

Trash City IV



The Xmas Stocking Edition

Winter 1989

Winter 1989

Being the story of a young man whose interests include ultra-violence, Nastassja Kinski, exploitation in entertainment, beauty, death, computer games, travel, UFO's, general weirdness and anything else he gets talked into printing. The style is best described as 'conversational' and 'informal' - the emphasis is very much on the words though the picture quality shouldn't be too bad for once since it's been professionally printed : it's number 1 of the 100 done.

TC is currently only available by subscription; send 40p/issue in cheques/p.o./cash (made payable to Jim McLennan where appropriate, 60p/\$1 EEC, \$2.50 elsewhere) to the address below; your name and address might be a good idea too. Get in now while this lasts - see the editorial for the reason why. If you're already a subscriber, the number next to your name on the envelope tells you how much of your sub is left - if it's less than one issue's worth, time to renew it; if it's negative, we'll be round for your intestines shortly. Contributions are extremely welcome - get in touch for details.

Issue 0 is back in print! 50p gets you a photoreduced copy of my first attempts, complete with illegible artwork & incoherent text. Kinski, the Human League, Hellbound & H.G.Lewis. 2nd generation copy, so not up to our normal standard! Issue 1 (Black Sunday, Kinski, Half Way to Heaven, Salo & DIY flame-throwers) Issue 2 (Shock, Kinski, Reform School Girls, Sherlock Holmes & A Road Accident) & Issue 3 (lots of lists, Cicciolina, comics, Linnea Quigley & the New Avengers) are still available - 50p including p&p.

Thought, comments, insults, ideas and suggestions to :	Jim McLennan
	247 Underhill Road
Editor : Jim McLennan	East Dulwich,
Artwork : The Plagiarist's Republic	LONDON
Publishers : Copyprint, London (cheers, guys!)	SE22 0PB.

Texts : in alphabetical order; Alun Fairburn, Mike Kosminski, Des Lewis, Jim McLennan, Steve Moss, Martin Murray, Per Porter, Richard Owen, Steve Welburn and Glyn Williams.

Back Cover : The Victorian equivalent of "Trash City"? Anyone fancy a serialisation of this 1886 story, found in a junk shop?

The views expressed in this 'zine are not necessarily those of the editor or publisher, and may well simply be an excuse to insult Dustin Hoffman, Linnea Quigley or anyone else the editor feels miffed at.

CONTENTS

Hey! Look! Page numbers on EVERY page!! [and exclamation marks on every sentence!]
Told you I'd do something special to commemorate our first birthday...

1.	The Cover	Curse of the MOMI's Tomb	21.
2.	The Info	Steve's piece on comics (sort of)	23.
3.	The Contents	Tom & Jerry	27.
4.	The Editorial	Rowland Rivron	30.
5.	Borderline Cinema	Film Blitz	33.
7.	Dreamaholic	Kick in the Eye	41.
8.	The Railway Children	It Must be True	43.
12.	The Incredibly Bad Film Show	Dinner Party Game: a Pun-dit speaks	46.
15.	Drowning in Berlin	The Back Cover	48.
19.	Dead Plagiarists Society	+ an 8-page miscellaneous supplement.	



Santa Sangre - Blanca Guerra about to demonstrate how to remove bad skin blemishes.

WELCOME TO THE VIDEODROME.

Happy birthday to us, happy birthday to us... Gee, to think it was a year ago that Issue 0 of Trash City oozed into the world. 36 A4 pages, corner stapled, I was as proud as punch of it.

Which is odd, because it wasn't very good.

I remain astonished that anyone saw fit to subscribe to it. I read through it when I was working on the reprint, and the urge to take a red pen to it was almost overpowering. It has a certain naive, rough-hewn charm to be sure - beyond that, every second sentence made me wince. There were nearly no pictures. No front cover to speak of. Every page reeks of inexperience. Just about a total waste of good rain-forest.

Hopefully we've come on a little since then, even if I expect to do a similar piece in TC8 saying how awful TC4 was! To commemorate our anniversary, I've gone pro, or at least, the printing has - the first 100 copies have been done by a PROFESSIONAL, rather than on the office copier at unsociable hours. This cost a lot more than you might think (tho' not as much as it could have - one place quoted 2.40 per copy!). To be honest, I over-ran on space, so eight pages are done in the old way - they can act as a comparison, though since they're picture-free, and the main reason for going pro was to get good artwork reproduction, it's not strictly fair.

It's only eight weeks since last time, because this is the result of me clearing out the file of 'things I wanted to print, but didn't have room'. A lot of these are contributed pieces (oddly enough, I usually managed to fit MY articles in!) which seem to me to give this issue a broader variety of styles, which you may or may not regard as a good thing! It also meant a lot of awkward gaps at the ends of pages, which I've had to fill with my usual egotistical ramblings. If you like it, so much the better, if not, well, (ab)normal service will be resumed next time.

One possibility is that I keep up this professional printing, which will improve the regularity since I'll no longer have to spend time hanging around said office photocopier, looking guilty and having a litter of kittens every time someone comes in. This is good. However, it would mean a price-hike - although I consider TC a hobby and not a money-spinner, there are limits to the amount I am willing to spend on it. The subscription rate would probably be 70p or so per issue, as against 40p now, and even that's significantly less than cost. Let me know if you think it's worth that for a regular, pro-printed 'zine with more illustrations.

"There's a million dollars of violence in my heart,
but you won't find any in my soul."

BORDERLINE CINEMA

ILSA: SHE-WOLF OF THE S.S. (Don Edmonds)

As far as titles go, it's difficult to think of one more calculated to ruffle the sensibilities of censors & bleeding-heart liberals alike, promising as it does sex, violence & very dodgy politics. On the other hand, it's acquired total cult status among fans of weird movies, so which view is right? Is it an unjustifiable exercise in sadism or an classic example of sheer, black, humour?

The story-line, such as there is, goes as follows : Ilsa is the commandant in charge of a Nazi prison camp, in the last days of WW II. She has a theory that women are better able to stand pain than men, and spends her time attempting to prove this by the simple method of being very nasty to a lot of people while also carrying out her 'official' work - other, equally unpleasant, medical experiments. Her prisoners attempt to stage a revolt and very nearly succeed before both sides are killed by Nazi High Command, who've decided the camp is not the sort of thing they want the Allies to find. Two prisoners survive, to tell the story to the world...

I believe two things prevent this movie from slipping beyond the limits of the acceptable. Firstly, the directorial stance is unashamedly exploitative. Though it purports to be a 'dramatised reconstruction', this is about as plausible as the voice-over at the start of 'The Texas Chainsaw Massacre', which claims that all the events THERE really took place.

This warning at the start also provides the makers with their 'justification'; they're only depicting these things to stop them from ever happening again. Not that this, or the fact that Ilsa gets her head blown apart at the end (Gee! I've given away the plot), stopped them from making two sequels, when they saw how successful this one was! These follow-ups, which are much gentler, and to be honest, more entertaining, prove there was never any intention of glorifying the Nazi regime - they demonstrate their political impartiality by setting "Ilsa: Tigress of Siberia" in a Russian labour camp though needless to say, they weren't accused of glorifying Stalin's purges...

In fact, the death-camp setting is totally irrelevant. 'Jew' is not a word ever mentioned in the film - indeed, the prisoners include an American. It's just a handy (and cheap) back-drop, an excuse for some eye-watering violence and softish-core sex. No doubt if they were being made today, we'd have "Ilsa: Dragon of Tian-ne-min Square" or "Ilsa: Springbok of the South African Secret Police".

The second barrier to it being considered beyond the pale is Dyanne Thorne, the actress who plays Ilsa. Now, whatever her attributes, and they are considerable (if

you know what I mean, and I think you do, to borrow a phrase), they do not make her an appropriate figure to play an evil, sadistic Nazi in a pseudo-documentary. She is simply not credible - her attempts at a German accent leave her sounding more like Avengers girl Honor Blackman than Mrs. Joseph Mengele. She would fit in perfectly to either of those other paragons of good taste, "'Allo, 'Allo" and "Reform School Girls", and the whole film seems to me to be a bizarre hybrid of the two.

Despite this, she's still highly watchable. In fact, her presence is the main thing that drags this picture out of the category of short-term novelty to the status of underground cult movie. Whether being nasty in the name of medicine, urinating on a visiting general, or just noisily having an orgasm courtesy of the aforementioned American prisoner, Dyanne Thorne is compelling. It's just that I find it a little difficult to believe that Nazi officers went around with the top four buttons of their tunics undone, flashing copious cleavage to all and sundry.

I can certainly understand why not everyone likes it. There are some nasty scenes - it's like a cinematic assault course and sometimes it does go a little far in its wanderings along the border between acceptable bad taste and offensiveness. However, there are so many ludicrous moments, ideas & characters (the 'German' guard whose entire vocabulary is 'Los!' & 'Schnell!' with the odd 'Achtung!' for variety) that the overall result is quite surreal. Like "The Toxic Avenger", this movie patently sets out to shock, trash taboos and be generally controversial, which leaves me just as certain not to let it offend me!

All of which carefully sidesteps the issue of 'good taste'. Such a nebulous concept is so personal as to be nearly useless. Perhaps ANY use of a concentration camp as a setting for ANY form of entertainment is hard to justify, but I found the comic book 'Maus', with anthropomorphic animals playing Nazis & Jews, far more repellent than 'Ilsa', which was completely impossible to take seriously.

Thus, while I don't think we can look forward to an early showing of the film on British TV, I do feel that it doesn't deserve the reputation it has gained (mainly among those who haven't seen it) for being THE sadistic outrage of the century. It does deserve A reputation - that of being one of the most outrageous examples of exploitation yet made.

* * * * *

"Of course, certain people are very offended by the language. When you have a 16-year-old blonde teen queen say "Fuck me gently with a chainsaw", alarms go off in a lot of people's heads..." ----- Michael Lehmann, director of "Heathers".

**** 1. "Wake up - time to die!!"

DREAMAHOLIC

I was sitting outside a newsagent's shop on a pavement bench, idling the time of day by watching people going in and out...

Until I realised, and I don't know when I first realised it, or how, and whether I am a special sort of person to notice it at all, but the people going in were always different from those coming out.

After quite a long while, I went in to investigate and discovered there was another entrance to the shop round the corner. On coming out, I wondered who that geezer was sitting on the bench, staring at me so strangely! I must have met him once in a dream.

Talking about dreams, I once had one where I was a cashier in a canteen, totting up all the items on the trays passing before me, and accepting the luncheon vouchers and tannersworth...

Strange, I was a woman in the dream, complete with shapeless torso and a wicked, gossiping tongue. The boobs felt funny hanging on my man's chest like polythene bags full of plum pudding.

But that wasn't the strangest thing, for the food-bearing trays gradually turned nastier. At first I thought the steaks Chef was serving up were getting rarer and rarer but they were, I finally guessed, thinly disguised bits of raw human bodies...

The customer who came last had what looked like a coiled penis on a bed of pilau rice, garnished such that it almost looked tasty...

I woke with a start, sweating like a pig on heat; I fumbled for what I thought would be proof of my manhood and was devastated (if that's strong enough a word) to find the dream was too close to home for my liking.

No wonder that chap coming out of the newsagent ogled me as I sat crosslegged upon the bench. He sat down next to me and whispered that he would like it "off the bone". I smiled knowingly, as dinner ladies sometimes do.

* * * * *

Splatterfest '90 takes place at the Scala on February 24th - unless it's all a con, I should be going to it, so any subscribers also going who need a floor on Friday night or who want to head out for a drink then, please feel free to get in touch.

**** 2. "I will not be threatened by a walking meat-loaf!"

THE RAILWAY CHILDREN

I take a lot of flak for liking this film. People find it difficult to believe that the same person who rates 'Re-Animator', 'The Evil Dead' and 'Reform School Girls' among his favourite films, can enjoy a film like this without an ulterior motive. This usually involves Jenny Agutter, though the rapidity with which even total strangers leap to this assumption convinces me that there is a fair amount of fantasy transference going on.

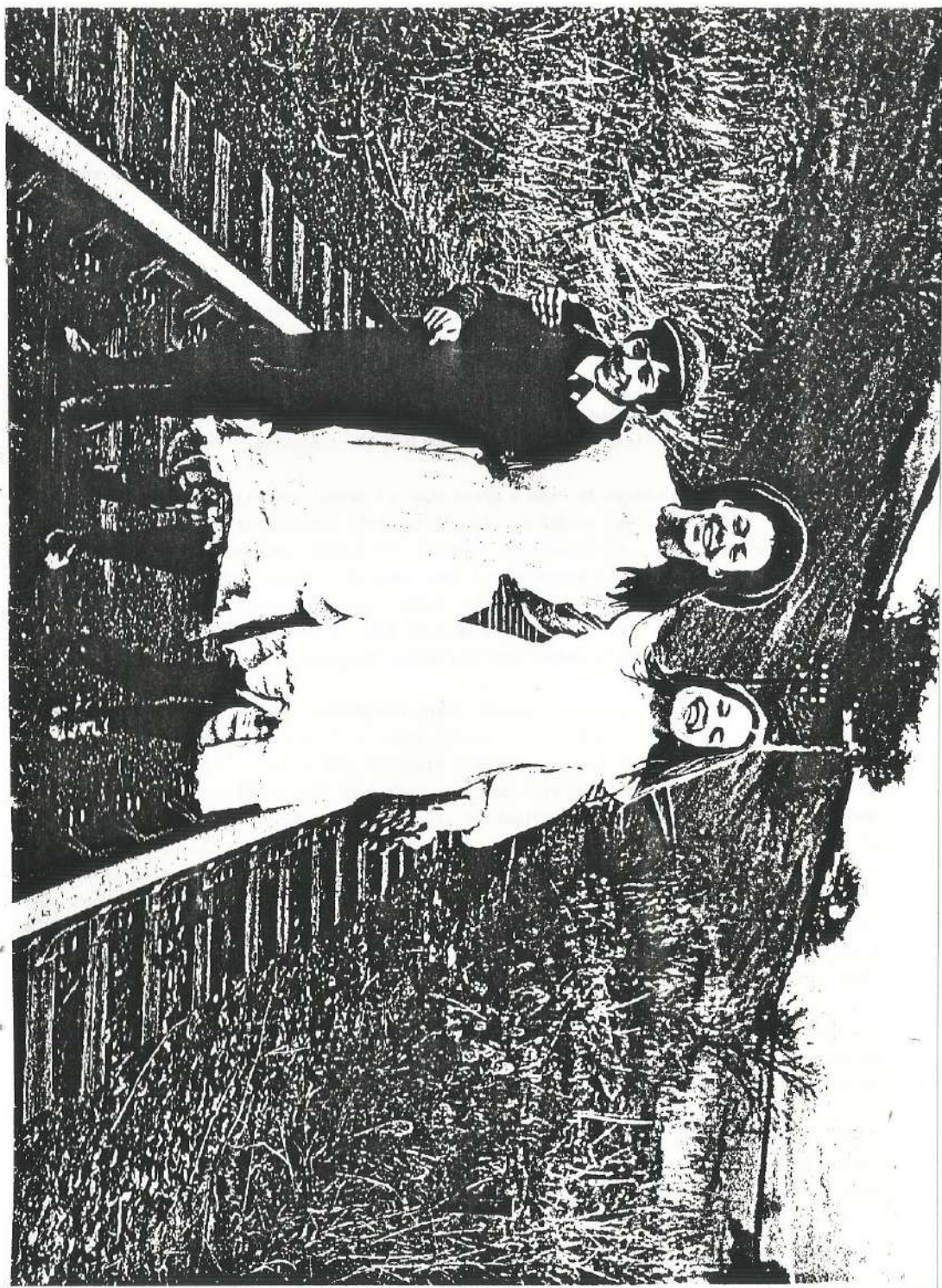
I will admit, make no mistake, that Jenny Agutter is astonishingly pretty in this film (and before anyone accuses me of anything, I should point out that she was 18 when it was made; she used to have terrible problems getting served in the pubs around where they were shooting!). However, this is almost completely irrelevant to the film, in the same way that Nastassja Kinski's presence in 'Paris, Texas' has little to do with why it's another favourite.

Every frame is carefully calculated and arranged to evoke all the 'Victorian values' that Mrs. Thatcher used to witter on about. The characters are so nice and sweet you can feel your teeth rot as you watch this cinematic equivalent of a tin of condensed milk. The film is a totally cynical attempt to manipulate the emotions of the audience. And the worst thing of all is that the bloody thing succeeds - your poor editor, hardened gore-hound that I am, can not watch the end without pretending to fiddle with his contact lenses.

There aren't many films that have that effect to me. When the mother deer in 'Bambi' gets killed, I do reach for my hankie. I also remember going to see 'E.T' and not being happy when the little green alien 'died' - say what you like about Steven Spielberg, he can twist an audience round his little finger. Of course, when I was younger, I'd start howling at ANYTHING; the first film I can remember going to see that I DIDN'T cry at was 'Jaws'!

Back to 'The Railway Children'. I'm sure that the plot is part of the sub-conscious heritage of every British child; a happy, upper middle-class family of mother, father, son, two daughters and several servants, living in Victorian London, have a crisis when father is arrested and charged with working for a foreign power (you can read in subtle social comment here - nowadays, they'd probably claim he bombed a pub somewhere). The loss of their bread-winner means they can no longer afford the massive house, so they go to live in the country, in a nice cottage overlooking a railway line.

The children wave to passing trains, make friends with the station-master (played by Bernard Cribbins), stop a locomotive from crashing into a tree on the line, help rescue an injured schoolboy from a tunnel and generally live the sort of humdrum



life typical of country peasants last century. Be grateful we live in modern times, with more interesting things to do in the evening.

Unsurprisingly, there is a Very Happy Ending when Daddy gets released, through the intervention of a passenger on one of the trains the children wave to. Not a dry eye in the house.

Not all the novel made it into the screenplay :

"Then Mother undid Peter's boots. As she took the right one off, something dripped from his foot onto the ground. It was red blood. And when the stocking came off, there were three red wounds in Peter's foot and ankle where the teeth of the rake had bitten him, and his foot was covered with red smears."

Ok, Shaun Hutson it ain't, but clearly Lionel Jeffries didn't think it was the sort of thing for a U-certificate film (the only U-movie I possess, incidentally).

Some people have also chosen to read a great deal of sexual symbolism into it. Their reasoning generally involves equating trains going into tunnels with sex - from this it can be deduced that the children's interest in trains, and especially Peter's desire to be an engineer, is symbolic of their passage through adolescence. Also, their association of trains with their father may well indicate an incestual relationship, etc, etc. Personally, I think such talk is a load of tripe and that all it proves is that certain people are in need of therapy...

It's appeal is very difficult to explain - the characters are, without exception, Very Nice, yet I feel no animosity towards them or desire to give them a good kicking, unlike the 'kids' in most of Walt Disney's live-action films! It is also unusual in that it's dramatic content does not stem from the normal good guys versus bad guys conflict - there are no 'baddies' to speak of. This lack of alternative views is perhaps a benefit; with no other characters to identify with, you either associate with the children or stop watching. If we compare it with, say, 'The Texas Chain-Saw Massacre' (and I bet it's the first time those two films have been paired!), in TCM most people end up cheering on Leatherface as he slices and dices hippies, even though this is not what the director intended, because it's easier than identifying with the whining, flare-wearing victims.

Too much analysis of a film can be counter-productive, perhaps. Maybe we should just write this one off as a personal foible or as a retreat whenever I tire of the sight of psychopathic murderers, demons from Hell and brainless teenagers.

[One rarely mentioned fact is that a group of Italians were initially involved in writing the screenplay, before Lionel Jeffries took it over. On the next page, we have printed a letter from the producer to the people responsible...]

EMI Film Productions Limited,
83 Wardour Street
LONDON
15th July 1968.

Messrs Bava & Fulci
c/o Cinecitta
ROME
Italy

Dear Sirs,

Thank you for your letter dated the 6th March and for the accompanying script for our production of "The Railway Children". We have read it carefully, and while happy with most of it, feel that certain sections of it may require slight alteration. These are as follows :

i) Please remember in future that the title of the film is "The Railway Children" and not "Night of the Necrophiles".

ii) The childrens' father should be arrested at the start for some unspecified crime involving state secrets, instead of being found playing with the intestines of a slaughtered East End prostitute. Similarly, at the end, he is released without a stain on his character. He does not escape from a mental hospital and despatch everyone else in the plot with a selection of gardening implements.

iii) Could you please explain the reason why Perks the Porter suddenly turns into a demon, after grazing his hand? If this is meant to represent a case of tetanus, why is there the need for his skin to become scaly and his teeth triple in size?

iv) We are unable to find the scene in the book where the family capture their housekeeper and eat her after hanging her up by her nipples. Are you perhaps confusing "The Railway Children" with "Rebecca of Sunnybrook Farm" here?

v) Had chainsaws really been invented in 1906?


vi) While not denying the dramatic power of the scene where the mother is run over by a train, we were rather hoping that she would survive to the end, instead of dying on her way home from a midnight naked swim.

vii) The scene near the end, with the helicopter crashing through the roof of the railway station, also puzzles us slightly.

These are mainly minor points and I feel sure we can come to a satisfactory agreement on them. Thank you as well for your thoughts on casting - unfortunately, Anthony Perkins was not available to play Perks. However, the good news is that Jenny Agutter has agreed to be raped by a tree, as specified in your script.

We look forward to hearing from you in due course on these points.

Yours faithfully,


Robert Lynn

(EMI Film Productions Limited)

THE INCREDIBLY BAD FILM SHOW.

The Tomb (Fred Olen Ray) - Cameron Mitchell, Michelle Bauer, Sybil Danning

Fred Olen Ray is a director greatly beloved by the connoisseur of celluloid junk. He specialises in gratuitous nudity; the 'bimbo pic'. They may be bimbos with buzzsaws ("Hollywood Chainsaw Hookers"), bad bimbos ("Prison Ship Star Slammer") or, as in this one, bimbo Egyptian goddess vampires with a grudge.

Examination of the video box reveals that the exploitation isn't confined to the subject matter or the direction. "Starring Sybil Danning", it trumpets - to say this is a bit of an exaggeration is being kind, since she appears, literally, for two minutes, thus becoming the only 'star' of a film ever to vanish from it before the opening credits roll.

Her 15 seconds of fame occur as she and her 5 henchmen - highly impressive since she arrived in the middle of the desert in a two-seater plane - try to swindle John Banning (Mitchell), an Indiana Jones style swashbuckling archaeologist, out of an artefact. This scene is completely irrelevant to everything that follows and the entire sequence can safely be ignored.

The plot really begins with Banning and his sidekick plotting in a Cairo pub. Yousef, a local guide, tells them of a tomb he has discovered and agrees to take them there - cue stock footage of Cairo and the actors leading camels through strangely un-Egyptian looking scenery. They arrive in the tomb, where their guide tells them of Nefratis, an Ancient Egyptian princess, disciple of Set, 'drinker of human blood, buried alive, and so on - fill in the blanks yourself.

Surprise, surprise, this is her tomb and before you can say 'Nebuchadnezzar', up she pops to decapitate the guide and slaughter the side-kick, with Banning escaping by cleverly bringing the roof down on her after he fires his gun. We know this isn't the end of the story, since Nefratis mutters "You can run - I won't follow you, but I'll be there when you can't run any more" as Banning leaves. 3,000 years in a coffin with nothing to do and that's the best line she can come up with? Oddly, she speaks English - where she learned this isn't explained. Must be a perk of the job.

Banning returns to America and has a brush with US Customs, leading to a chase which is remarkable only for it's total lack of excitement. He sells the relics he swiped from Nefratis' tomb to various people, before she (now dressed in the height of fashion) tracks him down and implants a scarab beetle next to his chest so he can serve her. Since he does next to sod-all for the rest of the film, this was clearly a limited success.

Nefratis is after the relics because she has to perform a ritual, involving h*m*n s*cr*f*c*, every seventh moon to retain her youth. One relic is in the possession of a Dr. Manners, an amateur egyptologist, who describes the artefact as "older than recorded history - possibly before the Thinnite period". Thank you, Doctor, very informative. C-, and here, get your heart torn out by this handily passing Egyptian with vampiric tendencies. From their comments, the police are baffled :

"Nothing's missing - except the victim's heart"

"A man's dead. Murdered. And someone's responsible"

"People get killed in this town everyday - that's Hollywood".

Dr. Manners' son, Dave, and a colleague of the dead man, Dr. Stewart, visit the local university to see Professor Phillips, a man whom they suspect of having bought the other piece. He denies dealing in illicit goods but Dave charms Phillips' niece, Helen into helping them - hey, SHE'S into Egyptology too. Lucky, huh? She comes up with Banning's name though when he's tracked down (busy playing pin-ball, no doubt at the behest of Nefratis - "O, my servant, go and stick a few quarters into the machines down the local arcade"), he proves none too helpful.

Dave & Helen find out about Nefratis from a convenient academic. Our goddess feels a bit peckish and pops out for a snack, in the form of the director's wife, Dawn Wildsmith, who is pushed onto a bed of snakes, after taking her top off, naturally. Helen finds out her uncle has Nefratis' bit of jewellery and relieves him of it - Prof. Phillips is clearly a mad scientist, since he wants to INTERVIEW Nefratis, a task even Sir Robin Day might balk at. Nefratis duly appears, miraculously finding a portable laser to help make her entrance dramatic, before leaving Phillips feeling drained, though she does say "I'm sorry, mon amour", proving that she's capable of regret and has also learned French.

The situation is now so serious that Dave & Helen take the evening off and go down to the local red-light district. Nefratis, accompanied by a song which sounds like a Devo out-take, follows them home and kidnaps Helen after Dave leaves to visit Dr. Stewart. The two men find Banning, knock him out, surgically remove the scarab and get him to take them to the sacrifice site, which fortunately, Nefratis has divulged to him.

And it is there that the final, dramatic battle takes place, between our heroes and Nefratis, with a brief contribution from the US Customs men (see about two pages back) who also want the artefacts returned. Nefratis is finally destroyed by a shaft of light from one of them (the artefacts, not the US Customs men!).

No, it doesn't make sense to me, either.

The last shot is of the destroyed vampire's skeletal arm, which moves, filling the

viewer with a sense of horror at the thought that a sequel might ever be made to this film, which has otherwise failed to be horrible in the slightest.

"Low budget" springs to mind very easily when discussing this film. The script-writer, Kenneth J. Hall (who directed the enjoyably atrocious 'Metamorphosis'), was also the prop-master and an 'animation assistant' as well (presumably meaning he was trying to get leading lady Michelle Bauer to show some animation; not a task in which he was overly succesful).

Distressing though it is to admit, it's still good fun - unlike 'Revenge of the Teenage Vixens', this seems SHORTER than is claimed. The directors cunningly appeal to the viewer in two ways. If you can resist the 'bimbo factor', they throw in a variety of genre figures to attract the completist - the aforementioned Sybil Danning, John Carradine, and Kitten Natividad, probably Russ Meyer's biggest find [FX: editor restraining himself manfully from making a childish remark], who gets a walk-on role in a strip-club for no better reason than to increase the nipple count.

However, perhaps the most memorable thing about the film is the dialogue. Ken Hall either has a wickedly ironic sense of humour or constructed the script while out of his tree on a combination of diet pills and 50's B-movies. The best examples, other than those given above :

Prof Phillips, on seeing the cross he is trying to ward Nefratis off with turn into a snake : "You know, I always wanted one of those things."

Banning's sidekick, in Nefratis' tomb : "What the hell's that? That wasn't here when we came in."

Customs man to Nefratis : "US Customs - we want those artefacts!"

Banning to Nefratis : "I've come to kill you, you mummified bitch."

For once, this film is no obscurity only accessible to the fanatic, the insomniac or the obsessive. Channel 5, that top producer of cheap trash who are also responsible for The New Avengers tapes and Transvision Vamp's video EP) have let it escape for 9.99. Less than the price of 8 pints of Guinness and you too can have two minutes of Sybil Danning and 84 minutes of "The Tomb" - pity it's not the other way round!

[What atrocity will we examine next time? Decisions, decisions. Not had a prison movie for ooh, at least two issues, so perhaps it'll be "Bad Girls Dormitory", the most pointless bimbo-behind-bars film I've yet seen. Or maybe Fred Olen Ray's contribution mentioned above, "Prison Ship Star Slammer". Then again, Rob Dyer (a curse on him) has sent me the prequel to "Return of the Barbarian Women"...]

**** 3. "Because I cut off his legs. And his arms. And his head. And I'm going to do the same to you"

DROWNING IN BERLIN - HALF-WAY TO HEAVEN II.

Once again, it was that time of year, so once again I packed my rucksack with a wide variety of unpleasant T-shirts and headed off into the wide blue yonder in search of excitement, adventure and VHS video cassettes.

My holiday started a day later than planned, since I went to the Scala all-night film show on the Saturday, more out of curiosity, since it included 'a surprise feature'. Some surprise. It was 'Driller Killer', a film previously shown there with no secrecy at all - ever feel like you've been cheated? The films on the boat across to Holland weren't a lot better - 'Twins' & 'Working Girl' failed to compete with a comfy chair and shut-eye.

Amsterdam, for the fifth time, and I don't think I'll be going back there for a while. Difficult though it may be to believe, the air of sin has lost its novelty value; even the hookers in the red-light district didn't seem as plentiful or as pretty as they used to be. Mind you, having said that, there was one who was absolutely stunning - all your fantasies made flesh (or at least, all mine) and well worth fifty guilders plus the possibility of catching a social disease. Unfortunately, I failed to strike while the iron was hot and when I came back for another look, a couple of glasses of Dutch courage later, I was just in time to see her curtains close. Hell, she wasn't all that pretty, anyway...

When not drooling at under-dressed, over made-up bimbos, I wandered round the shops in search of films. The Netherlands' much touted lack of censorship led me to think that Amsterdam would be a city where every shop was stuffed full of uncut 'Toxic Avengers' and full-length copies of 'Videodrome'. This wasn't quite the case - while even the Dutch equivalents of Woolworths and Our Price had their video shelves overflowing with films where the box art alone would set a customs officer's nose twitching at thirty paces, these were restricted to titles like "Shaved Pink" or 'Inside Desiree Cousteau', with splatter generally being British imports. The only exceptions that I came across were Dutch subtitled versions of 'Faces of Death' & 'Faces of Death 2', both costing the equivalent of 9.99. I didn't bother.

By now, I had a rough idea of where I was heading - Inter-Rail V was to become a quest, a pilgrimage to pay homage at Nastassja's birthplace. Which is why I found myself arriving at Berlin Zoo station following a surprisingly quiet journey through East Germany - about the only thing of note was that even when passing through the centre of towns, at about 8 a.m, very few cars were visible. And most of those I did see looked distressingly like Skodas!

Priority one : find somewhere to stay. This was accomplished very easily; courtesy of the tourist office I found a place in a newly-opened, low-budget, pseudo-youth

hostel for DM.25 per night, or about eight quid - that included an all-you-can-eat breakfast which is a little better than most places offer! Priority two : hit the video shops. Surely I'd be able to complete my collection of Nastassja-pics, here in her birth-place. First find your video shop, though - back to the tourist office and a quick flip through the local Yellow Pages turned up a couple of possibilities. However, one of these proved totally untraceable, and the other only did rentals. Putting that idea onto the back burner, I went sight-seeing instead.

Started off with the thing Berlin is most famous for: The Wall. At first sight it's not up to much, being a lot lower than I expected, perhaps a dozen feet high, and almost totally covered in graffiti. Some of this is admittedly very artistic, but most of it wouldn't be out of place in any railway siding here. However, at certain points the West Germans have built towers, from where you can see over, and it's only then that you can appreciate the scale of it all. For about a hundred yards on the other side, everything has been levelled; you can see, cut by the wall, the disused tram lines continuing into East Berlin.

Visited the Reichstag section next. Here, the border is a river, patrolled by East German motor boats, which occasionally try and drench the tourists on the bank by kicking up a wake (and getting an ironic round of applause when they fail). Since the river is East German territory, presumably any poor sod who gets splashed will be torn to shreds by machine-gun fire for trespassing.

I spent four days in Berlin, a little longer than planned since I wanted to take in a football match at the Olympic Stadium on the Saturday. On the second day, I did the obvious thing, and took a trip across to the Communist side to gawp at the primitive lifestyle of the oppressed masses, after queueing for ages to get my visa and change my 25 West German marks into 25 East German ones. This is compulsory - they clearly want to get their hands on our decadent, capitalist hard currency since the rate going the other way is 10 DDR to 1 DFR. Even that's not available to tourists, who have no option except spending the Communist currency, because Western banks collapse in hysterical laughter if you try to exchange them. There is a flourishing black market; I was accosted while writing postcards in a park by a seedy individual who offered to sell East German marks at a good rate. As I could foresee difficulty getting rid of the ones I had, I declined.

My first impressions of the Communist world weren't great. This was due to me coming out of the border post and heading in completely the wrong direction, into some sort of industrial estate. I eventually regained my bearings and went up the TV tower, carefully positioned to loom over the nearby cathedral as if to demonstrate that socialism is bigger than God.

The people seemed rather sullen, not really surprising considering they're regarded

as exhibits in a human zoo by most tourists. The pedestrian subways were full of people engaging in a little illicit free-marketeering, selling fruit & veg, crockery and even records. Duran Duran seemed especially popular - since the only Western artist available in the 'official' shops is Kylie Minogue, I can quite understand the appeal of Simon Le Bon & co.

Despite desperate attempts, I had just about failed to use up any Deutschmarks; I bought postcards for 20 Pfennigs (about 7p), stamps to send them home with for the same amount (and they took about four weeks to arrive) and a Biro for about 1.60 - presumably the high price helps keep these dangerous items out of the hands of dissident subversives. That was about it - everything else was either extremely shoddy or imported and hellishly expensive i.e. a simple mono record player, of the sort last seen here in the 60's, cost over 1200 DM, the best part of FOUR HUNDRED pounds.

However, on looking at a poster showing "What's on in East Berlin", I saw a local theatre company was putting on 'My Fair Lady' that night, not far from where I was - I was a little surprised at this, but on consideration, 'My Fair Lady', with it's idea that the rich are just like you and me, except with funny voices, is about as Marxist as musicals get. I went to the box-office hoping my remaining marks might buy me a cheap seat somewhere and discovered, to give them their due, that the government there do support the arts. Compared to a theatre in London, where seats are eight quid up, this one was astonishing; 2 marks (65p) got you a place in the roof and 15 marks, less than a fiver, got you into a box. If prices were like that here, I'd support the stage rather more.

The theatre was a little old-fashioned but perfectly restored, complete with a huge chandelier. The programs were also highly impressive; 16 A5 pages in colour for 30 pfennigs makes the idea of publishing TC from Berlin almost viable! The musical had been translated into German but since I knew the story of Eliza Doolittle from the film, this was no real problem - in fact, Professor Higgins' dialogue almost gained from the change, since staccato, clipped German suited his character well. The actors seemed, from my limited knowledge, well up to scratch - what was perhaps lacking in polish was more than made up for in energy (the dance numbers were especially energetic) and it was overall highly enjoyable. It also gave me a chance to see East Germans 'at play' and they seemed no different from us at all.

As I write this, the Berlin Wall is collapsing - it's astonishing to think that just 2 months ago, when I was there, nobody would have even considered the idea of a unified Berlin anything more than a idealists' dream and there were no signs of the dramatic upheaval that's taken place over the past few days. I'd love to be there now - the atmosphere must be absolutely incredible.

Back in the Western world, with it's luxuries like Coke (although there was a similar substance in East Germany, it tasted even worse than Pepsi!), I tried a few bars with my fellow-travellers. There are two problems with German bars; one, they all have different beers and there's little notion of 'brewery pubs' as we have here, so when you go to a new area, you usually end up drinking a totally different set. Good for variety, bad for consistency. The other problem is getting served. In Britain, you make eye contact with the bar staff. In Germany, they always seem to be looking three inches above your head and studiously ignore you. Of course, it might have had something to do with 'English' people not being flavour-of-the-month; the 50th anniversary of W*rd W*r II was just past and English soccer fans had been honoured ambassadors of sport again and trashed most of Sweden.

I eventually managed to track down a video shop. No joy there, either as I find out that of the three Nastassja-pics I don't have, two are no longer available, and the third will cost me fifty quid and take two weeks to order. The fifty quid I could stand, the two weeks I couldn't. Instead, I discovered the illustrated script of "Paris, Texas" in a bargain bookshop which cheered me up a bit - the only other bit of memorabilia I spotted was a postcard of her, and that was printed in London.

Berlin is very well served with cinemas; roughly 80 or so, and all showing different films rather than the latest block-buster. I went to see 'Pink Flamigos' at what must have been the Berlin equivalent of the Scala - a couple of weeks later and it'd have been 'Lair of the White Worm'. This set a new record of the minimum audience for a film : eight people including me and two who walked out half way through!

Saturday, I watched a football match at the Olympic stadium. The complex is very impressive, though I don't know how the idea of an open-air swimming pool would go down these days, and the stadium itself was immense; Blau-Weiss Berlin are only 2nd division and the 8,619 spectators, including a pleasing proportion of families, rattled around a bit like Linnea Quigley's brain-cells (yeah, let's force the simile further than it was ever meant to go). Here seems an appropriate place to tell the only example of Teutonic humour I heard during my stay there :

Did you know Hitler let 100,000 Jews take part in the Berlin Olympics?

They were the cinder track.

It seems to me that certain Germans are no longer feeling as guilty about the war as they might do...

[Next time, we head into the Alps, discover that Switzerland is not quite as boring a place as it's reputation has it and try to decide between buying 'Ilsa: Harem-Keeper of the Oil Sheiks' and going up a mountain]

**** 4. "I don't know what the hell's in there, but it's weird and pissed off whatever it is!"

THE DEAD PLAGIARISTS' SOCIETY

Or, why certain ideas that appeared in TC2 & 3 might be a little familiar. Firstly, just before TC3 appeared, Time Out came up with THEIR choice of the top 100 films of all time, chosen by a panel of directors, critics & writers. Precisely FOUR of their choices appeared in my list of favourites, given last issue: the other 96 films listed didn't rate a mention for me, though since I'd seen just THIRTEEN of these, this may not be surprising. When it comes to high-brow cinema, my education has clearly been lacking, though if a film like 'The Green Ray', which I found totally soporific, can get in their list, I can feel no great sense of loss... They followed this up with their reader's selections. While showing a distressing tendency to follow the critics, sheep-fashion, my four films above all rated higher in Joe Public's list, and two more were also in. I'd seen rather more of the plebs choices, which proves something, though I'm not sure what. Below are details of the more interesting entries :

	<u>FILM BUFFS</u>	<u>PLEBS</u>
Alien		39
Blade Runner	72	7
Blue Velvet	16	11
The Blues Brothers		51
Brazil	22	8
A Clockwork Orange		27
Dangerous Liasons		100
The Exorcist	63	84=
Jean de Florette	39	37=
The Life of Brian		67
Paris, Texas		45
Psycho	14	12
Rocky Horror Picture Show		95=
Some Like It Hot	4	2
2001, A Space Odyssey	71	9
Dawn of the Dead		67
This is Spinal Tap		83

Meanwhile, following the selection of rock lyrics of awesome awfulness that we had in TC2, Steve Moss told me that NME had been doing something similar, unbeknownst to me, since about June. Great minds thinking alike, or fools seldom differing? In either case, here's a selection of some of the best from their pages, as well as a few other unsung (and unsingable) classics :

Early attempts at song-writing can prove embarrassing to famous artists in later life. As an example of 'It's my first single, so I haven't quite got the hang of this lyrics lark but what does it matter since this is the B-side anyway' syndrome,

Look at Kate Bush, and "Kite" :

"Beelzebub is aching in my belly-o / My feet are heavy & I'm rooted in my wellios"

With certain people, it's difficult to tell if they have their tongues in their cheeks or not. Are The Pet Shop Boys cleverly pointing out the tedium of modern life, or just demonstrating total lyrical ineptitude, in "I Want A Dog" :

"I want a dog, to walk in the park / When it gets dark, my dog will bark"

Winners of the 'Incredibly Inappropriate Simile' trophy have to be The Cult, for "Peace Dog". Psychologists could have hours of fun analysing the writer of :

"B-52 baby, way up in the sky / Drop your love on me tonight"

Further proof, as if any were needed, that Charles Manson is TOTALLY insane :

"Garbage dump, my garbage dump / That sums it up in one big lump"

from the imaginatively titled "Garbage Dump". Don't give up the day job, Chuck.

Showing that if you ain't got soul, you ain't got, er, breakfast, is Bobby Womack :

"I'm looking for a love (someone to fix my breakfast)

I'm looking for a love (bring it to me in my bed)"

Speaking of Europe, perhaps we should leave out groups whose first language isn't English - it's not really their fault we are so insular we don't buy records in French (except the rotten "Joe le Taxi"). A few examples will suffice :

"One person calls someone to pour the water / Because it takes two to pour the water / To plough takes two as well" ("Delicious Demon" - the Sugarcubes)

"Bang a boomer boomerang / Dummy dum dum te dummy dum dum / Bang a boomer boomerang / Love is a tune you hum" ("Bang a Boomerang" - Abba)

Rod Stewart, in "Italian Girls", shows even us Celts can have our off days :

"She was tall thin and tarty / And she drove a Maserati / ...I must have looked so silly / When I stepped in some Caerphilly"

And that will do. I think perhaps next time we'll concentrate on heavy metal lyrics, always a great source of totally laughable, over-blown, ridiculous 'concepts' and, at the other end of the scale, tediously sexist junk. As an example of the latter, here's the chorus from Iron Maiden's "Women In Uniform" :

"Women in uniform,
Woo-oooh, they feel so warm".

Any other offerings gratefully received.

**** 5. "No tears, please - it's a waste of good suffering".

CURSE OF THE MOMI'S TOMB

Earlier this year, the Museum of the Moving Image (MOMI) opened on the South Bank in London amid much publicity and a welter of puns even worse than the one above. Typically, it was only mid-November that TC finally got around to visiting it, when we had a couple of hours to kill before seeing a film.

At 3.50, it's quite expensive, especially if you add in another 2.95, as I did, for the programme - it's not a necessary purchase, since there's more than enough in the museum itself to keep you informed, but it's an interesting read in it's own right. At the end of the exhibition is the shop and you can get copies there as well as at the beginning, which'll save you carrying it around.

The exhibition is organised in roughly chronological order, beginning with the shadow plays of the ancient Egyptians and goes up through the magic lanterns and other toys of the Victorians, the early days of silent films, and so on until the modern era, though occasionally there are also exhibits which compare how, say, censorship has altered through the decades.

One thing you should be aware of is that certain staff are dressed up in costume appropriate to the period - when I first saw a Victorian lady wandering about, I thought I was suffering from a bizarre form of hallucination, induced by having watched 'The Railway Children' the previous night! It doesn't help when they stop and talk to you - all the interesting questions you want the answers to are immediately driven clean out of your head.

It's a very visual exhibition, as you would expect, with a huge variety of exhibits ranging from Rudolf Valentino's personal stills album to a Dalek. There are buttons to be pushed, handles turned and a lot of films - I personally enjoyed the 'Youth Culture' video juke-box; pressing various buttons brought up clips from 'The Great Rock 'n' Roll Swindle', 'Friday the 13th', 'Baby Doll' and 'Night of the Living Dead', among others.

Not surprisingly, a large section is devoted to television. I can't really give a fair assessment of it, as we were thrown out (not for anything anti-social, you understand - the place was closing) before we managed to get more than a cursory glance in passing at that section. At the pace we went round, it would have taken roughly 2 1/4 hours to see the whole place, and that wasn't hanging about watching all the films - it'd be quite possible to spend an entire day there.

I did enjoy it, and want to go back when I've more time. If you're ever in London, you've only 3.50 left and have time to kill this is an interesting, and also very educational(!), way to do it.

THE SAN FUTURO CHRONICLES

Volume II.

Unfortunately, due to circumstances beyond Steve's control (like his PC vanishing without a trace), we are unable to bring you the advertised edition of The San Futuro Chronicles. Instead, in it's place, you get yours truly waffling on about his favourite comics in a little more detail than I had room for back in Issue 0 (copies now available, 50p, plug, plug).

Steve and I have a good few comic favourites in common. This isn't all that odd, since it was Mr. Welburn who was really responsible for nurturing the sapling of my vague interest into a full-scale hobby, and another pit into which to pour far too much money, by lending me large chunks of his collection. However, there are some noticeable exceptions and it's these I'll concentrate on in the main.

The first comic book I ever bought as an adult was when I was on holiday one summer in France. The French have a far better attitude than us to 'bande dessinée' as they call them - in the UK, comics are only just beginning to crawl out of the ghetto of Marvel superheroes and Biff the Bear, where they'd been languishing, but in France, comics are accepted as valid adult literature. This means that they cover a wide range of topics - this can be slightly disconcerting to the British reader, used to escapist fantasy. However, the book I bought was a 'comic' in the true sense that it was funny. "Natacha l'hotesse d'air" caught my eye initially because of it's title, but beyond that is a great read, even with my limited (and dictionary boosted) French. Beyond being about the eponymous heroine, the books have little in common - she can be fighting head-hunters, digging for religious relics or getting kidnapped. The only other constancy is her modesty - due to their adult appeal mentioned above, French comics are a lot more graphic, especially in terms of sex, than we are used to. Yet Natacha always keeps her clothes on - something parodied superbly in "Nathalie, le petit hotesse", a Dutch satire which has her engaging in virtually every sexual antic conceivable. Other French strips are just as good; Moebius is the best known artist, but no matter who draws them, they're all a great way to brush up your French!

It was after this that I was loaned Steve's collection, and the one that really caught my eye was "Hellblazer". Despite having suffered a title change due to a certain Clive Barker film, this one is a continual barrage of interesting ideas. Steve gave you details last time, so I'll pass on quickly, adding only that Issue 3 is probably my favourite single issue of any comic, and that after a worrying spell when the hero, John Constantine, was in danger of becoming a hippy, he is now back to his normal style and the two most recent issues have returned to their old, grim ways!

BUT KEEP PLAYING, YOU BASTARDS. I CAN TAKE IT-- AND THE LONGER YOU GO ON, THE MORE CHANCE OF MY LONG-SHOT COMING IN.



YOU THINK YOU'RE INVULNERABLE. HAH! YOU'RE JUST ADOLESCENTS -- NASTY, SAVAGE, CHILDREN -- NOISY BUBBLE-HEADS, WHO THINK YOU'RE LORDS OF CREATION.

WELL I'VE GOT NEWS FOR YOU. I'VE BEEN SCREWING UP PRATTS LIKE YOU SINCE I WAS A KID. I MAY ALWAYS'VE BEEN A PEASANT -- BUT AT LEAST I'M A CLEVER PEASANT.



HOI. SERVANT. BRING GLASSES. IT'S TIME FOR A TOAST.

MOSTLY, SLASH HAS SIMPLY STAYED CLEAR OF SHAPERS...



BETTER TO DEAL WITH THE GONZO BERSERKERY OF FELLOW HUMANS IN THE NEW-WILD, THAN TO ENDURE ALIENS AS LIKELY TO PAT A MAN'S HEAD AS TO BLOW HIM AWAY.





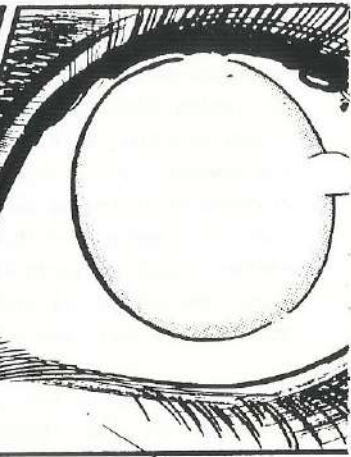
AND DON'T LET HIM FALL IN THE POOL!

K...K...



HIM? IT'S YOU I WANNA KEEP OUT OF THERE!

BLASTED BUTTONS! KNEW I SHOULD'VE ASKED ABOUT 'EM BEFORE I CLIT HIS THROAT!



The obvious thing to do now was wander round the comic shops for myself and see what else was available. My next two favourites were both discovered about this time, though they could hardly be more different. "Laser Eraser & Pressbutton" (aka "Axel Pressbutton") is perhaps the series I enjoy most, and is highly recommended to trashophiles for it's mix of sex, violence and humour. Axel used to be a mild-mannered florist until an unfortunate encounter with a carnivorous, though extremely polite, plant left him with half a body. The surgeons fashioned a replacement, complete with a titanium scythe attachment and a button plugged directly into his pleasure centres to make up for the loss of his family jewels - hence his name. Mysta Mystralis, the Laser Eraser, is a cloned assassin with a penchant for tight-fitting costumes and together, they roam the galaxy 'killing things' (especially plants, in Axel's case) and encountering weird creatures such as Zirk. He/It's a melon-shaped alien with a penchant for bimbos and avocado puree, simultaneously...

From the sublime, to the just as sublime. The Japanese are THE most comic-oriented country in the world; everyone reads them, watches film versions of them and absorbs them, willingly or otherwise, in every aspect of life. As in France, the adult market has demanded adult comics - this has been taken to extremes in the highly notorious "Rapeman" series, featuring a super-hero who cures women's sexual hang-ups by raping them. This has, unsurprisingly, not yet been translated into English. Plenty of other, more pleasant ones have - the best of which in my opinion is "Mai, the Psychic Girl". This is a very visual comic, which may explain it's successful crossing of language barriers - this one relies on visuals more than texts, with four pages being used to describe a car-crash for example. The plot is about a girl having to come to terms with her telekinetic powers, while simultaneously trying to avoid the Wisdom Alliance, an international conspiracy, who wish to subvert her abilities to their own ends.

From there, back to America and a swift steal of Steve's thunder, as I know he was going to talk about 'Slash Maraud'. Alien invasion is the theme here, with the ET's firmly in control and trying to change Earth to be more like their home planet. Unfortunately, this will also cause it to become uninhabitable by Earthlings, but nearly everyone is resigned to the fact, save our hero, Slash. He, and his motley crew of society's dregs, take on the aliens, culminating in a battle at the Eiffel Tower, which is being used to fill the Earth with alien junk. The whole thing shoots along at a dazzling, lickety-split pace with not a dull moment in the six episodes.

Comics, as a whole, stand midway between the film, the painting and the book - the best ones combine pure imagination and superb visual imagery with evocative writing that can almost stand on it's own, without any pictures. The range of comics available ensures that there is something for everyone to enjoy; anyone who writes the genre off as 'childish' just doesn't know what they're missing!

Imagine if you will a film where characters are sliced up with wire, hit on the back of the head with a hammer and have nails implanted in their flesh. "Hellraiser"? No. This film predates it by over 40 years, has been shown on TV uncut and was passed by the BBFC with a U certificate. I have to admit it's a cheat, though. For what we are discussing is not a film, but a cartoon series...

TOM & JERRY

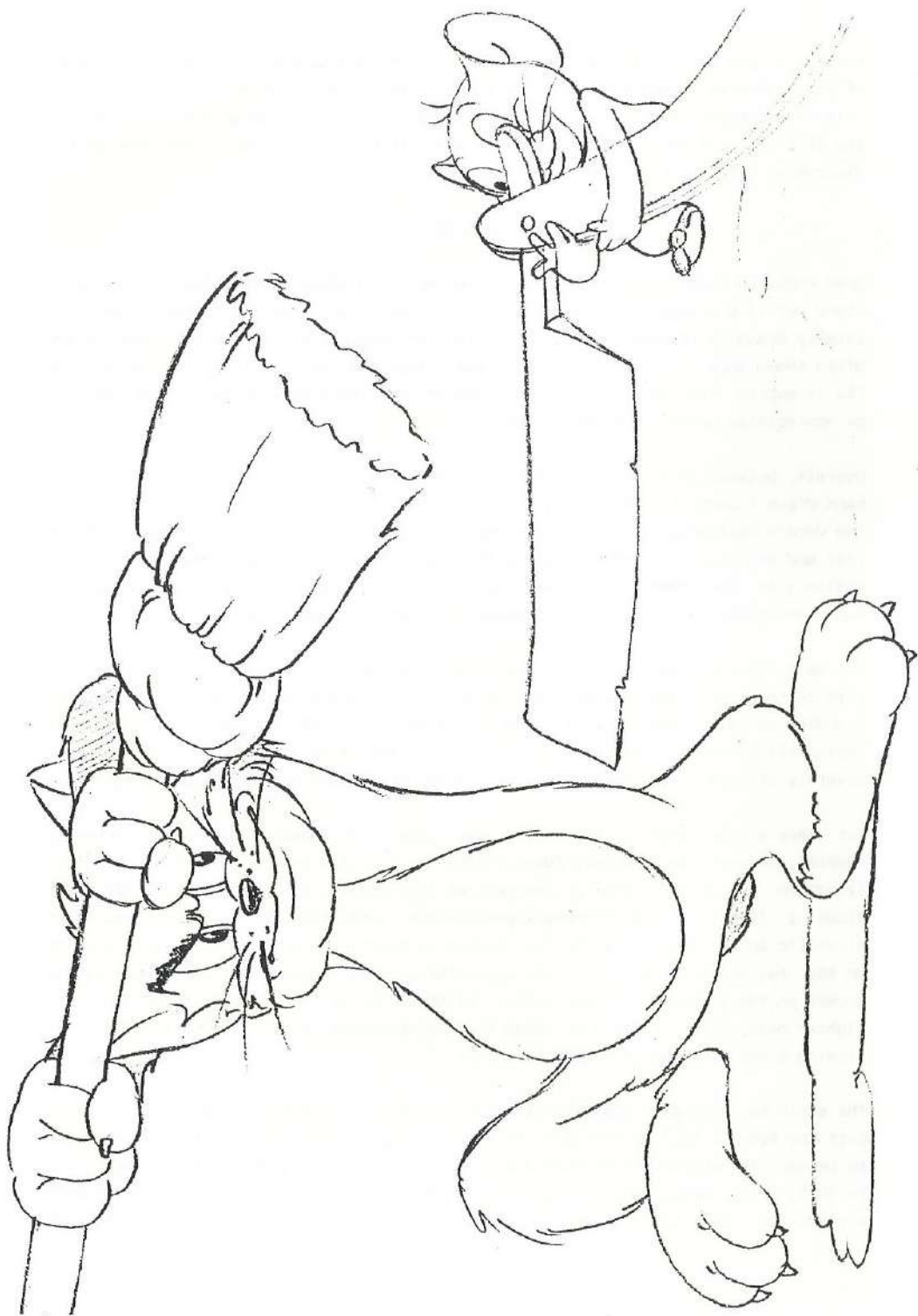
When compared with the appalling animation so often shown on TV today, Tom & Jerry stand out like a nugget of gold. While "Thundercats" and "The Real Ghostbusters" are largely drawn by computer, with the minimum of complexity (characters walking are often shown only from the waist up because legs are 'difficult'), the drawing in T&J is superb, with no skimping and sequences are frequently included that can only be appreciated using the PAUSE button.

Overall, between 1940 and 1967, MGM made 161 cartoons - that's about 1.75 million hand-drawn frames. At their best, the animation is well up to Disney standard: in the decade beginning 1943, T&J received Oscar nominations for Best Animation EVERY year and won SEVEN, including FOUR on the trot - a record far in excess of any live-action star. And remember, this was the same era as Warner Bros. were producing Bugs Bunny and Disney weren't exactly slacking either - further proof of MGM's strength.

The main element running through nearly all the cartoons is surreal violence. T&J live in an alternate universe, where gravity functions only when you realise you're standing on air, canaries pull 2000 lb. weights from off-screen and all flesh is infinitely deformable and semi-liquid - both characters often have their topology severely altered through being cut, chopped, broken and burnt beyond recognition.

Yet they always seem to survive. I say 'seem', for death is an overt theme in several cartoons. In 'Heavenly Puss' (1949), Tom will only be allowed into heaven if he can get Jerry to sign a contract of forgiveness. And, even worse, 'Blue Cat Blues' (1956) is a horrendously pessimistic love-story in which Tom becomes an alcoholic and attempts suicide. The ending is equally grim, both characters sitting on the railway track with a train approaching. Not often shown on TV and yet to appear on the videos, it is conclusive evidence T&J is not a kiddies' cartoon. On a lighter note, this can also be seen in 'Yankee Doodle Mouse' (1943), where the closing scene asks you to 'Buy War Bonds'.

The early cartoons seem quaintly naive, with Tom (or Jasper as he's called in 'Puss Gets The Boot' (1940), the first film) not looking much like the suave cat he was to become. The characters developed over the years up until Fred Quimby's departure in 1955, which marked the end of what is almost universally thought of as the best period; the cracks began to show and the ideas were starting to run out. "Life With



Tom" (1953) is just an excuse to clip together bits from three old cartoons and "The Egg & Jerry" (1956) is a pure remake, virtually frame for frame, of the earlier "Hatch Up Your Troubles".

Therefore, it wasn't so great a surprise when the series was eventually cancelled in 1958. However, three years later T&J made a comeback under the guiding hand of Chuck Jones. The changing economics of animation forced modifications in the style - the backgrounds are no longer as detailed as they were - and the content, with human characters being introduced; in previous cartoons only people's legs had ever been seen. These cartoons, though quirky and amusing in their own right, take the cat & mouse struggle out of the arena of the home far more often than previously and are often highly derivative. To be fair, some are very funny - 'Bad Day at Cat Rock' (1965) is lovely visual humour, even if it is more than a little like Wile E. Coyote v. Roadrunner, which Jones did a lot of for Warner Bros. The end has virtually all the combinations possible of a cat, a see-saw and a building site...

1967 saw the final T&J film, 'Purr-chance to Dream' (totally ignoring Hannah-Barbera's TV massacre of them in the 70's), yet the BBC's sterling use has helped ensure that generations not born when the cartoons were made have grown up knowing and loving them. A whole industry of annuals, soft toys, clothing and comics has been sustained by them - I recall having every issue of 'Tom and Jerry Weekly' and imagine they'd be worth a fair bit now had I kept them!

Although the main struggle throughout is Cat vs. Mouse, other combinations are often seen. Cat against two mice, cat against dog and mouse, cat and mouse against cat or dog or robot. Yet conflict is not a vital component. The classic 'The Night Before Christmas' (1941) has more real Yuletide spirit in each second of it's nine minutes than an entire Russ Abbott Christmas Special. 'Mouse in Manhattan' (1943) is also non-violent, showing Jerry's adventures in the Big Apple - Tom only appears in the final few seconds of this one.

Tom and Jerry's humour is timeless and international, thanks to it's visual style and lack of any significant dialogue, compared to Bugs Bunny, for example. France has gone for them in a big way, thanks mainly to the efforts of Patrick Brion, whose mammoth tome 'Tom et Jerry' remains THE work on the subject, lavishly illustrated but hideously expensive, it's forty pound price tag putting it out of reach of all save the rabid, hard-core fan. However, six videos of the duo are now available for under a tenner and any one of these will give you hours of entertainment.

To sum up, Tom & Jerry are essentially a distillation of all violent humour from The Three Stooges through to Sam Raimi, and prove again that fictional nastiness has no effect on the individual. Perhaps, after all, the difference between them and "Hellraiser" wasn't quite as wide as we thought...

TRASH TV - THE UNSUNG GENIUS OF ROWLAND RIVRON

Most people at sometime or other will have come across some obscure item which they feel they have discovered. They will then expose their friends to it, in the hope that they will acquire the same devotion for the subject as themselves. In this way, a cult following is eventually built up around it. One of three things can then happen: it can fade into obscurity, sustain it's cult/underground following or, worst of all, become popular! In the last case, it doesn't matter whether it gains it's success from selling out or not, to a cultist his 'find' will no longer be what it was and he will abandon it to the masses.

And so to Rowland Rivron, a man of extreme greatness who has appeared in some of the best trash television ever, and has a dedicated cult following. Unless I've missed anything (in which case - bother!), he's been quiet (very quiet) of late; except for his small but beautifully formed appearance in one of the recent re-runs of 'The Young Ones' he hasn't been on the box since his series 'Rivron' finished around May. Is it obscurity for the man of gin? I think (and bloody hope) not. What follows is how I became acquainted with RR, and his career as I know it.

We start on a Saturday morning, some two & a bit years ago, at around 1.00 am. I stagger home to my parents' house after a heavy session. I scale the stairs to my room and unearth a four-pack from the cupboard. I then rewind the tape that's waiting in the video : that night's episode of 'The Last Resort'. I lie back on my bed, start the four pack and begin to enjoy the show. It's not long before my first encounter with the man himself, in his legendary first appearance as Dr. Martin Scrote and his awe-inspiring "Bag o' fun" from which he produces various human organs and gives alternative suggestions for their use.

The next day I ask my mates if they saw this joker called Dr. Scrote on "The Last Resort" but they hadn't. A quick visit to my house rectified the situation and after a screening, some were impressed while others weren't. I couldn't get enough and on Fridays, I'd eagerly return from the pub in the hope that he would appear on the show. He often did, and those episodes I remember most fondly are: him trying to stop cars for an interview by standing in the middle of a busy road (but to no avail); one where he has invented a safety device to stop you from being beaten up or falling over when you're down the pub - it was in fact a large cardboard box; one where he described the benefits of swimming pools for pregnant women, including his pregnancy surf-board and one from the London Palladium where Harry Dean Stanton, upon seeing Dr Scrote dressed as a clown and stuck in a trap door in the middle of the stage, said "Who the fuck's that chap?". Nice one, Harry. Best of all, however, was the show broadcast from somebody's house in which he handed out tips on safety in the kitchen, during which he is stabbed and set on fire.

Aware of him at this time only in his Dr Scrote incarnation, I nearly gave both my parents a heart attack when I cried out "IT'S HIM!" upon seeing him on 'French & Saunders' one night. He appeared as Dwayne Bishop, drummer of a two-piece band called 'Raw Sex' (As I was to later learn, it was with Raw Sex that Rivron had started his career, touring with the likes of French & Saunders and Nigel Planer. In fact, he and his Raw Sex partner, Simon Brint, had been knocking out quite a few TV signature tunes including the aforementioned F & S, "London's Burning" and most of "The Comic Strip Presents".

But then in August '88, it was college for me. There I met a guy who shared my interest in Dr. Scrote and one night while he was watching "Night Network", they had a trailer for the following night, which included the start of "The Bunker Show". So we sat through 'Video Vote', etc until the magic moment. It's arrival was not disappointing - it must rank in the top three all time greatest TV programmes.

"The Bunker Show" is a chat show where RR is the host, conducting an interview with a guest celebrity down in a bunker after the bomb has gone off. During it, much alcohol (and on one occasion, meths!) is drunk, mostly by RR, and a vast amount of gibberish is talked, never more so than on the first show. In this incredible moment of television history, Danny Peacock discusses with RR such things as why Norman Wisdom wasn't in "Ghandi", the motorbike stunt cut from the same film (and how the bike was smuggled into the country in a turban), how to annoy Michael Caine by beating him at pool, what happened to the original UB40 before the likes of Mick Jagger & The Beatles left and Danny's first sexual experience with a girl called Cathy while she was unconscious after being hit on the back of the head by an apple that he had thrown! A well dodgy confession.

The rest of the shows featured Freddie Starr, Derek Jameson, the lead singer of Fairground Attraction, Spike Milligan and Cleo Rocos. Whilst none were as funny as the first, the final one of these was particularly funny, ending with Rowland posing the offer "I'll give you a quid if you show me your gusset!!".

It wasn't until this show that I became aware that Rowland Rivron was my idol's name, and the man's greatness was to be confirmed one night during a screening of the all-time-greatest-no-discussion-on-this-matter-thank-you-very-much programme ever made, "Mr Jolly Lives Next Door". Up flashes the credit, "Written by Rik Mayall Ade Edmondson & Rowland Rivron". If you haven't seen this classic Comic Strip episode, then consider your life meaningless and hope, no, pray that Channel 4 repeat it soon. If I ever see a programme funnier than this, I fear my head will fall off.

It wasn't long after "The Bunker Show had finished" before Rowland had a new show on the telly, Again, it was a winner, the likes of which had never been seen before.

'Groovy Fellers' starts with Jools Holland and Tom, the cameraman, standing in a pub waiting for something to happen so they can make a documentary around it, when in walks a naked man who it transpires is The Martian (RR). For the next six weeks, they drive around the country in a Rolls explaining to the Martian what we Earth people do.

Largely improvised, it makes for a very odd piece of TV - there were four incredible highlights to the series :

i) In the second episode, they visit the house of Dave Sullivan where RR, indulges in a spot of skinny-dipping with a couple of the "Sunday Sport" girls.

ii) In the fourth programme, they go to a night-club in Deptford where RR ends up very well-oiled, starts kissing everyone (male AND female), gets in a fight, falls down a flight of very steep stairs, and ends up in the ladies toilet where he revels in a spot of "wrestling toilet women".

iii) The 5th episode has an excellent birth by Caesarian section but best of all

iv) The part in programme 3 where they drop in on an upper-class dinner party. During the dinner, RR again gets canned but the funniest aspect is a bird in her forties who is constantly trying to chat him up. You begin to squirm in your seat at the come-ons she gives him!

Again, after 'Groovy Fellers' had finished it wasn't long before he had another new series. Going under the name of 'Rivron', it was simply 'The Bunker Show' relocated IN the Thames. Originally made for 'Night Network', when that ceased to be, Channel 4 came to the rescue and put them out as programmes in their own right. It was from this show that his romance with that talented girl [and well known antithesis of everything bimbo-ish] Wendy James sprung.

The show was certainly 'wacky', and RR is in great form. However, it lacks the alcohol content of 'The Bunker Show' and after a while, the novelty of them being in the river wears off. The best show is the one with Tony Blackburn, in which RR subtly takes the piss out of him.

But what's happened to him since? Maybe he was working on his relationship, but seeing how he's now split up with that talentless bimbo [You don't mean Wendy??], he'll maybe be making a return to the telly. He's meant to have written a series about Dr. Scrote and his five brother who are a boxer, a tramp, a farmer, etc. Whether this has been made or ever will be, I don't know. I guess I'll just have to "keep 'em peeled"...

**** 6. "While everybody else is opening up their presents, they're opening up their wrists."

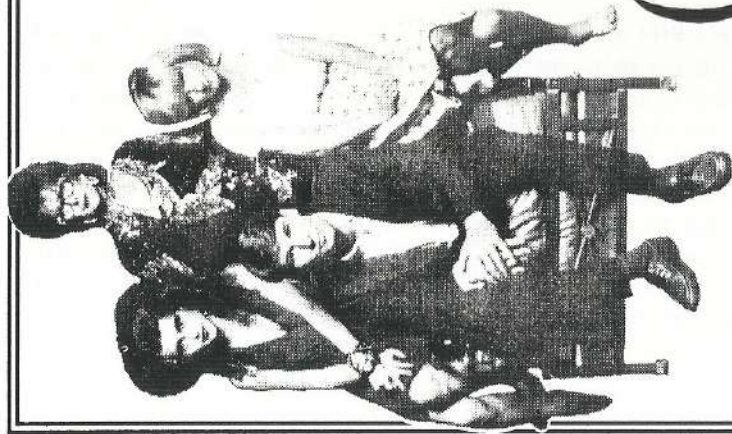
**** 7. "Couldn't enjoy it any more, Mum. Mmmm-mm-mmmm."

FILM BLITZ

The Amityville Horror (Stuart Rosenberg) & Amityville II : The Possession (Damiano Damiani) - The Lutz family move into their dream house, and all goes well until a series of bizarre events, climaxing in Lutz Sr. cracking up and attempting to kill his family (never have happened if they'd bought a Barratt home). Contains some good shocks and is supposedly based on fact - Rod Steiger puts in an appearance as a priest who discovers the house is evil. The sequel, made in 1982, is actually a prequel, which tells the story of the previous occupants who weren't so lucky; their son is possessed by the house and shotguns his family to death, tho' not before the usual things happen (taps drip blood, spooky noises, etc). These all contribute to a film which is as good as, and perhaps slightly better than, the original, even if the climax is a rip-off of 'The Exorcist'. 5/10 & 6/10 respectively.

A Clockwork Orange (Stanley Kubrick) - The story goes this was pulled from circulation by it's director when the BBFC wanted it cut for a re-release, after passing it first time round. The death threats he received didn't help things. In the 18-odd years since, it's been 'unobtainable' in Britain, yet has still acquired a huge cult status - witness it's high position in the Time Out poll. I'm no great Kubrick fan, but this oozes style and unsettling imagery, especially the opening, which is a nightmare plunge into the 'hero' Alex's ultra-violent world - things calm down after he is betrayed by his gang and sent for rehabilitation, with the prison scenes adding little to the film. Kubrick has remained faithful to the novel's spirit, except at the end where he dropped Burgess's ending (annoying the author) and there are flashes of genius such as dropping the camera off a roof to capture Alex's suicide attempt. Malcolm McDowell captures the character of Alex perfectly - "Singing in the Rain" will never seem the same again. Interestingly, in February next year, the Royal Shakespeare Company are putting on a play based on the book, with Phil Daniels ("Quadrophenia") as Alex, and music by U2's The Edge. It promises to be notably different to the film by all accounts - I may well try and get to see it. Oh, and 7/10 for a film, real horror-show in chunks.

The Cook, The Thief, His Wife & Her Lover (Peter Greenaway) - Cannibalism, fork stabbings, people eating dog-shit, vomiting at the dinner-table & screwing in the toilet. Ah, but this is Art, and the director is an Artist, so he can get away with it! Michael Gambon is the Thief, a psychopathic boor who eats every night with his cronies in the restaurant he owns. His Wife (Helen Mirren) meets her Lover there, and they snatch brief, torrid moments together. Then the Thief finds out about it, and swears to kill and eat the Lover. Sumptuously shot with gorgeous use of colour, stunning costumes (by Jean-Paul Gaultier) and sets, good performances, especially from Michael Gambon who projects an aura of seething insanity, and a haunting score make this about the artiest 'video nasty' I've seen. 9/10 for pushing the limits. .



"THE CAST ALL GET IT RIGHT"

Alexander Walker THE STANDARD

"VIRGIN ON THE BRILLIANT"

THE SUN

"GREAT FUN"

DAILY MAIL

"A THOROUGHLY DELIGHTFUL FILM"

WOMAN'S WORLD

"CHARMING, FUNNY & TOUCHING"

ESSENTIALS

Jesse Birdsall Helena Bonham Carter Peter Cook
John Gielgud Jane Horrocks Lynn Redgrave

Getting it RIGHT

15

M.C.E.G. presents a JONATHAN DEMME/RANDAL KLEISER production GETTING IT RIGHT ESSE BIRDALL HELENA BONHAM CARTER PETER COOK
JOHN GIELGUD JANE HORROCKS LYNN REDGRAVE COSTUME DESIGNER ROSEY LEHRBRANDER EDITOR ELIZABETH JANE HOWARD MUSIC BY STEVE
WOLFEKIN PRODUCTION DESIGNER JONATHAN DEMME EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS RANDAL KLEISER AND JANE FOSTER PRODUCED BY RANDAL KLEISER WRITTEN BY JANE FOSTER
DIRECTED BY RANDAL KLEISER



NOW SHOWING

CANNON

CANNON

CANNON

HAYMARKET 839 1527

OXFORD ST. 636 0310

CHELSEA 352 5096

Dead Time Stories, Vol 3. (David Wickes/Paul Verhoeven) - 3 episodes of a Canadian (I think) TV series. The first has Robert Vaughn as a plastic surgeon who cocks up an operation because of a sex & drugs session with Sybil Danning the night before - his mutilated patient takes revenge; also in it is Sonja 'Videodrome' Smits. Part 2, (Verhoeven's), has a director relying on odd methods to get a performance out of his Linnea Quigley-ish leading lady, and the third stars Klaus Kinski as a musician whose hi-fi takes a dislike to him. The plots are all a little thin - none could be stretched to a full-length movie but at 25 mins each they're fine. Good acting all round and plenty gratuitous nudity : 1st episode 8/10 (bonus point for Sybil), 2nd 7/10 (Verhoeven directs well), 3rd 5/10 (plaintive cry of 'not enough Kinski!!!).

The Doctor and the Devils (Freddie Francis) - Based on the Dylan Thomas play, with the names and ending changed for no good reason. Full of British actors (Jonathan Price, Timothy Dalton, Sian Phillips + Twiggy as a Cockney tart - what she's doing in Edinburgh isn't clear!) and directed by a Hammer stalwart, this still has an American air, perhaps due to Mel Brooks being the executive producer. Fortunately, it's not too intrusive - most of the performances are good and the sets & costumes seem appropriate. Pity it never breaks the 'TV drama' mould. 6/10, mostly harmless.

Earth Girls Are Easy (Julian Temple) - The best way to describe this indescribable film is as a musical version of "Revenge of the Teenage Vixens From Outer Space" with the sexes swapped. That was, unsurprisingly, several orders of magnitude worse than this, which isn't bad at all. Jeff Goldblum is the lead alien, his wife Geena Davis is the Valley Girl who finds ET's in her pool, and introduces them to life in California. Some very silly moments and a good soundtrack outweigh the odd dullish chunk and you have to keep on your toes to spot all the references and background joke. 7/10 and a good time was had by all.

Fast Times at Ridgemont High (Amy Heckerling) - Amiable teen romp, now out on sell-through, that meanders along amusingly enough without going anywhere. Worth watching for three reasons: Sean Penn (of all people) is great as a vacuous surfer dude, Phoebe Cates and Jennifer Jason Leigh are pleasantly scenic and there is one awesome, pointless moment of poor taste : a guy jerking off in the toilet while fantasising about Miss Cates is rudely interrupted by the entrance of his object of desire. 6/10, takes me back to my schooldays (tho' not, of course, the last bit!).

The Fourth Man (Paul Verhoeven) - This predates, is completely different to, and is even better than his other works, "Robocop" and "Flesh & Blood", which is saying a lot since they were by no means bad. A bisexual writer (Jeroen Krabbe), obsessed with death, shacks up with a beautician (Renee Soutendijk) so he can seduce her boyfriend. He has visions and premonitions of death before he discovers she has already buried three husbands. Will it be him or her boyfriend who gets to play the title role? Disturbing use of religious imagery, 'real' hallucinations and brilliant

camerawork combine with believable, frightening performances (especially from Soutendijk as the Black Widow) to make this one a real find, though not one the whole family can enjoy, shall we say! Whether it has the required staying power to last repeat viewings is unknown - until then, let's make it the first film to get
** 10/10 **

Getting It Right (Randall Kleiser) - Another very British film, with 'class' written through it like a stick of rock. Jesse Birdsall plays a 32-year old, virgin hair-dresser who gets entangled with three totally different women. Helena Bonham-Carter shows again why she's about the best actress around, as the anorexic daughter of a millionaire seat-belt manufacturer, played by Sir John Gielgud - he's about the only one who out-acts her, though all the cast are excellent (with the exception of Lynn Redgrave as the Older Woman, who's oddly out of synch). A lot of needle-sharp observations on the British class system, love, art and life in general more than balance a schmaltzy ending, leaving this one I enjoyed. 8/10

Heathers (Michael Lehmann) - Veronica (Winona Ryder) is in with the in crowd, but doesn't want to be. Egged on by JD (Christian Slater), she poisons one and then finds things are getting out of hand. Described everywhere as 'black', I felt it was a little tastefully done; only one sequence hit really low, where Veronica and JD execute two jocks and make it look like a homosexual love pact, after the jocks claim to "have had a sword-fight" in Veronica's mouth. How much of this is due to studio intervention is uncertain - they insisted on a less bleak ending than the director wanted, where Veronica blew herself up! Still, nicely acted - Slater's been watching old Jack Nicholson movies and Ryder is fine too, but Shannon Doherty as Green Heather out-acts (and out-cutes!) her, transforming from meek to bitchy when opportunity knocks. Teenage angst with a body count. 7/10

Henry V (Kenneth Branagh) - I last met any Shakespeare at school, where sitting down, reading it out aloud did a damn good job of putting me off, though I did enjoy Polanski's 'Macbeth'. This is similar - real 'ac-tors' doing real 'ac-ting', nearly all of them household names. It takes a while to get used to the pritheying and thou-ing and Branagh's added scenes which added nothing for me. However, it gets better as it goes on; the battle scenes are well staged and it's easy to see why Branagh has been critically acclaimed. 7/10 for being different.

I'm Gonna Git You Sucka (Keenen Ivory Wayans) - It's always interesting to note how Mel Brooks can get away with things, such as "The Hitler Rap", because he's Jewish. Similarly with Wayans, director, star & writer of IGGYS - no white man would dare stage a "Pimp of the Year" contest, featuring a poem called "Ma Bitch Better Have Ma Money"! The film parodies the blaxploitation movies like "Shaft", but you don't need to be black or know anything of the films to find this broad, 'Airplane' style spoof funny; platform shoes with live goldfish in them are bizarre enough to

make anyone laugh. Wayans resembles Eddie Murphy a little, tho' fortunately he knows there is more to comedy than saying 'fuck' every second sentence. 8/10, Spike Lee with a sense of humour.

Lethal Weapon 2 (Richard Donner) - The most outstanding things about this movie are Patsy Kensit's nipples. Neither the action sequences nor the characterisations are as good as in the original; Mel Gibson especially has lost all his suicidal sharpness. And the plot!! South African diplomats running drugs stretches even my credulity, and when the US government fails to take any action at all, such as expelling them, said diplomats then declaring war on the Los Angeles police for no good reason, I'm afraid it's all too much. 5/10, including two for Miss Kensit.

Nightmare City (Umberto Lenzi) - This is also known as 'City of the Walking Dead' and contains the fastest moving zombies ever seen. The film is directed with Lenzi's usual flair and some scenes are funny (unintentionally, I think) - witness with horror the scenes of flesh-hungry zombies invading a TV station full of dancers; gasp with amazement at the 'surprise' ending; die laughing at the terrible dialogue and crappy acting. Criticism aside, in fact I did like this one. The six cans of Harp did help a little. 5/10

Phantom Empire (Fred Olen Ray) - Look at any article on Sybil Danning and there's a good chance you'll see a still from this movie, with SD showing phenomenal amounts of cleavage. Don't be conned. This is another Fred Olen exploito-pic, with SD not appearing at all in the first half of the film and even she is hard pressed to resuscitate this movie. An expedition into some caves meet monsters in cheap costumes, scream and run away into a land at the centre of the earth, ruled by Sybil. They scream & run away from HER, she stalks them, they get back to the surface. The usual cast and budget of Ray's plus a less than average plot, even by his standards, leave this one looking like a bad Dr Who episode. 3/10.

Pray TV (Rick Friedberg) - A lost opportunity here. What could have been a savage satire on American religious TV runs out of steam after 20 minutes and peters out into a limp drama. Starts off hopefully enough, when a cheap & shoddy TV channel is bought up by a Murdoch-style entrepreneur and turned into KGOD-TV. A couple of the skits - an 'Exorcist' parody, a Hare Krishna barbershop quartet - are witty, but these are too few and far between. Not even a brief appearance by Devo can save this wimp-pic. 3/10, someone should be nailed to a cross for this.

Psycho III (Anthony Perkins) - Norman Bates is back to normal, but Mother's off her rocker again. The usual mix of kooks at the Bates Motel - a suicidal nun who sees 'Mother' and thinks it's the Virgin Mary, an investigative journalist and an insane C & W singer - help Norman out with the usual mix of murder, mayhem and mother-fixation. None the less enjoyable for it, with Perkins good value for money

"VERY FUNNY . . . MAGNIFICENT BAD TASTE."

Barry Norman FILM 89

"The blackest comedy this side of Blackadder."

Ms LONDON

**"YOU WILL NEVER HAVE SEEN ANYTHING
QUITE LIKE THIS FILM BEFORE."**

Derek Malcolm
COSMOPOLITAN

**"Viciously wicked black comedy . . . a strong
candidate for film of the year . . . utterly unmissable."**

CITY LIMITS

"FANTASTICALLY OFFBEAT. WICKEDLY IRREVERENT."

BLITZ

"A marvellous performance from Winona Ryder."

19 MAGAZINE

**WINONA RYDER
CHRISTIAN SLATER**

HEATHERS[®]

NEW WORLD PICTURES
© 1988 NEW WORLD PICTURES

Premier Releasing

NOW SHOWING

CANNON
HAYMARKET

CANNON
OXFORD STREET

CANNON
CHELSEA

The Screen on Bakers of
BAKER STREET

GALLERY
SLOUGH

cinema
GREENWICH

RIO
DALSTON



as ever and showing a few neat touches from the director's chair too, even if the film doesn't get into top gear until five minutes from the end. 6/10

Sante Sangre (Alexander Joderowsky) - Not shown at Shock for contractual reasons, maybe a good thing, as I don't know what the crowd there would have made of it. Not to say it isn't good - you just don't realise until the end how it all fits together and at Shock, they might not have had the patience! The first third tells of Fenix, an 8-year old living in a circus, whose mother finds her husband with the tattooed lady and pours sulphuric acid over them - he responds by cutting her arms off, in imitation of the religious martyr she worships. This, understandably, traumatises Fenix and he spends years pretending to be an eagle before his mother returns and she compels him to be her 'hands' and extract revenge. Or is she dead, and he merely hallucinating? A slow starter, spends most of the flash-back building 'atmosphere' with a lot of irrelevancies - when Fenix & Mother get together, it livens up fast and the sequences of the son/mother pairing are astonishing. The director's son Axel and Blanca Guerra are excellent in the lead roles and even if it does bear a certain resemblance to 'Psycho', there are more than enough original ideas and thoughts to make this one worth seeing. 8/10.

Stage Fright (Michele Soavi) - The first feature from the director of 'The Church' (see TC2) is 'A Chorus Line' crossbred with 'Friday the 13th' - a group of actors is locked in a theatre with a homicidal maniac, who picks them off one by one; an almost plausible plot compared to some Italian films. Though that aspect lacks originality, lots of directorial flair helps overcome the deficiencies and some scenes are startling; an owl wielding a chainsaw!?! It's almost Mario Bava quality, and it certainly isn't Lamberto - sheer gratitude for that alone gets it 7/10.

Surf Nazis (Peter George) - Having managed to lose the "Must Die" suffix on it's title, this Troma film is a post-apocalyptic beach movie; California has been wrecked by an earthquake (sorta topical) and the beach gangs rule - the Surf Nazis want to take over and are generally not nice to everyone else. Padded out with lots of surfing sequences, it steps up a gear when the mother of a victim of the gang's Nazi-ness (well played by Gail Neely) heads out for revenge. 6/10 for running over people in motor-boats, a couple of original ideas and general tastelessness of the characters & subject matter.

Zombie Oasis - As opposed to 'Nightmare City' (see above), this one contains perhaps the SLOWEST moving zombies ever seen, almost as lethargic as the film's pacing. When the final, 'exciting', 'climactic' battle arrives, the knackered zombies are killed with ease. Maybe they ought to rename this one 'Zombies - Yawn of the Dead'. 1/10

"Keenen Ivory Wayans' hard hitting parody... hilarious. It's razor-sharp."

Leslie Goff EMPIRE MAGAZINE

"Not since Airplane has there been such a generous cascade of gags."

Shaun Usher DAILY MAIL

"...splendidly bizarre, often wildly-funny spoof."

Ian Christie DAILY EXPRESS

"The soundtrack's pretty neat... be sure to check it out."

SOUNDS



**I'M GONNA GET
you**

SUCKA ¹⁵

UNITED ARTISTS PRESENTS IVORY WAY PRODUCTIONS A COLLIER BROWNE PRODUCTION WITH RAYMOND KATZ PRODUCTIONS & PETER McCLARTHY PRODUCTIONS I'M GONNA GET YOU SUCKA
KEENEN IVORY WAYANS • BECKIE CASSEY • ANTONIO FARGAS • ISAAC HAKES • JIM BROWN • JANET DUBOIS COSTUME DESIGNER JAMI BROWN AND ROBI REED EDITOR MICHAEL R. MILLER MUSIC BY TOM RICHMOND
EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS RAYMOND KATZ AND ERIC L. COLO PRODUCED BY ERIC CARRETT AND JAMARA BARNETT WRITTEN BY PETER McCLARTHY AND CAROL CRAIG DIRECTED BY KEENEN IVORY WAYANS

CASTING BY JANE WALKER AND JANE WALKER LTD. LOS ANGELES, CALIF.

CASTING BY JANE WALKER

UA
UNITED ARTISTS

distributed by UNITED INTERNATIONAL PICTURES

KICK IN THE EYE

Salvador Dalí and Luis Bunuel's "Un Chien Andalou", a short experimental film made in 1928, opens with a man sharpening a cut-throat razor. Finished, he walks out of the room onto a balcony where there is a woman already seated. Approaching her, he places his left hand over her face, stretches her left eyelid open and slices her eye with the razor. This is the first example of graphic eye violence on film.

In the years that followed there were few examples of eye violence, mainly due to what was or was not acceptable on screen. Something that didn't prevent Roger Corman from making 'X - The Man With X-Ray Eyes', in 1963, in which Ray Milland takes a biblical quotation all too literally and scratches his eyes out because he can't handle what he can see. Of course, it was Herschell Gordon Lewis in the 1970's who showed what the intelligent movie-going public wanted to see and more than succeeded with both 'The Wizard of Gore' and 'The Gore Gore Girls' (on which, see later).

Apart from those, the 70's were kinda quiet. 'Massacre Mansion' (aka Terror of Dr. Chaney; Mansion of the Doomed) and 'Headless Eyes' dealt with nutters removing people's eyes. It even filtered through into a mainstream film - 'The Omen II'; I'm sure many of you have a special place in your heart for the scene in which Joan Hart has her eye pecked out by a raven from hell and wanders into the path of an eighteen wheel Peterbilt truck.

In 1979, the whole show really kicked into action. An elderly, unknown Italian director named Lucio Fulci was hired to direct a rip-off of George Romero's 'Dawn of the Dead' which had just been released. History was made - even those who think the rest of 'Zombie Flesh Eaters' is junk love the scene where a woman is pulled through a door by a zombie, with her eye meeting a nine-inch splinter of bamboo on the way. In many ways this is the best example one can produce of eye violence. The scene in question is slow, painful, graphic, you really feel for the actress; it is marred only by a dodgy effect. This scene gave Fulci's career a new life - sure as shit is shit you wouldn't have heard of him if he hadn't filmed it.

So what is the appeal of seeing orbal punishment inflicted on someone else? Many can't "see the point" to it, but there are still those who sit up in their seats when a sharp object comes into view, while all around them hide behind a cushion or place a hand over their face. Perhaps it's because the eyes are one of the few organs visible on the outside of the body and are vulnerable to external forces, so when someone has their eyes poked out, you are thankful that yours are still safe in your head. This can be backed by considering the on-screen knee in the gonads. I've seen people double up and scream in pain when this has happened; the one difference between your eyes and your testicles (ladies excluded!) is that you can ALMOST carry on with your life as normal without your testicles.

What follows is a list of 20 great scenes of eye violence. Not all are violent, not all are graphic, but all should make you wince. Alas, it seems the golden age is over. But wait, someone HAS recognised the significance of losing your eyesight - stand forward Margaret Thatcher. Not content with having her own blind followers, she now attempts to make everyone else blind by unnecessary charges for eye tests...

1. ZOMBIE FLESH EATERS. 'Nuff said.
2. UN CHIEN ANDALOU. What? You've forgotten already?
3. NIGHT OF THE BLOODY APES. Julio the bloody ape vents his anger by gouging an eye from a passer-by, who is so scared that his face turns into a latex mask.
4. EDGE OF SANITY. Eyeball scraping with scalpel. Not gory or violent, but YEEUUCH!
5. DEAD & BURIED. A burned photographer recovering in hospital has a syringe stuck in his one visible eye by the bitch who got him there in the first place.
6. EVIL DEAD. Ash takes NO MORE SHIT. Lifted up by his possessed pal, Ash does what any quick-thinking gorehound would do and pushes his thumbs DEEP in Scott's eyes
7. MUTATIONS. A segment with freaks has one guy get on stage, utter total drivel & pop his eyes in and out of their sockets without using his hands.
8. CANNIBAL FEROX. John Morghen helps a cannibal native remove a particularly nasty foreign body from under his eyelid, with the use of a knife.
9. ZOMBIE CREEPING FLESH. The most original. A lady scientist has her tongue cut out and a zombie places its hand in her mouth and push her eyes out from inside.
10. DEMONS. Bugger what Jim says, at times it's interesting, the main highlight : a blind geezer having his eyes scratched out by a demon with it's priorities wrong.
11. NEW YORK RIPPER. The 'Ripper' drags a razor down a girl's face via her eye which splits and lolls in the vitreous & aqueous. The BBFC didn't see the humour (sic)
12. DESPERATE LIVING. John Waters' film: Mole McHenry, shown in flashback battering an opponent to death with a stiletto and stamping on his handily fallen out eye.
13. GORE GORE GIRLS. One unfortunate victim has her eyes pulled out, pierced with a fork and SQUEEEEEEEZED at the camera.
14. ZOMBI 3 aka Burial Ground. Number 1, restaged with a glass splinter.
15. REVENGE OF THE LIVING DEAD. A stiletto clad zombie(?) pushes a victim to the ground and stamps on her eye with the heel. The systeme sanguine follows.
16. THE FOURTH MAN (See Film Blitz). Car drives into back of lorry carrying steel rods, one of which pierces a character's head clean through.
17. SALO:120 DAYS OF SODOM. On the last day, one victim has an eye removed by knife. A low budget mean a loss of impact; spent the cash on fake shit, no doubt.
18. THE BEYOND. Choc-a-block, this one. Gouged out, eaten by spiders and one head implaed on a nail in the wall, leaving an eye on it. All UK releases are cut...
19. OPERA. Apart from needles under the eyes and Daria Nicolodi getting shot im the eye, the best bit has ravens pecking their friends' killer's eye out.
20. ZOMBI HOLOCAUST aka Dr Butcher MD. Another gouging - tricks you by cutting away at the last possible moment and then immediately cutting back. Meaty.

IT MUST BE TRUE...

Start off with a story I read, but unfortunately didn't clip. The rough details concerned a teenaged boy with a personality disorder which caused him to have periodic fits of depression. During one of these, he tried to commit suicide by shooting himself in the head with a gun - he didn't kill himself but the bullet destroyed the area of brain responsible for his illness. He's now leading a normal and happy life.

Technological cock-up of 1989, according to the Weekly World News - a computer that was supposed to issue fines for traffic citations went haywire and charged 41,000 people with murder, extortion and organised prostitution, reported police in Paris.

HUMAN BRAIN TRANSPLANTED INTO CHIMP - A team of surgeons at Humbolt University Medical Centre in East Berlin removed the brain of a clinically dead teenage boy and placed it into the skull of an adult female chimp. "To our great surprise, the chimp is not only alive...but she is already trying to talk like a human". Apart from sounding not dissimilar to "Bad Taste", the question uppermost in my mind is 'which member of parliament got the chimp's one?'

CYCLOPS SKULL FOUND - Japanese scientists claim to have found the skull of a Cyclops on an island in the South Pacific and there is evidence to suggest it didn't die until WW II. This is accompanied by a photo of it, which I showed to a zoologist friend of mine - he thought it was probably two skulls cut and joined together, the lower half of a 'normal' skull with the upper half being another skull rotated so that the hole where the spinal column entered became the 'eye'. Ingenious, huh? Though what a Cyclops was doing on a Pacific island is uncertain.

DINOSAUR WIPES OUT AFRICAN VILLAGE - The WWN works on the principle of if you can't get a picture, draw it; the picture on the next page demonstrates this technique in action. The story tells how the village of Mokokou, in the north-east of the Congo, was almost wiped out by a creature that left foot-prints measuring nearly 12 feet across and 'bigger than 10 elephants'. 175 people were slaughtered by the beast, according to a radio ham who'd just returned from the area. Meanwhile, whatever size feet the creature depicted might have, they certainly are nowhere near twelve foot across (unless the people fighting it are forty foot high or thereabouts - could this be a future story in the making?) and the dinosaur itself looks very like a brontosaurus, or similar VEGETARIAN dinosaur, admittedly with a malevolent sneer on it's face. The editor clearly chose the other accompanying picture (not shown) at random from a box marked 'African Natives' as the background is desert, rather than the swamplands where this creature is said to live. Jeez, I don't mind them making stories up - a little more consistency wouldn't go amiss.

Nurse sues her ex-boss and tells court:

He squeezed my breast!

Kinky robber swipes wig off baldy's head!

'I was searching for her jing jong point,' says doc

Confidential

Dear Cherie in New York: It's your body and you have the right to say no.

Dear Sad in Frisco: The girl was right — you're boring as hell.

Dear Brains in Virginia: If you're so smart, how'd you get caught?

Dear Ecstasy in Birmingham: With a vacuum cleaner? Are you out of your mind?

Dear Stunned in Atlanta: Promiscuity is the least of your problems. You're insane.

Dear Lightning in Omaha: A rubber band might help but I'd talk to a doctor first.

CAN'T SLEEP? YOU MAY BE NUTS

Man-eating elephant goes on a rampage!

Santas picket city demanding 2 Christmases

A bunch of greedy store Santas picketed a city hall demanding a second Christmas in summer so they could earn more money!

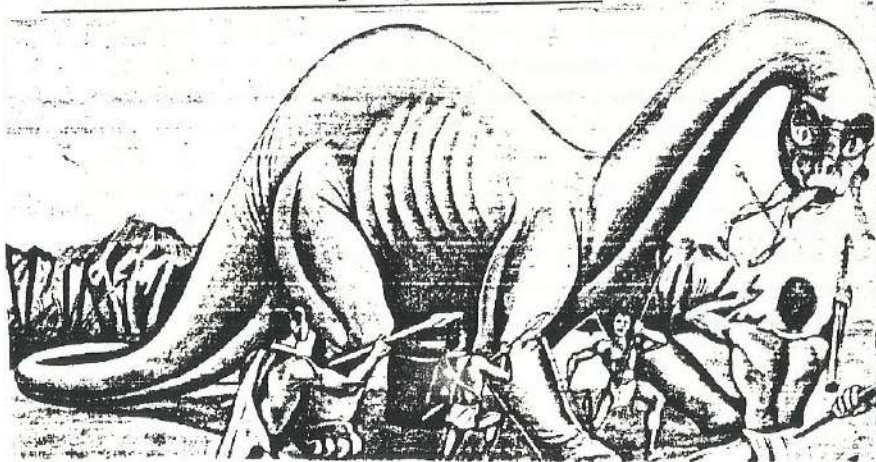
About 30 people wearing Saint Nick outfits marched in Hamburg, West Germany, with signs saying "One is Not Enough" and "A Second Christmas for the Children." But they admitted they just wanted to line their own pockets by playing department store Santas.

HUMAN BRAIN TRANSPLANTED INTO CHIMP



... and it's trying to talk!

**Shocked church lady says:
Male stripper ruined my life!**



More evidence that drug-abuse screws you up comes from the imbecile in Alabama who went out to buy crack cocaine. He was well swindled and was sold soap instead - this lunkhead then went and complained about it to the police...

An idea to consider as a present for that special someone this Christmas, or to drop hints for perhaps, is the collection of stories from the Sunday Sport: 'Bus Found at South Pole'. It's only when you see the stories extracted from the sex adverts and presented in undiluted form that you realise just how nonsensical the entire paper is. Little wonder that other papers regard it as beneath contempt, since if people realise the "Sunday Sport" is quite capable of making stories up, they might start wondering what's to stop the other newspapers from doing the same, in a slightly more subtle fashion? That would never do, though of course I realise that our papers are ALWAYS truthful and NEVER fabricate, lie or distort the facts. Except with respect to people rich enough to be able to sue them for libel...

SHOCKED COPS FIND CHILD'S MUMMY IN APARTMENT - Er, that's mummy as in corpse...

A historical tale : Robert Liston was a 19th century surgeon renowned for being a lightning fast worker in the days before anaesthetics. Unfortunately, in his haste he was often a little careless. Once, he amputated a man's leg at the thigh in just 2 1/2 minutes - it was only later he realised the patient's testicles were gone too. On another occasion, he was even quicker, though the patient died of gangrene, his assistant also had three fingers sawn off causing his death too, and Liston cut through the coat and tails of a spectator, who was so worried his manhood had gone, that he dropped dead of fright. This operation thus became the only one in medical history with a 300% mortality rate.

I'll finish with a WNN exclusive. I make no comment, & just print it as it appeared.

QUEEN FLIPS HER LID OVER FORGOTTEN POTTY SEAT - 'Cranky old Queen Elizabeth was in a royal tizzy during a recent visit to Kenya, snapping and sniffing at everyone in sight - because some ignoramus forgot to pack her favorite goatskin toilet seat! "Her Majesty was a holy terror the whole time she was here" said an employee at Treetops, a ritzy game-viewing lodge in the African bush. "She snarled at the help, she grumbled at Prince Philip - she even growled at a buffalo. Everyone was shocked because all this ranting and raving was out of character for her. Then word leaked out that she was mad as hell because she didn't have her Billy Goat." Billy Goat is the name palace staffers have given the fancy white-kid toilet seat the Queen normally hauls with her on foreign trips. "Elizabeth has become very attached to the thing", said one insider. "After all, a queen doesn't want to plant her royal bottom on just any old throne. Somebody's head is going to roll when they figure out who left the billy behind"... "That's what happens", said a royal escort, "when the Queen comes to town - and leaves the seat of power at home".

THE DINNER PARTY GAME. Glyn Williams' rolls up his sleeves and gets stuck in.

"I'm not sure about the rules of this, but I'm assuming that I can invite 12 guests (6 male and six female). I prefer to include guests who are still living - deceased guests have little to say and tend to leave their food. I will place myself at the head of the table and send my wife to her mother's."

"When choosing guests I have preferred to ask people who are capable of intelligent conversation and who may have conflicting opinions to their fellow guests but who can argue in a witty and civilised manner (thus Mr. Tyson is excluded). The guests are not chosen because they have big breasts or have spent their careers inducing cinema audiences to seek out the nearest barf bags. I retain the right, however, to ferring in a whole platoon of bimbos through the back door whilst my dinner guests are taking their leave through the front."

"Guests are selected from a variety of areas of artistic life with representatives from cinema(3), politics(2), music(1), literature(2), paintings(1), TV & theatre(1), and 2 guests who I consider to be capable of talking about anything and everything (but without hogging the conversation)."

"I think the assembled group would be able to keep a dinner party going well into the early hours of the morning, but in order to do so they need to be backed up by a good set of staff behind the scenes. I have, therefore, also added some random thoughts about selection of these back-room staff but, unlike the choice of dinner guests, this group is not to be taken seriously."

"One or two notable absentees from my dinner table: it would be a real coup to have Salman Rushdie but I can do without letterbox flambe half way through the evening and Clive Barker is not included because I have already read or heard just about every opinion he holds on anything. Margaret Thatcher would be welcome if she was actually ON the menu."

MALES

Michael Caine
Dennis Skinner
Randy Newman
Evan Hunter(Ed McBain)
John Arlott
Peter Ustinov

FEMALES

Catherine Deneuve
Edwina Currie
Maureen Lipman
Julie Burchill
Jane Fonda
Bridget Riley

Meanwhile in the kitchen :

Waiter and general dogsbody : My boss
Washing up : Nanette Newman

Food Preparation :

H.G.Lewis : Meat dishes

Chesty Morgan : Fruit dish (Melons, obviously)

Royal Shakespeare Co : Fish dish (Cod pieces only)

Arsenal F.C. : a variety of vegetables

Man who sold Brooklyn Bridge : cons-some

Next door's dog : whines

Kylie Minogue : tooth-pick

Julian Clary : After Eight mince

**** 8. "Don't you fucking look at me!!"

Even if you can't get all 10 (2 more in the supplement!), enter anyway - if last time is anything to go by, we may end up with more prizes than entrants and since I need the shelf space, it's either you lot or the dustman! Closing date, round about March 1st, shall we say, and bribery isn't against the rules...

[And finally, the following piece. After reading it, I spent half an hour banging my head against blunt objects. You have been warned.]

Once upon a time, there was a lazy old frog who sat in the middle of the pond and did nothing all day except catch gnats, All around him the other animals hurried and scurried, but the frog never moved. Eventually, the other animals got fed up and a deputation led by the lizard confronted the frog.

"Now, look here frog", said the lizard. "All you do all day is sit in the middle of the pond catching gnats. It's not good enough, animals should be active."

"Actually", said the frog, catching another gnat. "I have just been planning my skiing holiday. Would that be active enough for you?"

The other animals laughed in disbelief.

"You could never learn to ski", said the dragonfly. "In fact, I'm willing to bet a six month supply of gnats that you couldn't learn."

"You're on", said the frog, and went to pack his bags.

Three weeks passed, and the frog eventually returned to the pond. The other animals were waiting and, once the frog had settled in and caught a few gnats for his tea, they demand proof of the frog's skiing prowess.

Slowly, the frog unrolled a large certificate presented to him by the Skiing school, and across the top of the certificate it said in bright red letters :

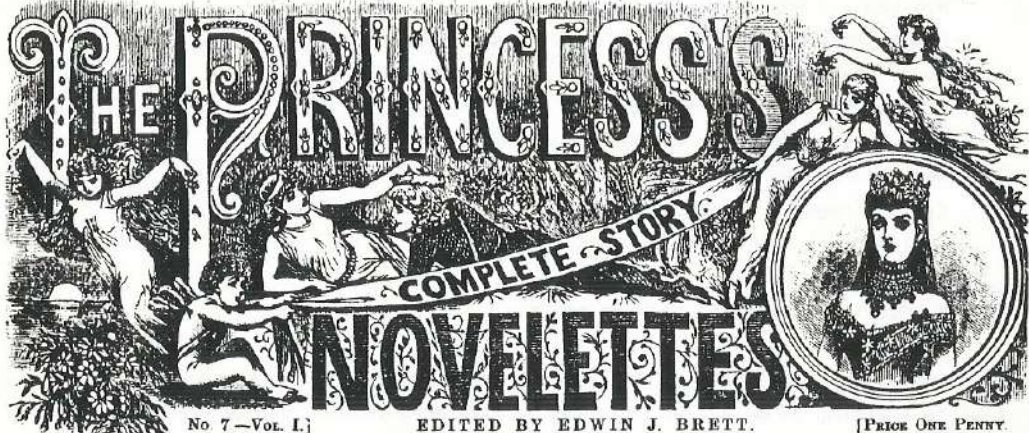
GNAT CATCHER CAN SKI.

[Thank you, and goodnight.]

THE PRINCESS'S

COMPLETE STORY

NOVELETTES



No. 7—Vol. I.] EDITED BY EDWIN J. BRETT. [PRICE ONE PENNY.



"SHE WOULD HAVE FALLEN ON TO THE ROUGH ROAD, BUT SIR HUBERT CAUGHT HER IN HIS ARMS."

LATE NEWS

Some things I hadn't room to mention elsewhere. 'Zines seen. Creeping Unknown 11 (32 A5 pages, 50p + SAE from Nick & Cath, 29 Westland Ave, Hucknall, Notts NG15 6PW) is more legible than last time, and as literate as ever. Imaginator 5 (36 A4, 1.25, Unit 1, Hawk House, Peregrine Park, Gomm Road, High Wycombe, Bucks) is getting better with each issue, tho' Ken Miller's fascination with castration is slightly worrying! Dagon 26 (60 A5, 1.40, Dagon Press, 11 Warwick Rd, Twickenham Middx, TW2 6SW) is a D.F.Lewis special - he's responsible for 'Dreamaholic' elsewhere in TC4, so if you liked that, you know what to do. Green Goblin 12 (32 pages A5, 50p + SAE, John Breakwell, 170 Caversham Rd, Reading, RG1 8AZ) is a computer/fantasy/chat 'zine, that's pretty AND interesting at the same time. And an error in the address for Prisoners of War in TC2. Wallace Nicoll, 48 Broughton ROAD, Edinburgh EH7 4EE.

On the book front, "Born to be Bad", the follow up to "Lost, Lonely & Vicious" is out, containing 40 more postcards of posters from B-movies. 5.95, and I can see me having to buy TWO copies, one to use and one to keep. Cunning swines, these authors.

A well-informed source (James Furman, chairman of the BBFC) says that "The Exorcist" will not be out on video in the foreseeable future, contrary to popular rumour : "We don't think the time is really right yet". However, according to "Time Out", "The Evil Dead" will shortly be available again, "albeit in a significantly cut form". Meanwhile, for "Texas Chainsaw Massacre", Furman said "several companies have asked us if there's any point in submitting it on video and we've said no".

TC5 should be out in April (I need the rest!). Contents: Sybil Danning, film reviews, Dangermouse, more European stuff, bits on Black Sunday & Splatterfest '90 (if I've enough stamina for both of them) + how NOT to synthesize psilocybin.

ALUN FAIRBURN'S FILM HIT & SH*T LISTS

SH*T LIST

Alien Encounter
Blood Tracks
Body Count
Barfly
Cujo
Conquest
Demons 2
Frogs
Haunted Honeymoon
Mutant Hunt

HIT LIST

Flesh For Frankenstein
The Thing (Carpenter's)
The Terminator
Street Trash
Blood Feast
Blade Runner
Dawn of the Dead
Day of the Dead
The Stepfather
House by the Cemetery

**** 9. "Although we may run out of Pan-Am coffee, we'll never run out of T.W.A tea"

TRASH LITERATURE

"Assassin" - Shaun Hutson, Star, 3.50

Herschell Gordon Lewis once said that his films were the first ones where everyone died with their eyes open. Similarly, Shaun Hutson's latest novel is the first I've read where everyone dies with their head in little pieces. Bloody gobbets of brain tissue and fragments of skull litter every second page like confetti, courtesy of a large variety of very offensive weapons.

It's less of a 'horror' story than previous efforts, being more a gangland thriller with the only supernatural elements being four zombie gangsters out for revenge on the people who killed them. The rest of the story includes a Manson-style family of psychos, bent coppers, informers, a hit-man who listens to heavy metal on his Walkman while working and a LOT of ammunition. There's a love story in there too, though don't expect to see Mr. Hutson getting signed up by Mills & Boon.

Make no mistake, the man can write. While any fool with a camera, some fake blood and a few cow intestines can make a movie capable of grossing-out the viewer, to do something similar with letters on a page is proof of talent, and there are at least two scenes in the book, the execution of a 'traitor' by a gang boss and a ritual murder, after which I had to stop reading for a moment. Oddly, the scene the author was proudest of (involving a prostitute and a zombie - I won't go into details), left me totally unfazed.

Despite, or perhaps slightly because of this, it's a good read - I went through the 300-odd pages in two sittings. The pace is fast, you're never sure exactly what's going to happen next (though the most violent and messy alternative is usually a safe bet) and the characters are interestingly flawed. If perhaps occasionally they have 'CANNON FODDER' tattooed too conspicuously on their foreheads, this is only to be expected in a book where the mortality rate of the characters is close to 100%. Overall, nasty - very nasty - yet still recommended for those with strong stomachs.

* * * * *

No room for a real letter column this time, yet I couldn't resist putting in the following extract from a reader - I think I'll refrain from printing her name...

"You missed the obvious, didn't you, tho' it's probably due to you being male - to be polite, it's plastic, runs on batteries abd often masquerades as a 'neck massager' in the Kaleidoscope catalogue..."

Only things that brings to mind are rechargeable batteries...

**** 10. "We just cut up our girl-friend with a chainsaw. Does that sound 'fine'?"

TRASH TV

Well, the BBC did it again. The Saturday before Halloween, they showed David Cronenberg's 'The Dead Zone' and the Tommy Lee Wallace directed 'Halloween III : Season of the Witch' (oddly, both produced by Debra Hill). In a startling display of idiosyncrasy, they censored the former, removing the scene where the murderer commits suicide, probably leaving those who hadn't seen it before wondering what the hell happened. Then, two hours later, "Halloween III" was shown in full, including a man having his head pulled clean, or rather, pulled messily, off. Not bad, given it's cut on video. I can just about bear TV censorship, as long as it's consistent - this semi-random approach is getting more and more annoying.

Advertisement time. Don't know whether other regions have it, but down in London, we've been getting an advert for Cadbury's Crunchies. I assume it's supposed to be a parody of a 50's musical - it consists of little more than a big-bosomed bimbo waving her cleavage at the camera while singing lines like "I'd rather have a Crunchie, than play a round with Sam". How this sexual innuendo got past the IBA and what it's all got to do with honeycomb choc-bars remains a mystery to me, but I can foresee trouble. If the looney feminist lobby can claim on 'Right to Reply' that an advert for the Peugeot 209 (I think it was) was a rape fantasy, they'll be having an apopleptic fit about this one.

Assuming this gets out before Chrissie-mas, you might care to keep an eye out for the following. "Hazard of Hearts" (31st, BBC1, 2015) - it'll be interesting to see the result when an irresistible force, in the shape of Helena Bonham-Carter, probably the best young actress in Britain today, meets the immovable, leaden prose of Barbara Cartland. "The Prince and the Pauper" (25th, BBC2, 1100), if only 'cos Sybil Danning's in it (I think!) and Jan Svankmajer's "Alice" (2nd, Ch4, 0050); see TC3 for it. Overall the BBC wins, on the film front anyway: "Legend", "Krull", "My Fair Lady" (in English!), "The Name of the Rose" & "Clockwise" will do nicely; all I'll be slapping on tape from ITV is "Escape From New York".

Saw an interesting piece about Wendy James on 'Hard News'. She was whining about the tabloid press telling lies and making up stories saying how she called Kylie Minogue 'that Aussie bimbo'. "Bimbo is such a sexist term" said Miss James, as she sprawled on... Well, where do YOU think would be the most appropriate place to hold an interview, for a girl supposedly trying desperately to lose her bimbo image? A king-size bed? Right first time...

* * * * *

"After half an hour we saw a hooker on the street of a small town. In the DDR there are no prostitutes, peepshows or porn mags, but we knew what she was from Western TV programmes that we'd seen."

----- East German refugee describing his first impressions of the West.

THE SECTION WITH NO NAME

Dark Star 5 (36 A4, 1.50) - So there was SOMEONE who liked 'Batman'! This issue is mainly devoted to said movie, and is a fair digest of all the previous hyper-hype - interviews with FX men, previous 'Batman' films, comics, etc. Interesting, even if like me, you thought Jack Nicholson was it's only saving grace. Otherwise, broad ranging - Sherlock Holmes, cinema going in Greece, James Bond and a good few film reviews. Rob Dyer, Publishing House, 50 Wrotham Road, Gravesend, Kent DA11 0QF.

Death Bane 2 (22 pages A5, 1.00) - Some good ideas here; the foldout middle and (at least on my copy) a colour pic stuck to the front cover. Spoilt rather by the execution; the layout is VERY messy & unclear, and someone ought to buy the editor a dictionary! Just, 77 Crystal Palace Park Road, London, SE26 6UT.

Fantasynopsis 2 (80 A5, 1.70) - After a lengthy wait, another issue rises from the grave. An appropriate simile, for this 'Zombie Special' features pieces on 'Dawn of the Dead' and 'Plague of the Zombies', a history of undead cinema and a prize crossword. Dear, but well-produced with good photographs and a 'classy' feel make this just about a coffee-table fanzine! Paul J. Brown, 1 Bascraft Way, Godmanchester, Cambs. PE18 8EG.

Gore Gazette 100 (4 pages tabloid, Special freebie, send an IRC?) - Now been going for nine years and it's general couldn't-give-a-toss attitude is getting endearing. This special freebie has a list of all horror(ish) films issued theatrically in New York this decade; 641 in all, ranging from the known to the totally obscure. And any 'zine has class that reviews de Palma's 'Casualties of War' with "If you ever got your kicks out of torturing some nerd in gym class, should be pleasantly nostalgic"! c/o Rick Sullivan, 469 Hazel St, Clifton, New Jersey, NJ 07011 U.S.A.

Samhain: An index to Issues 1-17 (39 pages A4, 1.00 including p&p) - One of those "now, why didn't I think of that?" ideas, essential for anyone who reads Samhain. It lists all the films, books, soundtracks, authors and people that have been written about in Britain's premier 'zine, and will save endless hours trying to track down that bit on Jess Franco. Only minor complaint - the 'authors' section sends you to 'books' rather than to the piece direct, which'd have been as easy. Otherwise, invaluable. Glyn Williams, 219 Ladybank Road, Mickleover, Derby, DE3 5RR.

Strange Adventures 10 (12 A4, 50p) - From the Isle of Wight we have this varied selection of reviews - videos, films, comics & books are all covered, concentrating on mainstream product with a fantasy content. A bit too 'normal' for me perhaps, though I enjoyed Tony Lee's list of "Horrible Things", ranging from grouting tiles to Russell Grant! Stephen & Tony Lee, 13 Hazely Combe, Arreton, Isle of Wight, PO30 3AJ.

HO,HO,HO! THE TRASH CITY CHRISTMAS COMPETITION

Those of you with us back in the prehistoric days of TC0 may remember me giving away some videos that I didn't want, to encourage people to subscribe. Since then, I've acquired more of these, and our anniversary seems a good time to offload these on you, sorry, offer these up as superb prizes. Hence this contest, not to be taken TOO seriously...

THE RULES.

- 1) All entrants must be subscribers to Trash City, with enough money left in their sub to cover the cost of p&p - say one pound. If I'm giving these films away, I'm not paying the damn postage too!
- 2) Prizes can only be sent to UK subscribers, since it'd cost too much to send tapes to America. 'Foreigners' get a pat on the back instead, especially if they can understand all the obscure British cultural references.
- 3) 10 points for a correct answer, 1 - 10 for an interesting, apt or funny answer, regardless of truth, at the editor's discretion.
- 4) Top score gets first choice, next gets second, etc. Contestants must supply an order of preference for the prizes, otherwise I choose which one you get...
- 5) The editor's decision is final. Absolute power corrupts absolutely. Fun, eh?

THE PRIZES.

Original tapes of the following films. No guarantee is made as to their quality, but most have been watched once. They are thus likely to be good tapes, if not good films. Naturally, all have BBFC certificates...

Demons * Demons 2 * Friday the 13th * Surf Nazis * Creepozoids * The Hunger * Satan's Dog * Avenging Angel * Pray T.V. * The Marriage of Maria Braun

THE QUESTIONS. Two sections, one factual, one to 'use your imagination' on.

Section 1) - Scattered throughout TC4 (look out for the "*****") you'll find quotes taken from movies. All you have to do is identify the movies - none are especially, or even mildly, obscure.

Section 2) - The tiebreaker. Suggest appropriate film roles for the following non-actors :

- a) Wendy James
- b) Jim Bakker
- c) Mikhail Gorbachev
- d) Gabriella Sabatini
- e) David Gower
- f) Salman Rushdie
- g) Edwina Currie
- h) Kate Adie
- i) Bob Monkhouse
- j) Pamela Bordes

FORTHCOMING ATTRACTIONS

Rumour time again. Take your pick from the following crop of sequels, follow-ups and the odd, very occasional, original idea. Starting with the biggie, "Batman II", rumoured to be costing, wait for it, \$100 million, is being planned, pitting Keaton and Basinger against Nicholson (if he accepts the 'write your own cheque offer') plus the Penguin (Dustin Hoffman?? I kid you not...), Catwoman (Cher) & The Riddler (Robin Williams). Michael Jackson for the soundtrack this time?

Alien III, scripted by William Gibson, will have Arnold Schwarzenegger playing alongside Sigourney Weaver & Michael Biehn. It doesn't take place on Earth or the aliens' planet and may not be until 1992 however. Terminator II, also with big Arnie, is shelved indefinitely. Predator II doesn't have Mr. Schwarzenegger in it and is set in New York - the preds taken on his brother instead.

Robocop II, written by comics man Frank Miller is being/has been filmed, with both Weller & Allen returning. In it, Murphy is 'retired' and his replacement goes wrong necessitating a swift come-back. Also on the comics front, we have 'The Watchmen' which is now being directed by Terry Gilliam, after a brief flirtation with James Cameron. The name of Mickey Rourke to play Rorschach has been heard.

On the 'wise move' front, Bruce Willis has realised that 'Die Hard' was the only good thing he's done since 'Moonlighting' and has signed up for the sequel, which shows startling originality in being called, not 'Die Hard 2', but 'Die Harder'. Renny Harlin, having parted company with 'Aliens 3', is down to direct. Set on a 747, the lead villain may well be Steven Berkoff.

THE 1989 TRASH CITY AWARDS.

Nominations, please, with descriptions where appropriate, for the following categories, ideally based on films you saw in 1989. Should I still have a video or two left from the competition, I'll give them to the senders of the best suggestion.

- a) The 'Bambi' Award for the film which gave the censors LEAST trouble.
- b) 'Manon des Sources' Trophy for most blatant moment missed by the censors in a U/PG certificate film.
- c) 'Ghostbusters' Shield : the BBFC certificated movie with the smallest chance of getting turned into a Saturday morning cartoon series.
- d) 'Man is the warmest place to hide' Cup for best line used to advertise a movie...
- e) 'The name in laughter from the hereafter' Dagger ...for the worst!
- f) 'Son of the Return of the Sequel II' Tombstone : most uninspired general cash-in.
- g) 'Prison Ship Star Slammer' Bust for the most totally gratuitous piece of nudity.
- h) The 'Gone in 60 Seconds' Furry Dice for the best car chase.

Dusk fell.

The hand of night swept over the city, settling like a velvet cloak thrown over a puddle. The air sighed in resignation, and a million leaves scurried for cover like frightened rodents. Neons flickered and gained the upper hand, street lamps warmed to orange and reflections danced on paintwork and glass. Electricity flowed in the city's veins. Time to move.

I snapped up the collar on my trenchcoat and pushed open the glass panel door, noting that they didn't take any of my credit cards, and were, in fact, closed. It looked like this lead was about as useful as a parachute that opened on impact or a boot spoiler on a Volvo, but desperation was the better part of invention. I guessed I'd think of something. An answer perhaps, but why stop there, I needed plenty.

Answers to questions like is there anyone out there with skin the same colour as sticking plaster and where do blacks get black plaster, what language do angels sing in and who writes the words and why do French supermarket trolleys have steering-wheels at the front? Then again, perhaps that explains why the French have the highest road fatality rate...

My casual entrance ran into credibility problems when the door ran out of movement and I ran into the door, but I needn't have worried. I could have been a passing alien in a fluorescent tutu or Margaret Thatcher and attracted less attention. The walls held everyone transfixed, but if there was any Warhol in this gallery, it was on Beta or VHS.

The titles seemed to be organised on quite different lines to a newsagents. The sickest slime occupied the fifteen-year-old eye-level shelf while artistic classics languished on the top shelf, safely out of harms way. Each cover vied for attention, with the awards for grossest title, largest breasted female star and heaviest hand-held weapon all hotly contested, with more than a few combined entries. There was a common thread, they shared a healthy obsession with destroying property, poking fun at authority and filling the intervening periods with sex. I reckoned there could be more miles of sex and violence here than in Mary Whitehouse's private collection, but without the really sticky bits.

The whole place was more than just a reinterpretation of the Victorian library, more like the most complete collection of the obsessions and fantasies lurking in the mind of man ever assembled. Yours to rent at two nuggets or less. I figured it was worth trying everything in life once, except perhaps incest, morris dancing and vespas.

But did this sleaze deprave people or reflect their depravity? It was too big a question to handle, like why people vote for politicians when it only encourages them or why no-one has invented a finger friendly supermarket carrier bag.

Perhaps after those I could have a go at working out how did ladies get the lids off jam-jars, why same-day dry-cleaners always tell you to come back tomorrow, and why people keep giving Ken Russell money to make films. I figured there must be good money in psychiatry...

I also figured that looking for something good here was like looking for a working phone-box in Peckham - out of order. But I was wrong. I scanned the shelves for a few seconds and duly found what I was looking for. I thanked her and coughed the cash. She was mine, in "Assault of the Killer Bimbos". Mine for a night.

* * * * *

Damn. Another one of these awkward gaps at the bottom of a page. I suppose it's the penalty I pay for using up the excess this issue - rather than writing articles to fit pages, I've got to fit the pages round the articles! Here's some more letters :

Glyn Williams, Mickleover - "Borderline Cinema is serious stuff which makes me uneasy...because it brings up doubts again in my own mind about some of the scenes in some of the seedier tapes I've watched. I'm afraid that I've always managed to convince myself that my suspicions...are unfounded...The lid on this particular can of worms is showing signs of strain"

Alun Fairburn's views came in for some flak.

Mike Kosminski, Dumfries - "If he's a genre fan then we're well & truly sunk."

I have to accept a fair chunk of the blame for this one - my editing left some people thinking Alun was ADVOCATING banning magazines that reviewed illicit films, when all he was doing in his original letter was pointing out the illogicality of the current government position. That may have got lost in the translation...

Congratulations go to Wendy James, for getting another Time Out cover - she might not be TOO pleased about this one, as it's thanks to her appearance in their Hated Hundred, under the heading 'tits out for anti-sexism'.

Difficult to believe rumours #23. A sequel to '9 1/2 Weeks', provisionally entitled 'Four Days in February'. Basinger & Rourke return for a second helping of ice-cubes and peanut butter, and ROMAN POLANSKI of all people is supposed to direct it. Hang on, I thought Kim Basinger was twice the age of his usual, er, interests...