medieval Knight), Alan Openheimer (Supervisor).



reviewed by Jerry Weddle

*HITLER: THE LAST TEN DAYS* is based upon the eyewitness account by Gerhard Boldt and is prefaced with signed declarations by other surviving Nazi's and reputable historians. The screenplay by Ennio DeConcini and Mario Pia Fusca deals with a delicate subject in an intelligent and sensible manner. Set in the Fuhrerbunker during the fall of the Nazi Empire, the film perceptively defines Adolf Hitler as a person, explored the relationships between he and his officers, shows the effect he had on their lives and on the world, and shows the gradual and inevitable fall of the Third Reich. Hitler says that he knew the war was lost before it even began, yet he let the fighting go on. Hitler smiles at a frightened child, awards him the Iron Cross and sends him to participate in what is to be a massacre. The film alters between the fascinating and the dull. Certain scenes will hold your attention: Hitler's marriage to Eva Brown; the officers discussing the best way to commit suicide; and the most shocking scene of all: a mother asking Hitler for extra cyanide tablets to give her children. These events take place in cultured and civilized surroundings. It is bizarre, obscene, horrifying, and sad. Forget that Alec Guinness wears heavy greasepaint and a toupee; just watch him as he carefully fleshes out the facets of Adolf Hitler's persona. It is a commendable performance deserving an Oscar nomination. The entire cast (which includes Simon Ward (YOUNG WINSTON), Diane Cilento (Mrs. Sean Connery), Adolfo Celi, Eric Porter, Joss Ackland, Gabrielle Ferretti, and Doris Kunstman, are all superb as the loyal Nazi's whose faith in their leader is shattered as they watch their empire crumble. DeConcini also directed, and he utilizes a washed-out color scheme for the interiors and



ABOVE: Pamela Franklin in THE LEGEND OF HELL HOUSE. FAR LEFT: Bill Finley, as Dr. Breton, calms his wife and patient, Danielle (Margot Kidder) as Jennifer Salt resides in foreground, from *SISTERS*. LEFT, CENTER: Bill Finley and Margot Kidder in *SISTERS*. LEFT: Olive Revill, as Dr. Barrett, is killed by a falling candelabra in THE LEGEND OF HELL HOUSE.



black-and-white for the exteriors to give his film a documentary-like approach. One very effective device is the actual newsreel footage used to emphasize points in the story. It works; DeConcini emerges as a major film director. **HITLER: THE LAST TEN DAYS** is a powerhouse of a movie and deserves to be viewed at least twice for a full impact.

**HITLER: THE LAST TEN DAYS**, Paramount 1973. 106 minutes. A Wolfgang Reinhardt Production; Executive Producer: John Heyman; The Production Supervised by Norman Priggen; Director: Ennio De Coninci; Screenplay: Ennio de Coninci, Maria Pia Fusco, Wolfgang Reinhardt; English Screenplay Adaptation: Ivan Moffat; Based on the Eye-Witness Account *The Last Days of the Chancellery* by Gerhard Bolt; Director of Photography: Ennio Guarneri; Musical Score Devised and Conducted by Mischa Spoliansky; Editor: Kevin Connor. CAST: Alec Guinness (Adolf Hitler), Simon Ward (Hauptmann Hoffmann), Adolfo Coli (General Krebs), Diane Cilento (Hanna Reitsch), Gabriele Ferzetti (Fieldmarshall Heitel), Eric Porter (General Von Greim), Doris Kunstman (Eva Braun), Joss Ackland (General Burgdorf).



reviewed by Mark Verheiden

If you've caught more than a couple of the quickie Karate movies from the far east, then you know just as well as anyone that run-of-the-mill producer Run-Run Shaw is on a level just below the worst. Amusing only in their lack of intelligence, flicks like **FEARLESS FIGHTERS**, **DREPP THURST**, **THE HAND OF DEATH**, **THE HONG-KONG CAT**, and at least a dozen others stand out like sore thumbs, just begging for someone with enough talent and money to do one of these things right.

Enter **ENTER THE DRAGON**, produced by Fred Weintraub (who worked on television's **KUNG-FU** series) and starring veteran Karate performer Bruce Lee. In comparison to the other Eastern adventures, **ENTER THE DRAGON** is the **GONE WITH THE WIND** of the genre.

But you have to remember that these adventures are intended to entertain, period. If you're looking for a message, or great social relevance, or even half-baked acting, then go to the local art-house and catch another showing of **DAY FOR NIGHT**. Keep this in mind and **ENTER THE DRAGON** will deliver what it promises: 98 minutes of fun.

What plot there is revolves around an island in the Pacific controlled by the evil Han (Shih Kien), a sinister looking fellow dealing in dope, prostitution and numerous other tawdry activities. Unhappy with this turn of events, the authorities (in the person of Geoffrey Weeks) hire "the Dragon" (Lee) and a couple of other Karate notables (John Saxon and Jim Kelly) to get on Han's island and compete in the oriental demon's semi-annual martial arts competition while digging up facts for the cops. Unfortunately, Han eventually discovers the plot and before long sic his 500 disciples on our stalwart (if somewhat stupid) heroes.

Sounds like an old serial, doesn't it? Well, **ENTER THE DRAGON** almost is a serial, albeit some fine technicolor photography and expensive special effects are added. Bruce Lee, while not a particularly fine actor, is a superb gymnast and makes his stunts look at least plausible. Lee, who died last summer of a brain hemorrhage (inflicted, some say,

by his work in **ENTER THE DRAGON**) was probably the finest talent Run-Run Shaw had in his stable of regulars, and was a very talented Karate expert. In best serial tradition, Lee takes all defeat in stride and then retaliates. His presence in this film was undeniable.

Saxon, as the Dragon's closest partner, and supposedly as skilled as Lee in the martial arts, is efficient but really doesn't have the sheer power Bruce Lee radiates as the "top gun." A better actor (last on view in television's **BOLD ONES**), Saxon does do a credible job in what few non-fighting scenes there are but otherwise is unexceptional. Likewise Jim Kelly (whose newest action adventure, **BLACK BELT JONES**, is another Weintraub feature) who can swing better than he can emot.

Naturally, though, the fight scenes are the best part of the film, and for sheer, nearly bloodless spectacle, this movie simply can't be beat. With stunts arranged by the ever-present Lee, there are an endless variety of Karate punches and kicks and, oddly enough, several scenes that really stand out. One of the most incredible has the "dragon" performing a routine with a weighted chain that simply boggles the eye. Another interesting sequence shows Lee practicing his Kung-Fu callisthenics when interrupted by one of Han's henchmen. Lee's foot follows the uncomfortable man's head around the room as the fellow informs the Dragon about a new competition.

Technically, **ENTER THE DRAGON** is a slick, if not overly artistic feature. Robert Crouse's direction is as fast as a television commercial's, but it manages to do its job fairly well. The fights are well-filmed and at least look realistic.

Perhaps the most unusual aspect of **DRAGON** is its attempt at explaining some of the obvious confusions in a Karate epic. Unlike the abrupt and utterly incoherent Shaw features, **DRAGON** carefully described just why someone can't take out most of these martial arts masters with a well-loaded machine gun. And there are no forty foot leaps for these champions, though Lee certainly makes his way past all-out experts with a certain amount of ease.

With the death of Bruce Lee, the possibility of features as entertaining as this one seemingly disappears. While the other actors were acceptable, Lee made the film what it was. His death was a real loss to anyone who enjoys enjoying themselves at the local cinema.

**ENTER THE DRAGON**, Warner Bros 1973. 98 minutes. Producers: Fred Weintraub and Paul Heller, in association with Raymond Chow; Directed by Robert Clouse; Written by Michael Allin; Director of Photography: Gilbert Rubbe; Editors: Kurt Hirshler, Geo. Watters; Fight scenes staged by Bruce Lee; Music by Lalo Schiffrin. CAST: Bruce Lee (Lee), John Saxon (Roper), Jim Kelly (Williams), Ahna Capri (Tania), Bob Wall (Charra), Shih Kien (Han), Angela Mao Ying (Su-Lin).



reviewed by Jerry Weddle

It's a curious thing. Whenever a Robert Altman film is released, one never knows what to make of it. On first viewing, his film is like an enigma. You have to think about it and then go see it again before you can really understand it. Such is the case with **THE LONG GOODBYE**, a Philip Marlowe mystery based on Raymond Chandler's

novel of the same name. It is not like other mysteries and it is not like other movies. That is partly why the film has been misinterpreted. Chandler fans hated it and critics praised and condemned it for all the wrong reasons. It has been called a satire without bite, a mystery without intrigue or action, and inferior to **THE BIG SLEEP** (directed by John Huston in 1946 with Humphrey Bogart as Marlowe). The fact is, **THE LONG GOODBYE** is not a thriller, neither was the book (which was very different from Chandler's other writings), so there are none of the over-sexed, shoot-and-bleed, hunt-and-chase antics you'd expect from a Dirty Harry or James Bond film. Unfortunately, that is exactly what Chandler fans and Altman fans did expect, which explains their disappointment and misinterpretation of the film. The fact is, **THE LONG GOODBYE** is quite definitely an Altman film and is more faithful to Chandler than any other previous films (made by George and Robert Montgomery, and James Garner).

Robert Altman is the most adventurous filmmaker in America. France has Truffaut, Sweden has Bergman, England has Losey, Italy has Fellini, Spain doesn't have anybody, and we are fortunate to have Altman. We also have Bogdanovich, Kubrick, Lucas and Peckinpah, but Altman towers above them because of his stunning originality and insight. Like his contemporaries, Altman is not just a film director, but also a film author. When he conceives a film, it is an expression of his own ideas -- there's poetry in his ideas -- and he gives his authorship artistic and social value. Also like his contemporaries, Altman is so innovative in style and indirect in method that he either confuses you or throws you off-base, if not both. He is continually experimenting with filmmaking techniques and approaches, throwing out the rulebook that every other director lives by and writing his own. Each succeeding experiment is better than the last: **MASH**, **BREWSTER MCLOUD**, **MCABE AND MRS. MILLER**, **IMAGES**, and **THIEVES LIKE US** (made after **THE LONG GOODBYE**).

Altman has taken the very essence of Chandler's novel -- its themes of honor and loyalty, respect and integrity, as embodied by Marlowe -- and made a personal statement out of them. The film has no fast-paced action or hedonistic characters, but it does have a devastating wit and understanding of what makes people tick; just like the long-winded, flawed novel. Altman is also faithful to Chandler's point of view.

Marlowe is a member of the old school, thrust into a contemporary society (1973). He tries to hold onto his own principles in a world where they are not applicable. In this sense, **THE LONG GOODBYE** is as much the study of a person as it is a comment on society, and it is fascinating as both. Such a theme is a vast improvement on **THE BIG SLEEP**, which was so without depth it is rather juvenile by today's standards. And that is the crux of the film: today's standards as opposed to yesterdays. According to Altman, morals and values, the basis of society, have changed, and the individual doesn't have a chance.

After a fight with his wife, Terry Lennox (Jim Bouton) asks Marlowe to drive him to a place of safety. Marlowe does so without asking questions, and refuses to talk even when the police humiliate and brutalize him. Augustine, a gang-leader,

BELOW, FAR LEFT: Sir Alec Guinness as Adolf Hitler and Doris Kunstman as his mistress, Eva Braun (top photo), and members of Hitler's bunker (bottom photo) Fegelein (Julian Glover), Eva Braun (Doris Kunstman), Fraulein Junge (Ann Lynn), Hauptmann Hoffmann (Simon Ward) and Frau Christian (Sheila Gish) at target practice in **HITLER: THE LAST TEN DAYS**. FAR RIGHT: Elliot Gould from Robert Altman's **THE LONG GOODBYE**. CENTER: Bruce Lee battles Shih Kien (left) and John Saxon battles one of Han's henchmen in Warner Brother's kung-fu entry, **ENTER THE DRAGON**.





ELLIOTT KASTNER presents A ROBERT ALTMAN Film

# ELLIOTT GOULD in "THE LONG GOODBYE"

Hi! I'm high-powered director Robert Altman, and I'm here on location filming my latest high-powered movie, "The Long Goodbye".

This film is full of fun—murder, maiming, drunkenness, infidelity, topsy-turvy, four-letter words—everything! Like my first big success, "M\*A\*S\*H," it's got the same key ingredient!

Here's our star, Elliott Gould! Elliott plays Philip Marlowe, a hard-bitten, cynical private eye trying to solve an incredible mystery!

This is Nina van Pallandt, who portrays a femme fatale involved in a deceptive plot of shadowy intrigue!

And here's Jim Bouton in the role of Terry Lennox, a small-time mug! You'll enjoy seeing Jim strike out on a new career!

Finally, we've got Sterling Hayden as a deranged novelist, "Laugh in '57" Henry Gibson as a quick psychiatrist and Mark Rydell as a sadistic mobster who disfigures helpless women!

What's that? Good taste!

That's the mystery!

With so many other actors around, why did you pick me?

How do you want me to play it?

From memory!

No, as an actor!

Strike out? Is that a clever reference to my one-time skill as a baseball pitcher?

Like I said, "The Long Goodbye" is a fun movie!

The mystery deepens when beautiful Eileen Wade, played by Nina van Pallandt, asks Marlowe to find her lost husband, played by Sterling Hayden!

Look, I got problems of my own! A mobster is threatening to rearrange my face!

You turned him down?

I've been pushed around by the cops and the mob, but I finally tracked down the murderer! I guess that wraps up "The Long Goodbye".

Oh, NO! What if I don't win YOU doing here?

We're here to win the real murder!

Namely, YOU! Your performance has killed this movie, not to mention our careers!

So we're giving it a new ending! It's now YOUR "Long Goodbye".

And if we don't finish you off, the critics WILL!

with NINA VAN PALLANDT • STERLING HAYDEN

Executive Producer ELLIOTT KASTNER • Produced by JERRY BICK • Directed by ROBERT ALTMAN

Screenplay by LEIGH BRACKETT Based on the novel by RAYMOND CHANDLER

Music Composed and Conducted by JOHN T. WILLIAMS

United Artists

threatens Marlowe: find Lennox and the \$35,000 he stole from me, or else. When Marlowe finds a missing person, Roger Wade (Sterling Hayden), he finds evidence to believe that Wade was having an affair with Terry's murdered wife. He thinks that Wade might have killed her, not Terry, during one of his alcoholic fits. But Marlowe's old-world outlook causes him to misread the whole situation: the private eye is wrong. Terry made a fool out of Marlowe ("what are friends for?") and used him as a scapegoat.

There are two violent scenes which are so unexpected they're shocking -- nothing gory or gratuitous about them -- in a film that relies on wit and subtlety to make its point. Augustine smashes a coke bottle against an innocent girl's face (we later see her in bandages with a wired jaw); it is a mean act that makes us believe Marlowe is going to stop being Mr. Nice Guy and start fighting fire with fire. "That's what I do to people I love," Augustine tells Marlowe, "and you I don't even like." The anti-climax, in which Marlowe murders his friend Terry, is an act necessary to show his reversed values, and is therefore justified even if it doesn't follow the novel. We hate to see this last man who still cares about right and wrong charge his ways, but who can blame him when all he gets is "You'll never learn, Marlowe, you're a born loser" for his efforts. In the end, Marlowe is just like everybody else, an unimportant man walking about a lonely road who just doesn't give a damn.

But there is humor, too, and the first scene is a riot. Marlowe is awakened in

the middle of the night not by a desperate dame, but by his hungry cat. Wearily, he goes to an all-night market where the cat's favorite brand is unavailable, so he buys a substitute. Marlowe returns to his tower room, spoons the substitute into an empty can of the right brand and pretends to open it. (Notice he's not using an electric can opener), all the while grumbling while the cat watches him suspiciously. He gives the temperamental feline the food, only to have it ignored. The Nine-Lives cat commercial on television isn't nearly as funny. This is a classic joke that still has punch.

As every Chandler reader knows, Marlowe is a guy with a soft heart who puts on a tough act. *The Long Goodbye* was not so much a mystery novel as it was human drama. It is about Marlowe, a fictitious character who is very real, and written differently than Chandler's other novels and short stories. The film portrays Marlowe as the book sees him, as Chandler saw him in his commentaries on his own writings. Everyone mistakes Marlowe's slouch for cowardliness and his passivity for obliviousness. That's an act; he's really on the ball. His voice is all command and his tongue is all wisecracks, and no matter how sticky the situation is, Marlowe never loses his wit or courage. He is an anti-hero who is unheroic. Marlowe's tragedy is that there is no one to appreciate his virtues.

Elliott Gould is Philip Marlowe. He portrays Marlowe as a modest, mild-mannered, wry man, a likable and sympathetic man. This is Gould's first film as a major star; he made his screen debut in *THE NIGHT THEY*

RAIDED MINSKY'S, and Altman cast him in MASH after seeing him in BOB & CAROL & TED & ALICE. Of the four films that followed, only LITTLE MURDERS offered him a demanding role, but none as demanding as in THE LONG GOODBYE. Gould shows that he is an actor of unlimited range, who was wasted in MOVE, GETTING STRAIGHT and I LOVE MY WIFE. As Marlowe, Gould shows a sensitivity that no other film role has allowed him to reveal. He has been vastly under-rated in 3 films about co-eds and rebellious college students. Gould has finally broken the mold; he is an actor to be reckoned with.

What is the satire in THE LONG GOODBYE? An Altman film has an atmosphere of inter-relationship, THIEVES LIKE US more than any other, and in THE LONG GOODBYE the satire is expressed through this atmosphere. For young, delectable nymphomaniacs always do yoga exercises twenty-four hours a day, in the nude, in plain sight on the terrace across from Marlowe's front window, and apparently they're high on something. Marlowe is disinterested, being used to their presence, but visitors to his apartment stare at them in awe. One of the visitors is Marty Augustine. He's a psychopathic nut who lives in a house next door to a house once owned by Richard Nixon in a town called Truesdale. Augustine is the sort of gangster who will take his clothes off just to prove that he is not hiding anything. He needs his \$35,000 back so that he can support his wife and kids, whom he loves no less than his mistress. His gang is populated by one member of every minority group, one of whom is an impressionable, moronic young hood who doesn't know how to tail a car in traffic. Marlowe gives the hood the address of where he is going. Incidentally, no where does it say that a satire has to have bite. It's just that THE LONG GOODBYE's bite is rather subtle. As for Marlowe, he still drives a 1948 Lincoln convertible and lives on the top floor of a tower (symbolically). He doesn't accept divorce cases and is scared of barking dogs. Frequently unshaven, he chain-smokes non-filters (Camel), drinks whatever you're drinking and mutters "It's okay with me" whenever society dumps on him (every other minute).

Altman's films would never be a success if it weren't for his off-beat, perfect casting. Nina Van Pallandt (Clifford Irving's mistress during the Howard Hughes hoax) and Jim Bouton (sportscaster) both make respectable acting debuts, and Miss Van Pallandt has the air of cool self-confidence that all Chandler's leading ladies wear like perfume. Henry Gibson is amusing as a determined doctor and Mark Rydell (the director of THE REVERSERS, THE COWBOYS, and CINDERELLA LIBERTY) makes Marty Augustine a funny but horrific figure. But it is Sterling Hayden, as Roger Wade, who steals the show. He's superb; loud, defiant, filled with the hot air and slightly unbalanced, he makes Wade as sympathetic a fellow as Marlowe is. Incidentally, Hayden was the last replacement for the late Dan Blocker, to whom the film is thoughtfully dedicated.

Like all of Altman's films, THE LONG GOODBYE seeps into the marrow of your aesthetic. Altman's careful use of the Panavision screen, the slick production qualities, the mellow color scheme, the elegant scenic compositions and Vilmos Zsigmond's subdued photography make the film a pleasure to look at and experience. The camera is always making smooth, graceful movements, moving towards and away from the scene but always held at a distance from the actors. Although the camera is always in motion, the film has a still, quiet surface, and beneath the surface there lies a certain pervasiveness. If you just sit back and relax, Altman's direction can weave a hypnotic spell. He draws you into the film and holds you fascinated. Altman will make you stop, look, listen and think. The tone is almost sarcastic, the point of view is cynical (witness the ending), and the mood is one of haunting melancholiness. There is a stunning scene -- a lonely man walking along the beach, montaged with the Wades in a fierce argument, the rushing waves blended with their angry voices -- that keenly expresses the film's message.

Leigh Brackett, who co-scripted THE BIG SLEEP with William Faulkner, has written a literate private-eye screenplay -- well balanced, well thought-through, well developed. The plot is a lively one that thickens consistently. The dangers Marlowe



faces are believable, because they're true to life and unfantastic (just the opposite of what you'd expect from a mystery; there are no superficialities).

In MASH and MCCABE AND MRS. MILLER, the dialogue was often hard to follow -- you just couldn't hear it -- and you didn't realize until halfway through the film that the dialogue didn't matter. It was the tone, style, conception and message of the film that mattered (Richard Lester does the same thing). The dialogue in THE LONG GOODBYE is partly improvised and partly Brackett's, and it is so natural and witty -- and the cast speaks it as if they weren't acting at all, but just being themselves -- that Chandler would have been proud. Listen carefully to the dialogue and you'll find the film even more satisfying.

Altman is saying that it is futile to be an individual. He is saying that people have lost their humanity along with morals and values which gave them their humanity. Soap opera? Not in the least. THE LONG GOODBYE is quite brilliant. It is Altman's bitter farewell to a life style, his long goodbye.

I loved THE LONG GOODBYE and I urge you to see it. As entertainment, there is nothing better, and as an experience, it is very rewarding.

THE LONG GOODBYE, United Artists, 1973. 112 minutes. Executive Producer: Elliott Kastner; Producer: Jerry Bick; Director: Robert Altman; Screenplay: Leigh Brackett, based on the novel by Raymond Chandler; Director of Photography: Vilmos Zsigmond; Editor: Lou Lombardo; Music: John Williams.

CAST: Elliott Gould (Philip Marlowe), Nina Fawcett (Eileen Wade), Sterling Hayden (Roger Wade), Mark Rydell (Marty Augustine), Henry Gibson (Dr. Verringer), David Arkin (Harry), Jim Bouton (Terry Lennox).



reviewed by Jerry Weddle

Despite its title, HORROR EXPRESS is not the hacked-out, low-budget and low-mentality film that its title seems to indicate. It completed filming in December of 1971 in Madrid as PANICO EN EL TRANSIBERIANO (PANIC ON THE TRAIN). It was released the following year in England but didn't reach the USA until Scotia-International billed it with THE DEATHWHEELERS at New York suburbia drive-ins for six days this January. The story won a special prize at the Sitges 1972 convention in Spain. Probably the only expensive thing about HORROR EXPRESS are the fees that Christopher Lee, Peter Cushing and Telly Savalas charge for their services.

Two million years ago a creature came to Earth from another galaxy and took over the mind and body of a man-ape. Discovered in a China cave by an archaeologist, the supposedly-dead creature is brought aboard a Trans-Siberian express, on which it kills a number of people and assimilates their identities. For a change, Lee and Cushing (in the latter's only foreign film) share equal billing and screen time. Eugeno (or Gene) Martin has written an intelligent, thoroughly original script, but as a director he's clumsy. He never establishes a sense of forboding that is essential to such a film, and thus there is no suspense at all. The more experienced directors have proven that, suspensefully, the monster's face should not be shown, only his shadow or burning red eyes in the darkness. Martin provides us with a closeup of the creature's face in the first scene and frequently afterwards, so there is nothing frightening about it. The scene where Telly Savalas (he's a riot as a brash Siberian soldier) and his small army are taken over by the monster and Chris Lee has to fight his way through them, could have been terrifying. A lot less murdering and a little more methodical build-up to such scenes would have been far more effective than watching the victim's eyes turn white and their noses bleed as they stare into the creature's ugly face. It happens about twenty times and that's nineteen times too often. Everyone runs around looking scared but the audience doesn't participate. Peter Cushing is his usual charming self, spreading wit and cheer and a firm sense of style wherever he goes. Chris Lee delivers a strong, commanding performance. His tenebrous walk, deep voice, gaunt features and tall, lean build make him

perfectly suited for villain roles. But here he's a hero for a change. The color processing is cruddy and the sets of the train are so cramped the cast literally stumbles over themselves trying to move around. HORROR EXPRESS is fine in conception but uneven in execution and suffered at the box-office because of its extremely unfair R rating.

HORROR EXPRESS, Scotia-International, 1974. Produced and directed by Eugeno (Gene) Martin; CAST: Telly Savalas (Kazan), Christopher Lee (Saxton), Peter Cushing (Wells), Silvia Tortosa (Irina), Jorge Rigaud (Trovski), Julio Pena (Mirov).

## A NON-STOP RIDE TO HELL!!



BELOW: A random sampling of some of the grotesqueries to be found within HORROR EXPRESS



## NA KOMETA reviewed by Eddy G. Bertin (ON THE COMET) (Belgium)

This Czechoslovakian film was made in 1970 by Karel Zeman, and (just as Zeman's two earlier films, THE DEMONICAL INVENTION and A VACATION OF TWO YEARS), it is based on a novel by Jules Verne, Hector Servadea. It is a real turn-of-the-century 'voyage extraordinaire', a tale of wonder in the purest sense of the word. It tells the misadventures of an isolated group of people who are on a piece of earth which has been carried away into space on the tail of a comet, which has passed Earth very closely. In turn they pass Mars and come close to the Sun before finally ending up back on Earth. Unfortunately at the ending all is revealed to be only a fever dream of the narrator, which however doesn't take anything away from the charm of the film, which is partly images in very strange and weird colors, and partly animation and cartoon. The action is fast-moving, as well as hilarious in its burlesque and satire. At the moment of the disaster, a group of Arabians are being received at the local fortress, and as a gift they are bringing an ornate table with a bomb in it. The table explodes, and they attack just at the moment the comet passes, and take them all with it, including some sea-pirates and a beautiful young lady in distress who soon

ends up in the arms of a young sergeant. Peace is made, but as soon as they think that all is safe, the fight starts again, only to be interrupted by the next disaster. There are some funny images, like the army band which is blown sky high by an explosion, all the soldiers sailing upwards in different positions, but still playing their instruments. Then there are the dinosaurs who begin to appear, and who aren't afraid of guns, but are frightened of rattling pans, so the whole army is equipped with long sticks to rattle kettles and pots and so they scare the beasts away. But very beautiful are the strange dream-like colors, sometimes the whole screen is green above and dark red below, and then it all fades into stark orange. Not to be missed.

NA KOMETA

Produced by Vladimir Vojta, directed by Karel Zeman for Ceskoslovensky Films, screenplay and adaptation of Verne's novel also by Zeman, Camera by Rudolf Stahl. Starring Magda Vassaryova, Frantisek Filiposoly, Vladimir Mensil and Jan Bor.



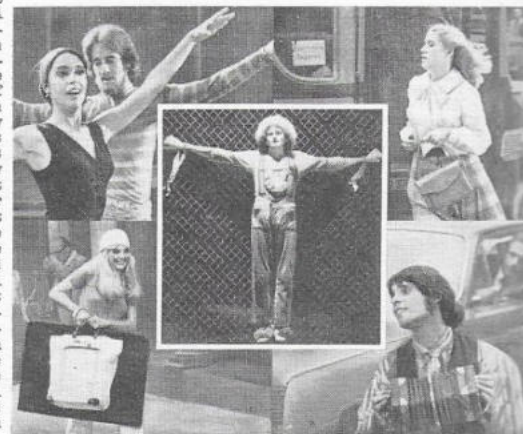
reviewed by Jerry Weddle

The inevitable drip that had to follow JESUS CHRIST SUPERSTAR is GODSPELL, a rock musical version of St. Matthew's Bible that is set in New York City. Or maybe "Fun City" would be more accurate because in the world of GODSPELL, there aren't any slums or any littered streets, but clean city parks, beautiful junk yards and the tranquil Hudson River. Admittedly, Jesus Freaks ballroom across the Washington Bridge wouldn't attract too much attention in Fun City, but when the men are wearing Raggedy Ann costumes you can't help noticing, and laughing at the idiocy of it all. The setting is all wrong; Disneyland would make the allegory credible as well as expressing GODSPELL's level of mentality. The cast, as energetic and charming as they all are, maintain the same expression of mindless bliss indefinitely. The splendid photography is by Richard Heiman, the imaginative production designing by Brian Eastwell, the unpretentious direction by David Green, and the symbolism by an imbecile. GODSPELL is too idiotic and simple-minded to be poignant. However, a breezy, light-weight attitude does make it an enjoyable film for undemanding audiences.

GODSPELL, Columbia 1973. Color by TVC, 101 minutes. Producer: Edgar Lansbury; Director: David Greene; Screenplay: David Greene, John-Michael Tebelak; Music and Lyrics: Stephen Schwartz; Photography: Richard G. Heiman. CAST: Victor Garber (Jesus), David Haskell (John/Judas), Katie Hanley, Merrell Hackson, Joanne Jonas, Robin Lamont, Gilmer McCormick, Jeffrey Mylet, Jerry Sroka, Lynne Thigpen.



GODSPELL: "The Gospel according to today."





# SOYLENT GREEN

reviewed by Jerry Weddle

PG METROCOLOR PANAVISION MGM

Stanley Kubrick's magnificent 2001: A SPACE ODYSSEY established the current trend of serious science-fiction in the cinema; it has been followed by PLANET OF THE APES, COLOSSUS: THE FORBIDDEN PROJECT, THE ANDROMEDA STRAIN, THX-1138, SILENT RUNNING and others. These films prove, despite ridicule from critics across the globe, that s.f. can express far more intelligent things than little green men. Science fiction has been used to comment on our contemporary way of life and where society is heading, often coming up with startling realizations. SOYLENT GREEN is such a film, as it takes a cynical, philosophical outlook towards man's future. It is the year 2022 when the 44 million citizens of New York are living in a status quo of destitution. The film depicts a self-destructive society and the dying environment with awesome realism. You'll have to see it for yourself to believe it. Against this background, Detective Thorn (played by Charlton Heston, who drops his granite-like stoicism for a change in favor of a more emotional characterization) is assigned to find the murderer of a mysterious millionaire (Joseph Cotten in another one of his cameos). He's a tough cop, overworked and underpaid, who saves his kindness for Sol Roth (the late Edward G. Robinson). Eventually Thorn's investigations lead him to the Soylent Corporation's factory (where they manufacture the world's artificial food supply) where he discovers a secret that threatens his life and the welfare of the world. Stanley Greenberg's (SKYJACKED) screenplay is an improvement on Harry Harrison's *Make Room! Make Room!*, the novel on which it is based. There are flaws (the dialogue is stupid) but they are trivial and unimportant. It has an intriguing detective formula, but with the usual conventions: the police are corrupt, the government is dormant, industry runs the nation, the individual vs the establishment, and the hero is something of an anti-social outcast. Richard Fleischer's direction is strained and often unconvincing (the fight sequences, for example) but he explores the theme and characters with sensitivity. Roth's death scene -- an extermination center where he drinks a painless poison and watches a cinerama-like travelogue of nature's wondrous and obsolete accomplishments -- is one of the most haunting, lyrical moments ever captured on film. I admire the integrity and insight that has gone into SOYLENT GREEN. Not only is it a timely film, but one of the best examples of filmed science fiction that has been offered.

SOYLENT GREEN, MGM 1973. Director: Richard Fleischer; Producers: Walter Seltzer and Russell Thacher; Screenplay by Stanley R. Greenberg, based on a novel by Harry Harrison; Original Music by Fred Myrow; Symphonic Music conducted by Gerald Fried; Director of Photography: Richard H. Kline, A.S.C.; Film Editor: Samuel E. Beasley, A.C.E.; Technical Consultant: Professor Frank R. Bowerman (Director of Environmental Engineering Programs, University of Southern California). CAST: Charlton Heston (Thorn), Leigh Taylor-Young (Shirl), Chuck Connors (Tab), Joseph Cotten (Simonson), Brook Peters (Hatcher), Paula Kelly (Martha), Edward G. Robinson (Sol Roth), Stephen Young (Gilbert), Whit Bissell (Destini).



ABOVE, LEFT-TO-RIGHT: Other recent films: Christopher Lee in a rare American television appearance, with Sammy Davis Jr., in Paramount-Televisions POOR DEVIL, which also starred Jack Klugman, Gino Conforti and Adam West. Paul Newman in THE STING, undoubtedly one of the finest comedies of recent years; with excellent direction by George Roy Hill, the film takes its audience through countless cons and delusions, all in excellent style; Sean Connery in John Boorman's ZARDOZ. Overlooking its flaws, ZARDOZ is one of the finest examples of pure science fiction of recent years, and possibly one of the best examples of really hard-core s.f. ever filmed. Steve McQueen and Dustin Hoffman in PAPILLON -- despite its overall excellence, the film was marred considerably by brief, unnecessary scenes of explicit violence. LEFT: FANTASTIC PLANET, a Czech cartoon which has been praised for its fine animation.



reviewed by Mark Verheiden

Directed by Sergio Leone, A FISTFUL OF DYNAMITE (Originally released as DUCK, YOU SUCKER) is probably the finest western he ever made and a darn good western over that. Leone is a master with detail, as a look at any of his previous features will disclose. His movies usually run close to the three hour mark, and feature incredibly long, super tight close-ups of his major characters. DYNAMITE is no exception. Dealing with a Spanish revolutionary (Rod Steiger) and an Irish bomber (James Coburn), Leone spins a complex and yet simple story -- or stories. Leone plots his films like an anthology, with each segment having a definite end. Thus one part of the film deals with the meeting of Steiger and Coburn -- then it ends. Another deals with a massive bank robbery, and yet another deals with the confrontation between Coburn, Steiger, and a German tank commander (Yes!) It's all tied together by a connecting thread (in this case Coburn's Irish affiliations and Steiger's grand ambitions) and everything is wrapped up by an excellent finale.

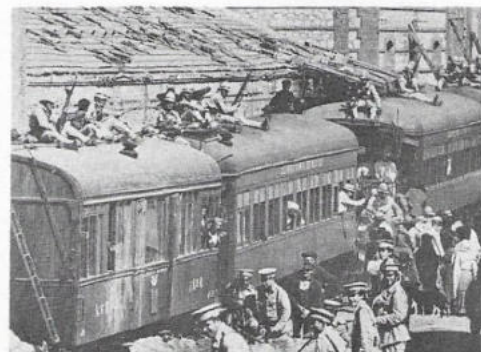
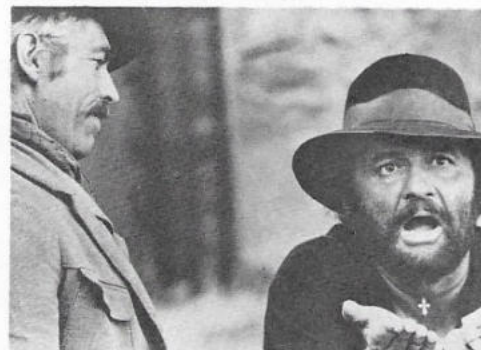
Leone's camera catches everything, and that's what makes his films so fun to watch. His characters are developed slowly and carefully. The opening sequence has Steiger riding in a plush coach filled with dignitaries and high society folk. Leone lingers lovingly over the mouths of these people as they chomp, slurp, and generally disgust each other with their eating habits. As they chomp down their dinner, they continually point to Steiger and comment on his "animalism". Naturally, Steiger gets his eventual revenge (again, lovingly depicted by Leone) and while these people really haven't done anything wrong, we hate 'em as much as Steiger does.

Perhaps the nicest things about a Leone picture deal with the film's lavish budget, all of which goes into well-designed sets and massive special effects. DYNAMITE has perhaps the biggest effects budget yet, since Coburn's character has this "thing" with explosives.

An excellent western, an excellent motion picture.

A FISTFUL OF DYNAMITE (DUCK, YOU SUCKER), United Artists, 1972. Director: Sergio Leone; Producer: Fulvio Morsella; Screenplay by Luciano Vicenzoni, Sergio Donati, Sergio Leone; Music composed and conducted by Ennio Morricone; Director of photography: Giuseppe

Ruzzolini; 2nd unit Director: Giancarlo Santi; 2nd Unit Director of Photography: Franco Dellecolli. Technicolor, Techniscope. CAST: Rod Steiger (Juan Miranda), James Coburn (John, the Irishman), Romolo Valli (Doctor Villega), Maria Monti (Adolita), Rick Battaglia (Santerna), Franco Graziosi (Governor), Goffredo Pistoni (Nino).



ABOVE, TOP: James Coburn (left) and Rod Steiger in Sergio Leone's magnificent western adventure, A FISTFUL OF DYNAMITE, originally called DUCK, YOU SUCKER. ABOVE, BOTTOM: Leone's attention to detail and realism is evident in this still from A FISTFUL OF DYNAMITE. LEFT: Charlton Heston realizes the dreadful truth behind the world's food supply as he infiltrates a Soylent Factory in SOYLENT GREEN.





reviewed by Mark Verheiden

## Deliverance

A JOHN BOORMAN FILM  
Starring JON VOIGHT • BURT REYNOLDS  
Produced by PHILIP YOUNG • Screenplay by  
From WALTER BROS. •  
A Warner Communications Company

There seem to be several pre-requisites for a "beautiful movie." Among them, good looking scenery must surely rank the highest. Find an area where even an idiot with a Brownie couldn't foul up and then shoot. Get someone talented behind the cameras and toss in a truly horrifying horror story and you'll probably come up with something like *DELIVERANCE*.

The plot is simply effective. Four desk men decide to ride the rapids of the Cahulawassee river before the stream becomes a lake, victim of man and his hydroelectric dams. Burt Reynolds, playing the leader, takes his band into the mountains and they head off. Before long, Ed (Jon Voight) and Bobby (Ned Beatty) are sexually assaulted by a pair of mountain men and are about to be murdered when Lewis (Reynolds) kills one of the vicious men with a well-placed arrow. The group finally decides to hide the body of the dead man and begin their trip down the river again -- when Drew (Ronny Cox) is killed by a shot from the high mountain walls. The men in the canoes are being pursued.

Perhaps one of the main faults in *DELIVERANCE* is the exquisite scenery, which tends to make the story of the men and their enemy a decided second rate concern. Vilmos Zsigmond, who was also responsible for the excellent camera work in Robert Altman's *MCGARE* AND *MRS. MILLER*, turns in a superb job for director John Boorman. The canyons and the river are picture postcard lovely, disturbed only by the yelling and hollering of those



guys in those canoes. The scenes in the rapids are well shot and even the crude rape scenes are given a mystic quality by Zsigmond, who shoots through the dense foliage at the lurid mountain men and their victims.

Acting isn't terribly impressive either, made moreso by the outdoors scenes. Voight, as the transformed Ed, is the best of the lot and gives a determined, quietly frantic performance. Reynolds is almost as good as Voight, with the looks to give his outdoorish antics realism. Unfortunately, Ned Beatty (who's main forte is playing overweight "characters", i.e., the bartender in *JUDGE ROY BEAN*, and a heavy in Richard Matheson's tv-movie *DYING ROOM ONLY*) is far too overbearing as the eventually humbled Bobby, and Ronny Cox (now starring in a WALTON's television spin-off, *APPLES WAY*) is simply too moral to be realistic. Dickey's novel makes much out of Drew's protests against hiding the body of the mountain man, here his comments are merely annoying (frightening in itself and almost a plot hindrance. James Dickey himself makes a small appearance as the Sheriff at the end of the flick and possibly gives the most disturbing performance of all, particularly with his last line: "You boys better not come back here."

As an experience, sitting through *DELIVERANCE* can overwhelm one with the beauty of nature. The horror story combined is good but nevertheless minor in comparison.

Where does the camping trip end and the nightmare begin...?



*DELIVERANCE*, Warner Bros 1972. 109 minutes. Producer and Director: John Boorman; Screenplay by James Dickey, based on his novel; Director of Photography: Vilmos Zsigmond; Editor: Tom Priestley. CAST: Jon Voight (Ed), Burt Reynolds (Lewis), Ned Beatty (Bobby), Ronny Cox (Drew), Billy McKinney (Mountain Man), Herbert "Cowboy" Coward (Toothless Man), James Dickey (Sheriff Bullard).

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Mark Verheiden is a fan with a serious interest in films, as well as journalism. He began writing reviews for various Amateur Press Associations and now writes for his local newspaper as well. As a critic, Mark says: "I totally agree with many film-makers: Critics are parasites; and I don't like being a strict parasite."

Jerry Weddle is a major contributor to *Cinefan*, which means you'll be forced to read his material for several issues to come! He's written for two other fanzines under pseudonyms ("I am very fond of false names"), has studied photography, Media Theory and journalism. He's also published one issue of *THRILLER*, a very good filmzine which is available from him at 40 Ribbon Lane, Wantagh, NY 11793 and contains material by Robert Bloch, Ronald V. Borst, Dale Wingenure, Bill Nelson and others. (*THRILLER* costs \$1.00)



# The Golden Voyage of Sinbad



Reviewed by Mark D. Wolf

I've always been thoroughly engrossed by the fabulous films of Ray Harryhausen. I grew up marveling at his awesome stop-motion wonders long before I had learned who he was or what single-frame model animation was.

The earliest motion picture I remember seeing was Ray's *THE BEAST FROM 20,000 FATHOMS*; for years after I'd seen it, at the tender age of three-going-on-four, I could vividly recall the scenes of the massive prehistoric Rhedosaurus rampaging through the city streets of New York, such was the impression it made on me. The next film I can recollect being overwhelmed by was his *IT CAME FROM BENEATH THE SEA*...and so it went throughout my childhood. Almost every film that had a major impact on me and my fantasy-hungry imagination had been done by Ray, or other stop-frame wizards like O'Brien and Jim Danforth.

It won't surprise you, then, when I tell you that Ray's latest film, *THE GOLDEN VOYAGE OF SINBAD*, enthralled me as much as his earlier films, though I must admit it doesn't hold me as spell-bound as the first *SINBAD* film, which he made back in 1958.

The film has only recently gone into distribution here in the states (having been doing exceptionally good box-office business overseas in England and the Orient) through Columbia, who have launched the most ambitious publicity campaign I've seen in years, replete with *SINBAD* T-shirts, paperback books, Marvel Comic 2-part adaptations, eye decals, *SINBAD*-Horoscope posters, 8mm home movies, 16mm featurettes on the making of the film (broadcast in a slightly different version over NBC-TV Jan. 21st), and the British release of a *SINBAD* soundtrack featuring music by Academy Award winner Miklos Rozsa.

I was fortunate enough to see the film twice at the University of Iowa's REFOCUS '74 Film Festival. Jim Danforth was here for the fest (holding some very well-received special effects workshops) and we were both fired-up to see the film -- one can not be in the business of trying to produce stop-motion visuals and not be keenly interested in Ray's new film!

The film is not a direct sequel to the original Harryhausen/Schneer film, *THE 7TH VOYAGE OF SINBAD*, but is rather a continua-

tion of the *SINBAD* theme of adventure and Arabian Night's fantasy, with all manner of mythological and mystical happenings to liven up the proceedings, as only Harryhausen's magic can conjure! This latest collaboration between Ray and producer Charles Schneer was in production since 1972, following lengthy pre-production work, which included considering Indian locales as possible settings in which to stage his exciting visuals (leading to the rumor that the new film was titled *SINBAD IN INDIA*!). The film was finally shot in and around Madrid, Spain, and Mallorca; many of Ray's other projects had also been shot in those locales, such as the original *SINBAD*, *GWANGI*, and *3 WORLDS OF GULLIVER*.

As a whole the film is a highly entertaining adventure, with better-than-I'd-expected performances from the cast (John Phillip Law, especially, was much better than I'd anticipated), and an amusing, light-hearted script from Brian Clemens which is highlighted, of course, by a couple of spectacular animated sequences of which Ray can be proud.

I was amazed that the film came out as









good as it did, considering what a hack Gordon Hessler has proven himself to be; his directorial talents are positively non-existent, and it is to everyone else's credit that they overcame his lack of skill.

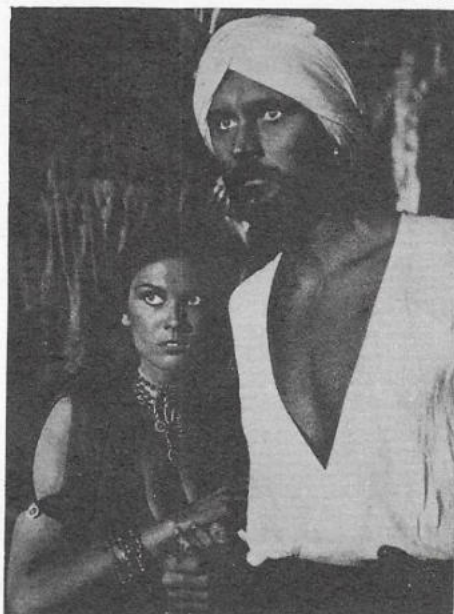
Ray uses every trick in the book to conjure up his cinemiracles, ranging from detailed miniature temples, traveling mattes, split screens, and animated people to rear screen projection and water tank effects, all utilized to the best advantage of the budget. And he does some fantastic things, let me tell you!

The 1958 SINBAD was unique in its selection of animated characters and situations, starring a one-eyed, horned cyclops; an impressively gigantic flame-belching dragon; an outsized, two-headed Roc (and its newly-hatched chick); and most memorable of all, the dueling skeleton warrior with which So-kurah almost succeeds in terminating our hero's adventuresome life. These, along with numerous well done, non animated visuals (the shrinking of Princess Parisa, the appearance of the Geni from the lamp, etc.) made 7TH VOYAGE a spectacular, colorful feast for the eyes and imagination.

GOLDEN VOYAGE carries a similarly impressive array of creatures, including:

The Homunculus: a small, bat-winged creature designed in such a way as to be embarrassingly similar to Ray's unforgettable Ymir in 20 MILLION MILES TO EARTH. For some reason the decision was made to follow the earlier concept, with a few additions and alterations, rather than troubling to come up with a whole new creation. The animation turned out to be superb, and more than compensates for the resemblance to the earlier character. In the original sketches the head was more man-like and the tail much longer than was finally built -- two changes which did not make the creature as effectively unique, as it would have been. I am very happy, however, to see Ray exploring new approaches to ani-characters in this film, such as using the small homunculus to spy for the evil magician. To survive, animation must explore new areas, must generate new excitement. People are tired of dinosaurs.

The Centaur: the most often-seen stills of the film are of this model doing dastardly things to Caroline Munro or J.P. Law; I only wish the model had been up to Ray's usual standards of excellence -- and by this I mean that I wish the centaur would have had a powerful musculature to give him the power to do the feats he does and that his face would have had the character and personality that the earlier cyclopan horror in 7TH VOYAGE had. The animation of the Centaur is so slow



and deliberate as to be unnatural, not as kinetic and loose as most of Ray's creatures.

The Kiva: the 6-armed statue that comes to life, does a dance, and then battles Sinbad, is the most imaginative ani-character to come along in quite awhile; its appearance is unlike anything else ever done and the animation is magnificent...utterly inspiring. The model has a beautiful stoney look to it, and despite a few visible seams, may well become one of the unforgettable Harryhausen creations.

The Gryphon: a marvelous beastie, ripe for animated life, though its full potential is not realized in the film. It just ambles out of a cave and does battle with a centaur. The more I see of this model the more I like the taxidermy work on it, though I wish that it would have been more unevenly colored than its overall goldish hue. I would also have liked to have seen the creature fly and thus open up the possibilities for a really dynamic confrontation between the two mythological monsters, with the gryphon buzzing the centaur from overhead, and so on. When I saw the first stills of the battle between the creatures, I felt that it might be awkward to handle two 4-legged critters and make their fight look convincing -- but I'm happy to say that the final combat fulfills my every wish for balance and naturalistic movements.

The Siren: One of the most dynamic sequences the film offers features the Siren Figurehead of Sinbad's ship, which is endowed with life by crafty sorcerer Koura (Tom Baker in a fine performance) for the express purpose of stealing a nautical chart from Sinbad for Koura to use to his evil ends. The animation of the Siren is brilliant; it walks with a halting, uncertain gait, its limbs moving stiffly as though it really is under the mage's control from miles away. The sequence is made all the more impressive by appropriate creaking-wood sound effects. The color control on the background plates is some of the finest in the film, and the whole sequence is in the best tradition of Ray's special "magic".

The film is not perfect by any means, but it is a far cry from the junk that has degraded the fantasy genre for years. Now that stop-motion animation has again produced a big money-maker, (as KONG did in '33 and 7TH VOYAGE did in '58), let's hope that some producers with good sense will decide to break away from the "prehistoric drama" formula and that they will follow in GOLDEN VOYAGE's lead by making some first-rate fantasy films highlighted by a perfect marriage of story, cast, visuals, etc.

Or am I expecting too much???

\*\*\*\*\*

Mark Wolf, aside from being an author of numerous articles on films for various magazines, is involved in the special effects business fulltime. He and his partner, Ernest Farino, have done various jobs for their local television commercials, model building for amateur films, mask and miniature work. They've also worked on one feature, FORCE:INFINITE.







# Cast

Sinbad  
Margiane  
Koura  
The Grand Vizier  
Rachid  
Haroun  
Achmed  
Abdul  
Hakim  
Omar  
Medium  
Cassim  
Selim  
Akbar  
Captain of Guards

John Phillip Law  
Caroline Munro  
Tom Baker  
Douglas Wilmer  
Martin Shaw  
Kurt Christian  
Takis Emmanuel  
John D. Garfield, Jr.  
Gregoire Aslan  
Aldo Sambrell  
Porfiria Sanchis  
Fernando Foggi  
Miguel Pedregosa  
Mario Debarros  
Juan Majan



# Credits

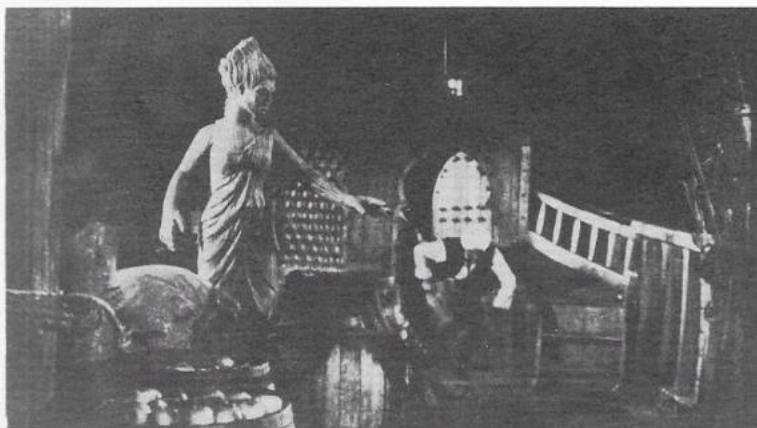
Producer  
Co-Producer and Director  
of Visual Effects  
Screenplay by  
Based on a story by

Director  
Music by  
Production Executive  
Production Supervisor  
Production Manager  
1st Assistant  
Script Girl  
Cinematographer  
Camera Operator  
Sound Mixer  
Production Designer  
Art Director  
Wardrobe Supervisor  
Set Dresser  
Make-up  
Hairdresser  
Special Effects  
Stills Man  
Editor

Charles H. Schneer

Ray Harryhausen  
Brian Clemens  
Brian Clemens and  
Ray Harryhausen  
Gordon Hessler  
Miklos Rozsa  
Andrew Donnelly  
Roberto Roberts  
Luis Hernanz  
Miguel Gil, Jr.  
Eva Del Castillo  
Ted Moore  
Salvador Gil  
George Stephenson  
John Stoll  
Fernando Gonzalez  
Tony Pueo  
Julian Mateos  
Jose Antonio Sanchez  
Carmen Sanchez  
Manuel Baquero  
Antonio Luengo  
Roy Watts

Rated: G. Running Time: 105 mins.





# WHO KILLED KING KONG?

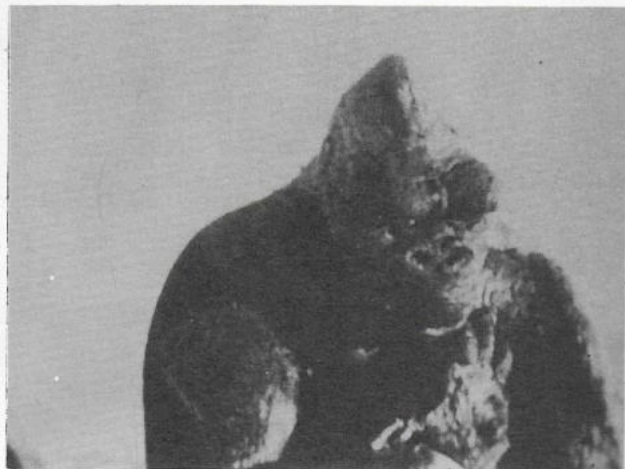
The KONG films, it seems, share the same fate as the more recent PLANET OF THE APES and DR. PHIBBS thrillers: their respective themes have been grossly and remissly overworked. The original films, KING KONG and SON OF KONG, were immediately acclaimed classics, while the later films but served to dull and cheapen the success of the first.

The first two KONG movies -- KING KONG and SON OF KONG -- are films which, to this day, remain unsurpassed in their effectiveness. Few movie buffs can watch King Kong's valiant but futile battle atop the Empire State Building against the planes or "Little Kong's" attempts to save his Beauty from the approaching waters which are swallowing his prehistoric Skull Island and not feel a lump rise in their throats. While the later Japanese-made films -- KING KONG VS GODZILLA and KING KONG ESCAPES -- are but bad and tasteless attempts to cash in on the success of the original RKO productions.

KING KONG, the 1933 classic starring Robert Armstrong, Fay Wray and Bruce Cabot, is unquestionably the greatest giant monster film ever made; it could, in fact, be rightfully called the "granddaddy" of all such films. Willis O'Brien, the greatest animator of all, did the special effects and Edgar Wallace and Merian C. Cooper wrote the screenplay. It is an impressive and dramatic film. Its flaws are few, mainly in plotting and overacting; but these, once the fans become involved in the action on Skull Island, are soon overlooked or deemed insignificant. Robert Armstrong as Denham seems to radiate an aura on the screen which makes him overshadow the other characters; Fay Wray, as talented as she is beautiful, wins the hearts of man and beast alike; and Bruce Cabot, the hero of heroes exhibits some of his finest acting, out done only by Armstrong and King Kong himself!

Shortly after KING KONG hit the theatres, RKO followed it up with a delightful sequel, SON OF KONG, also released in 1933. Again Robert Armstrong portrays the incorrigible Denham. This film takes up where KING KONG leaves off. It views almost like an improved remake of the original; only Fay Wray and Bruce Cabot, in fact, are missing from the cast of KING KONG. The special effects -- particularly in the scenes where Denham and

by Loay Hall



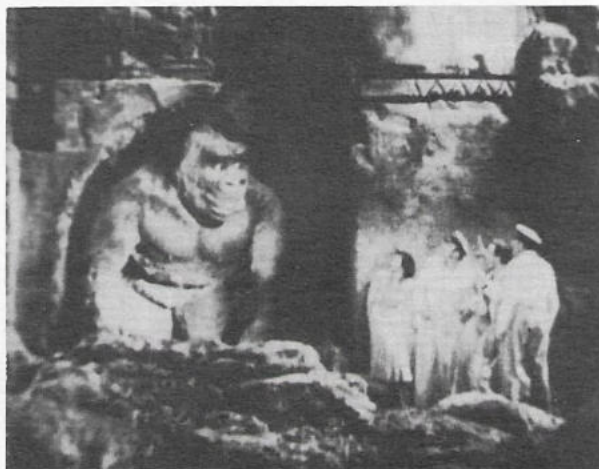
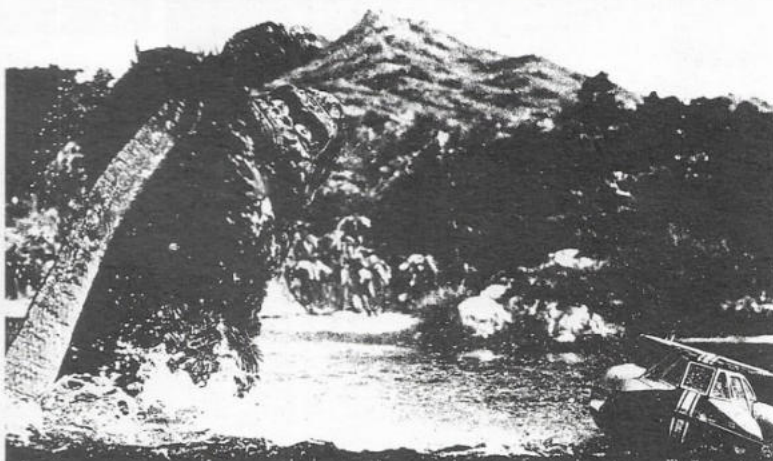
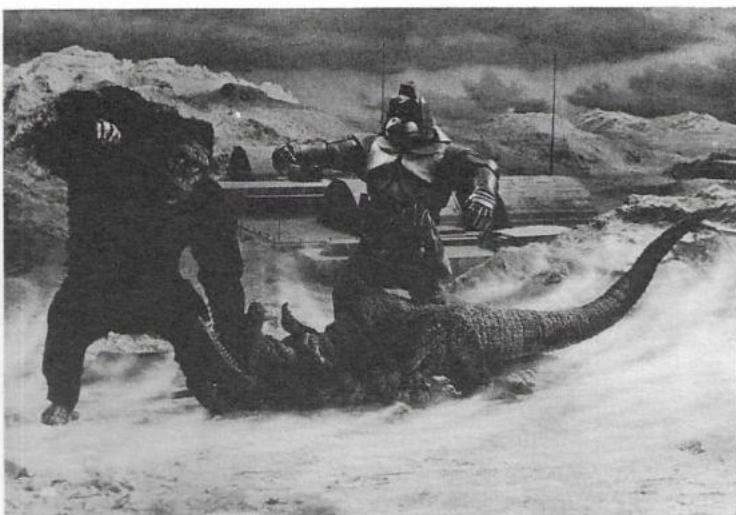
TOP RIGHT: King Kong battles vainly against the airplanes from atop the empire state building in the closing scenes of what has become the most classic of fantasy films. CENTER: Fay Wray, wearing the "Beauty and the Beast" costume.

RIGHT: Kong, puzzled and frightened by this new sensation of pain, caresses his wounds; Bruce Cabot comforts Fay Wray inside the hotel room, unaware that the rampaging Kong has found them; A prehistoric brontosaurus looms ahead through the fog as the men row across a river on a makeshift raft.

LEFT: Underscored by a magnificent crescendo of Max Steiner music, King Kong makes his first appearance, claiming Fay Wray as the sacrifice the natives have left; Bruce Cabot embraces Fay Wray after Kong has fallen to his death in the streets below. Note the top edge of the backdrop visible in the photograph.







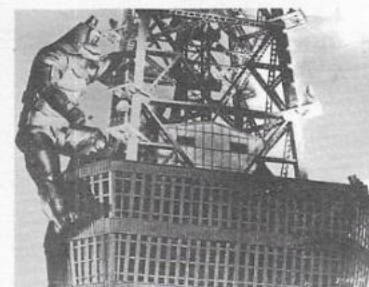
LEFT, TOP TO BOTTOM: "Little Kong" is amply frustrated during the light-comedy moments of RKO's SON OF KONG, a cute, thoroughly entertaining film, which, by no means, equals the grandeur and sheer majesty of its predecessor. It remains, however, a very enjoyable movie. In a very atmospheric shot, Kong lifts up the fallen tree on which the sailors are trapped and tosses it aside. A sea monster arises from the depths in SON OF KONG. "Little Kong" gazes in anticipation as the wound on his finger is fixed by the humans. RIGHT, TOP TO BOTTOM: A Japanese publicity still from KING KONG ESCAPES, notice the detail given to set decoration -- then notice the realism given to the monsters' costumes. Toho-Kong fites with an enraged rubber serpent, saving our heroes in their mini-sub; from KING KONG ESCAPES. "Little Kong" peers out of his cave as the humans gaze in awe. Kong battles the pteradactyl who attempts to steal his "beauty" (Ray Wray). CENTER: One of the more realistic scenes from KING KONG VS GODZILLA.







LEFT TO RIGHT, FROM TOP: Kong battles the airplanes in the original film -- a scene which gave more characterization to the creature in those short minutes than Toho ever did in four hours. KING KONG VS GODZILLA: Kong is carried away by balloons. Note the toy people. One of Willis O'Brien's best creations, the Tyrannosaurus from KING KONG. Toho's Mechani-Kong climbs the symbolical tower in KING KONG ESCAPES. Godzilla demonstrates his logical battle tactics in KING KONG VS GODZILLA. In a photograph which demonstrates the intelligence and realism given to KING KONG ESCAPES, Toho-Kong runs through the water. SON OF KONG: "Little Kong" investigates.



## KONG



the heroine (played by Helen Mack who, curiously, resembles Miss Wray) are being chased by a dinosaur, and where "Little Kong" battles a giant lizard in the treasure cave -- are, I believe, far superior to those in KING KONG. (But, then, I admit my prejudice; SON OF KONG is my favorite of the KONG films.)

(It is amusing, I think, to note how when fans and critics seize upon one of the two initial KONG films to condemn it is always SON OF KONG. And the humorous thing about it is that SON OF KONG is modeled, in plotting and acting and pace, directly after KING KONG; so when they tear down SON OF KONG they are, likewise, tearing down KING KONG (which they praise as being so superb). The only notable difference in the two is that SON OF KONG was intended to be humorous whereas KING KONG only possesses hints of it. And this -- humor in a monster film -- is looked upon by fans and critics alike with disdain.)

Then, in 1963, Toho (a capable Japanese film company) released a new King Kong movie, KING KONG VS GODZILLA. This film is by far the worst of the KONG films. It is plotless and ludicrous in the extreme. Where RKO's SON OF KONG employed humor with great success, KING KONG VS GODZILLA is so steeped in it that the film loses all semblance of seriousness! And most of the Kong-Godzilla battle scenes are reminiscent of earlier Toho productions, and the acting (even by Japanese standards) is terrible. All in all, I rate KING KONG VS GODZILLA as the worst piece of celluloid garbage I've ever seen -- and I've seen plenty!

In 1968 King Kong (who has become King Clown since Toho used him) returned in a more bearable but little better flick called KING KONG ESCAPES. The film, wherein King Kong battles his robot double, stars Rhodes Reason, Linda Miller, Mie Hama and Akira Takarada. It is a little better than KING KONG VS GODZILLA, but cannot (even jokingly) be compared to either of the RKO films. The acting is fair (Rhodes Reason and Linda Miller did their best to salvage at least this portion of the film) and the plot, while hardly believable, is interesting. Unfortunately, tho, this film, like KING KONG VS GODZILLA, was only produced as a money making vehicle and was given no serious thought by Toho.

KING KONG, then, was an original and fascinating creation in 1933, and not even a sequel could subtract from its success; but time and indifferent misuse at the unfeeling hands of Toho has, like Beauty, killed the Beast. Had Toho (a company capable of making good films -- as their original RODAN and GODZILLA prove) taken serious interest in their tasks and not permitted money to be their sole objective in making these two KING films, KING KONG VS GODZILLA and KING KONG ESCAPES might have become two excellent films. But they did not. So now all Kong fans can do is look back to the RKO productions and ignore the work of Toho, the ones who killed King Kong!

Loey Hall, as well as being an ardent fan of science fiction and horror/fantasy literature, is also the editor of VISHNU, a magazine, and PUSAD REVISITED, a one-shot publication devoted to author L. Sprague de Camp, which is available from him at 210 W. Florence, Blackwell, Okla. 74631



# AN EDITORIAL OPINION: 2001

by Ernest D. Farino

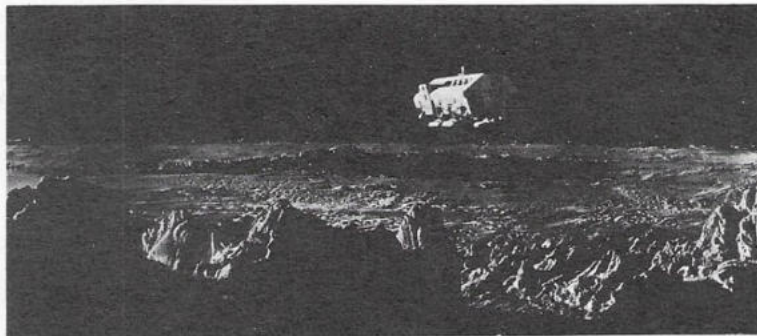
At the release of 2001: A SPACE ODYSSEY, much was made of the spectacular visual effects -- and rightly so since they were indeed quite incredible. But the press, and many fans, were quick to hoist the film atop a pedestal, quite literally "worshipping" the film and proclaiming it as a Unique Innovation in the eyes of Man and the history of the Cinema. The plot has been the source of (almost) violent controversy, so that aspect of the film will not be dealt with here (how many times have you heard it all before anyway?) But opinions regarding the special effects and technical aspect of the production have a more concrete basis, and the viewpoint supporting the film's technical "uniqueness" is something that I don't particularly agree with.

Admittedly, I too was once awed at its (apparent) magnificence when the picture was first released and was right there along with everyone else at the foot of the pedestal, blinded by the vision above. However, as I became more aware of available motion picture special effects techniques, and gradually became to be involved in this field on a full-time basis, the "lustre" began to tarnish. Finally, upon re-reading some of the published articles on the techniques after a long period of time, as well as viewing the film about 23 more times, it suddenly dawned on me (much like, I suppose, a prominent ape in the picture) that the effects techniques in the film are not really that extraordinary for their uniqueness.

And here the distinction is made: virtually nothing in 2001, again from a technical standpoint, was done for the first time. Rather, a great many things were done on a larger scale than ever before, resulting in a striking first-generation quality look that tended to overshadow the origin of the process in question.

The front projection system used in the Dawn of Man sequence, for example, was first originated in the early fifties and, at that time, a great deal of research was undertaken by the Motion Picture Research Council in determining its effectiveness. A few years after this, a fellow named Will Jenkins (who writes science fiction under the pseudonym of Murray Leinster) patented the process in his capacity as an inventor (however, due to the previous work by the MPRC, the validity of the patent is questionable and many productions have since utilized this process). The main drawback to the technique at that time was the lack of a highly reflective narrow range screen, although the basic technique was utilized in such films as THE BEAST FROM 20,000 FATHOMS and many "B" pictures of that decade.

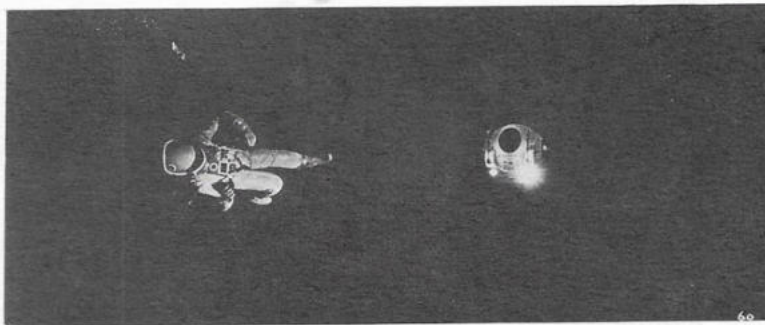
The introduction of the highly reflective "Scotchlite" screen by the 3M company in recent years caused quite a boom in front projection work, utilizing the principle of a 45% semi-transparent beam-combining mirror, which serves to unite the aligned projector and camera onto a single optical path. The screen reflects almost all of the light striking it directly back to its source, and the mirror alignment creates the effect of the projector (either motion picture or still)



located "inside" the camera. This results in optimum brilliance and picture quality as opposed to rear projection, in which process the projected image is necessarily diffused through a translucent screen rather than reflected off of an opaque one.

But regardless of the technicalities involved, the fact remains that front projection work had been used prior to 2001. Kubrick's innovation was incorporating the process on a much larger scale, and allowing his special effects team to overcome the various obstacles and problems in producing necessary hardware. Since 2001, the process, on a

levels, which prevented the "dark side" of the models from washing out (as would have been the case had a great deal of light been used in order to force depth of field). These shots were then meticulously hand-matted for combination with star or planet backgrounds, and all scenes were broken down into the three b&w separation masters. This last step allowed for the addition of each color as a single step, resulting in refined color balances and definition. (The weirdly colored landscapes at the end of the "Stargate" sequence were accomplished by printing the masters in the incorrect sequence through



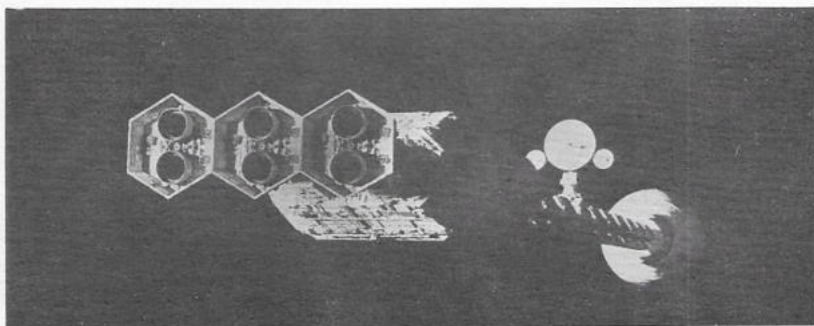
large scale, has been used successfully in numerous features, including THE BATTLE OF BRITAIN, WHERE EAGLES DARE, and THE WAR BETWEEN MEN AND WOMEN.

Other special effects included in 2001 thought to be particularly earth-shaking were the space scenes in general, due to the tremendous sharpness of the images, absence of tell-tale matte lines, and, again, an admirable "first generation" look. But there's really no magical secret to the whole business: inordinately large models (made extra big to allow for exacting detail work) were photographed at very slow film speeds, propelled by slowly moving, extremely geared down motors and support systems. The advantage of shooting at up to four seconds per frame of film was to create an almost infinite depth of field, which kept the entire model in sharp, critical focus at all times. Such a procedure also allowed for lower light

filters).

So again, the above techniques are not really unique, but (and here's the catch) they're extremely expensive. Most productions can't afford to go the color-separations route simply because it's too expensive. And the whole business of hand-mating all the elements is really extraordinary: the technique itself is nothing basically new (even amateur special effects buffs have tried hand-drawn travelling mattes now and then) but its use in this film should at least be considered highly unusual...

The most spectacular effects, however, consisted of the Star Gate slit-scan sequence. The planes of infinite, traveling light were certainly mind-boggling, but in view of the fact that the slit-scan technique is almost "old hat", and with regard to some of the more imaginative uses with which it has been employed, the Star Gate sequence al-





# THE JAPANESE FANTASY FILM JOURNAL

most becomes a bit "mild." The slit-scan technique was originated many years ago by experimental filmmaker John Whitney as an offshoot of a scanning technique popular in still photography. (The basis of the technique is: a thin slit, extending the length or width of the frame, scans across the frame area, exposing the artwork -- or whatever -- behind it onto the film. If just the slit is moved across the frame, then the original art scene will be reproduced. If, however, the camera is moved in relation to the slit, the image will be distorted: as the camera moves closer, the image becomes larger. The resulting effect, as used in 2001, was to have planes of abstract design "stretched" across the frame so that the images at the edges of the screen appeared very close to the viewer and the images at the center appeared at "infinity." Movement was introduced by moving the artwork behind the slit at the time of exposure).

Additional work by experimental filmmaker Jordan Belsen in the early sixties preceded Trumbull's 2001 rig (Whitney's was mounted on an animation stand, while Trumbull's was mounted horizontally). It is this effect which has most contributed to the fallacy that the techniques utilized for 2001 were almost god-like. But as anyone willing to do the research will find, the process has been used extensively before and continues to be used in many applications (the most recognizable being Trumbull's own work for ABC-TV, although other commercial firms, such as the motion picture department of Ling-Temco-Vought Aeronautics in Dallas, which has a vertical setup has used the principle for technical/industrial work).

My remarks in this paper will probably be misconstrued: at no time have I intended to undermine the work in 2001. I am one of the first to suggest that the effects were of near perfect quality. The slit-scan machine as used in the production was a marvel of engineering and electronics, and Trumbull, as well as Tom Howard, Wally Veevers and Con Peterson are to be highly commended for the apparatus that they were able to design and the effects that they were to produce, the intricacies of which have only been superficially suggested here. My sole intention, at the request of Randall Larson, has been to point out the one fact that is often obscured when people discuss 2001: nothing in the film, from a technical standpoint, was entirely new or unique--every process and method has a precedent. They were able to achieve a tremendous high quality in the effects work, but this was only possible because the special effects budget exceeded \$6 million and the personnel involved were given quite a "free hand" with the work; the chance to do and re-do everything as many times as necessary to produce a "perfect" result. I maintain that any production could achieve such results if made under the same circumstances. 2001 was unique in this respect.

\*\*\*\*\*  
Ernest D. Perino is the editor of FXRH, a very good fansine devoted to special effects genius Ray Harryhausen, which is available from him at 3030 Ellen St., Irving, TX 75060. Ernest is also involved in the special effects business with his partner Mark Wolf. They have done various work on television commercials, amateur films and one feature (FORCE INFINITE), providing special effects, model-work, miniatures, and similar needs. (FXRH costs \$1.50)  
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The Japanese Fantasy Film Journal is the only fansine of its kind to deal exclusively with fantastic films from Japan. It has spent the last six years publishing news and information on the current Japanese fantasy cinema, as well as extensive, in-depth critiques of past productions.

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# EUROPEAN NIGHTMARES

by Eddy C. Bertin  
(Belgium)

## CONTES FANTASTIQUES (FANTASTIC STORIES)

During 1967-1969, the RTB (French-speaking distribution web of Belgian TV) brought their viewers a series of 12 short films under the general title "Contes Fantastiques" (Fantastic Stories). The films were all produced between 1965 and 1968, with the aid of French TV and a long list of cultural associations, and based on stories by Belgian authors. They were all French-spoken, sometimes even heavily accented, and famous singer Jacques Brel introduced the series to the public, though heaven knows why he has asked for that job. The effect was the same as if Frank Sinatra would have introduced a late night horror show.

They started with *L'Homme Qui Ose* (The Man Who Dares), based on a short story by Jean Ray, published originally in 1943 in his collection *Les Cercles de l'effrayance* (The Circles of Terror). In the neighborhood of a small isolated village in Flanders, is an island surrounded by moors. Several disappearances of men and beasts have started fearful rumors among the inhabitants and there is only one witness; a young shepherd who saw one of his friends run madly on the island, as if trying to escape an invisible fiend. A wandering stranger, Hillmacher, offers to exorcise the unseen evil in return for one hundred florins and the permission to fish with dynamite on the island, something which is otherwise forbidden by the law. Alone he goes towards the island, and two nights later explosions are heard. The next day the wanderer comes back, seeming years older. He speaks in private to the burgomaster, saying "Years I have sought, and now, when I found, it was too late. You spoke about the devil on the island. No, the devil was here, behind you, when you spoke to me about fishing with dynamite. You can go safely to the island now, your nightmare is over. Mine is only beginning..." and, crying, he leaves them. When the men go to the island, shock and horror await them: among other dead beasts and fish, they find the explosive-torn apart torso of an enormous fish, and also the cruelly mangled parts of a woman's body. Only the head is still intact, the face of the most beautiful young girl they ever glimpsed, encircled by her long, golden hair. The climax of the original story -- that the girl is a siren, of course -- is never fully clear in the film, as we get glimpses of the girl running on two legs. The greatest fault of this film however, is talk, talk and talk. Of course it isn't easy to make a 45-minute film out of a 10-page story, but the screenwriter could have avoided a lot of superfluous dialogue. The eerie atmosphere of the haunted moors, eternally hiding in the fog is carefully handled, and in the film we get flashes of the necessary ingredients to solve the puzzle ourselves: shots of the running girl, the telling of how the sea once broke in to the moors just before the disappearances started. Fernand Tac's photography is good, but often too dark, too obscure, especially the last shot of the dead siren-woman's face, half obscured by leaves. The image gives a short impression of unearthly beauty, but the effect doesn't last. The sound-effects of Andre Notte are hardly worth mentioning. The film was directed by Jean Delire, and produced by Pierre Levie under the supervision of J.P. Nellis in 1966. Actors are Christian Barbier, Quentin Milo, Lilinsky, Fernand Leneche, Nele Paxton and Daniella Denie as the girl. Strangely enough, at the 7th National Festival of the Belgian Film in Antwerpen in 1966, it won the first prize as the best short film and best musical background. The music was due to Y. Deilly, montage by E. Van Outsem, while Jean Delire adapted the original story to the screen.

Thomas Owen's *Pitie Pour L'Ombre* (Pity For a Shadow) was next. Thomas Owen is a Belgian writer, who mainly writes for the French public. He had many short stories in *Piction* (The French P&SF) and *Mystere* (The French Ellery Queen's Mystery Magazine) and



Christian Barbier in the "L'Homme Qui Ose" (The Man Who Dared) episode of *Contes Fantastiques*, a French-speaking anthology series on Belgian television. This episode was based on a short story by Jean Delire, Belgium's most popular writer of horror stories. (Photo courtesy of Danny De Laet and the Antwerp Film Club.)

a few memorable collections of horror stories, such as *The Cave of the Toads*, *The Way of the Shadows* and *Nocturnal Ceremony*. *Pitie* is a ghost story, featuring a Gothic castle, complete with a burial vault where the sarcophagus of a virgin, who died in 1600 just before her wedding, is placed. A young man and woman are guests in the castle for a hunting party. The castle Lord tries to impress and seduce his female guest, much to the dislike of his own wife. He tells the legend of the young virgin, who won't find rest until she has had a lover. In the night, the Lord meets a young woman in the hall, whom he makes love to, thinking it is his guest. In the morning, the Lord's wife finds the girdle of a woman's night gown with him, and makes a scene in front of the female guest, who as it turns out, spent the night with her boy friend. Understanding at last, the older woman grabs a hunting rifle and runs to the vault, where she starts shooting at the sculptured woman on the sarcophagus, the image which seems to smile at her, no longer a virgin, having found her final rest at last. This 29-minute film has some very fine photographic angles, the work of P. Geilfus and J. Bechhoff, while the leading parts were acted by Gisele Oudart, Nadine Forster, Lucien Salkin and Yves Iarac. The film was directed by L. Derois and produced by Pierre Levie, with a musical score by J.C. Baertsoen, and montage by Derois and Levie. Derois and J. Harpmann are, however, responsible for making the story very confusing with their adaptation to the screen; too much must be guessed by the viewer, and again there is a lot of unnecessary dialogue. Produced in 1966.

Again a Thomas Owen story with *Le Testament de Mr. Breggins* (The Testament of Mr. Breggins). In this rather poorly-done fantasy, Breggins, living alone with his sister

and maid, dies but finds out that he has died two hours too soon, and he'll have to spend that remaining time on earth as an invisible presence. J.D. Colmant wrote the screenplay, which shows us how Breggins spends his last two hours taking a look at his heirs and bringing his business on earth up to point. Directed also by Colmant, produced by Pierre Levie, montage by R. Perrault, camera by B. Sentroul, with Pierre Dermo, Francoise Oriane, Nelly Corbusier, Jane Max and Georges Lambert in the leading roles. Produced in 1966.

We switch back to the work of Jean Ray with *La Maison Des Cicognes*, or *Storchhaus* as it was first published (The House of the Storks). Producer E.G. de Meyst did a good job with this tale, also one of Ray's best short stories, treating a classic subject matter: the house possessing a soul of its own and in this case an evil one. The very walls of Storchhaus are saturated with evils, ancient sorceries and hideous crimes committed there. We are in Hildesheim, 1800. Captain Flanders (played by Louis Verlant) lives alone in his Tower Mahaut, where he experiments with chemicals. An ancient mariner (no pun intended) visits him and asks him to solve the mystery of Storchhaus. As it turns out in a very creepy film, the house is a vampiric entity, which feeds on the flesh and blood of those who enter it, and in return produces payment in gold coins for those who get people to enter Storchhaus. Other actors are Gil Lagay, Manogue Gary and Nadia Gary.

Again Jean Ray, with one of the loudest stories of the lot: *Ultra Je T'Aime* (Ultra, I Love You) based on his story *Un tour de cochon* (A Dirty Trick). The title comes from an idiotic tune which runs through the film. All the opportunities for something really special are present, yet the resulting film is a complete idiocy. So (played by Paoul



Louka) is visited by an old friend, Gran Malloray (Frederic Iattin), whose sister Nele (Nadia Gary) Jo has been in love with. Gran asks Jo to kill him, because he is haunted by a very singular nightmare: in this dream Gran is in a large kitchen, whose walls are plastered with old newspapers. Gran's mother (Suzy Falc) is making breakfast, while his sister Nele is singing a horribly bad tune, "Ultra Je T'Aime." But both Nele and his mother have been dead for years. Jo kills Gran at his request. Later, while on a journey he enters a forest and hears someone singing inside an abandoned building. He enters its cellar, and Nele and her mother, and now even the dead Gran is there. When Jo looks back, doors and windows have disappeared everywhere; he has entered their twilight world completely. He tries to persuade Death (who appears in the form of a servant of the local gas distributor) that he doesn't belong with them, and manages to escape together with his beloved Nele. But when they rest in the forest, and he turns his head away from her, Nele is gone, and he hears only her singing in the now empty building. Patrick Ledoux directed this story which seems easy when reading it, but on the screen comes out as a confused mess. Camera by Freddy Rents and Jacl Leluop, stupid musical score also by Ledoux. Produced by Pierre Levis, assisted by Francoise Levis. The symbolism is lost in the idiocy and absurdity of how it is presented, and even the tragic power of the ending is broken by having it turn out as a stupid joke.

Again Thomas Owen, this time with a better story, *Le Voyageur* (The Traveler), the strange story of Patricia (Sisn Servaes), a woman in her late thirties who spent her life in a wheel chair, both her legs being lame. Every day, the butler, Frans (Louis Mercy), walks her in the park, where she seems to wait for something wonderful, something impossible to happen to her. One day, the traveler (Andre Ernotte), a stranger without a name, without a past, arrives, and strange memories awake in Patricia's mind. She becomes convinced that the traveler, and a child which she saw crushed under the wheels of a train, are the same. Francoise Levis produced this one, with Olivier de Saedeleer in the part of the child.

Another good adaptation was based on *Les Gardiens du Cimetiere* (The Cemetery Watchman) based on Jean Ray's *Les Gardiens* (The Guards) which was published in *Ghouls in My Grave* (Berkeley Books, 1965). Andre (Guy Leclercq) is without a job and also without money. Finally he obtains a job as a watchman in an old castle. No hard work, good food and good pay, what more can he ask? However, he finds himself awakening tired in the morning, and very weak, with a small wound on his throat. It couldn't have been made as a joke by the other guards, Ossip (Jean Massin) and Velitcho (Lucien Froidobise), could it? The rest of the story develops along the classic lines of all vampire stories, featuring an aged countess (Claude Grandclaude), a tomb, etc. Christian Mesnil produced this atmospheric little horror yarn.

The final Jean Ray adaptation -- he isn't Belgium's most published horror author for nothing -- was *Le Choucroute* (the famous German food 'Sauerkraut'). An old dealer in

books (Maurice Schwilden) is presented a free ticket for the railway by his friend (Fernand Leane), and so starts a fantastic trip in company of another traveler (Jacques Lippe), which brings the two into a house in another dimension.

A practically unknown story, *Tell me, Doctor*, by Erick Uytendaele was adapted by Jean Ferry and Patrick Ledoux for the screen in *Noces De Plumes* (Feather's Wedding). Basu (Edmond Bernhard) telephones his psychiatrist (Kupissouff) and tells him a very strange story about an abandoned church, an unreal trial and an even stranger wedding ceremony, in which he married a beautiful young girl. There are memories of a short period of happiness, but then Basu is left alone with his memories and a plume.

The psychic power over life and death has often appeared in fantasy stories, and Jean Le Faillot used it in a radioplay, *Le Futur Anterieur* (The Past Future), which was adapted by director Jean-Jacques Peche as the next film in the series. Director Geniat (played by Andy Van Gend), while working on a film, discovers a strange coincidence. During a special scene, he tears the picture of a famous boxing champion, and later hears on the radio that the real champion died exactly at the moment he tore his picture. His unrest begins when he remembers that just before, he destroyed a picture of his wife for the pleasure of his mistress. Wife and mistress are portrayed by Nena Nonovitch (Helene) and Martine Bertrand (Wanda).

*Simple Alerte* (Simple Alarm) is the story of a small industrialist who is too much of a dreamer, and not enough of a businessman to save him from failure on all accounts. His partners leave the 'sinking ship', his wife deserts him, and all seems lost. Yet he doesn't seem to care. Jean-Louis Roncoroni adapted it from a story by Marcel Thiry, Jean Delire produced the film, which starred Jean-Marie Deblin, Marc Audier, Irene Verdal and Yvan Badel.

Thomas Owen is again with us, as the last two films are based on his tales. *Non-Lieu* (Nowhere Place) was directed by Michel Stameschkin and starred Georges Bassair and Georges Randax.

*La Princesse Vous Demande* (The Princess Asks to See You) is one of the better films in the series, with a reasonably clear story (though at the ending again the viewer has to guess too much what has happened), a very fine musical background and excellently executed photographic angles. Hornen (Giani Bepusito) is a world famous violin player, who lives in continuous dread that some accident might fall on his cherished hands. During a concert, a beautiful young woman keeps staring at him, and he sees her again on other occasions. Some time later, he is invited by the Princess Rokasi (Danielle Lenie) to be her guest at the castle. The Princess turns out to be the woman who watched him, and all her lovers have given her that which they valued most. Hornen falls completely in love with her, and, slowly, understanding dawns on him what he will have to give her in return for her promised love. Jean Delire directed this bizarre and frightening yarn, which also starred Claude Etienne and Amedee.

Thus the series was brought to an end, unfortunately and fortunately at the same

time. There were a few of them who were worth watching, but many of the others mixed unbelievably poor camerawork with lousy acting, distorted and confused screenplays and silly background music. Very probably there are some Belgian authors who now have a few more gray hairs after seeing what had been done with their stories. On the other hand, the fact that the series had come into existence shows that finally there is some kind of interest in the field of fantasy and the macabre, and that even literary interest in them exists from cultural centers. As a whole, however, the series is -- at least to the horror addict -- a failure, with only a few of the films worth seeing, the majority being a lot of trash.

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Maurice Schwilden gazes longingly at a plateful of sauerkraut in the television adaptation of Jean Delire's "Le Choucroute" for the Belgian television series *Contes Fantastiques*. (Photo courtesy of Danny De Laet and the Antwerp Film Club.)





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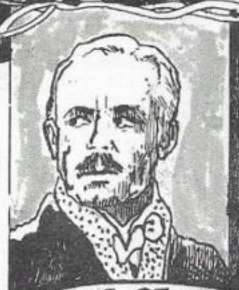
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