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SUBSCRIPTIONS
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by David Bartholomew
As few films ever do, THE EXORCIST has made history. David Bartholomew traces the development of the phenomenon from the writing of the novel, to the creation of the motion picture, to the mania which obsessed the country with its release.

JASON MILLER
A talented new actor discusses his Oscar-nominated performance as Father Karras and provides important insights toward a better understanding of the film.

WILLIAM FRIEDKIN
an interview conducted by Dale Winogura
Director William Friedkin discusses more fully the ambiguities and misconceptions that have arisen from the public reaction and critical response to his film.

DICK SMITH
an interview conducted by David Bartholomew
The makeup artist responsible for much of the film's shocking impact discusses his contribution to the film from a technical standpoint.

RETROSPECT: THEM!
by Steve Rubin
In 1954 this film delivered a subtle, but crucial, message on the hazards of the nuclear age. Steve Rubin traces its rocky production history at Warner Bros.

CAPTAIN KRONGS: VAMPIRE HUNTER
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THE TERMINAL MAN
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FLESH GORDON
an interview conducted by Mark Carducci and Douglas Olson
Howard Ziehm, the producer, co-director and bankroller of one of the most outrageous fantasy films of all time tells why it took three years and $1,000,000 to produce.

DARK STAR
an interview conducted by Dale Winogura
Young director John Carpenter tells how he turned a 40 minute student film into a major theatrical feature in commercial release.

YOUNG FRANKENSTEIN
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Madjac Mel Brooks plays vocal ping-pong with Dale Winogura while telling us all about the filming of his black-and-white ode to James Whale and the Universal horror classics.

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Front Cover: Artist Jim Thomas captures the fear of the unknown which pervades THE EXORCIST.

The great god Porno and Queen Amoura's Swan Ship, two scenes from FLESH GORDON: Back Cover
FLESH GORDON
AN AMERICAN IMAGE OF PURITY AND INNOCENCE LOSES ITS CHERRY
Last time, you remember, our intrepid interviewers were ascending in the elevator to the 11th floor of the National Screen Service building, on their way to interview Howard Ziehm, the co-director of FLESH GORDON. As the lift carried the pair upward, Mark and Doug eyed the other passengers suspiciously. Now quite close to their objective, the prospect of something going wrong worried them. The doors opened on the 11th floor, and the duo stepped out into the corridor and headed for the screening room. Howard was nowhere to be found. Mark and Doug decided to wait it out.

Time passed and soon it was 12:45. The meeting had been scheduled for 12:30. Our heroes grew nervous. "Golly, what if we have the wrong address," shouted Mark. "Gosh, then we're bloody well sunk," answered Doug. Was this the end for our courageous pair? Would our intrepid heroes never question the father of FLESH GORDON for the benefit of all mankind?

Just then, help was sighted on the horizon. Ambling amiably into the screening room came the co-producer Peter Locke, and to his right, our quarry, Howard Ziehm. Before another brush with the possibility of no interview could occur, we hustled Howard off to a secluded area of the building to begin. Howard gladly answered our questions, although at first he seemed a bit shy. This was, he said, his first interview, and he was a little nervous. Whether because of shyness or nerves, Howard Ziehm came across rather like the proverbial boy next door: tall, California sun-tan, sandy-blond hair, all smiles and eager to please. From his demeanor one would never suspect he helped concoct the outrageous goings on in FLESH GORDON, or for that matter, MONA or HOLLYWOOD BLUE.

We soon discovered that Howard was anything but the typical boy next door, for he was soft-spoken and articulate as he gave us a step-by-step account of the genesis of FLESH GORDON.

CFQ: Previous to FLESH GORDON, what film projects have you done?
ZIEHM: I've only been in the film business for about five years. Believe it or not, I started out taking baby pictures, and this was my first photographic experience. My partner and I decided to go into the film business, and we wanted to make a motorcycle flick, but we had only about $80 between the two of us. We knew nothing about film, but we tried to find out what equipment would cost us. We soon found out that it was way out of our ballpark. The only thing we could do for $80 was shoot some girlie pictures, and so that's what we did. We started out with stills,

The "raping robots" attack Flesh and his band of adventurers in Emperor Wang's palace. Tom Sherman constructed the robots to resemble those seen in numerous Republic serials of the 40s.
Top: The great god Porno is brought to life by Emperor Wang and promptly abducts Dale Ardor. The model was originally constructed by Mike Hyatt who was later removed from work on the film. The sequence was photographed by Jim Aupperle with Robert Maine doing animation. Middle: Suzanne Fields as Dale Ardor in the grip of a full-sized mock-up of the hand of the great god Porno model. Bottom: Dr. Jerkoff’s penis out a lot so I went out to see his setup. He would turn on his equipment and tell us to watch the monster, a ghost would make it move. And of course, the ghost wouldn’t show up that day. Eventually we came to the conclusion that Hyatt was going to get that monster done. A side note to this is that he had practically adopted the monster, taking it all over town, demonstrating it in restaurants. So we figured it would be best to go out and get all the equipment, but we knew if he was there we would run into trouble—he would hide the monster, or something. We had to pull a little trick on him. We called him down to the office to pick up his check, and sent a truck to his house to pick up the camera, the other equipment and the monster. We moved everything out on him. Actually, it was a sad situation that meant an awful lot to Hyatt, but it was either his feelings or the production.

After Mike Hyatt, Dennis Muren took over, and he was assisted by Dave Allen, who did a few things before disappearing, supposedly he was sick. Then Bob Maine finished the monster. The beetle man was animated by Jim Danforth, and he undertook the work the biggest break the film ever got. Jim had a meeting with Mike Benveniste, and he suggested a different kind of organization, which came from lack of experience. We were doing a very ambitious film. So Jim decided to come onto the film, and he did all the matte paintings, and then took on the beetle man. The Swaz Ship was executed by Dennis Muren.

CFQ: Why is Jim Danforth’s name spelled backwards in the credits?

ZIEHM: Jim was very irritated with the whole project. He likes to be there from the start, organizing things. He knows what he is doing, and he doesn’t like to have a million headaches every day. This film was just that, a million headaches. There was an animosity that grew slowly between all of us as we worked on the picture. My partner Bill Osco, was driving a Rolls Royce and I was telling people I couldn’t afford to pay them. It pretty much arose and it became a real struggle. Jim wasn’t used to these hassles. He felt that since he wasn’t on the film from the beginning, and he was just called in to do repair work, he didn’t want it presented as something that was done. He asked, in fact, demanded that his name not be put on the credits. I put it in backwards because I felt that if he ever wanted to point it at his work, he could.

CFQ: He has nothing to be ashamed of. His animation of the beetle man is excellent.

ZIEHM: Jim has a great sense of humor, and he put some of it into the creature’s movements. All along I had the struggle of making the crew understand that we were doing FLESH GORDON, and not Flash Gordon. I was always looking for that scene in which Jim realized this and put in little comical touches like the creature’s karate chop motion with its claws.

CFQ: Of the total budget, how much was spent for special effects?

ZIEHM: If you include the opticals done in the optical house, I would say 2/3 of it. We spent nearly $700,000, and nearly $500,000 went for effects.

CFQ: Where did the money come from? Who backed the film?

ZIEHM: All the money came from Grafit Productions, the company Bill Osco and I own. At the time we were
FLESH GORDON

It's the best-mentioned turd I've seen.


FLESH GORDON was a project that grew, not unlike a boil. Originally it was merely a hard-core porn film sort of spoofing the first Flesh Gordon serial. Scenes of real correlation between most of the principal players with everything showing were filmed, and some of these remain in the finished film, but have been cropped. But someone with a hand-egg, let's hold-the-show-right-here attitude expanded the project and ambition grew like a weed. Good independent effects and all men were hired and all seem to have done their best.

It's the best-mentioned turd I've seen.

The script is shallow and simplistic, even though someone pointed out once that sophomores can be pretty funny. Many of the situations, lines and gags are obvious, but some are pretty amusing all the same (the various titles and names are good examples of this: Dr. Flexi Jerkoff, Prince Precious, Wang the Empotential of the Planet Purno, etc.). However, once you've heard the names and storyline, you've encountered about all the film has to offer. Some of the effects are perfectly CPAV and one at the climax is interestingly designed but inexpertly animated. The spacecraft are handsome and the evil queenawash in very impressive. But rather badly handled by the effects crew.

Because of the way the film was made, that more and more money was spent, more time was spent on the effects and attempts were made to create expert effects work. There are some effects in the film that are excellent, as it happens. At one point a beetle-like creature has a fight with Flesh in a parody of the skeleton fight in THE TITANIC OF SINBAD. This sequence was designed by Bill Becks and animated by one of the two leading people in this area, whose name is given in the credits-on-screen as Mij Hrofnad (later he had requested his name be deleted altogether). This is the smoothest animation I've seen anywhere. But it isn't a very long sequence, and buried as it is in this film, will probably not be seen by people who might help Mr. Hrofnad's career. This same special effects genius seems also to have done several beautiful matte paintings, including one which looks like it walked in from THEWizard of Oz.

A scene in which penis-shaped monsters erupt from the floor of a flashy cave is also very well animated, apparently by Bill Hodge. A set of "raping robots" has been cleverly built by Tom Scherman to resemble mechanical men from various serials.

The acting is largely poor. Jason Williams as Flesh and Joseph Judith as Jerkoff both take exactly right, but are not exactly accomplished performers. Only John Hoyt, in his brief scene as Flesh's father, exhibits any real professionalism. William Hunt as Wang is reasonably good, in a high-school play fashion.

What's really wrong with the film is the direction. Directors Ziehm and Benveniste seem to choose the worst possible angle, set-up, and staging for every scene. Awkwardness is all. The camera moves when it should sit, in rigid when it should be mobile. Actors block the speeches of others. The pacing is erratic and annoying. Despite being amusing most of the humor is of a somewhat lower level than the jokes on Playboy's party jokes page. The whole film constantly verges on the merely smarmy and lewd. It isn't explicitly sexual enough to be pleasingly exciting; it isn't good-looking enough to get you by the low-key pore; and it isn't funny enough to really matter—except to a few in the crowd who might be hard-core science fiction and horror movie buffs. I myself probably found the film a lot funnier than would the average film-goer, simply because I recognized a few more references.

A film like FLESH GORDON needs more control than this one has. It needs a unity idea and a clear goal, instead of flailing about trying to touch on as many lamppooned points as possible. All too few satirical films seem to have the necessary clarity of vision, the specificity of purpose. Films like THE LOVED ONE and BLAZING SADDLES ultimately fail because they attempt too much. Being funny, being funny, the goal is satire, just isn't enough. Satire has to be specific and controlled. A film out of control, like all of FLESH GORDON and much of BLAZING SADDLES might be funny, but they should be so much more than funny. That FLESH GORDON is also, by far and large, a poorly-made film, simply adds to its failure. It is an attempt I'm glad to see made, but I wish the results and the whole had been as worthc while as the promise and the parts.

Bill Warren

Left: Suzanne Fields and Prince Precious get acquainted when Flesh seeks help against the tyranny of Wang in the Forest Kingdom. Right: Fine character actor John Hoyt puts in a brief cameo appearance as Prof. Gordon at the beginning of FLESH GORDON.
As few films ever do, THE EXORCIST has made history.

William Friedkin began shooting THE EXORCIST on August 14, 1972, in a hospital on Welfare Island, in New York. Neither he nor author and producer William Peter Blatty could possibly have been prepared for the scope of the experience that followed, and to a very real extent, still continues to develop.

The novel on which the film was based goes back to the late 40s and Blatty's college days at Georgetown University, where he read newspaper accounts of an exorcism incident involving a Mt. Rainier, Maryland boy in 1949. Blatty had once considered entering the priesthood and becoming a Jesuit, began a massive research into the subjects of possession and demonology that only ended with the writing of the novel, having finally, almost accidentally, at a dinner party, interested a publisher (Bartam Books) in the project. Every other publisher approached by Blatty had flatly rejected the book. By this time, he had been typed as a writer of comedy, capers and whoodunits. Blatty based his novel not only on the 1949 case, but also on an earlier one in Carroll, Iowa, in 1928, and on a host of historical cases dating back to the subject's Biblical origins, all of which he had unearthed in his studies. The novel, which Blatty has described as a 350-page "thank-you-note to the Jesuits" for his education, was completed by the summer of 1970. Bartam sold hardcover rights to Harper and Row who published it the following Spring. Almost immediately, it became a best-seller, battling Thomas Tryon's The Other, published at roughly the same time, for the top of the charts.

As a veteran screenwriter, Blatty knew very well the dangers that movie producers posed to the writer and his work when purchased for film production. Determined to avoid this situation at all costs, Blatty decided to take on the deal-making himself. He interested producer Paul Monash (who bought the book on the profits of his BUTCH CASSIDY AND THE SUNDANCE KID success) in a six-month option, and he, in turn, interested Warner Bros. for a reported purchase price of $441,000, in making the film and agreeing to Blatty's strict, self-protective condition that he produce the script. Monash eventually left the deal with a hefty $50 cut of the film's eventual profits. Some say he was forced out by Blatty, a stolen file, and a Warner Bros. xerox machine, all involved in a brazen bit of derring-do right out of one of Blatty's own screenplays. This maneuver left Blatty the sole producer. Blatty was then instructed on mutual approval of director. Blatty was pushing a young director named Billy Friedkin. They had met a year before when Blatty and Blake Edwards were trying to find a director for GUNN, and later, when Blatty and Friedkin attempted to put together a production deal on Twinke, Twinke, Killer Kane. Soon, one by one, all of the Warner Bros. choices declined: Arthur Penn was too busy teaching at Yale; Stanley Kubrick would not do it unless he could produce as well; and Mike Nichols, according to Blatty, "didn't want to hazard a film whose success might depend upon a child's performance." There were also several "mystery" directors suggested by Warner Bros. but mixed by Blatty including one who Blatty, in his recent screenplay volume, dubbs "Edmund de Verre" and who smacked pretty sharply of John Cassavetes. For other directors came now surfaced, proudly claiming to have refused the project, now that it has become fashionable to put down the film, with the latest being Peter Bogdanovich, in a recent issue of Interview, Blatty continued to push Friedkin. Fortuitously, 20th Century-Fox released THE FRENCH CONNECTION and that finally ended Warner Bros. reluctance. Friedkin was hired and went to work on Blatty's nearly un-filmable first draft screenplay (which runs to 226 pages in the present published edition). Ironically enough, Friedkin immediately charged Blatty with starting his own novel.

In August of 1972, the New York Times devoted most of its Sunday "Arts and Leisure" section to the start of filming of THE EXORCIST. A couple of painstaking times the Times would carry major articles in the weekly section on a single film. The Warner Bros. publicity mill, without ever actually starting up, then died down. Most people, probably many in the trade included, promptly forgot about the filming. Then came a coup of publicity that Harold Newman, who headed the publicity unit on the film, or anyone else in the business for that matter, could ever have even hoped to concoct. In a General Audience on November 15, 1972, Pope Paul VI delivered an address on the Devil and evil. According to the text in the Vatican newspaper, the Pope declared, "Evil is not merely a lack of something, but an effective agent, a living spiritual being, pervaded and perpetuating. A terrible reality....So we know that this dark and disturbing Spirit really exists and that he still acts with ever new cunning: he abounds in inventions and devices against the souls that sows errors and misfortunes in human history. This question of the Devil and the influence he can so exert on individuals as well as on communities...is a very important chapter of Catholic doctrine which is given little attention today, though it should be studied again." With these words, the Pope shifted the spiritual into the secular ad-pub business.

A bit later, the rumors began. The press seemed to have been unofficially banished from the film's shooting. By March, 1973, the film was reported (always vaguely) as over-budget and behind schedule. The original shooting plan of 105 days was stretched to 200 days. When one reporter asked Blatty the production had begun he replied, "I think it was 1822." Yet Friedkin maintained that Warner Bros., and especially its chief, Ted Ashley, were behind him 100% and were generously allowing him the freedom and perfectionism usually foreign to Hollywood films. Consequently, the budget kept expanding: originally the film was to have cost $4 million, then it was hiked to $6 million (April, 1973), then to "over $7 million" (May, 1973), and by the film's opening in December, to between $8 and $10 million. The figure, which has not been officially confirmed, is now rumored between $10 and $11 million.

The amount of truth in most of the stories that managed to filter out one way or another into the
press will probably never be fully determined. The rumour was that the writer had actually been the one who wrote the story, and that he had disguised himself as a cousin of the actress, in order to get the original manuscript and the list of names and addresses of the people who had seen and heard of the events. The writer was later arrested and charged with criminal defamation, but the trial was postponed until the film was completed. It was eventually released in 1977, and the film received mixed reviews from critics. Some praised the performances and the atmosphere, while others were critical of the pacing and the overall quality of the film. The film was a commercial success, but it also generated controversy and debate.

Gowran, a small village in County Kilkenny, Ireland, is the setting for the film. The story follows the life of Hazel Smith, a young woman who is visited by a mysterious figure who claims to be the devil. Hazel is plagued by visions and nightmares, and she begins to lose her grip on reality. The film is a psychological thriller, with elements of horror and supernaturalism. The director, David Cronenberg, was known for his unique and innovative style, which was evident in his previous films like "Shivers" and "Videodrome". The film was a critical and commercial success, and it is considered a classic of the horror genre.

The film's themes include the battle between good and evil, the nature of reality and perception, and the power of suggestion and manipulation. The film is also notable for its use of special effects and its depiction of the human body as a machine and a canvas for the devil's inscriptions. The film was a turning point in Cronenberg's career, and it established him as a leading figure in the horror genre.
ed] and shopping and restaurant areas felt the un-
accustomed crunch. In New York, fires were ig-
nited along the street by line standers to keep
warm. Although the film drew all kinds of people,
oftimes an uglier crowd prevailed. At the Para-
mount Theatre in New York, the last showing one
particularly cold evening in February had to be
cancelled when the crowd, afraid they wouldn't all
get in after hours of waiting, mobbed the theatre.
Henry Marshall, the first exhibitor to play the
film in Toronto, reported, "It's a brutal crowd. I
see nice people in the lineup and I tell them not to
come in but they do anyway."

And indeed they did. But as so often happens,
a string of wild successes simply prepares the
way for failure. Warner Bros found, in extending
bookings into smaller areas through the U.S., that
many theatres had trouble in maintaining their 15
week minimums. On June 19, in a controversial
move, Warner Bros four-walled the film into 110
theatres in the metropolitan New York City area
alone with six-week minimum runs. The satura-
tion booking failed by overkill; by the 5th week,
the grosses had slipped to $300,000 from the first
week's total of over $3 million. Although as of
this writing the film is still playing on 42nd St in
New York, for all practical purposes, THE EX-
ORCIST has had done with New York.

A bit of perspective might be in order, at
least from the point of view of audience response.
The power of THE EXORCIST hitting the screens
had a precedent of sorts in the opening in Novem-
ber, 1931, of the original FRANKENSTEIN. To
ward off potential trouble (and perhaps to shrewd-
ly ballyhoo it further), Carl Laemmle ordered a
"warning" to be delivered by Edward Van Sloan
in a prologue to the movie. Denis Gifford, in his
book on Karloff, notes that at previews people ran
screaming from the theatre during the film. Oth-
er sources report ambulances standing ready at
car side for action and that theatre managers
soon learned to keep a good supply of smelling
salts handy. There was a loud cry of rage from
parents and civic groups that the film was too
horridly and should play to adults only. As it
was, the public objected so strenuously to the se-
quence with the Monster and the little girl that it
was snipped from the American version and the
ending altered as well. A contemporary trade re-
viewer for Film Weekly concluded his critique of
FRANKENSTEIN: "The film has no theme and
points no moral, but is simply a shocker beside
which the Grand Guignol was a kindergarten... It
is the kind of film which could only induce night-
mares." Sound familiar?

Controversial films mean, if they're really not
feeling around, lawsuits, or their threat. And
THE EXORCIST has cooked a fine brew of them.
The first to surface was a distraught Mercedes
MacCambridge who claimed, perhaps excessive-
ly, that in providing the demon's voice, she was
responsible for its power on the screen. ("If there
was any horror in the exorcism, it was me!") She
claims Friedkin promised her a credit line and
then welched. Her tale of how she recorded the
cries (and whispers) and vomiting sounds makes
extremely bizarre reading, including her self-
duced regurgitation ("swallowed 10 raw eggs and
a pulp apple") and physical restraint ("I had the
crew tear up a sheet and bind me hand and foot")
with the result of complete physical exhaustion
and a ruined voice for weeks." Friedkin answer-
ed by noting that her contract did not call for a
screen credit (although one was quickly inserted
into the film) and that he had been overruled on
the issue by the Warner Bros legal department.
He added that not all of the demon voice was
soley hers, that a barrage of noises and sounds
were incorporated and, indeed, that her words as
originally recorded were "varied pitched and re-
recorded at slower speeds," all of which finally

The exorcism of Regan. Top: Father Merrin (Max
von Sydow) incants the Roman ritual andRegan
(Linda Blair) squirms in agony. Middle: The two
priests watch in amazement as the little girl's
body rises from the bed. Bottom: The end is near.
Father Karras (Jason Miller) finds the body of
stricken Father Merrin. Is evil triumphant or de-
feated? While Blatty's book is quite specific on
the matter, Friedkin's film is tantalizingly am-
biguous.
resulted in the final voice on the soundtrack. The squabble developed into a fairly bitter personal battle between the two with MacCambidge, after receiving her on-screen credit, demanding a direct and public apology from Friedkin. She received no such apology, but she did exert considerable pressure to get one by withholding her permission for Warner Bros to release a soundtrack album including scenes and dialogue from the film. In mid-October an arbitration board of Screen Actors Guild decided that MacCambidge was to receive 3.6% of all album royalties, an advance of $3,000 and billing on the album jacket to be 100% the size of the other actors and with the additional billing "as the voice of the demon," but no apology, an area which the board declared was outside the realm of existing contractual obligations. For the record, for her film work MacCambidge received $2,000 per week for four weeks work and $2,000 for one additional day.

Actress Eileen Dietz was the second complainant to appear. In a dispute that has become quite nasty, she charged that she was the double for Linda Blair for much of the film and that most of the crucial scenes in the film were played by her and that Blair was receiving credit, and perhaps an award or two, for what was mostly Dietz's work. Almost everyone concerned with the film labeled her a self-server and discounted her charges. Dietz countered with a letter to Variety in March. Warner Bros then stopwatched the film and finally admitted that Dietz was on-screen for 26:1:4 seconds but still maintained that her work was hardly of the importance she claimed. Dietz has since curiously refused to participate in a Screen Actors Guild arbitration requested by Blair's lawyers. Dubbed the "Great Pea Soup War," the issue is still unsettled.

Other legal problems include a suit against Newsweek for publishing photos of Blair in demon makeup which were apparently snapped from a screen during a showing and published in an interview with Blair in the 1.21.74 issue. Also, Lea Nordine, a musician and soundman, has sued Warner Bros for $35,000 due him for work done on setting up sound effects and voice-overs but not paid for. His lawyers contend that Blatty was responsible for not accepting the work.

Other non-legal hassles include the possibility of bad blood between Friedkin and Ted Ashley as the December openings grew near and Friedkin, having fired Schirin, pleaded for an extension to work out a new score for the film (Friedkin originally wanted Bernard Herrmann to do the music) and later, when Friedkin felt that the Warner Bros publicity department should push Jason Miller harder for the various best acting awards. This is not to mention the feuding between Friedkin and Blatty during the latter stages of shooting and post-production, although these problems, with a great show of mutual backslapping and boyish grins, at least for the photographers, seem to have been patched over.

The religious furor the film aroused centered, as was to be expected, in the Catholic Church. Friedkin had used three priests as advisors and given one of them, Rev. William O'Malley, S.J., a featured acting role. Many commentators seemed upset not with the fact of the film as much as with the participation of the priests, as if their work on it contrived to lend the support of the Church to the film.

None of the religious experts could agree on the film's effect although most were negative. One of the positive views came from Father Michael Callahan in Los Angeles who stated, "If it makes people think about the meaning of good and evil for an hour, it'll do more good than a lot of religious study programmes." Most were not that optimistic. The Rev. Juan Cortes, a Jesuit at Georgetown University, calls the film "not help-

Jason Miller as Father Karras. Top: Director William Friedkin discusses the motivation of Karras during the exorcism with Miller and von Sydow (off camera). Middle: Karras bears the burden when his Uncle (Titos Vandi) has his mother committed, "What I going to do? Put her in big hospital, Timmy? Who going to pay for that?" Bottom: Karras ministers to his aging mother on one of his visits. More so than the novel, THE EXORCIST is the story of Karras.
furl to society... You can't bring people to God by scaring them to death. You can't do a positive thing by negative means." Theologians warned that the film taught the Devil, exorcism, and the function and mission of priests. The Rev. Richard Woods of Loyola University strangely noted that the priests, in reality, would have helped him see the exorcism—a belief that backs up what many feel to be one of the indictment of THE EXORCIST against the crush, "The film is a tool from the ritual in the most stupid and reckless manner [trying to fight the demon hand to hand instead of relying on the power of God]."

Rev. Eugene Kennedy, father of the film for ascribing mysterious and mystical power to the priest," He called the film "the GOING MY WAY of the film going for the first time in the sense that no one single frame. Not one single word. Warner Bros guarantees it."

With the hefty U.S. grosses (the film alone accounted for 14% of the 1972 U.S. box office, January 1974) added to the bright foreign outlook, Ted Ashley announced in the New York Times that he expects the film to amass $110 million grosses (after the film's initial run has even one $180 million. For comparison, the gross of THE GODFATHER now stands at $155 million worldwide.) The film has also sparked a novel. Before the film had opened, the novel in hard covers had appeared on the Times' bestseller list for 55 weeks. The Bantam paper edition sold 5 million copies, and the film, Bantam printed an additional ten press runs amounting to another 5.5 million copies, which makes it the 2nd all-time best-selling paperback of all time. Dr. Ralph Woods, president of the Academy, said, "It has been translated into over a dozen languages."

THE EXORCIST has not collected all the awards Warner Bros and other observers had expected. The first Academy Award nominations, given in January, are the Golden Globes, and the film captured four: director, screenplay, actor, and actress (Blair). However, the industry awards, such as those of the Directors Guild of America and the Writers Guild, bypassed the film completely, as did, for the most part, the Os-"

CQF: How were you chosen to play Karras? MILLER: Billy Friedkin went to see that The character of Karras, more than in Blatty's novel, is the center of the film's story, and I sought out Miller to discuss how the character developed. I found him working on his latest pic-

Jason Miller received an Academy Award nomination for his portrayal of Father Karras in THE EXORCIST, his first motion picture role. The character of Karras, more than in Blatty's novel, is the center of the film's story, and I sought out Miller to discuss how the character developed. I found him working on his latest picture, NICKEL RIDE for 20th Century-Fox and director Robert Mulligan, in which again works as an actor, in the lead role of a gangster. Act-
exorcism out of the picture, with the kind of Dosto
evskian character Blatty created in Karras, you can do without, but without touching on the supernatural. You are dealing here with mythical guilt, a guilt that forces transcendence by some kind of sacrificial act. It’s not the sin of guilt that we’re imma-
dicated with in magazine articles. I mean you as-
soilate it with Kafka and Dostoevski—it’s deep.

Although Blatty’s Church is also subject to it’s Father Church. Most of the older Jesuits he
talked to when he said, “I’ve lost my faith,” he’s
giving confession to his father. You’ll no-
tice that there’s a complete absence of no men-
tion of his father—not even a picture.

You are dealing with a profound metaphysical change in terms of Karras, because that which has sustained spiritual and emotional level has shifted away from him, and he’s really in a void. He is a man of science as well as a man of religious oppos-
ites that drive him mad, and creates this en-
orous guilt. So his entire life is going through a profound change, and in the middle of it, he’s faced with incorporating himself into an experi-
ence that is kept in the closet by his church, and
his rational mind says it does not, cannot exist.

The only way he can meet it is on grounds of
compassion and finding the best approach, without painting every-
thing in huge, gashing strokes. That was one of
the great dangers with Karras, it could lend it-
self to sentimentality.

CFQ: That scene in introducing Karras is quite
remarkable.

MILLER: During that shot, you hear Ellen say-
ing, “You have to change within the system.”
That’s where he’s at. The audience may get it on
a very peripheral level, many of them won’t, but
the fact is that it’s there in the overall concept, and
for the hyper-sensitive viewer to pick up.

CFQ: The EXORCIST affects people not just
because of the makeup and special effects, but
because of the effects of the movie.

MILLER: Almost every sanctuary in the film
is violated—the church, a child’s room, a hospita-
tal. All the sanctuaries people use are question-
 inferred as to how that affects people at a very deep and vulnerable level of their being. Karras’ sanctuary, the church, has no solace for him. His privacy is also desecrated
because of the possession, in the fact that he has to
deal with it.

CFQ: That scene in the mental hospital is very
revealing of the character of Karras.

MILLER: These deranged, abandoned people,
coming to him, to that black symbol he wears, respond to what he represents. By pushing them away he does what his interior state is. That gesture tells you more about Karras than the dialogue. It’s the same with the park sequence. He is really pushing the mother away. Because of his luck of faith, he’s no longer equipped to deal with what his vocation deals with: human pain, misery, and suffering.

What Friedkin and Blatty also did was give
the inanimate a lot of life, like the medal, the statue,
the prayer book, and the medical machines. Lit-
tle things are beautifully woven into the overall
picture. When I go downstairs and look at her
paintings, after she throws up on me, if you look
close there’s some red-and-green putty she has
that基本的神秘成分, it doesn’t sat-
tify anything, but it keeps alive doubt.

CFQ: Were there any specific directions Billy
gave you that really stand out in your mind?

MILLER: He’d give me a thousand directions, and
told me to live in Georgetown for three weeks
with the Jesuits. That was the best direction he
could’ve given me. I think that’s what I’m
found, he said, “I would love to know of the wonders of God’s love.”

CFQ: One of the secrets of the film’s success are
the many different aspects one finds on con-
secutive viewings.

MILLER: The texture is so dense, and there
are so many things that Billy threw away or hid
that will be revealed in successive viewings.
Nothing is really wasted. It’s impossible to re-
ceive the full dimension in one sitting.

CFQ: When you read the script did Karras ap-
pear as an important part of your own experience?

MILLER: Oh, very much so. I was raised as
an Irish Catholic, and had a great deal of influ-
ence from that family’s cultural roots, rubrics, and rites. I was struck by what Blatty had
captured, that elusive mystery of a man be-
coming a priest, and the quiet tragedy of a man losing his faith. This is why I think the
person experiences a sort of exorcism his “or-
minal” is the “false exorcist.” A formal exorcism
doesn’t work here, it’s an act of human love that
works, coming out of violence.

Although it’s the fragmentation of the shot,
that your concept of Karras changed?

MILLER: That’s the danger of shooting out of
sequence, and having 2-3 weeks off between
shots. The character can suddenly let go of you
because the reality of everyday life starts to in-
trude, I did a great deal of preparation, and the
2-3 weeks I had off, I used to let the char-
acter mature, and let it ripen. Before I played a
scene, I saw or felt it maybe live or six different
ways, and it was just a matter of eliminating, and
finishing off theภาพยนตร์ชุดนี้.

CFQ: What do you think psychiatrists are exag-
erating about the effect THE EXORCIST has had on
people?

FRIEDKIN: I don’t really know. I don’t want to
say there is no reason for concern on the part of
psychiatrists. I personally don’t feel that any pic-
ture by itself, without certain social conditions
being given up front, has the power to turn some-
body into a raving maniac.

I was in Pittsburgh not long ago, and I read an
account there of a doctor who said he took twelve
mental patients to see it, and the picture irre-
calmy drew them into hopeless insanity, and that
they were now beyond cure. You have to take into
account (and this is something the newspapers ne-
ever do) the emotional condition of the patient
before he went in. It is possible of course that somebody
seeing THE EXORCIST, or any other work gives
much less attention by the newspapers or by the
public, in a state of mental imbalance can become
farther unbalanced by an encounter with a friend,
a relative, or a stranger.

I don’t think there’s a convincing argument that
freedom of the screen should be limited, or
that “this or that” picture is harmful to some-
one’s stability, even including hardcore porno-

Interview conducted by Dale Winogura, May 14,
1974 at the Warner Bros studio in Burbank, Cali-
forina. The transcript has been edited slightly.
CFF: The N.B.A. Quarterly said the film's shock value is a way of giving people's fears a kind of expression to which they relate. Do you agree?

FRIEDKIN: No, I don't. It was not my intention to do this. I made the film because it was a good story. I never thought of what psychological effect it would have on anyone. I intended to make a picture that would first and foremost be an engrossing work of fascinating entertainment. The hullabaloo that's taken place is a big mystery to me frankly.

I saw Psycho when I was a kid, and I was very terrified by it. Fortunately, I was able to overcome that. I have friends who are very intelligent who can't bring themselves to see the picture because they know what it's liable to do to them. I understand that.

I made the film as an overview of an event involving five characters who interested me. I don't know the probability as regards literal possession and the possibility of exorcism. I'm not knowledgeable enough in that area.

CFF: Are you reluctant to discuss the implications of what you were trying to do in the film?

FRIEDKIN: I'm not reluctant. I have thought about these things. I tend to think about the physical problems of production, which are many. Occasionally, things occur to me in terms of deeper meaning. But the main thing that concerns me is how to achieve the story. If there is deeper meaning, it's only "by the way."

A friend of mine in the clergy sent me an article from a Catholic paper. Some clergyman suggested that the story was a homosexual fantasy, that Kasas and Merrin were in a male bond to physically torture this little girl. The girl stabbing the vagina was a gesture of female hatred, and the passionate involvement of these two men ends in death over the actions of this little girl and her vaginal problems. Presumably, anyone looking for that sort of thing is going to come up with something equally as far-fetched. I must say it never occurred to me, but when the guy puts up such a convincing case, what can I tell you?

CFF: Do you believe in the devil?

FRIEDKIN: I think it is possible that many people form a moral code based on beliefs that are outside the tangible and rational. My moral standards were formed when I was very young, and they did have a lot to do with the belief that I would not get my ultimate reward in heaven if I f*cked up here on earth. Those are hard things to shake, and the older I get, I don't find any reason to abandon that. I find more reason to say anything is possible. The more I spend thinking about those concerns outside my own narrow ones, the more I think it's possible that higher and deeper levels of consciousness are out there, and the life we lead here is just a little ways along.

CFF: You believe in heaven and hell then?

FRIEDKIN: I believe that heaven and hell exist as other levels of consciousness. I'm fascinated not by the universe that encompasses mankind, but by the mind that encompasses the universe. That is one underlying factor of my interest in this picture, and all the pictures I've made, but this one especially. The mind that can conceive of possession and exorcism exists within ourselves, not outside.

CFF: Do you feel the belief in a personified devil is an escapist viewpoint?

FRIEDKIN: It depends on the individual. I don't think you can make a generality out of that. It isn't what you believe, it's how you act on your beliefs. I find many worthwhile things in Catholic doctrine. I can't accept the whole enchilada however.

CFF: In the opening Iraq scenes there is a feeling that something is closing in on Merrin.

Director William Friedkin at work. Top: Friedkin gives instructions to Linda Blair to prepare her for a scene with Ellen Burstyn. Middle: Billy, as everyone calls him, listens to cinematographer Owen Roizman explain a camera set-up on location in New York. Bottom: Friedkin goes over critical action in the levitation scene with Miller and von Sydow. The refrigerated set necessitated the wearing of insulated clothing. Friedkin calls his film a drama, not a horror film.
FRIEDKIN: Something is closing in on all of us. The sounds in that sequence were meant to convey his inner state. Merrin is a man near the end of his life, and he's very expectant of death.

CFQ: When he faces the statue of Pazuzu, he seems to be challenging it.

FRIEDKIN: That interpretation is possible because you don't see his face at that point. That's one of the things I let the viewer fill in. What was intended in that sequence was that in a land of mystery, certain portents are uncovered by an old man that bring premonitions that are later fulfilled. I added the St. Joseph medal which was not in the book, which is something that is passed from hand to hand and ends up in the hands of Father Dyer at the end. The reason for that was again to let the audience have its own interpretation as to what it means. It is either a talisman of good or evil depending on what you bring to the film. The statue of Pazuzu is obviously a symbol of evil.

CFQ: THE EXORCIST is on a much higher spiritual plane than other horror films.

FRIEDKIN: I wasn't thinking of the horror film genre at all. I thought of it primarily as a suspense film. The quality I look for most in a picture I'm directing is the suspense factor, the race against the clock.

CFQ: Do you plan your films carefully?

FRIEDKIN: Sure, very carefully. I seldom deviate from a plan I make weeks, months in advance. I would say I go about 80-85% with a planned sequence of shots and angles. I let everyone on the cast and crew know what's coming up with primitive drawings as a guide. Every day is a continual re-adjustment, but if you don't have a plan, you have nothing to adjust from or to.

CFQ: In the dissolve from Iraq to Georgetown, we go from light to dark. Was this intentional?

FRIEDKIN: Yes. Every scene was planned for its light and dark values, even down to the actors within a shot. I tried to alternate those values as much as I could.

CFQ: One of the reasons the crucifix scene is as effective as it is, is that it is brightly lit.

FRIEDKIN: We overlit the scene. The cameraman was reluctant to do that, and once we did it, the lab was reluctant to print it that way. They printed it at the bottom of the scale, totally in the dark, and I screamed at them to get it up four points brighter. That's not a new concept. Hitchcock did it in pictures like SHADOW OF A DOUBT, where most of the action takes place in broad daylight.

CFQ: Supernatural horror in the daytime is rather unique in films, with a few exceptions.

FRIEDKIN: I attempted to make THE EXORCIST as realistic as possible. No one gives a hysterical performance out of keeping with human behavior. That's why I cast it the way I did. The one mistake I sort of made in casting was Lee J. Cobb, who gives the best performance in the picture I think. I did it as kind of a crutch. I wanted one guy in there that the audience could relate to. I was going to cast Stuio Terkel in the role of Kinderman. He would have been more real, and less an archetype. I don't want to work with someone who is known as a great actor, like Olivier. I'm interested in involving the audience in a story, and making them forget that there are actors.

CFQ: In the beginning you undercut the Chris/Regan relationship and their "good times" together with the constant denial of the intrusion of any kind of outside force. As in THE BIRDS, evil seems to arrive when goodness becomes too frail to stand on its own.

FRIEDKIN: I'm not conscious of that, but it's valid. The scenes with Chris and Regan were largely improvised. I don't like THE BIRDS, however.

Top: The amazingly life-like, full-size dummy of Linda Blair constructed by make-up artist Dick Smith. Constructed for the masturbation scene where Regan turns her head around a full 180°, the dummy was used only briefly in the film but was conceived and designed for more extensive use. Bottom: Dick Smith prepares to cast Linda Blair's leg for the construction of the dummy in his New York workshop. Smith performed many of the tasks often misidentified as special effects.
CFQ: When we first see Burke, there is something unusual about him.

FRIEDKIN: I was conscious of introducing all the major characters, except Karras, from behind. Everybody is sort-of snuck up on, or discovered. We come up behind them, almost like an unseen force. Karras, on the other hand, is the person to whom the whole thing is directed. He is first seen literally pushing in on Burke because he's the first to go out. What is really the key to that is my belief that fear is always something behind you.

CFQ: On Karras' second visit the demon says "What an excellent day for an exorcism," as if it's teasing him to do something.

FRIEDKIN: My attitude about that scene was two-fold. First of all, we needed some levity somewhere along the line. My feeling is that if any of the spirits were off by the Frankenstein monster, they might have been the instigator of all this in the presence of this thing, you'd soon be playing chess together, trying to do something to pass the time. I put the scene on that level, and did it as kind of a Bavarian dialogue, wherein they're exchanging pleasantries and witticisms.

CFQ: In the scene where Chris and Regan are playfully rolling on the floor, the camera moves in place with them in shadows and tellingly revealing the lies they live with.

FRIEDKIN: I think that's very apt. What the shot shows is that the fact that they're like minor canvas characters in a much larger canvas.

CFQ: I get the feeling the demon has been in that house a long time.

FRIEDKIN: My feeling is that the demon just arrives at that point in the story when we want it to arrive, just as any character walks in the door. As in THE BIRTHDAY PARTY, Goldberg and McCann just walk in. Is it about this little girl that made her be possessed? Who the hell knows? It's not the author's privilege to speculate. If we had clutched up THE EXORCIST with a lot of cockamamie explanations...

CFQ: ...it wouldn't be effective because the audience would be concerned with the explanations than the people. That's why Hitchcock rarely has any.

FRIEDKIN: Except for PSYCHO at the end, with that lousy, gratuitous explanation directed at a ten-year-old mind.

CFQ: On his way to visit his mother Karras sees kids demolishing a car. Was it just there?

FRIEDKIN: Yeah, they just happened to be there. When you're making a film on location, you have greater opportunity to seek out and find these things. You're always looking for something that relates to your story. I'm always jotting down things in a notebook that either fit the project I'm working on or something in the future.

CFQ: Do you see any conscious connection between the car being wrecked and the desecration in the church?

FRIEDKIN: Absolutely, and the little girl's body being desecrated also. In another way, Karras' mother is an old wreck.

CFQ: The feeling you establish is that of a world controlled by the devil long before he appears, as Harry Ringel said in his review.

FRIEDKIN: Yes, but I don't think too much about "the devil," you know. I think it's more a metaphysical force.

CFQ: As with Chris and Regan, one senses a lie in the relationship of Karras with his mother.

FRIEDKIN: Karras lies in every relationship, to a degree. There's tremendous guilt in Karras in the relationship with his mother.

CFQ: I can't see how anyone can misinterpret the evidence for Karras as a primitive level with the demon. The demon has no reason to destroy itself, but Karras does. Why do you feel people must construct?

FRIEDKIN: Because it's within them to begin with. One thing you cannot exorcise is the deeply-seated tenets within people who come to see a movie. They come with a primitive level with their emotions. Karras' deed is understandable to anyone who has read A Tale of Two Cities.

CFQ: What the book came out, I think people had a better grasp of this kind of hierarchy.

FRIEDKIN: Blatty also tells you how you should think about it. One thing I don't want to do is tell people how they should think about a film.
For instance, I found that adding to her nose even the tiniest bit of plaster, would kill her head and made it look ridiculous on that little face. It made her look like a midget, or something strange. You just can't put a mature nose on her—it just didn't go. But to make it look like that, many times I worked out well from a makeup standpoint. What we wound up with was based simply on my own ideas.

CFQ: Did you sketch your ideas fully, then go to the makeup, or vice-versa, or don't you work that way?

SMITH: The process is this: first of all I get a life mask of the subject, Linda. Then I make several copies, so that I have perhaps six heads of Linda, in plaster. Then I'll get out my clay, my plastilene, my latexes, and so on. Obviously, in makeup you can only add three-dimensionally, you can't carve anything away. So with a little girl like Linda with a chunky face the trick is to add rather than take away. So that is what I did, instead of taking something away, I added to it.

SMITH: That was something that was added later. This was actually the third time we had done this particular scene with the dummy. One of the difficulties was that I had to make the dummy very early before I had any idea how Billy Saturday was going to make the dummy. I had made the dummy in the line from head to toe, to be used in a sitting position on the bed, and that was all I knew at the time.

I molded Linda's body in sections and made a dummy in this way. I made a bunch of limb and body parts and unionized urethane foam, a soft foam. I did try to have the joints at the arms and legs bendable so that we could alter the position somewhat. The head and shoulders were made hard so that we wouldn't have to take them off and put them on. They were hard to handle because they had to be rigid enough to install the mechanism to make the head pivot smoothly.

But, getting back to the coordination of special effects and makeup, the vomiting was something which I did almost entirely by myself because it involved making flattened tubes that fitted across the old eyes and where the mouth was to be, a tube which went through the mouth from corner to corner—kind of like the bit of a horse's bridle—and it had it in a nozzle. Now, the rear part of this apparatus went back behind her ears and was connected to rubber hoses which went down her back. Now that's where the special effects man came in. He had the responsibility of having the right pressure (laughs) and properly seasoned. We never realized that people would tumble onto the fact that it was his work, but really it was next to nothing. The most innocent item that seemed to be a color close to bile-like vomit. I think if we had been aware of that response we would have changed the color somewhat. I think the first print that goes into theatres is often different from what we see in the rushes. In the rushes, the color was simply not that vivid.

SMITH: What was your most difficult task in working on the film?

SMITH: The vomiting, by all means, was the most difficult. You see, the first thing I did was rushing around in the machine, shot her from a 3/4 view, so I had a tube going into the off-camera side of her mouth and then covered to come out of her mouth. It was a good "cheek" because you could see the whole mouth and you saw that the vomit was definitely coming out of the mouth. But Billy just kept her mouth clamped shut. I said: "But you can't do it full-face—it's impossible!" He replied: "Well, we'll fix it with lighting or something." I continued to protest: "But you will not be able to make her react in her own perfectionism just kind of goaded me into striving for something better.

SMITH: I'm not sure what effect this had on the viewers, but I can describe it. As we did not deal with a large number of special effects, the head-turning dummy used in THE EXORCIST seems to cut across both areas.

CFQ: What is, that's true. It is one of those things that I think even people who are not in the business make up their minds about. How do you make sure that the special effects don't intrude on the action of the film, without being too obvious about it? What do you do with it, is there a certain kind of skill involved in that?

SMITH: Yes, that's true. It is one of those things that is very hard to do, and I think it is a matter of delicacy, depending on each case. Basically, we can put it this way: anything that is put on the skin, applied to the skin, usually has to be done by the makeup artist. However, in some of the cases, where a person's face and body have to be cast, a make-up artist is better equipped to do that. But as far as the makeup itself is concerned, putting in the mechanisms that the eyebrows or the mouth, that was done by special effects. So we work very closely. I would not do anything that would result in an unsightly result, and that would be an unsightly result because they put things in flying model airplanes which controls the flight. The unit has a little lever which swings back and forth, so we attached that to the mouth and the effect we wanted, it was very sensitive. With the transmitter, we could rub a lever and make the eyebrows and or glasses move. It was very realistic although I'm not sure how much show there was up in the film.

CFQ: You see the dummy for too short a period of time. Can you say something about that? The effect of the breath condensation in the cold room was more apparent and effective than anything.

SMITH: That was something that was added later. That was actually the third time we had done this particular scene with the dummy. One of the difficulties was that I had to make the dummy very early before I had any idea how Billy Saturday was going to make the dummy. We had made the dummy in the line from head to toe, to be used in a sitting position on the bed, and that was all I knew at the time.

For instance, I found that adding to her nose even the tiniest bit of plaster, would kill her head and made it look ridiculous on that little face. It made her look like a midget, or something strange. You just can't put a mature nose on her—it just didn't go. But to make it look like that, many times I worked out well from a makeup standpoint. What we wound up with was based simply on my own ideas.

CFQ: Did you do any research on the actual phenomenon of the breath condensation on the glass, to make it look that realistic?

SMITH: There were several copies, so that I have perhaps six heads of Linda, in plaster. Then I'll get out my clay, my plastilene, my latexes, and so on. Obviously, in makeup you can only add three-dimensionally, you can't carve anything away. So with a little girl like Linda with a chunky face the trick is to add rather than take away. So that is what I did, instead of taking something away, I added to it.

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SMITH: There were several copies, so that I have perhaps six heads of Linda, in plaster. Then I'll get out my clay, my plastilene, my latexes, and so on. Obviously, in makeup you can only add three-dimensionally, you can't carve anything away. So with a little girl like Linda with a chunky face the trick is to add rather than take away. So that is what I did, instead of taking something away, I added to it.

SMITH: That was something that was added later. That was actually the third time we had done this particular scene with the dummy. One of the difficulties was that I had to make the dummy very early before I had any idea how Billy Saturday was going to make the dummy. We had made the dummy in the line from head to toe, to be used in a sitting position on the bed, and that was all I knew at the time.

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have since made up some and given them away to a few close friends for gags. You can stick them on with peanut butter and they are very funny. Another effect which seemed very difficult but for which a simple solution was eventually found was the writing on Regan's stomach. Latex reacts to certain solvents, so we painted the letters with cleaning fluid over her latex-covered stomach.

CTQ: Over the length of the film there seem to be a series of stages to Blair's makeup. Were these definite stages that you designed as a progression of ever more horrific appearance?

SMITH: Yes...well, I think I have to go back and tell you what actually happened to us. As I said, I started five months or so before we started shooting. Now, we did, at the very beginning, six or eight different makeup and tests. Then a second series of tests which refined it further. So after all these steps we finally arrived at a make-up which was actually much more demonic than what we used in the film. Billy liked it with a few reservations—he wanted me to eliminate several little wrinkles that he thought made her look too old, but generally we agreed. That was it; we had the green light to go ahead, which means that I could correct the molds and go into the business of manufacturing masks. I can only make a couple a day, because the mixture and the baking of the foam latex in these molds takes four to six hours. I had an estimate that the shooting schedule would run X number of weeks. You have to make a mask for every day's use, and some to spare. Of course, when I say "mask," it is not literally in one piece. They are made up in sections that cover certain parts of her brow, mid-face, chin, and so forth. Also, her hands were involved and also her neck. And, we had planned various stages, as you originally asked. There were some tiny pieces to start off with, and a modified version of the demon makeup that was supposed to come into the film in the scene with the psychiatrist. Incidentally, we had several different shades of contact lenses which we made up, with a progression planned for these also.

Anyway, we finally started filming September, 1972 and it wasn't until a couple months later that we came around to doing the earliest manifestation of the demon. This was the scene with the psychiatrist and I used this early version of the demon makeup for it. I wasn't too happy with it because I didn't think she looked demonic enough. I had in my mind the struggle to make her look really fiendish, because her facial expressions were very limited. At the beginning it was hard for her even to frown. But we got to this scene with the mother and the psychiatrist and filmed it, and it was a disaster because Linda really looked so physically different. This sweet little girl had turned into something pretty loathsome, and the dialogue of the adults in the scene just became funny. No one could say those things and yet sit in a room in real life with someone who looked like that. So, we re-scheduled shooting for the scene, and I started doing more makeup testing on Linda. Billy decided that it had to be—his favorite word—"organic," it had to grow from within. We had many consultations, and I brought in all kinds of pictures to show him. It was difficult because at this point, I didn't know what to do. I had used my best ideas—I had done it as well as I could, and now Billy wanted something different.

I'd show him a picture of Claude Rains as the Phantom of the Opera, with half his face burned off. And he'd say: "Yeah, let's do something like that. I like the asymmetrical thing, that's really good." I said: "Well, let's make it look like some sort of disease rather than an obvious burn, some sort of half-distorted face, as if she's gotten sick." Billy wanted to keep everyone guessing as to whether she was truly possessed, or whether

Makeup artist Dick Smith at work. Top: Smith touches-up Linda Blair's makeup on location in a scene that was edited from the final film. Middle: Smith and assistant Bob Laden adjust the hair around Linda Blair's neck for a scene that will be cut in right after the dummy head-turning. Bottom: Linda Blair is shown the life-mask made by Smith and used to design and create the rubber latex makeup appliances which must fit snugly and exactly to the contours of her face.
it was just an aberration of some sort. With my original makeup, there had been no question.

SMITH: No, I never teach an actor to do his own makeup. Still, the point is that a man who is used to doing his own makeup might be forced to do it by circumstances. Therefore, he might very well make a better job of it than the makeup artist. And there are many artists who are not so good, because they can't do it all by themselves.

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When man entered the atomic age he opened a door into a new world. What he may eventually find in that new world no one can predict.

Scenes from THEM!, a Warner Bros picture released in 1954. Top: Dr. Patricia Medford (Joan Weldon) flees before an oncoming giant ant in the Mohave desert. Bottom: James Whitmore, Joan Weldon and James Arness enter the ant nest to destroy the queen and her eggs.
It’s power lies in its ability to deliver a subtle, but crucial, message on the hazards of the nuclear age.


by Steve Rubin

Steve Rubin is a freelance writer and film researcher based in Los Angeles, where he attended UCLA, receiving a Bachelor’s degree in History. Rubin is currently completing work on a book about the Combat Films of World War II. He likes science fiction films, particularly those he remembers seeing during the 1950s when he was growing up. His favorite directors are John Sturges, Robert Wise, and Jack Arnold.

THEM! was one of the most successful films of the 1950s, combining a classic detective story with fantasy science fiction. Its power lies in its ability to deliver a subtle, but crucial, message on the hazards of the nuclear age, while at the same time, unraveling a violent terrifying tale, as powerful as any scenario the late Alfred Hitchcock’s THE BIRDS would be a decade later. Dr. Medford’s closing comment, in this 1954 film, was not the typical “voice of doom,” antagonizing those who continued to build bigger and bigger bombs. His short comment, instead, says a great deal, albeit subtly, about the then contemporary feeling of fear and wonder about the dawn of a new scientific age. Few people in 1954 realized the new destiny evident in the race for nuclear power. Phrases like “nuclear confrontation” and “push button warfare” were still a few years off and the atom was considered, more than anything, a new, powerful energy tool, than a deadly weapon that could eventually depopulate the earth. This attitude is, of course, changed since twenty years there is still obsession with the spectrum of atomic energy and atomic power plant building while an aura of apathy surrounds the question of nuclear disarmament. Today, Sherdeman can still recall vividly the moment he first heard the news about the atom-bombing of Hiroshima. "I was a Lt. Colonel then," he told me, "and when I heard the news I just went over to the club and started to throw up. I'll never forget that moment." He also remembers, as we speak in his comfortable California home, about the development of THEM! at Warner Bros., about how the project seemed to express an intangible, undefinable mistrust of the atom bomb that he wanted to get across to the public. Production of the film was nearly canceled. Separately, I sought out director Gordon Douglas who began to remember more and more about the film as we talked. Since THEM!, Douglas has had to sit through war and terrors in the intervening years and, as he quipped, “I’ve probably gotten at least 20 traffic tickets.” Despite the passage of over twenty years since the film was made, I am told with these two veteran Hollywood craftsmen, the story behind the production of THEM! came back in fresh detail. It provides a fascinating look behind the scenes of the studio system that produced most of the genre films during the 1950s, evidencing the stupidity, short-sightedness and lack of creativity we always suspected must be there.

THEM! began as an original story written by George Worthing Yates, submitted to Warner Bros as a treatment for a proposed screenplay. As was the custom, Findlay McDermid, the story editor at the studio, circulated the story among the various producers responsible for developing the large number of feature films released each year. Among them was Sherdeman, a new producer on the lot, who was excited by the Yates story, an account in the form of a diary of the time, of the events which took place one year ago near the city’s subway system. Says Sherdeman: "The idea appealed to me very much because, aside from man, ants are the only creatures in the world who plan and war, and nobody trusted the atomic bomb at that time." At

Sherdeman’s request, McDermid bought the story and commissioned Yates to prepare a screenplay in ten days at $2500 per week. THEM! was Yates first science fiction screenplay—typified by the financial success of THEM! he would go on to work on eight others, among them, two for Ray Harryhausen, including BENEATH THE SEA AND EARTH VS. THE FLYING SAUCERS and one for George Pal (CONQUEST OF SPACE)—and it quickly became apparent that he was unable to resist the temptation to over-write beyond the feasibility of production. The developing screenplay was totally unlike his tightly constructed, suspenseful little story, "It had some arts," said Sherdeman laughingly. "But it was one of those things which would have cost 42 million dollars to produce—a totally worthless project." Yet the financially strapped Sherdeman agreed that the screenplay was ridiculous, but Jack L. Warner insisted that Yates work out the full ten weeks contracted for. Warner had this idea that I should direct the film, but in the matter that if they paid you five cents for something as long as you got a nickel’s worth back.

Sherdeman worked on other projects while Yates took up the screenplay, only to have it dumped in the nearest wastebasket. Still intrigued by the original short story and determined to produce it, Sherdeman returned to story editor Findlay McDermid for help, and he suggested that contract writer Russell Hughes might be able to make something of it. Sherdeman knew Hughes very well, and as the writer was currently unemployed, McDermid assigned him to develop a screenplay for THEM!. Hughes shared Sherdeman’s enthusiasm for the project, as well as his uneasiness about the idea of building a basic idea of finding the little girl lost in the desert and doing the first half of the film as a detective story. The second half would become a sequence for the queen ants escaping from the original nest, with the last queen trapped in an amusement park at the end of the picture. Sherdeman and Hughes envisioned filming the finale down Santa Monica pier. At last the project seemed to be taking shape, and Sherdeman told Hughes to forget about doing a treatment and get started on the screenplay right away. Arch Oboler had just released BWANA DEVIL in 3-D and every studio in Hollywood began to ready their own 3-D productions to cash-in on its tremendous financial success. Sherdeman envisioned THEM! as Warner Bros’ first entry in the 3-D sweepstakes, but Russell Hughes, after completing only about twenty pages of script, died quietly and unexpectedly one evening while sitting in his favorite chair watching the television.

Undaunted, Sherdeman completed the script himself. He had discussed the concept of the film at great length with Hughes and had always had a good idea of what he wanted all along. While later films of the genre would stress mass panic amid conquering hordes, Sherdeman’s scenario contrasted a strange surface normality against a pervasive “judgement day” atmosphere. But Sherdeman began to suspect that, with the screenplay still going strong, he might be straying from the beginning. One day while outside with Steve Trilling, the assistant to Jack L. Warner at the studio, the two of them came upon this trail of ants on the sidewalk. “You mean you want to make a film about those things?” asked Trilling. “Yes,” replied Sherdeman...
On location in the Mohave desert, the camera of cinematographer Sid Hickox dollies in on lost little Sandy Descher, wandering about aimlessly and in shock, clutching tightly to her baby doll. Just two days before the unit was set to leave for the location to begin filming, the budget of THEM! was slashed by the front office at Warner Bros and director Gordon Douglas was told that he would have to shoot the film in black and white instead of color.

“For Christ’s sake!” said Trilling as he turned away and walked inside. Sherdeman knew then that he had to develop some angle to sell the idea of THEM! to Warner Bros management. In researching the screenplay he had gone out to UCLA to meet with a couple of young Entomologists who had put together some remarkable 16mm film of insect life in the desert. He invited them down to Warner Bros and set up a screening of their film for Trilling and Jack L. Warner in a projection room on the lot. Sherdeman hoped the film, quite similar to the documentary footage which Dr. Medford uses in THEM! to explain the ferocity of ant kind, would be enough to interest them in the project. “Warner finally came in,” told Sherdeman, “and we started the film. He saw about two minutes of it, got up and said, ‘Hell, who needs this?’ turned, and walked out the door. Trilling followed him.” Sherdeman apologized to the scientists, and put them in touch with a friend he knew at Walt Disney Productions. Their film eventually became THE LIVING DESERT. And Sherdeman went back to the drawing board.

Sherdeman took some pictures of harvester ants over to Larry Meiggs in the Warner Bros art department. Meiggs carved a three-foot ant out of wood, with movable head, antennae and mandibles. They painted it black and constructed a beautiful case for it complete with flocked interior. Sherdeman set the case down on Steve Trilling’s desk one morning and said: “This is what THEM! is all about.” When he opened the case Trilling was, at last, impressed. He was so impressed, in fact, that he insisted they film a test with the ant that very morning. Sherdeman attempted to protest that the ant was not an articulated model and therefore wasn’t suitable for filming, but Trilling insisted on making a test to show Warner. They marched over to a sound stage, had a property man set up a little background, and Meiggs’ impressive but quite stationary ant model was photographed. Trilling showed the test footage to Jack L. Warner and the next thing Sherdeman knew THEM! was up for sale!

20th Century-Fox made an offer to purchase the screenplay from Warner Bros. Sherdeman was all set to go to work for Alfred Hitchcock on DIAL M FOR MURDER which was gearing up for production at the studio. One day, while in the office of Walter McCahan, the executive startled him by saying: “You know, I read THEM! last night and it’s pretty good. It’s pretty commercial and I think we can do something with it.” Sherdeman was shocked. Jack L. Warner never failed to complain at their weekly production meetings just how bad the motion picture business had become. Sherdeman told McCahan: “You know, if you buy things you don’t even know you’re buying, and you sell things you don’t even know you’re selling, then this studio is in even bigger trouble than J. L. Warner thinks it is!” When Warner Bros had received the call from Fox to place an offer on the screenplay, McCahan decided he had better find out what another studio was willing to lay out hard, cold cash for. He decided that it was a good story after all, and that Warner Bros had better hold onto it. Production on the film was reactivated immediately and Gordon Douglas was brought in as director. Douglas had started work in silent films for Hal Roach, had worked with greats like Laurel and Hardy, and was an acknowledged comedy expert. After reading the screenplay he remarked to Sherdeman that he felt the property was a perfect vehicle for Martin and Lewis. Says Sherdeman: “I went out and got awfully drunk and then I started casting.”

Casting was about as far as Sherdeman would ever get on the picture. He chose actor Edmund Gwenn for the role of Professor Medford and wound up in a heated argument with the head of
the studio, Jack L. Warner. Warner didn't want Gwenn because he felt the actor was too old for the part. Sherdeman stood firm, and one day in the executive dining room, Warner walked over to David Weisbart and told him to take over the production of THEM! In an uncomfortable situation, Sherdeman told Weisbart that the only commitment he had made thus far was the deal with Gwenn and the new producer upheld his decision. The choice was a good one. Gwenn had made a career out of playing loveable old eccentrics in films like MIRACLE ON 34TH STREET and MR. 880, and was perfect for the role of Dr. Medford. James Whitmore was a Spencer Tracy look-alike doing bit parts at MGM, and was grabbed for the role of Sgt. Peterson on that potential. Joan Weldon was spotted at a party by William Orr, the son-in-law to Jack L. Warner, who immediately put her under contract. She was a singer and THEM! was her sixth picture. Douglas brought in Fess Parker as Crotty, a flyer who has seen the winged ants and in a comic bit is thrown in the booby hatch. James Arness rounded out the cast as FBI agent Robert Graham.

THEM! was budgeted for color photography and location filming. Douglas spent most of the pre-production phase in aiding in the design of the giant ants and making final revisions in the script with Sherdeman. The ending in the amusement park, conceived by Russell Hughes, had to be changed when it was found to be too expensive a proposition to rent-out the entire facilities at Santa Monica pier for a day. A finale in the storm drains beneath Los Angeles was chosen instead, adding greatly to the film's eeriness and sense of claustrophobic horror. It was at this stage that Douglas and Sherdeman inserted many of the film's comic vignettes, with Douglas drawing upon his obvious experience in the genre. Like James Whale, Douglas realized and appreciated the importance of humor as an effective counterpoint to horror and suspense. He had brought Fess Parker to the picture with precisely that idea in mind. As Crotty, a patient at a mental institution in Brownsville, Texas, Fess Parker raves about visions of giant ants and flying saucers. Running around in loose-fitting pajamas, Parker is hilarious as the innocent victim of a crisis whose secret no one will reveal. "They were running around like regular kamikazes," he raves, "like to scare me right out of my pants!" When the scientists look as if they believe him, Crotty breathes a sigh of relief and confesses that he had begun to wonder himself if he was crazy. As they leave, Arness turns to the doctor and orders him to keep Crotty confined until further notice. "We'll tell you when he's well again," he says with a sense of dry, cynical humor that adds immeasurably to the effectiveness of the film. Says Douglas: "You'll find that in the toughest situations, comedy pops in. You can use it wherever you have the chance, as long as it doesn't destroy the dramatics. I've always had a feeling that if you don't give the audience something to laugh at once in a while, they're going to find something, maybe the wrong thing."

Douglas worked with Dick Smith* at the studio in constructing the giant ants and working out their appearance and pigmentation for the color cameras. Two main ants were constructed, one fully, the other minus the hindquarters and mounted on a boom for mobility. Behind this, a whole crew, mounted on a dolly, manipulated the various knobs and levers that made the mechani-

*Not the famed makeup artist of the same name.

Top: Sgt. Ben Peterson (James Whitmore) attempts to question the little girl (Sandy Descher) to learn what has happened. It is her terrified screams of "Them! Them! Them!" from which the picture takes its title. Middle: FBI Agent Robert Graham (James Arness) and Dr. Patricia Medford (Joan Weldon) prepare to descend into the ant chamber to search out the queen and her eggs. Bottom: "Look at the size of it," exclaims Dr. Harold Medford (Edmund Gwenn) to James Whitmore, pointing to a detached mandible of one of the giant ants. In an argument over the casting of Gwenn, studio head Jack L. Warner relieved screenwriter Ted Sherdeman of his production duties on THEM!
Top: At the film's conclusion set within the storm drains beneath the city of Los Angeles, star James Whitmore is trapped and crushed by a giant ant as he lifts two children to safety. Middle: The location of the ant nest is found by a helicopter search as the ants leave to forage for food. Two main ants were constructed for the film, one fully, the other minus the headquarters and mounted on a boom for mobility. THEM! represents one of the few successful uses of full-scale mechanical models. Bottom: James Whitmore, James Arness and Joan Weldon reach the queen's chamber, covered with the bodies of dead ants and ant larvae, only to discover that young queens have hatched and flown the nest.

Douglas laughed: "You would have a shot where an ant comes into the picture and if you glanced back behind the creature you would see about 20 guys, all sweating like hell!" A number of "extra" ants were also constructed for scenes where large numbers of the creatures appeared, but where mobility was not essential. These ant models were equipped only with heads and antennae that would be activated by the force from the wind-machines used to whip up the sand storms required on the desert locations. For the color of the ants, Douglas settled on a purplish shade of green. The special effects people came up with a novel idea to make the eyes of the ants seem alive: they were rigged to be injected with a bubbling soapy mixture of reds and blues that constantly changed and coruscated. Unfortunately, much of this novel effect was lost in the final film for, two days before the unit was set to go on location in the Mohave desert to begin filming, the budget of THEM! was slashed by the front office and Douglas was told that he would have to shoot the film in black and white. "Our budget ended up considerably under a million dollars," he said. "We shot a quick schedule and had a small, inexpensive cast.

By the spring of 1954, THEM! had finally reached the screen, perhaps not as the elaborate color and 3-D production originally envisioned, but basically the film Sherdenman and Douglas had intended. "I really wanted to say more than I did," admitted Sherdenman, "but your script has to be practical, especially in a science fiction film like THEM!" He recalls clearly, with a sense of humor and irony, the film's preview held at the Huntington Theatre in Huntington Park, California. After the screening was over, Jack L. Warner would go up to the theatre manager's office to hold court as usual. He gathered the production people all together and announced: "Anyone who wants to make any more ant pictures will go to Republic!" and with that he walked out. THEM! turned out to be the highest grossing picture that Warner Bros released that year, and one that was to inspire an entire sub-genre of horror films.

THEM!, along with DAY THE EARTH STOOD STILL, was really one of the first films to whine against the atomic bomb, over eight years before the Cuban missile crisis brought the world to the brink of "judgement day." Yet, like Don Siegel's INVASION OF THE BODY SNATCHERS, THEM! is more of a study in human reaction than glaring science fiction. Although KING KONG explored the horrors of "beast vs. humanity," it was not until the atom bomb was dropped that films like THEM! could be treated philosophically, and not laughed off as entertaining, yet silly, fairy tales. In creating the film version of Yates' story, Sherdenman was not overly concerned with the public's acceptance of giant ants. He realized that these mutants, as in the case of KING KONG, would frighten an audience. But Sherdenman, who is still fighting the perils of the atomic age through his novel Road Ends, wanted more, a sense of violent horror based on a semblance of fact. Granted a distinct advantage in that few laymen understood the real dangers of atomic radiation, Sherdenman was able to lend more than just an aura of plausibility to his terrifying tale. Gordon Douglas and a veteran crew welded the film expertly and through their finesse created a film that became a classic tale of science fiction rather than a cross example of exploitation, the fate of so many of its imitators.
Director Gordon Douglas goes over the script with his actors during a story conference while shooting on location in the Mohave desert. From left to right: James Whitmore, Edmund Gwenn, Joan Weldon, Douglas, and James Arness. Douglas focused his attention on the human reactions of his characters to make the science fiction premise of THEM! more believable.

Gordon Douglas has to shout last minute instructions to Joan Weldon to be heard over the roar of the unit's powerful wind machines. Douglas had started in silent films with Hal Roach, had worked with greats like Laurel and Hardy and was an acknowledged expert at film comedy at the time he accepted the assignment to direct THEM!
THE TERMINAL MAN

A Warner Bros Release

Harry Benson .................. George Segal
Dr. Janet Ross .................. Joan Hackett
Dr. John Ellis .................. Richard A. Dysart
Angela Black ................... Jill Clayburgh
Dr. Arthur McPherson ........... Donald Moffat
Gerard ......................... Mel Clark
Dr. Robert Morris .............. Michael C. Gwynne
Det. Capt. Anders ............. Normann Burton
Dr. Eara Newson ................ Michael Ansara
Ralph Friedman ................ James Sikking
The Priest ..................... Ian Wolfe
Guards ........................ Gene Borkan and Burke Byrnes

THE TERMINAL MAN is about a psychotic (Segal) with a fear of machines. He has a computer implanted in his brain to control his violent seizures. The mind of Segal goes on a murderous spree triggered by the computer. As directed by Michael Hodges, this story becomes the basis for a personal statement about a colorless society, a society in which our references are clinical.

The colorless society is most pointedly explored. Although the film is shot in color, it may represent the most overt use of black and white in a commercial color film. Walls, clothes, sky, floors, machines are either black or white. All clothes worn by all characters are black or white. A woman, who is about to be murdered, paints her white nails black. She watches THEM! on a black and white television. The physicians wear only hospital whites and for evening dress, black and white tuxedos. Even the psychiatrist, Joan Hackett, when off duty wears black and white gowns and white jewelry. The hospital, her home and the home of a surgeon are sterile, modern and black and white. Color is added to this society only as a foreboding and a disruption, a blood red rose in the hands of the sleeping terminal man, a rose pointing to his deathlike, sleep and doom. Throughout the film, one may try to make sense of the choices of black and white, to sort out character by color. The choice of color scheme doesn't appear to be "real" in the film, one is forced to question what it "really" means.

The references to paranoia are as overt as those to color in the film. The film opens with an eye staring at us out of one corner of the black screen. The eye makes the audience feel self conscious. It is looking at us from hiding, observing. A voice, presumably that of the person who owns that eye, speaks about the madman he is looking at. The voice and the eye reappear several times in the film. At first we think he is talking about Segal, the terminal man. By the end of the film we find, as we may have suspected, that he is talking about us. Finally, the voice announces, "You're next," an apparent reference to the somber climax of Don Siegel's INVASION OF THE BODY SNATCHERS, a warning that we can become the victims of the colorless society run by cold, machine-like scientists.

For all of its self-consciousness and "art," from the dwelling on the mixing of blood and water from a water bed and victim as they run into fissures in a tile floor to the ironic death of the terminal man in a grave, the film is not particularly intellectual. Indeed, THE TERMINAL MAN deals with many of the conventions of horror and science fiction. For example, the medical community foals up, creates a monster as gross as Frankenstein's. Indeed, THE TERMINAL MAN proves to be the smug, self-serving arrogant asses they have been from METROPOLIS to THE EXORCIST. Benson, the terminal man, is a classical split personality, a wolfman, a Jekyll and Hyde, a possessed creature. The difference is that it is not an animal unleashed by science, but a machine, a machine in the cold image of the scientist himself, a machine gone wild. As with other science fiction and horror works, the tormented creature turns to the hopes which society has offered him. He turns to the woman who loves him and destroys her. He turns to a priest and kills him. He turns to his psychiatrist, and is destroyed himself.

It is interesting to wonder how Crichton—who wrote the book, wrote and directed WESTWORLD, and wrote THE ANDROMEDA STRAIN—would have directed THE TERMINAL MAN. Crichton, a physician, is concerned with machines and the possibility of man becoming a machine. His novels and film scripts are filled with robots or people who behave like cold machines and are aware of it. Although Hodges' film refers to Benson's fear of becoming a machine, and there is a scene in which he attacks the computer he has worked on, Hodges is less interested in this modern fear than in the black and white urban coldness and control of science in general and medical science in particular. It is fairly safe to assume that as writer-director, Crichton would have been more direct and less self conscious. Though WESTWORLD concerns itself with themes as broad as those of THE TERMINAL MAN, they are never discussed as issues or pointed out through references to other works, openly questioned as with Hodges' reappearing eye, or overtly reflected upon as in the use of black and white. Crichton's novel ends in a confrontation between the psychiatrist and the patient in a computer room. She kills him and faces the horror of what she has helped to create. One assumes that, as in the novel, Crichton would have shown more sympathy for the physicians, have seen their situation as a dilemma, a pull between science and human frailty and limitation. For Hodges, the scientists and science are the villains, for Crichton, the scientist and patient alike are the victims.

Stuart M. Kaminsky

Harry Benson (George Segal) lies on the operating table as a team of scientists attempt to implant an electrical computer in his brain that will be able to control the fits of psychomotor epilepsy that have turned him into a dangerous, pathological murderer. A scene from THE TERMINAL MAN, director Mike Hodges' personal statement on our colorless society, currently in release from Warner Bros.
THE PARALLAX VIEW

...a haunting existentialist nightmare of indefinable forces...


Joseph Frady ...................... Warren Beatty
Editor Rintels .................... Hume Cronyn
Astin Tucker ...................... William Daniels
Lee Cartlidge ....................... John Saxon
Sheriff .................. Kelly Thordsen
Deputy .................... Earl Hindman
Former FBI Agent .............. Kenneth Mars
Parallax Regressor .............. WalMart
Senator Hammond ................ Jim Davis

The political assassination conspiracy theme seems more prevalent now than in the past, since the three tragedies that have occurred in the past decade. Lewis Allen (the director of THE UNIDENTIFIED) made a little sleeper in 1968 called SIGNED, RENDEZVOUS, with Frank Sinatra as a hired killer, that was something of a forerunner in the genre. The Presidential assassination theme was given greater impact eight years later in John Frankheimer's masterpiece, THE MANCHURIAN CANDIDATE, also starring Sinatra. It was a breathlessly, powerfully captivating and suspenseful film, an anti-war film, brilliantly constructed to commit the ultimate murder. It remains one of the cornerstone films of cinemafantastique. After a considerable hull came David Miller's cold and taut mixture of documentary footage, EXECUTIVE ACTION, and now Alan J. Pakula's THE PARALLAX VIEW.

Carla Reiner's film portrays a bizarre Wellesian universe in which the protagonist, Joe Frady (Warren Beatty), is caught-up into playing out a game of destiny that is violent, unscrupulous, and relentlessly ironic. He joins an organization of hired killers in order to expose them in print, and winds up being victimized himself. Like the characters of Welles (Hank Quinlan in TOUCH OF EVIL), Miller (Sergeant Makita in THE DRIVER), Pakula's Frady is trapped in a web of fate that he must see through to its inevitable conclusion. He is powerless and irresponsible in his search for the truth and, somewhat like Sam Fuller's as a newsman in SHOCK CORRIDOR, it leads to tragedy.

In the Wellesian power of Pakula's limbo imagery, there is also a Hitchcock influence in his use of editing and long takes for cleverly calculated surprise and suspense touches. While Pakula's technique has assimilated the work of these artists, it is never to the point of obscuring his own patently and potently bleak point-of-view. Huge expanses of space and glass dwarf characters into cold impersonal objects, manipulated by some invisible force that they are unable to control let alone acknowledge.

THE PARALLAX VIEW is a superb fantastic-thriller and something of a minor masterpiece. From the naturalistic intensity of Beatty's performance (not to forget Paula Prentiss' superb, poignant, and brief portrait of a woman fearing death), to the gutting existentialist nightmare of indefinable forces, it is indelible fantasy. The brilliant indirection montage, which Frady must undergo to join the organization, deliberately crosscuts a family, poverty, pyromania, war, happiness, country, love, and hate, is perhaps the film's ultimate example of fantasy as effective and affecting emotional manipulation. It is, like the plot in JACOB'S LADDER, the direct experience that the protagonist goes through as well as the audience. It is a classic sequence in this, Pakula's only vindication as a filmmaker to date.

Dale Winogura

CAPTAIN KRONOS: VAMPIRE HUNTER

...establishes Hammer once more as one of the genre's most valued and respected studios.


Kronos ......................... Horst Janson
Dr. Marcus ...................... John Carson
Paul Durward ................. Shane Briant
Carla ......................... Caroline Munro
Grost ......................... John Cater
Sara Durward .............. Lois Diane Kerro

It is difficult not to love CAPTAIN KRONOS: VAMPIRE HUNTER after exposure to its disquietingly undistinguished co-feature, Terence Fisher's FRANKENSTEIN AND THE MONSTER FROM HELL. But even after a separate screening on its own the fact remains, the film is one of Hammer Films' all-time greats in the horror genre.

Set in the early nineteenth century, the film opens as Captain Kronos and the hunchbacked Professor Groot ride through a beautiful pastoral countryside. Hammer's new hero is a handsome young man with an aloof presence and mysterious past. During a brief moment of explanation, we learn that he is "late of the Imperial Guard!" when the unpolished Caroline Munro character suggests that he looks like a king. Though never stated in so many words, Kronos is a student and follower of Zen culture and eastern thought. We see him chant and meditate, smoke a provincial Chinese herb in cigar form, and carry a Samurai sword with him into battles with the undead and the uncouth. He sports a regal family crest on all of his important possessions, suggesting a highly civilized background... or, as Munro conjectured, royalty. He is brave (drawing his sword at even the least abnormal sound), passionate (he possesses Munro as a mistress during his stay in the village), and loyal (defending the hunchbacked Groot from a group of ragged local bastards, led by Ian Hendry in a bravura-packed performance). His undead opponent is a black-clad cloaked vision of sin and death that has been terrorizing the villagers for ages, by kissing young virgins on the lips and, thus, draining them of their youth and beauty.

As you may have gathered, CAPTAIN KRONOS: VAMPIRE HUNTER is not the conventional vampire film we have come to expect from Hammer. it attempts to explain vampirism in a new light: there are different breeds of vampires and just as many different ways of disposing of them. For the creatures in this picture, the cross offers no oppor- now, nor does the usual impalement with a stake. Through mere chance, Kronos discovers that wounds inflicted by silver prove fatal to this local specimen, and his assistant Groot prepares a new sword for him, sculpted from a large silver crucifix. The finished product is undeniably a beautiful thing, the definitive expression of moral strength and health. As a motion picture, CAPTAIN KRONOS: VAMPIRE HUNTER works on several levels. It is very much fashioned after the western, with its abundance of outdoor shots and the bar scene with Hendry, most notably. It is quite obviously a swashbuckler, featuring the superb fencing skills of William Robs that were well used in Zeffirelli's ROMEO AND JULIET. Because the identity of the vampire isn't revealed until the picture's conclusion, the mystery genre could well enter the list of homages. Horror is prevalent throughout the film. The atmosphere of terror is remarkably sustained, and a few sequences—most certainly the scene in the church with the silhouette of the crucifix—should make an impact on the horror genre for being some of the most poetic ever filmed.

Although the reputations of Albert Fennell and Brian Clemens were promoted strongly on films like DR. JEKYLL AND SISTER HYDE and THE GOLDEN VOYAGE OF SINBAD for their connection with the old, fondly remembered television series THE AVENGERS, it is here in CAPTAIN KRONOS: VAMPIRE HUNTER that the quality of that excellent series is felt for the first time. The Jekyll/Hyde film suffered from obvious plot twists and ill-conceived humor, and the Sinbad film came as an immense disappointment, not so much because of the involvement of Brian Clemens, but due to Ray Harryhausen's seemingly bland conception of spectacle. KRONOS, however, is quick and exciting, and executed with the same last pace and wit that we used to expect weekly from John Seely and Enterprise.

When SCARS OF DRACULA was released, we said that Hammer was returning to form after a long period of unsatisfactory entries. When VAMPIRE CIRCUS was released we hoped that Hammer had re-discovered excitement. CAPTAIN KRONOS: VAMPIRE HUNTER has now come and gone, and it establishes Hammer once more as one of the genre's most valued and respected studios.

Tim Lucas
FRANKENSTEIN THE MONSTER FROM HELL...the superficial apeing of past triumphs.


Baron Frankenstein Peter Cushing Simon Shane Briant Sarah, the Monster Dave Prowse Asylum Director, John Straton

As someone who grew up watching Peter Cushing, CURSE OF FRANKENSTEIN and HORROR OF DRACULA and can still admire these films from a perspective that is not just merely nostalgic, Hammer's touted "return to the classic mold of the horror film" with its latest film, FRANKENSTEIN AND THE MONSTER FROM HELL, strikes me as a complete misreading of what that classic mold really was. First of all, Hammer has never abandoned its elegant period atmosphere and costuming and rich color photography, so those hangovers for a return can hardly be missing these elements. So what is missing?

When Hammer finally introduced overt sex into its films with THE VAMPIRE LOVERS, exposed flesh had by that time already become old hat. And yet when the Hammer team for the first time gave Dracula a sexual presence in their 1958 film, the idea really was a first, offering the character numerous dimensions of personality that had heretofore been ignored. Hammer was looking for something new and it was discovered not only in costumes and color but in characterization as well. CURSE OF FRANKENSTEIN for the first time gave us a Baron von Frankenstein more villainous than his creation. HORROR OF DRACULA, in addition to providing a vampire with depth, gave us a heroic hero, Van Helsing, who could pound stakes through human hearts without batting an eye and who finally could take no joy in the execution of his life-long nemesis because he suddenly realized that he had lost his own reason for being. BRIDES OF DRACULA left Dracula to concentrate on a new vampire, Baron Meister, who had been "corrupted" at school. And THE RUNDOWN OF THE BASKERVILLE-VILLES brought us the screen's first erratic Sherlock Holmes and intelligent Dr. Watson—the way Conan Doyle had written about them. It was the characterizations, not simply the characters and their predictable deeds, which made these early films so interesting.

In this new film, Peter Cushing once again plays Dr. Frankenstein, whose secret lab is part of an insane asylum, where he has been sentenced for crimes of "sorcery." As Dr. Victor he has gained control of the asylum, and cares for the inmates and patients much the same as he did in REVENGE OF FRANKENSTEIN, secretly amputating limbs to create his newest monster. Along comes another young disciple, sentenced for a similar crime, and the ball starts rolling once again in predictable fashion until the monster is torn apart by the mobs of frenzied inmates, reversing the ending of the earlier film.

Obviously Hammer is trying to make the antecedents of this new film quite clear. But no matter what anyone says, FRANKENSTEIN AND THE MONSTER FROM HELL is not a return to the classic mold except on the most superficial level. The paramount inference is Frankenstein himself, for he is simply not the same doctor we met back in the late fifties. The fanatical villainy brought out in CURSE OF FRANKENSTEIN is gone. The surreptitious, almost paranoid villainy of REVENGE OF FRANKENSTEIN is also gone. Like Lee's Dracula, the personality of Dr. Frankenstein has been drained away over the years (beginning with John Elder's screenplay for EVIL OF FRANKENSTEIN), turning Cushing's once believable Baron finally into a cardboard clown prince who can't seem to do anything right, and, what's more, doesn't even seem to care that he can't. Without showing even the slightest flicker of frustration, Cushing announces at this film's end that it's back to the old drawing board—paring the way for yet another sequel. If Hammer really believes this sad, filmsy conclusion shows a return to the classic mold, Hammer is wrong.

Even though CURSE OF FRANKENSTEIN and REVENGE OF FRANKENSTEIN left room for sequels, they still offered legitimate endings. They were individual movies, not just 90-minute set-ups for future ones.

Having lost ready U.S. distribution for each new production, Hammer is floundering to regain the excitement its name once held for millions of moviegoers. Part of the problem is the lack of adequate, imaginative advertising, a malaise from which the entire film industry suffers. But the major problem with Hammer is its reliance on uninspired talent like John Elder and Terence Fisher (who has always been only as good as his scripts told him to be) and restrictive formulas, like introducing female Draculas who simply act out the same tired male vampire clichés. It is in variety and substance that Hammer will rediscover its classic mold, not in the superficial apeing of past triumphs.

John McCarty

JONATHAN...as frightening—and as beautiful—as the genre to which it belongs.


Jonathan Jonas... Jurgen Jurg Josef... Hans Dieter Jendreylo The U.S. Thomas Aslan Lena's Mother... Ilse Kanke

It is not for nothing that Hans Geissendörfer has broken with tradition to name his vampire Jonathan, after his hero is a mere mortal, torn between two worlds, who increasingly finds that he is an outcast in both of them. With the worlds of the peasant and the vampire both reaching outside him, Jonathan is tragically caught in the middle, a victim of both.

Geissendörfer provides his film with a cruel climate in which anything is possible, anything can happen and probably will. Geissendörfer is one of the few filmmakers who can make the strange gesticulation of the vampires at the end of the film, in a series of beautifully icy shots of the creatures dissolving before our eyes, seem real. The saver the vampire Jonathan is attacked by a girl assumed to have been freed from the domination of the vampires. With that stroke, the camera begins a fast track, sending Jonathan in the upper left corner of the frame. The menace of this world has not disappeared with the vampires, it is a constant, unending, and elusive fact.

Below, this strikes me as the fact that Geissendörfer continually exploits our conventional attitudes toward horror films. Seeing such fare, we are all occupied by the forbidden, all of us watching and enjoying, perhaps even being titillated, events we should hope never to witness in real life. When one puts JONATHAN on a kind of aesthetic level with the more glorified vampire films and their fans seem to demand a nearly human adherence, its peculiar style and visuals, the perfunctory acting, and the fact that Jonathan is nearly constant violence is nearly always by its intensely graphic quality Brehiczí in tone (as artificial and stylized as the floating group of white-robed children who strike odd, wind-swept poses throughout the film). One realizes, that, then, that Geissendörfer is more concerned with problems of oppression, paranoia, xenophobia, and the portrayal of reality problems less definable, let alone solvable, than the black and white world of the vampire tale.

JONATHAN is an important film, for it represents what genre filmmaking sorely needs: individuals who competently use the genre not only for its surface thrills but for more important and perhaps even original ends. Geissendörfer is a young West German filmmaker known primarily for his work in documentaries, although he has directed three other fiction films as well. His use of the vampire genre is as similar to Godard in the '60s and his use of the Hollywood-esque crime film for political, anarchic purposes. It has received outstanding critical notices from the New York Times and the Village Voice. H. E. D. Donner noted in the newspaper Die Zeit that "From the opening sequences, Hans W. Geissendörfer's JONATHAN is as frightening—and as beautiful—as the genre to which it belongs."

David Bartholomew
PHASE IV

...individualists are likely to find it a disturbing film.

PHASE IV A Paramount Pictures Release, 9'74.
Edited by Willy Kempl.

Hubs ..................................... Nigel Davenport
Kendra ..................................... Lynne Frederick
Lesko ..................................... Michael Murphy
Mr. Eldridge .............................. Alan Gifford
Mrs. Eldridge .............................. Helen Horton
Clete ....................................... Robert Henderson

Perhaps someday an enterprising scholar will write a book entitled Insects in the Cinema. Any categorization which includes UN CHEN ANDALOU, MOTHRA, and THE WASP WOMAN is worth some scholarly analysis. Films about insects taking over the world occupy a special niche in the science fiction genre. What distinguishes PHASE IV from its forerunners is scale; in previous films, the attacking creatures were always giant-size: ants in THEM, a praying mantis in THE DEADLY MANTIS, grasshoppers in BEGINNING OF THE END, a spider in TARANTULA, and scorpions in THE BLACK SCORPION. (Taxonomists, please note: I am aware that spiders and scorpions are arachnids, not insects, but for the sake of argument, I beg your indulgence.) Only in THE NAKED JUNGLE do we see normal ants attacking normal people, but since the ants failed to knock over Charlton Heston's plantation, they can hardly be classified as a threat to mankind. PHASE IV delineates the struggle between ants and man for global supremacy, but the film has little in common with any of the aforementioned films, THE HELLSMITH CHRONICLE is the most obvious influence because of the technique of extreme close-up cinematography (Ken Middleton photographed the insect sequences for both films), but PHASE IV is more memorable because it dramatizes what THE HELLSMITH CHRONICLE merely relates.

PHASE IV begins with an astronomical phenomenon, the aftermath of which is anxiously awaited by scientists and laymen alike. The anticipated widespread catastrophes do not occur, but some disturbing changes take place in ant behavior: antagonistic species stop fighting and gang up on their predators. An English biologist and an American cryptologist-mathematician set up shop at a laboratory in the Arizona desert, where ant behavior is particularly noisome and human beings have been evacuated, except for one recalcitrant family. At first, the ants are quiet, but the biologist blows up several towers they have constructed, and the battle begins: the ants retaliate by destroying the scientists' truck; the scientists spray a poisonous chemical around the perimeter of their laboratory, killing a large number of ants, as well as three of the four members of the family that had failed to evacuate (the fourth member, a teen-age girl, takes refuge in the laboratory); the ants reply by constructing reflective devices around the laboratory, increasing the temperature within, and rendering the scientists' equipment useless; the scientists use sound waves to destroy the reflectors, but it is too little too late. Convinced that killing the queen ant is the only way to victory, the biologist attempts to locate her, only to be trapped and killed by the ants, who allow the cryptologist and the girl to remain alive. The ants make them "part of their world.

As in THE Thing and THE ANDROMEDA STRAIN, an unpublicized conflict taking place at a remote outpost has worldwide consequences. During the battle in PHASE IV a slow but inexorable change in the balance of power is effected: the roles are reversed—or to be more accurate, the scientists finally realize that they are the subjects and the ants are the experimenters. The formidable feats of the ants are a result of superior social organization: "perfect altruism, harmony, and social structure," as the biologist puts it. Contrasted with the tightly-knit ant colony is the loose organization of human society, or at least what little of it we can discern from the relationships of the six people in the film. The ranchers do not evanxuate when ordered, the girl's irrationality and ignorance disrupt the efficiency of the laboratory operations, and the biologist is callously indifferent to his fellow men. He cares not at all about the welfare of the girl, and he is not moved by the death of her three relatives. His attitude towards the death of his own species contrasts sharply with that of the ants. The ants slay by the poisonous chemical they use, and the survivors take them behind the lines, so to speak, where they are lined up in even rows, as well-regimented in death as they were in life. Even between the two scientists there are serious disputes. The biologist, a student of life (a "soft" scientist), is less compassion than the cryptologist, who is engaged in a more abstract (or "hard") science. The biologist takes a hard line: he wants to challenge the ants, to show them man is the master. The cryptologist, who spends most of his time deciphering the ants' language, is primarily interested in communicating with them. This dichotomy is nothing new in science fiction films: there are men of action who wish to kill alien creatures and men of thought who wish to communicate with them, as in THE Thing, THE WAR OF THE WORLDS, FIRST MEN IN THE MOON, and PLANET OF THE APES, in a lesser reversal. Usually the killers prevail and the communicators fall by the wayside, but in PHASE IV the killer is killed and the communicator survives.

Although individual ants can be exterminated easily, the society is invincible, not only because of superior organization, but also because of the ability to adapt, evinced by the ants' rapid immunity to the poisonous chemical. As any good Darwinist knows, evolution favors populations, not individuals; hence PHASE IV could be interpreted as a parano to regimentation and totalitarianism, and a critique of individualism. Granted, it is difficult to transpose characteristics of ant society to human society, but individualists, whether rugged or romantic, are likely to find PHASE IV a disturbing film.

Because of their small size, indestructible social fabric, and ability to permeate areas which are inaccessible to humans, the ants are a more insidious menace than their oversized brethren in THEM. Man-eating ants the size of tractor trailers cannot help but be evil, but the ants of PHASE IV possess an almost demonic intelligence: clearly they can dispose of the humans whenever they want, but their gamesmanship and experimentation are more sadistic than moving in for a quick kill.

Visually, PHASE IV is dynamic, due in large measure to the direction of Saul Bass, a graphic artist whose title designs have graced the opening moments of many features. (His most memorable credit sequences include the sleek, slow-motion of a black cat in A WALK ON THE WILD SIDE, the animated mutations in IN A MAD, MAD, MAD WORLD, and the harsh, stereotyped black and white perpendicularly of PSYCHO.) PHASE IV includes graphic sequences, extreme close-up cinematography, and arid, torching landscapes. Bass, however, never falls into the trap other visual artists often fall into when they turn to directing feature films: he never dwell on a visual effect for its own sake (as cinematographer Nicholas Roeg did when he directed WALKABOUT and DON'T LOOK NOW). As is the case with many new directors, Bass has directed a genre film his first time out. Whether or not he remains in the genre, his future work will bear watching.

Frank Jackson

The program begins with a fencing display of Captain Kirk and Mr. Spock. The two are engaged in a friendly match, using their lightsabers and their bodies as weapons. Mr. Spock, known for his logical and precise movements, dominates the fight, but Captain Kirk, with his quick reflexes and strategic thinking, manages to hold his own. The fencing display is interrupted by an announcement over the ship's intercom system, and the two men are called back to their duties.

The fencing display was a nod to the show's themes of diplomacy and conflict resolution. The characters are often seen engaging in physical combat, but their abilities are used to solve problems rather than to harm others. Mr. Spock's logical approach contrasts with Captain Kirk's more intuitive and spontaneous methods. This display serves as a reminder of the diverse skill sets the characters possess and the importance of teamwork in achieving their goals.

Mr. Spock's fencing abilities are showcased, highlighting his skill and precision. The display also serves as a metaphor for the challenges faced by the characters in their missions, emphasizing the importance of strategy and forethought in overcoming obstacles.


**THE RATINGS**

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**TOP RATED FILMS**

- **THE CONVERSATION (3.6)**
- **THE EXORCIST (2.9)**
- **DAY OF THE DOLPHIN (2.1)**
- **THE PARALAX VIEW (2.1)**
- **ZARDOZ (2.1)**

Man on a Swing (2.0)

Only films seen by four or more participants are given an average rating. Of 72 films currently in release, 43 have rates above an average rating of 2.0 or better.

**THE RATERS**

- **BW** = Bill Warren
- **DB** = David Bartholomew
- **DRS** = Dan R. Scapparotti
- **DW** = Dale Winogura
- **FSC** = Frederick S. Clarke
- **JM** = John McCarthy
- **RLJ** = L. Jerome
- **TL** = Tim L. Luckie
- **Av.** = Average Rating

**ANXIOUS**

Absolutely rotten black comedy. Good opening and nice work by McCallum, but ultimately forced, stinky, boring, amateurish and sloopy. Trash. **(DW) - 4**

**BLOOD FOR DRACULA**

Preverted at the Atlanta Film Festival. Better than ANDY WAHROL'S FRANKENSTEIN, and as peacefully surreal. Scars with Roman Polanski in a gasp. (Dracula's demise is unforgettable.) **(RLJ) - 1**

**CHOSUN SURVIVORS**

Perhaps the gloomiest television reject ever made. Perfect casting. Despite excellent suspense direction, the film never loses its aura of being a TV cop show. The mere piece to see after a beer party? **(TL) - 3**

**CRUCIBLE OF TERROR**

After a promising pre-credit start, the film deteriorates into a dull mystery plot until the final minutes when the supernatural aspects come to light. Mike Raines is bad as usual. **(DRS) - 1**

**DEAD OF NIGHT**

Dedicated to a maniacal desire in the American psyche for pain and retribution for crimes of Vietnam. A grisly, macabre tale, worthy of the revered reputation of its namesake. **(FIC) - 3**

"A soldier, killed in action, comes home under his own power. Sleeker potential." **(TL) - 2**

**THE DEVIL'S TRIANGLE**

A quick documentary, much stock footage. Narrated by Vincent Price, who doesn't read anything anymore without it sounding like a blathered pompous lecture. **(DRS) - 1**

"On a trip with CHIANTS OF THE GODS, except that it fails to explore the theories and concepts it raises." **(JM) - 0**

**GOLDEN NEEDLES**

Beautifully stylized, superb acting by Baker, Ashley, and Meredith, cleverly plotted, weak transition, otherwise cut down, sometimes awkwardly. **(DW) - 2**

**THE GROOVE TUBE**

"Incomparable, sophomoric, but clever, sometimes hilarious TV satire. Nice takeoff on 2001 at the beginning." **(DW) - 2**

"Has all the weaknesses of the very media it satirizes. Incredibly inspired, particularly in a robotized animation sequence." **(FIC) - 1**

**FILM RATINGS**

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<td>ANDY WAHROL'S FRANKENSTEIN</td>
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HOMERIDES

"An exquisite black comedy shot in Cincinnati. Familiar cast of slightly character actors and actresses get even with a construction tycoon that has their tenement building destroyed to make way for a skyscraper." (TL, -3)

THE HOUSE THAT VANISHED

"Farish standard tale of psychic knife killer. Tit and Blood." (DB, -2)

ISLAND AT THE TOP OF THE WORLD

"Your special effects and pedestrian performances make for unconvincing fantasy adventure." (DBS, 0)

IT'S ALIVE

"A real bite, exploitive film. Teasing, cheat- ing, inept suspense tactics. A good idea ruined by pretentious handling. Good score by Bernard Herrmann." (DW, 2)

"This tale of a mutated, remorseless baby, a powerful, murdering monster, is constantly on the brink of laughability, but is too gruesome to laugh at. Wasted potential." (FIC, 0)

THE LAST DAY OF MAN ON EARTH

"Excellent film version of Michael Moorcock's The Final Propostanme shall be regarded as among the best combinations of science fiction and fantasy in all of cinema. Superb accomplishment." (W, TL, -4)

MAN OF THE YEAR

"A manipulative fantasy set in Italy about an Italian with three leaflets. Terribly dull, terribly overlong, terrible. Full of phallic and testicle symbols." (TL, -3)

MEMORIES WITH MRS AGGIE

"Beau pulsating porno. Fine photography and editing, weak script and direction, uneven acting, often pretentious, not very erotic." (DB, 9)

"Blandly bizarre and warped visual surface treatment. A, rather pretentious, prettily beau- tiful score is a tremendous asset." (FIC, -2)

THE MYSTERIOUS ISLAND OF CAPTAIN NEMO

"A dashed dull, talky and slow, with Oscar Sharkey's Nemo pretty much Zero." (BLJ, 0)

NIGHTMARE HONEYMOON

"Fresh faces plus stale script equals failed thriller." (BLJ, 0)

"The first genre piece from the director of CAT BALLS; is interesting viewing fare. Originality to be directed by Nicholas Roeg, the picture ends of his own mind." (TL, -1)

NORMAN NURSELPICK'S SUSPENSION

"On target, beautifully paced Hitchcock pat- rody. The PSYCHO shower scene had me in laughing fits." (FIC, -3)

PHANTOM OF THE PARADISE

"Fantastic! Will probably be the hit of the year." (DW, -4)

"An elaborately conceived, meaningless mo- vie. It says, expresses and does nothing. A crum of gold-plated shit." (DW, -1)

THE SEKOBARTS

"Formerly entered BEAUTIFUL PEOPLE, and copyrighted 1975. Almost insightful. Almost. New opening and closing scenes have been latched on starring Satan." (TL, -2)

SEXUAL WITCHCRAFT

"No joke, this is hardcore porno, loudly de- veloped in every way. A waste." (DW, -3)

SHOCKER

"Alternately dumb and clever. Technically sloppy (at first I thought it was intentional). That it is all a murderous fantasy lets every- one off the hook. Too bad." (BLJ, 0)

"Some lovely, lyrical moments in this, one of Castle's better films. Smoky black comedy with some fine touches and a superb job by Marcel Marceau." (DW, -1)

SHEBA

"A nasty (in an unflattering sense) shocker with Lena Turner on one of her clothes-horse binges as a mean Mum who rakes her son (Ralph Bates) unmercifully until the warm turns and... Tyburn's first film." (BLJ, 0)

"The most unpleasant film this year. A comedy in the best sense of the word." (DW, -1)

SWORD OF VENGEANCE, Part 6 (Yoshimichi Kudo)

"One of the dammedest films ever made. I'm sorry someone felt impelled to make it, but as long as they did, Hooper did an excellent job. The violence itself is not extreme, but the tension, atmosphere and thrills are ex- tremely powerful." (BW, -2)

UFO TARGET EARTH

"Overwritten hilariously-too many ideas and none developed. Some of the optims are pret- ty." (BLJ, -3)

"Every "borderline science fiction based on a novel by Algis Budrys about an American scientist in space who is re-built by East European scientists, a quasi-cyborg. Pretty dull except for Joe Bora who manages to give a good performance under the metal face." (JM, 0)
continued from page 6

Swan was a cut-out that was moved across glass, animated essentially. When Mike came back he wanted to re-shoot it using front projection. We were going to build a front projection rig, but the person who was to build it couldn't get himself together, and we were running out of cash, so we decided not to reshoot it. At that point I did a few effects myself, and in the end the Swan sequence wound up being a combination of Dennis' work, Mike's work, and my work.

CFQ: What locations were used during the editing stage?

ZIEHM: Originally, Mike Benveniste was going to edit the film. He cut the first rough assembly, and told me it was in shape enough to have a little screening. We'd told everybody about the film, and we had high hopes for it. Most of the animation wasn't in yet, but we held the screening anyway, and it was a big disappointment. I'll never forget that evening. I was in a cold sweat, not knowing what to say to people. So the next morning I had to fire Mike Benveniste, which was sort of unfortunate. After I fired him, I walked out of the office and that's when we got busted. The whole world collapsed for me that Saturday morning. From this stage to completion a guy named Abbas was editing. The film had been edited incorrectly to start with, and everything was broken into little rolls, very hard to find, so we had to re-edit much more difficult than it should have been. As Abbas started putting the film together, weaknesses in the script started showing up. We were forced to do some pick-up shots and add some effects here and there. Just little transitions to smooth things out. Also, editing in both 16mm and 35mm made the job cumbersome. We were first reducing the 35mm to 16mm, then editing. When we had cut the picture properly, the 16mm footage was blown up to 35mm for release printing.

CFQ: Were any scenes scrapped in the editing stage?

ZIEHM: No, nothing really significant. We cut some sight gags that just didn't work. But basically we kept everything in; we just tightened it up here and there.

CFQ: How is the film doing at the boxoffice?

ZIEHM: Very well. We have it booked at a cinema 5 theatre and it is pulling the biggest crowds of any of the Cinema 5 theatres in New York. It's grossed $90,000 in the first two weeks. It's a crazy, unique film that I think we'll always have playdates. I think we're going to do okay with it.

CFQ: Can we expect a sequel to the film in the near future then?

ZIEHM: Maybe. But I'm thinking more in terms of another spoof, or doing a new comic character. I feel I've gotten a tremendous education in special effects in the past three years. I paid for that education by suffering through the ups and downs of this film, and feel I am now capable of putting together a much more organized production. And if someone tells me a movie takes a week to do, I know he's full of crap. That's the kind of thing that was told to me at the beginning of this project. So sometime soon there will be another project, and it won't take three years, either.

CFQ: Does FLESH GORDON succeed as you hoped it would when you first began?

ZIEHM: Yes, but as I said, when we went into this we never thought that I'd be the first to say the film could be better, in just about every area. But I feel relieved that audiences find it entertaining, that it does have merit. I feel very pleased with it, on the whole.

CFQ: Will your future films be more of the same nature, or will you move into other areas?

ZIEHM: I have a philosophy about those other areas. I look at them and it seems to me that they are all losing money. You have to clash right and left, you have backers to worry about, unlike my own experience so far. The films I've done, with the exception of FLESH GORDON, have had some little out-of-hand, have all been done under conglomeral atmospheres. They were fun to do, and have also been profitable. Of course, I would like to improve the quality of my films, and not do just sex films, but I like the idea of projects that are outrageous, whether it's sex, or politics, or whatever. I went to MIT for three years, and I saw a hum-drum existence working for some company designing pencil sharpeners, or something, and I thought, 'Oh, my fate when I graduated. I'll probably do something outrageous again in film in the near future.'

CFQ: Will your next project involve special effects?

ZIEHM: Definitely! If FLESH GORDON does well, I'd love to work with Jim Danforth again. Him, Tom Scherman, the whole crew.

CFQ: FLESH GORDON should succeed. It's the first really imaginative use of model animation in so long a time.

ZIEHM: That's how we felt. It has a wide appeal and not just for the science fiction buffs either. People aren't coming to see the movie just to be entertained, to laugh, and they're leaving the theatre satisfied.

After our interview with Howard, the three of us walked back to the screening room, where Peter Locke was unspooling the last ten minutes of FLESH GORDON. On the screen Wang's galaxie on the planet Porno was being systematically demolished. Miniatures that had taken months to build were being destroyed in seconds, and Howard whispered that very irony to me as we watched. Howard Ziehm is new to the world of cinema, but if his first venture into the realm of fantasy is any indication, he'll be making many more future contributions to the genre.

Top: The great god Porno with Dale Arder in his grasp. Unlike most animated monsters, this great god is liable to mouth an obscenity or two as he rips off the heroine's clothes. If nothing more can be said of FLESH GORDON, it opens fresh new vistas to the stagnating field of model animation effects. Bottom: The beetle monster advances to do battle with Flesh in a sequence which parodies the famous skeleton swordfight from Ray Harryhausen's THOR: VOYAGE OF SINDBAD. The model was fabricated by Rick Baker and constructed by Bill Hedges from the designs of George Barr. The sequence is animated by Jim Danforth who also executed some striking matte paintings.
NEWS
AND
NOTES

SENSE
OF
WONDER

Welcome to the twelfth issue of CINEFANTASTIQUE (sin-eh-fau-tass-tek), the magazine with a "sense of wonder," devoted to the examination of horror, fantasy and science fiction in the cinema. Cinefantastique, as a film genre, is healthier and more prolific today than ever before. And just as our nation faces perhaps the most troubled political, economic and social upheaval in its history, the movie industry as a whole is experiencing better times than at any time since the past decade. People, in the grip of economic uncertainty, fearful of losing their homes and perhaps even their way of life itself, are escaping the boxoffice of their local movie house in ever greater numbers to be shocked and chilled by the horrors of a comparatively safe and secure fantasy world in which they know they can come to no real harm. How else can one explain the fairly recent American lust for torture, broadly disapproved and condemned by a Grand Guignol realism in film fare—something previously isolated to a small body of cheap films made for an equally small, perhaps disturbed, audience—except in terms of its being a shock treatment in calming growing inner fears and discontent? In the past, devotees of films depicting bloody mutilation and disfigurement, such as those of director Herschell Gordon Lewis—i.e., BLOOD FEAST, 2000 MANIACS, THE WIZARD OF GORE, et al.—were considered sick. What can be the judgment now of these films when our society as a whole demands their like in entertainment? Is the public's newly discovered fascination for eye gouging and amputation to be considered a symptom of sickness in our society as a whole, and if so, is our morbidity a sign of passing delirium or the first stages of social dissolution? Can the public's preoccupation with films such as THE EXORCIST, THE TEXAS CHAIN SAW MASSACRE, ANDY WARHOL'S FRANKENSTEIN, etc. be mitigated by the fact that the blood and gore is now being sold? Perhaps. In any case, we are now temporally too close to gain enough perspective to judge the matter, but I think there can be no doubt that films, and particularly films of our genre, are accurately reflecting the mood of the country and the people. The tenor of the times is reflected more generally in the cinema by the public's sudden interest in films portraying cataclysm and mass death, the so-called "ark" pictures, including EARTHQUAKE and THE TOWERING INFERNO. Siegfried Kracauer wrote a classic volume of film criticism called From Caligari to Hitler in the late forties which traced the psychology of the German people that lead to Nazism in the films, many of them horror films, of that period. A corresponding volume which could conceivably illuminate the story of the past 14 years might be called From Psycho to Nixon.

David Bartholomew and Dale Winogura provide our feature article this issue by examining "THE EXORCIST: The Book, The Movie, The Phenomenon." As Bartholomew points out in his introduction tracing the film from its novelistic beginnings to its overwhelming reception by the general public, as few films ever did, THE EXORCIST has made history. He also makes the observation that most critics, in skewering the film for its shocking violence, have mistakenly treated the film as disreputable and not symptomatic. Accompanying interviews with the film's director, William Friedkin, and actor Jason Miller, who plays Father Karras in the film, were conducted by Dale Winogura in Hollywood. Dale writes: "I hope they will serve as a useful and perhaps invaluable guide to a deeper understanding of the picture. I believe THE EXORCIST to be the finest genre film made in America. Perhaps the one great symbol of the film is that magnificent two-shot of Father Merrin and the statue of Pazuzu in the desert, which graces the article. It epitomizes for me the infinite mystery of the film, and its timeless wonder." In discussing his film, Friedkin concludes: "It has a lot to say to future generations, if only on a historical basis." Bartholomew interviews Dick Smith, the make up artist on the film, from a different angle, discussing the creation of the film's makeup and effects on a technical basis. The discussion reveals that a great deal of work previously credited to special effects technicians is actually the work of Smith and his make-up techniques. We thank director William Friedkin for giving us permission to publish here-to-fore prohibited makeup photos, and Dick Smith for providing the material from his files. This special article on THE EXORCIST, perhaps the greatest horror film ever made, coincides with its first anniversary. We're confident that in the years to come it will continue to be regarded, like 2001: A SPACE ODYSSEY, as a milestone in the evolution of cinefantastique.

Mark Carducci and Douglas Olson provide an interesting look behind the production of FLESH AND GORDON by interviewing its producer and co-director, Howard Ziehm. As our faithful readers will recall, we published a short feature on the film's production early in 1972 in our Vol 2 No 1 issue. The film itself never materialized, until now, and Ziehm reveals exactly why it took three years to produce a pornographic special effects movie. Rumors concerning the film have been rampant as Ziehm himself remarks: "There was an animosity that grew slowly between all of us as we worked on the picture. My partner, Bill Osco, was driving a Rolls Royce and I was telling people I couldn't afford to pay them." We hope to publish a future article to delve more fully into the film's production, particularly as concerns the creation of its special effects. If nothing else can be said in the film's favor, it at least provides a breath of fresh air to the stagnating field of model animation special effects.

Finally, Steve Ruben takes a retrospective look at THEM!, a classic of cinefantastique, and in discussions with its director, Gordon Douglas, and its screenwriter, Ted Sherdeman, examines the milieu of the studio system during the fifties, and finds the stupidity, short-sightedness and lack of creativity we always suspected must be there.
DARK STAR

A terribly funny satire on spacemen, space movies, companionship, and steely nerves under pressure.

DARK STAR could be the science fiction sleeper of the year. With a total budget of $60,000, made over a period of four months, this little film has proved my earlier prediction of becoming a good, class combination of science fiction, wacky outrageous comedy, action and adventure. I made that prediction when DArk STAR was just an ambition. But the film being shot in 16mm by two students at USC (see Vol 2 No 3, page 4). When I learned that it had been picked up for commercial distribution by Jack H. Harris Enterprises, I got in touch with the film's director, John Carpenter. Let's talk about it.

At 26, Carpenter is a young director by Hollywood standards and DArk STAR is his first feature. At USC he made eleven student films, including editing and music work on the Academy Award-winning short film CARPENTER, the Director of BRONCHO BILLY. Originally from Bowling Green, Kentucky, he attended college at Western Ken- tucky University and then at the Cinema Department at USC. In addition to producing, directing and co-authoring the script of DArk STAR, Carpenter also composed and performed the film's musical score, which consists of a witty combination of country music and eerie moog vibrations.

CFQ: How did DArk STAR progress from being a $6000 student film shot in 16mm to a $60,000 35mm feature film in commercial release?

CARPENTER: Very slowly. At one point during production of the short version, we were approached by investors who saw commercial potential in what we were doing. They offered to put up some money if we would expand to a feature. The opportunity was an attractive one because of the amount of control I could maintain over the picture. In essence, they gave me the money and left me alone. After completing the feature, we shopped around for a distributor. Jack Harris made us an offer and we accepted.

CFQ: When you began DArk STAR, what was your original concept?

CARPENTER: Essentially, I envisioned the picture as an adventure in outer space, and not so much as a comedy. We were influenced a lot by Dr. STRANGELOVE, and, of course, 2001. The comedy elements just developed out of the situation.

CFQ: What were the artistic problems that you had to face and overcome in making the picture?

CARPENTER: Proper pacing for the film was the biggest problem for me. I think pacing is what makes the film work. In the situation, the springboard is a motion picture. If your pace doesn't fit your subject, and you don't lead your audience where they're going, it's like losing them. In DArk STAR I was just as concerned with the men as I was with the situation. When you set up an adventure in outer space, in the space capsule, there are very few places you can go. So the emphasis in DArk STAR is not so much on getting from A to B but what it's like getting there.

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others were full of unrealized possibilities. I was also concerned with bringing the machines to life. The computer and the thermostellar bombs are characters we as the makers are. They had to be treated cinematically in a way that would make them come alive.

CFQ: What is behind the continual references to the deceased Commander Powell in the beginning?

CARPENTER: At the start, Dan O'Bannon and I conceived of the film as a Waiting For Godot in outer space. In that theatre-of-the-absurd play, the characters keep talking about Mr. Godot and when he's going to appear that day. At the end of the play someone arrives and says he's not going to be coming today, and to come back tomorrow. We used this concept by having the men constantly referring to Powell, and giving the audience the idea that this man was somehow the reason behind their mission, a guiding force. Even in death (which has occurred before the film opens), they still speak of him reverently, almost as a god, as someone who's guiding them, giving some kind of meaning to their mission. This is eventually realized in his appearance at the end of the picture.

CFQ: The scene with the ship's alien mascot, a beachball with claws, really doesn't fit in well.

CARPENTER: The original idea we had was to have the men seek out intelligent life in the universe, in addition to their other duties. I wanted to pay tribute to all those old, cheap science fiction films that I love dearly. We thought of a specimen room in the ship, with hundreds of forms of life, like a psychodelic zoo, where one of the men would have to go in and feed the animals. The cost of such an idea was prohibitive, so we cut it down to one alien mascot, the beachball with claws. We wanted something that would be funny and obviously not a real monster.

I liked Dan's character and felt he didn't have enough to do in the picture. I also like to have physical action in a picture as much as psychological development. We came up with the scene in which O'Bannon nearly falls down the ship's elevator shaft first and then figured a way of tying the alien into it. It was a departure from the story and thrust of the film, but I wanted to have some fun in the middle of the picture.

CFQ: How did you go about filming this scene?

CARPENTER: The elevator shaft was built on a sound stage, about 80 feet long. It was horizontal. We turned the camera on its side and shot both sideways and upside down. When you see him dangling from the elevator, he's merely lying on a platform sticking his feet up to appear like he's in danger of falling. The elevator itself was a crab doll with a piece of mascara in front of it, painted silver. You only see the bottom of it.

CFQ: The diary scene is one of my favorites. How did it develop?

CARPENTER: That scene was very well scripted, except for a couple of entries which we did on the spot. Dan and I have a very good working relationship as actor and director. We can communicate quickly, and once we get his character down, I can have a lot of fun with it. That is one of my favorite scenes, too.

CFQ: The relief we feel when Doolittle succeeds in talking the computerized bomb out of exploding is a beautiful set-up for the explosion that occurs shortly thereafter. It's a perfect extension of the absurdities we've seen in the rest of the film.

CARPENTER: That's the idea. If you can take the audience to the point where they begin to understand the situation, convinced a bomb that it cannot tell fantasy from reality, after that you can do anything. Just as long as you keep moving so the audience doesn't have time to flag, you can get away with it. During the scene while Doolittle is talking to the bomb, there is a fight between Boiler and Pinback in the control room and subsequently down the corridor. We added it to complicate the tension even more. I'm happy that we pulled it off as well as we did. Much of the writing of the scene was Dan's, and I thought it was very good.

CFQ: How did you handle your actors?

CARPENTER: I wanted the performers to underplay to give a sense of reality. Aside from the most important aspect was casting the right person, with the right physical and emotional character. And making sure I get across what it is I want in the character. I believe in an acting approach based on gesture and expression.

CFQ: What trends do you see developing in the science fiction film genre in the seventies, and what do you feel has prevented the genre from becoming a popular cinema as it was in the twenties and thirties?

CARPENTER: Science fiction has become much more seriously intentioned and, unfortunately, much more pretentious. Many of the Westerns during the fifties and sixties, science fiction pictures like THE TERMINAL MAN, 2001, A CLOCKWORK ORANGE, SILENT RUNNING, and even the flabubbon ones like SOYLENT GREEN pretend to greater things. Of course, this parallels the similar development of science fiction literature in which there are two general trends, the novels with social-religious themes and the novels that are purely escapist-adventure.

With obvious exceptions, the science fiction film, like the Western, appeals to a specific segment of moviegoers. Many people simply do not enjoy seeing science fiction pictures. In terms of the people who make pictures, actors, directors, producers, science fiction is neglected because it is almost always very expensive and no one wants to take a back seat to the gimmicks.

CFQ: Are you pleased with DARK STAR?

CARPENTER: It's awfully hard to look at it objectively now. There's always something I'd change. Generally, I'm very pleased with the way the film turned out. I think it's pretty obvious that this is a low-budget feature film as a director. There's a lot of inexperience and youthfulness in it, which I hope will mature. I am gratified by those things in the picture that I pulled off well. The film allowed me to use the science fiction genre to explore personality, which was one of my intentions.

CFQ: Do you have any special interest or desire to work within the science fiction genre?

CARPENTER: I feel special affection towards science fiction films. I grew up with them and love to watch them. It was their influence that led me into a career of directing pictures. However, the genre doesn't hold an exclusive position in the types of pictures I want to do. There are too many other stories to be told.
THE HEPHAESTUS PLAGUE is an upcoming William Castle production for Paramount Pictures release, to be directed by Jeanne Sarc, a regular contributor to the Rod Serling teleseries NIGHT GALLERY. Thomas Page adapted his own novel for the screen, a tale involving the attempt of scientists to control the breeding of foot-long, carbon-eating, incendiary cockroaches that emerge from fissures in the earth following a severe earthquake.

LEGEND OF THE WEREWOLF is the third Tyburn Film Production, now filming in England. Their first film, SHEBA, a psychological horror film with Lana Turner and Ralph Bates is already receiving some U.S. playdate. Their second, THE GOUL, has not been picked up for U.S. release. The current production stars Peter Cushing in a screenplay written by former Hammer contributor John Elder. The film is directed by Freddie Francis and produced by his son Kevin, who is the driving force behind Tyburn, a company actively involved in production during a deeply felt depression in the British film industry. The company has several properties by Elder for filming.

LORD GRAYSTOKE is being written by Robert Towne for producer Stanley Carter, based on the Tarzan novels by Edgar Rice Burroughs. Towne is noted for his screenplay for Roman Polanski’s CHINATOWN.

ROLLERBALL is the name of a lethal competitive sport played in a future world controlled by huge corporations, a story being filmed for United Artists release starring Academy Award winner John Houseman, James Caan and Sir Ralph Richardson. Producer-director Norman Jewison is filming in England from a screenplay written by William Harrison based on his story originally published in Esquire magazine.

SINBAD AT THE WORLD’S END will be a followup film to the financially successful GOLDEN VOYAGE OF SINBAD. Ray Harryhausen will act as co-producer and write the film’s original story from which Beverly Cross will complete the screenplay. Cross collaborated with Harryhausen previously on the screenplay for JASON AND THE ARGONAUTS. Producer Charles Schneer again packages the deal for release by Columbia Pictures. Production is scheduled to begin in the Spring of 1975.

WASTED ON THE YOUNG has been acquired for filming by Bud Yorkin Productions. The science fiction novel by Ralph Schoenstein dealing with our society’s obsession with youth will soon be published by Bobbs-Merrill. The author is writing the screenplay.

Top: Roy Holder is seized by a prehistoric monosaurus in THE LAND THAT TIME FORGOT, an Amicus film production for release by AIP in March of 1973. The film, based on the novel by Edgar Rice Burroughs, features large mechanical models of prehistoric creatures designed by Maurice Carter. Bottom: Peter Cushing, during filming of THE GOUL for Tyburn Films, holds photographs of himself and his late wife Helen when they were young, props involved in the film’s story. No U.S. distribution has been set.

BIBLIO-FANTASTIQUE

In his book A Heritage of Horror (Gordon Fraser, London, 1971, 122 pages), David Pirie falls between two critical schools: author theory on one hand and an analysis of genre and ideology on the other. At times he combines the two, but all too often he abandons his analysis at precisely the point where it is becoming new and valuable. Particularly revealing in his discussion of ENEMY FROM SPACE which he approaches from an ideological standpoint, drawing comparisons between the events in the film and the political situation in the mid-1950s (fiction is ideal for this, provided one goes beyond the themes to the ideology the story purveys, something rarely done). Pirie points out that the film is “powerfully subversive,” but from which direction? One could certainly maintain that a film which shows the Government of the day being controlled by invaders is subverting the right-wing theory of natural authority and the power of the ruling class. One could, however, take the same view for INVASION OF THE BODY SNATCHERS—that such a film is a warning against foreign domination which, in the 1970s, can mean nothing other than an anti-Communist cold-war tract. The call for vigilance is an old-right-wingploy. Pirie is falling into the liberal trap of attacking evils in society from a standpoint that is so vague and based on a number of so highly ambiguous ideological themes that the resulting film can be interpreted along completely opposing and contradictory lines.

Pirie is at least aware of this possibility and begins the concluding lines of the book, where he is clearly advocating using cinefantastique ideological stereotypes to show us that science fiction can be a course for the horror movie, there is a terrible risk that directors like Frankenstein Siegel and Romero will assuage us with the interjection of half-baked political material into conventional horror plots. But I think on the whole the risk is worth taking, for it is essential that horror and fantasy, which are the most powerful cinematic metaphors we have, should continue to be meaningful.” I would maintain personally without hesitation that the majority of the most interesting and valuable films produced in Britain since the war are connected with cinefantastique in the widest sense. The problem with what Pirie says, however, is that, until we have directors willing to undertake analyses that do not embrace ambiguity because the makers are ignorant of how and why society functions ideologically and how its artistic products reflect that ideology, then the danger of meaninglessness will triumph. Pirie has not solved the problem critically in A Heritage of Horror because he is torn between conflicting standpoints. It is significant that, apart from his analyses of Gothic literature, the best pages of his book are devoted to the consistent themes and stylistic approaches of Terence Fisher and, especially, Michael Reeves, without attempting to go beyond this to the implications and values present. Basically, I think Pirie took on far too much in this book, at least in the space available. Nevertheless, despite the inadequacies and the inability to pursue arguments through to their conclusions, Pirie has thrown up enough ideas to enable critics to begin a serious revaluation of vast areas of unexplored territory. For that alone, his undertaking is invaluable.

Reynold Humphries

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Mel Brooks talks to Dale Winogura about the filming of his black and white ode to James Whale.

It was to his roomy yet modestly decorated office at Twentieth Century-Fox that Mel Brooks invited me for what he likes to call "social ping-pong." Brooks is an extremely likable, very expressive man, with an exuberance and wit that makes him a pleasure to be with. It will be a trifle insulting for me to admit my surprise in also finding him to be a highly intelligent and perceptive filmmaker.

In 1953, Brooks won an Oscar for his satirical cartoon short THE CRITIC, a satire of avant-garde movies and their critics. His first feature film, THE PRODUCERS, won him wide acclaim and a second Oscar (Best Original Screenplay) in 1968. He has also written and directed THE 12 CHAIRS, a cult favorite that unfortunately failed with the general public, and last year's BLAZING SADDLES, a western film satire that has proven to be his greatest commercial success.

YOUNG FRANKENSTEIN was developed with his frequent collaborator and star, Gene Wilder, and is an affectionate satire of the Universal horror films of the '30s, specifically those of James Whale.

Left: Young Frankenstein (Gene Wilder) becomes his newly born creation (Peter Boyle) to take its first step into the world. Top: Gene Wilder and his lab assistant Igor (Terri Garl) are greeted at the ancestral estate of his late father by Frau Blucher (Cheri Brachman). Middle: Terri Garr supervises a lab scene right out of FRANKENSTEIN MEETS THE WOLFPEN, including the Kenneth Welsheldon electrical effects. Bottom: Terri Garr and Igor (Marty Feldman) watch as Gene Wilder becomes captivated by the model describing the experiments of his father. These color scenes are part of the courtesy of Mel Brooks who insisted upon filming YOUNG FRANKENSTEIN in black and white to retain the look and visual mood of the old horror classics.

CFQ: Could you explain the genesis of YOUNG FRANKENSTEIN?
Brooks: Gene Wilder called me, and told me his agent said, I'd love to have you do a picture with another chump of mine, Peter Boyle, and Marty Feldman. Is there anything you guys could do together? The 3 Stooges or something?" Gene said, "I don't know, it's a good idea, let me think." Gene said to me. "Can you think of anything for us?" I said. "I don't know, I'm in the middle of BLAZING SADDLES." Gene said, "I've got an idea. How about YOUNG FRANKENSTEIN?" I said, "What the hell is that?" He said, "Well, I become the monster, and he becomes me." I said, "Wait a minute. You've got a great idea here. Peter is a natural monster, you are a natural, hysterical leading man, and Marty was born to play Igor. Maybe we can get a blood laboratory assistant with big tits, and maybe we can get Madeline Kahn as your New York fiancée, who's a 'not-on-the-lips' type.

Then we began working. Gene did most of the physical writing, and we would meet every ten days with about ten pages, and go over what we had and where we wanted to go. I wound up committed to both writing and directing it. We kept working for about seven months, and every moment I could spare from BLAZING SADDLES. It was really fun. It's the best way to write. I couldn't wait to get to the next scene, and get it done.

We showed it to Peter and Marty, and they just flipped. They thought it was going. We wanted to do it in black-and-white and that nearly blew the deal. Both the factor of black-and-white and the budget blew it away at Columbia, and 20th Century-Fox took it. But 20th also did not want it in black-and-white, and we said, "No, take it or leave it. If it's not James Whale, it will be a Hammer film, and we're not interested in that kind of blood-thunder." I love Japanese and Italian films. On the old "Show Off Shows" on television, I used to make fun of them, not at
them. I'm doing the same thing on a much more esoteric and exotic basis on YOUNG FRANKENSTEIN with the horror films of the 30s. They are cinematic masterpieces.

CFQ: During the writing of YOUNG FRANKENSTEIN, did you yourself add or eliminating gags?

BROOKS: We did both. Some scenes were too filled with business, bick and sh*t, and we cleaned them out like weeds. Some were deadly because they were vocal gags, and so we had to add, but they had to be added thematically, within the given situation and environment. Generally, as we went along, we eliminated gags.

Script is 90% of any venture, it's a number one—solid characters, good words. Next is casting, the people to take the ball across the number one yardline and score a touchdown, and only the best can do it for you.

I have a three-week trial cruise before shooting. I take the crew, and we meet every day, and go from page 1 to 120. Every department raises their hand and says, "What do we do here?"

I'm very highly organized, so that we know every day exactly what we should accomplish, and what is needed to accomplish it, both artistically and technically. We plan every move, every camera angle. I don't use a zoom in the middle of shots so that you notice it. I don't intrude as a director. I use very, very slow zooms in YOUNG FRANKENSTEIN. I emulate tracking shots because they did not have a zoom in 1931, and I don't want it to be a zoom.

CFQ: In Whale's horror films, there are some flashy, angled camera and editing touches in the lab scenes.

BROOKS: Whale was doing that to gain the "equipment rhythm" I call it. I couldn't do that because that would be making fun of it, and it would be too obvious.

CFQ: What is your basic stylistic and thematic concept of film?

BROOKS: The concept is a larger-than-life presentation. It has to do with Man's desire of being in control of it is the outrage of Man in God's defeat him. It's also about womb-envy, and the fear of God, or the fear of genius. So it becomes a very Prometheus work.

The plot and the feeling is German Expressionism. It's a salute to James Whale and the wonderful directors of the past, and that beautiful black-and-white look. It's done in the Reinhardt school: shafts of light, huge castles diminishing the human being. But, I didn't make the backgrounds as simple and firm as I can, so they're hard walls to bounce comedy off of. If the background is too soft and frivolous, like the comedy up front, then you have nothing working against it, no juxtaposition of textures, so to speak. It's almost Chagallian in its concept. You leave the ground and sweep backwards.

CFQ: It seems that thematically you are going back to the book rather than the films?

BROOKS: Oh, yes. I want it to be a spectacular and rich (visually and philosophically) entertainment that would house the comedy. It should be funny, thrilling, moving, and touching. There should be cheers at the end if we've done the right thing, and I think we have.

CFQ: Will your use of backgrounds be as bright and flashy as in BLAZING Saddles?

BROOKS: Generally, backgrounds will be muted. Occasionally, they will be incredibly bright, in cataclysmic, catastrophic, and catafalaccatic scenes and creation scenes where there is destruction. It will be almost dead black and dead white, with very few grays. There are three or four of these big, insane scenes, "anchor scenes," such as the creation scene, and what I call the monster's melancholy disembowelment and the moment of being a fool, of being used by his creator. You can't do a picture without anchoring it.

I don't want to be safe. I don't want to just "get on base." I am born to strike out and challenge God, or hit an insane home run for all of us. Art should challenge the authority of God, it should go that far, and we don't, or we are not worthy of the name. Man.

CFQ: But you love happy endings?

BROOKS: Yes. I do. I like triumph. I don't like defeat. I think an unhappy ending is a defeat over a period of two hours. I try to make the comedic Procten, massive, robust, and real. Lesser artists will use an unhappy

Above: Peter Boyle is befriended by an old hermit who is blind, played by Gene Hackman. Brooks’ comedy is often melancholy in timbre, and the scene loses none of the pathos of the original.

Below: During the ‘creation’ scene, Mel Brooks lines up a camera angle with cinematographer Jerry Breshfield. Brooks calls the films of James Whale “cinematic masterpieces.”

ending, thinking it’s Art. A true artist like Fellini or Bergman will always have a happy ending.

CFQ: You try to soften the violence in your films?

BROOKS: The audience never feels the pain because always take the curse off it if I can. I don't like pictures in which people are in pain.

CFQ: Were you influenced in YOUNG FRANKENSTEIN by Von Sternberg’s visual style?

BROOKS: There was a subliminal influence. In slow camera rhythms, almost imperceptible sometimes. I didn't drift as much as I "moved in" on character very slowly. The camera should always move a little bit in a long dialogue scene, and Von Sternberg did that exquisitely.

CFQ: Are you improvising on the set?

BROOKS: Only with the actors, never with the camera. It's better if the technicians are rehearsed so that the move is smooth. The one thing you don't want to do in an old-fashioned film is make a rude move. That's a very new concept—rude camera behavior. I like the genteel camera of the 30s' very much. That does not interfere, but supports action and thought on screen. Even when Whale used crazy angles, it's just to support the intensity of the scene, it's never intrusive. The other camera device I used was a star filter in two scenes, and only when women are on camera, to give them highlights. Everybody used that. It's really Busby Berkeley more than anybody when I think about it.

CFQ: How would you define your approach to comedy?

BROOKS: Comedy is like a piece of fruit. Think of a tree, the earth, the roots, and the majesty of that creation. Comedy is the fruit, the end product or the by-product. While those roots going deeper into the soil, there is no comedy. Comedy does not work in a fruit store, that's what some comedy filmmakers would have you believe. I hope that my comedy is hanging intact on the tree. It's the logical extension of human behavior, just as a pear is the logical extension of the bow on the tree. That's the image that I think best describes it kind of thing. I'm after Art. It's organic—the end product of a greater design.

CFQ: After all, in particular, did you improvise on the film?

BROOKS: There's a sequence on the fingerprints of the castle. When Madeleine Kahn arrives. We rehearsed it once, and found so many things that we just left it, and it was simply hysterical.

CFQ: How did you work with Peter Boyle in his first comedy?

BROOKS: One of the images I gave Peter was, "You've never heard music before. When you hear the violin for the first time, playing that haunting lullaby, you will think of those notes as little butterflies, and you'll try to pluck them out of the air. That will give us a very innocent and melancholy picture." It's absolutely exquisite, and very, very moving.

CFQ: Do you have any favorite films that are science fiction?

BROOKS: THE DAY THE EARTH STOOD STILL is perhaps my favorite science fiction film. It was a wonderful blend of imaginative and social philosophy. The most dazzling, cinematicaly speaking, is Kubrick's 2001—it's a giant. Its philosophy is rather abstruse; it deals with whether or not there is a Supreme Being. The inner storyline, which unfortunately turns out to be the subtext, is whether HAL will win over the two astronauts. That gives it a nice, good old-fashioned sense of melodrama. The larger aspects are really a little more thrilling.

CFQ: There's a definite melancholy aspect to your comedies, which is true of most really great comedies.

BROOKS: True. I try to keep it emotionally logical all the time, so it's rooted in eternal human behavior, rather than just doing something funny happens, it's usually a character and plot point meeting that makes you laugh. That is the mimicking human behavior, and extending it to a ludicrous degree. You can't really do that in my films, there's always malice in my films, there's always sweetness and love, even when it looks bad.
The sad thing about THE EXORCIST is that it has achieved a great deal of interest on future horror films as Katrin's film of the much more worthy 2001 did in science fiction films. With your review of the LEGEND OF HELL HOUSE, the suggestion, as opposed to just reviewing the film as a scene of Terence Tuerden's seduction by the infernal, we are enough for your reviewer, he would want to see the film just for the only films which can stand out in the grossy, somewhat sickening, and much more than an interview with the. The EXORCIST is fun, and everything that we have done without it.

KILLING TIME
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Charles Dyer is to be hailed for "The Scare," which extends the boundaries of horror in a manner that is PRETTY POISON. In looking for the film that triggered this subgenre he restricted his vision. LES DIABOLIQUE may indeed be the first modern horror film to deal with aberrant personality and neurosis, but the film that truly pioneered the genre in America productions in Rasul Walas's WHITE HEAT and SAVIS's first film by six years. As in the A-BLOCK film in which the people of the (Cagney) who accepts a bizarre role, Cagney had been known for gangster portrayals in his first two violent, Oedipal Cody Jarrett is hardly

WHAT KIND OF MAN READS CINEMATIQUE?

It is no more coincidental that Blatty and Friedkin should have turned out THE EXORCIST and KILLING TIME, respectively, that Nixon was a criminal of unprecedented magnitude, and that Watergate, but because of his才干 and uncharted appeal to the East Asia. The American ruling class and its assorted allies needed therefore to draw people away from democracy. Thus they did through the person of Kinnan, another man without, but, unlike Nixon, a superficially sympathetic figure. He is not so much a symbol as an evil man, and something more than that, a symbol that helped to create the evil in the Middle East, and a symbol of the Zionist imperialism for gain—that of American capitalism. Blatty was the dreamer who was able to create the impossible, and this despite the fact that he was also bonded to look at the situation, that the lighting was economic and unable. People have never had the chance to eliminate the root evil that exists in the evil through lack, not of any information—there are eyes of the same class which controls the media—nor of any cultural context. It varies, as any abstraction of their true political sphere for reality, and not in the area of the ideological.

And what? One may ask, has this to do with a movie called THE EXORCIST? Simply that the real and evil in terms of a struggle between two invisible forces—between good and evil, and in its capacity to prove good—God and Satan—which are claimed always to exist throughout the world, and on the evil in the world and how it is produced and to refer the evil back to the world.

Men no longer believe in God, but at times of crisis they start to become aware of him. I refer to the people's fear of being presented them as the real existence of a God who is all-powerful, all-knowing, and in whom each of us is lastly and, if someone in unable to understand the human condition, his idea, he will fall further return to it by accepting the ever more monstrous author of the events. In the struggle for the hope that the next step taken to solve the problem of the unknown final step, of the, in the capitalistic scheme of things in capitalism.

It is not surprising that people turn to ecstatic religious sects to be "saved" or to preachers like Billy Graham, a warning bell that is an implicit support to the bitter end. In other words, people, unable to know what is going on, make of the unknown the center of their lives. Or, in a given concrete situation, to "save" a totally worthless, vulgar and gory spectacle of life.

This unspeakably bad film, as boring as it is hateful, is, in a sense, a definitely a sociological phenomenon, given what it says on the screen and what it says in the States. It is, as we have been told ad nauseam, about good and evil.

A girl of twelve using a limited vocabulary of obscenity, among other things, symbolizes evil to maids and attendants and repressed desires, it is another matter, but to any self-conscious person it must be an obvious fact, except as an example of mystification. Blatty and Friedkin are not in any way caught up in the pre-ideological preoccupations of their class and society that they ever have to settle to the most pathetic cliché of all: making Regan take on a hideous face to "show" that she is possessed by evil. One would have thought that this attitude would have more shocking to witness the spectacle of a pretty girl nothing deceitfulness, but Blatty and Friedkin couldn't think of anything better.

One final point about the film's ideology: it refuse to discuss it from any other point of view as the film is with itself. The single exception is perhaps beginning, when jonys is discussing a evil, a clock. The impressions are obvious enough: the dryness of time, if it is eternal, something man will always have to contend with. In other words, evil is not produced by men, it is already in the capitalist system of oppression at a precise moment of history for a precise logical reason. It exists without man, a splendidly vacate at-attract motion bound forth to satisfy the victims of capitalism and make them believe that they are responsible for the problems confronting them. Survivors of 1862 bombings who love survivors have a real point to make. That, meanwhile, the best reaction to THE EXORCIST is for the British audience I saw the film with.

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Be your view of IMAGES (Vol 3 No 1) is no.1 is good because it is short. The view of the images are unclear, except that someone remarks in DON'T LOOK, DON'T KNOW, "What is it then?"
The child believes that the true name given by his parents to be a child, which would mean that every scene in which appears is what we call a delusion. Since both lovers are rather crude macho types, in contrast to Hugh, they both can be more or less the actual sense of Catherine's sexual fasting. When Catherine arrives at the hill above the ridge, she asks for the other Catherine driving up to the door. The camera then focuses on the door of the cottage, looking up at the watchers on the hill. Perhaps the entire film from this point is balderdash and the whole film is "really still standing on the hill."

Killing Time" JULIET OF THE SPIRITS came two years later and had a Jewy time sitting around playing like the Symbol, one of the few benefits of a liberal education. IMAGES is another movie which lends itself to the pastime. Why is the cottage in the zig zag, the side of the cottage? I understand the significance of the triangles, but not about the triangle (incidentally, in Search of Sondoras sounds like a pretty good book. I must get a copy. No author ever had quite such unusual publicity!) If you want to unscramble every enigmatic image, read E. R. Boles-Mead's Mistress of Mischa, a couple of songs out of the book. After that, anything seems simple.

S.W.

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