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TRASH
CITY
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超面白大漫画! 48P!!!

Ninjutsu
Comics
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Films

SPECIAL JAPANESE ISSUE
Bimbos Behind Bars
Black Sunday 3
Road Runner



SUMMER 1990

Trash City - Issue 6

Summer 1990.

Bringing you fun in the sun, Nastassja Kinski, splatter movies, culture from East and West, conspiracy theory, some very bad fiction, some very good fiction, Christopher Lee, and more deviant ideas than you can shake a stick at. People of a sensible disposition or with deep faith in copyright law should stop here. No back issues are currently available, though bribery in that area may be productive. For the record, previous TC's were:

- TC0 - Nastassja Kinski, the Human League, "Hellbound" + H.G. Lewis
- TC1 - Black Sunday '89, NK, "Salo", DIY flamethrowers + Holiday '88
- TC2 - Shock 2, NK, "Reform School Girls", "Edge of Sanity" + a road accident
- TC3 - lists, Cicciolina, Linnea Quigley, + "The New Avengers"
- TC4 - "Ilsa", "The Railway Children", Tom & Jerry + eye violence
- TC5 - Sybil Danning, "G.L.O.W.", "Dangermouse", Black Sunday '90 + Troma

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Subscriptions are available: 60p/issue UK, 80p/\$1.25 in Europe, \$3 elsewhere. A label on the envelope for subscribers tells you the last issue you'll get + how much money will be left over after that. Cheques or PO's made payable to Jim McLennan please. Contributions are welcome, and in any case I reserve the right to publish any correspondence unless specifically asked **not** to. All submissions, subscriptions, petitions and proclamations to :

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T-shirts!

The idea of TC T-shirts has been put forward. I quite like the idea of running off a limited, full-colour one; the cost would probably be 7.95 or thereabouts. However, I don't know what ought to be put on them! A past TC cover? All suggestions would be welcome...

WELCOME TO THE VIDEODROME

Great mysteries of our time #739 : Where do misprints go between the final draft and the finished item? 'Cos I'm damned if the final draft had 'Heane 17' for Heaven 17, or credited TIM Lehmann, instead of Michael, for directing '**Heathers**'. Still, at least the former can be put down to typing frenzy and the latter, well, I got it right in TC4, which proves I'm not completely ignorant. TC is not alone in mis-prints as I've recently seen two references to '**Isla, She Wolf of the SS**' - I knew Miss St Clair was hard up but... Presumably a similar gremlin caused Warner Home Video to release '**Zoltan, Hound of Dracula**', as part of their House of Hammer collection when the film was a cheap (tho' endearing) American rip-off. And I'm now a little more cynical about the joys of DTP after the rumour that NK was due to appear in Peter Greenaway's next film was discredited in exactly the same place it had first appeared, two weeks after I'd rewritten my editorial to accomodate it.

In fifty years time when my grandchildren ask me, "What did you do during the Great Poll Tax Riots of 1990?", I'll be able to look them straight in the eye and say, "I was sitting in the Scala cinema watching '**Queen of Outer Space**' starring Zsa Zsa Gabor". I have a theory that history is largely determined by people with nothing better to do on a Saturday afternoon.

Distribution: TC5 was available in/from Forbidden Planet and Psychotronic Videos (both London), Artware of Germany and a couple of other places that might get mentioned when I get paid for the issues! More outlets should follow. Thanks to Andy Waller, Kevin McLure, John London, Pete "Eat Them Alive" Shepherd, Claire Blamey and the Men in Black, Malcolm Dalglish (who got out of the bath to answer my queries - sorry!) & Dave Bryan.

Hideous lack of space this issue - even this editorial is edited. Next issue will be out whenever it appears, which may not be long given the amount of unused stuff lying around. TC7 should include Ruiger Hauer, John Waters, '**Deathstalker II**', more conspiracies & Shock Around the Clock 4.



"The street will find it's own use for technology"

Christopher Lee - Fangs for the Memory

I'm writing this on Christopher Lee's 68th birthday, May 27th, and I'm trying to find words to sum up the career of a man who has appeared in more films than almost any other actor. Not all of these have been good perhaps, but even in the dullest of these (who mentioned '**Night of the Big Heat**'?) he is always worth watching. He's a highly versatile actor, capable of playing everything from the Mummy to Sherlock Holmes, via Shakespeare - '**Hamlet**' (1948) won an Oscar and was his first film with Peter Cushing.

He is undoubtedly best known for his performances as Dracula, his height (6 ft. 4") lending him an air of authority few, if any, other actors have been able to bring to the role. In addition to the Hammer versions, beginning with '**Dracula**' (1958) and generally going downhill in quality until the abysmal '**Dracula AD 1972**', he also appeared in other vampire films, though these were usually feeble spoofs. He was 'misled' into appearing in '**El Conde Dracula**' by promises it would be the definitive telling of

Stoker's tale - since it was directed by Jess Franco, it will not surprise readers to learn this is not how it turned out...

Outside the horror genre, his appearances have been almost as numerous, especially in more recent years. He was Scaramanga in **'The Man With the Golden Gun'**, and is also well known for his appearances in **'The Three Musketeers'** and its two sequels. At other times, he has played Dr Jekyll, Rasputin & Fu Manchu but for me his most memorable role was as Lord Summerisle in **'The Wicker Man'** (1973), which in my opinion is the best non-Hammer British horror film ever made.

In recent years his appearances have become slightly less numerous, leaving him free to pursue his other interests - he is a keen golfer, possessing a low handicap, and is also very fond of cricket. However, he can shortly be seen in **'Gremlins II'**, which means the man will be in the (unique?) position of having starred in films with three of your editor's idols; Nastassja Kinski (**'To the Devil a Daughter'**), Sybil Danning (**'The Howling II'**) and now Phoebe Cates.

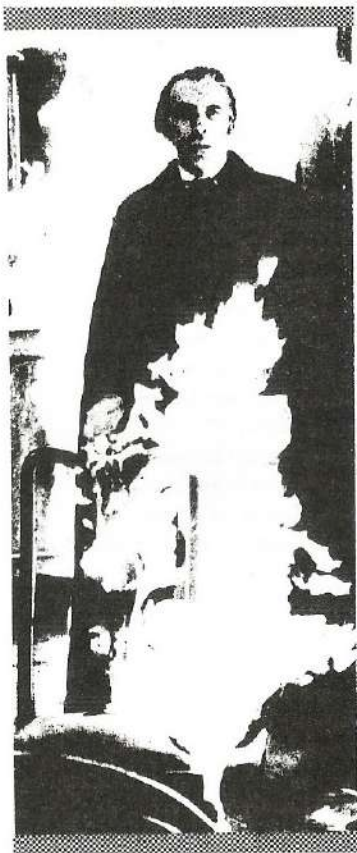
His latest film, as yet unreleased here, is called **'The Rainbow Thief'**, with Michael Caine. During the filming, it was reported that Lee was called to do a scene where he has a heart attack while bonking some beauty. Lee wanted it changed, in deference to his age, and settled for being tickled into a seizure by eight topless bimboes! Some people have all the luck...

Filmography

So you thought Sybil Danning was busy? I lost count of the following list when it went into three figures; all corrections, additions and amendments would be gratefully received, though note that only commonly encountered alternative titles are included :

- 1947 - Corridor of Mirrors
- 1948 - Hamlet
- 1949 - They Were Not Divided
- 1950 - Prelude of Fame
- 1951 - Valley of the Eagles
- 1952 - The Crimson Pirate
- 1953 - Moulin Rouge
- 1954 - Dark Avenger
 - aka The Warriors
- 1955 - Private's Progress
- 1956 - Alias John Preston
 - Moby Dick
 - Ill Met by Moonlight
 - aka Night Ambush
 - The Battle of the River Plate
 - aka Pursuit of the Graf Spee
- 1957 - The Traitor
 - The Curse of Frankenstein
 - Corridors of Blood
 - aka Doctor from Seven Dials





- 1958 - Dracula
 - aka Horror of Dracula
- 1959 - A Tale of Two Cities
 - The Man Who Could Cheat Death
 - The Mummy
 - Two Faces of Dr. Jekyll
- 1960 - Beat Girl
 - City of the Dead
 - Taste of Fear
 - aka Scream of Fear
- 1961 - Hercules in the Haunted Kingdom
 - aka Hercules in the Centre of the Earth
- 1962 - Hands of Orlac
 - aka Hands of a Strangler
 - The Terror Tongue
 - aka The Terror of the Tongue

Uncle Was a Vampire
 Sherlock Holmes & the Deadly
 Necklace

The Longest Day
 Pirates of Blood River
 Puzzle of the Red Orchid
 aka Secret of the Red Orchid
 Devil's Daffodil
 aka Daffodil Killer

1963 - Terror Castle
 aka Virgin of Nuremberg
 What
 aka Night is the Phantom
 Devil's Ship Pirates
 Castle of the Living Dead

1964 - The Gorgon

1965 - Dracula, Prince of Darkness
 Rasputin, the Mad Monk
 Dr. Terror's House of Horror
 The Skull
 Face of Fu Manchu
 She

1966 - Brides of Fu Manchu

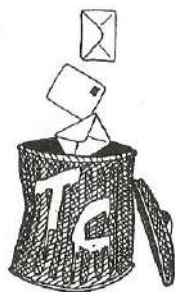
1967 - Vengeance of Fu Manchu
 Theatre of Death
 Circus of Fear
 aka Psycho Circus
 Night of the Big Heat
 aka Island of the Burning Damned



The Devil Rides Out
 aka The Devil's Bride
 Five Golden Dragons
 The Torture Chamber of Dr Sadism
 Curse of the Crimson Altar
 aka The Reincarnation
 aka *about five other titles!*
 1968 - Eve
 The Oblong Box
 Dracula Has Risen From the Grave
 Blood of Fu Manchu
 aka Kiss and Tell
 1969 - Castle of Fu Manchu
 aka Torture Chamber of Fu Manchu
 Assignment: Istanbul
 Taste the Blood of Dracula
 Night of the Blood Beast
 aka Throne of the Blood Monster
 The Magic Christian
 One More Time
 1970 - Eugenie: The Story of Her Journey Into
 Perversion
 aka Sade 70
 El Conde Dracula
 aka Bram Stoker's Dracula
 The Scars of Dracula
 Scream & Scream Again
 The House That Dripped Blood
 Julius Caesar
 The Private Life of Sherlock Holmes
 1971 - I, Monster
 1972 - Dracula AD 1972
 aka Dracula Today
 Hannie Calder
 Dark Places
 Poor Devil (TVM)
 1973 - The Satanic Rites of Dracula
 aka Count Dracula & His Vampire
 Bride
 Panic on the Trans-Siberian Express
 aka Horror Express
 Creeping Flesh
 Nothing But The Night
 Deathline
 aka Raw Meat

The Wicker Man
 1974 - The Three Musketeers
 The Man with the Golden Gun
 1975 - Tendre Dracula
 In Search of Dracula
 The Four Musketeers
 1976 - Dragon's Murder
 Killer Force
 Mask of Murder
 To the Devil a Daughter
 Revenge of the Dead
 Dracula Pere et Fils
 Meat Cleaver Massacre
 Diagnosis: Murder
 1977 - Airport '77
 Starship Invasion
 aka Alien Encounter
 End of the World
 1978 - Return From Witch Mountain
 Caravans
 The Pirate
 1979 - The Passage
 Arabian Adventure
 1941
 Circle of Iron
 aka The Silent Flute
 Bear Island
 Captain America II
 1981 - The Salamander
 An Eye for an Eye
 Goliath Awaits (TVM)
 Jaguar Lives
 1982 - Safari 3000
 1983 - The House of the Long Shadows
 Whispering Death
 The Return of Captain Invincible
 aka The Legend in Leotards
 1984 - Rosebud Hotel
 The Howling II
 1988 - Murder Story
 1989 - The Return of the Three Musketeers
 1990 - Treasure Island
 Gremlins II
 The Rainbow Thief





High Weirdness by Mail

Best excuse of 1990: Daniel Cox - "I have been on location in Cuba as technical advisor for the snuff movie 'Kinkarver' or as it is known by its UK release title 'The Kinski Lookalike Murders' and please do not suspect me of exaggeration. [Who, me?] I did meet Dennis Neilsen at a party, prior to his arrest of course...I expect he had other things on his mind at that time, such as "did I turn the oven off?"...the party did take place and is not a figment of my imagination".

Neilsen used to work for the Manpower Services Commission in Denmark St, just opposite the old Forbidden Planet shop - probably all those nasty books warped his mind. Speaking of warped minds, here's Andy Waller - "TC appears to be cleaning up it's act, judging by the latest edition - it's becoming far too clean, decent and bloody responsible! It's rapidly losing it's crude unrefined personality, it's borderline origins - TC come home! Screw discretion, commercialism, honour and decency - bring on the sleaze!" Certainly a problem I'm aware of - the only difficulty is that my life lately has been too clean, decent and bloody responsible! TC reflects this and is thus distressingly sleaze-free - all suggestions and offers of 14-year old nymphomaniacs, large amounts of money and heaps of pharmaceuticals would be welcome.

Which is an easy link to Handy Household Hints. "You have to be careful not to make ergot (lysergic acid) as well as psilocybe", warns Claire Blamey. That would be a disaster, wouldn't it? David Thomson asks "Could you please tell me where to avoid getting hold of any psilocybe mycelium? Just to be sure." - so far, I've luckily avoided that pitfall myself. Poor Richard Owen has a problem in the offing - "A friend is very grateful to you for HHH #2. He recently spent a lot of time researching at the library in Swansea University but to no avail - unfortunately, I'm the one who'll have to look after him".

Mark Stevens - "Please put me on the letters page, I've seen Robert de Niro's left testicle". No bother at all, Mark. Next, Paul Mallinson - "Boo! No mention in the letters page!...Maybe next time, Jim?!". Maybe, maybe not.

Oh, alright then - go ahead! PM - "On the whole, I enjoyed the Splatterfest - not because of the films (although 'Rabid Grannies' was marvellous), mainly because of the atmosphere and getting the chance to meet all the people I've been writing to... Well said on 'The Comic'...Sure, it was well out of place at the event but all the shouting did was to deny us the chance of seeing their other film on offer which could have been much better". Every festival has it's dick-heads - Splatterfest just had more than most it seems.

The Sybil Danning piece was enjoyed/appreciated, tho' maybe those that didn't just kept quiet rather than risk the wrath of SD, who naturally pops round to collect her copy in person... Several people spotted that 'Your Sister is a Werewolf' is an alternate title for 'The Howling II' and Tony Lee adds "you forgot her guest appearance as a prison bitch, beating up Heather Thomas in TV's 'The Fall Guy!' (No I'm not kidding)". Not forgot, Tony just haven't seen - I'm sure it's pretty unforgettable!

"TC5 was jolly interesting, with my only gripe being the fact that you got my name wrong in the letters page. Simon Owen? Who he?" says Simon Wood. Guilty, m'lud - probably something to do with him residing at Owen Court, I expect. SW - "Tell Stuart Adamson of R.A.D. (letters, TC5) there is another band who would dispute the 'fastest band on earth' tag. The Anal C*nts started out by putting out a single (7") which contains 88 songs and their latest 7" single has a total of over 5,000 (!!!!) songs on it!!!!".

More one-upmanship comes from Paul Higson - "I sat alone in a cinema studio for the last day of a two week run of 'Videodrome'. The usherette didn't bother coming down with the tray, she just called out "Do you want any ices?" from the door". The only way we can take this further is to find someone working at a cinema who knows of a showing when no-one turned up!

Several readers kindly told me about Pop Will Eat Itself and their unofficial World Cup Single, 'Touched by the Hand of Cicciolina'. I was very disappointed they wimped out and failed to include Ms. Staller when they were on 'Top of the Pops' as they claimed they wanted - even the video had a fake Cicciolina and about two stills of her. Far better to watch 'The Late Show', which had a piece on an Italian art exhibition where one of the exhibits was a double life-size sculpture of her and the artist making love, surrounded by photos of them. This is Art, so it was alright to show the sort of things the BBFC would frown on... Glyn Williams speculates on the possibilities: "One can only hope that Maggie, by the next election, is in such desperate straits that she will feel it is necessary to stand on the back of a lorry lifting her skirt and opening her blouse to gain attention". Not sure 'hope' is the word I'd use, Glyn - it will be interesting to see if Glenda Jackson, a lady not averse to removing her clothes for Ken Russell, tries something similar.

When I write 80% of a paragraph, I know it's time to stop! All letters are read avidly and you will get a reply, though given the time spent watching the World Cup, it might take a while to clear the backlog...



The Section With No Name

A sudden influx of American 'zines this quarter; it's interesting to reflect upon the differences in both style and content, though perhaps six isn't really a representative sample! 'Gore Gazette' #101 demonstrates these differences admirably, being a small (7 sides A4, \$2), no-nonsense 'zine with an off-centre sense of humour. Not for overly sensitive liberal wimps, I enjoy it.

Taking GG's attitude to it's obvious, if somewhat ludicrous extreme, we have 'Chunk Blower' #0 and 'A Taste of Bile' #8, both hailing from good ol' Waco, Texas. Both revel in deliberate offensiveness; the latter (8 A5 for an IRC) says of Linnea Quigley, "Someone ought to rape/murder this bitch", while the former (12½ A5, ???) has "Next time your parents, boss, cops, etc give you shit about drugs, just tell them : "I don't do drugs, I just sell them to elementary school brats for sex". - ATOB is the better written and layed out, tho' CB openly acknowledges it's deficiencies!

At the other end of the spectrum is 'Scareaphanalia' #87 (8 A5, \$1), which is sober, sane & well written, with a lot of inside info. as you'd expect from a F*ng*r** employee (tho' a nice bloke despite this!) and a chat with Frank Henenlotter, 'Basket Case 2' director. #88 has a good list of American

'zines to help me use up the dollars left over from the NY trip. Also on the suaver side is **'It's Only A Movie'** #1 (32 A4ish, \$4??), with a column by Joe Bob Briggs, an interview with John Menaughton and pieces on The Cramps, comics, Argento and some comedy group called Monty Python... Finally, there's **'Murder Can be Fun'**, which I invested a fistful of dollars in. #11 (32 A5, \$2) digs up some forgotten American accidents (the Great Boston Molasses Flood) and earlier issues cover similar topics; death, destruction and Karen **"She's skinny, she's sexy, she's dead"** Carpenter. Worth a look.

British 'zines are a little scarce, but regular as clockwork appears **'Strange Adventures'** - #14-16 (12,16,16 A4, 95p) do their best to cover everything in the fantasy genre from SF to **'Field of Dreams'** and is a damn good try, tho' it's tendency to LIE HEINOUSLY about TC should be discounted! The forthcoming #17 includes a piece on **'Twinkle'**; at least that's what I assume Tony means by comics since he has a distressing inability to count to 48. Go on, support the innumerate!! **'Sheer Filth'** #8 (32 A5, 75p) proves again that real 'zines don't need page numbers with a large chunk on Cicciolina, David Friedman, Coil and many reviews of things you probably don't want to know about. The **'Racconti Sensuale'** review includes phrases like **'compositions and bizarre setups allow people and objects to blend into organic entities veritable glowing with delighted sexuality'**. Er, yes... **'Creeping Unknown'** #13 slithered onto the door-mat, having lost it's staples on the way. In it's 36 A5 pages (75p), there's news, competitions + a lot of reviews - almost made me want to rent **'The Abyss'**. Almost. Last, but not least is **'Green Goblin'** (20 A5, 50p + postage). #13 is different to #12, consisting of 2 short stories (one SF, one sword-and-sorcery-humour) + a letter column, all of which I enjoyed reading.

'Black' #5 (16A4, \$1.50) is undoubtedly the clearest layout of any 'zine this quarter and Mikael's unique English is a bonus! Reviews and a couple of rants about life & Sweden. **'Fanzines'** (28 A4, 2.00), originally done as a college project, which reviews in depth 20 odd horror 'zines. Perhaps trying too hard to avoid insulting anyone, it's still interesting and you'll even learn about the origins of TC! It's a limited edition, so... **'My Pants are Made of Welded Steel'** #1 (20 A4, 30p) deals mostly with music, but plans to widen out. Great title, shows promise beneath an occasionally rough-edged look. Finally, received this morning, another new 'zine: **'Subterrene'** #1 (20 A4, 60p) - clear layout, covering a lot of familiar ground so far but we'll see how things develop; certainly no worse than TC0!

Black - Mikael Bomark, Aspv. 28, 14141 Huddinge, SWEDEN

Chunk Blower - Jason Beck, 3737 Campus Dr., Apt. 203, Waco, TX 76705, USA

Creeping Unknown - Nick, c/o 33 Maltby Road, Mansfield, Notts, NG18 3BN

Fanzines - Paul Mallinson, 12 Daneshill Road, Leicester. LE3 6AL.

Gore Gazette - c/o Sullivan, 469 Hazel St, Clifton, NJ 07011, USA

Green Goblin - John Breakwell, 170 Caversham Road, Reading, RG1 8AZ

It's Only A Movie - PO Box 14683, Chicago, Illinois 60614-0683, USA

Murder Can Be Fun - John Marr, Box 640111, San Francisco, CA 94109, USA

My Pants are Made... - Simon Owen, Fieldside House, London Road, Blewbury, Oxon, OX11 9NY

Scareaphanalia - Michael Gingold, 55 Nordica Drive, Croton-on-Hudson, NY 10520, USA

Sheer Filth - David Flint, 39 Holly Street, Offerton, Stockport, SK1 4DP.

Strange Adventures - Tony Lee, 13 Hazely Combe, Arreton, Isle of Wight, PO30 3AJ

Subterrene - Anthony Cawood, 6 Daleside Avenue, Pudsey, Leeds, LS28 8HD

A Taste of Bile - PO Box 7150, Waco, TX 76714, USA

bimbos behind bars

In the 80-odd years since the cinema began, roughly 3,000 films have had at least some significant scenes set inside penitentiaries, reform schools or good old-fashioned jails. Though not all of these centre on female characters, bad girls have long been a staple of B-movie production. Why do film-makers have a fascination with this genre?

Firstly, they're cheap to make - not many genres allow you to get a quantity discount on the costumes. Sets are also easily obtainable, a few old prefabs and a couple of rolls of barbed wire are all that's needed. Secondly, the moral tone of them (and few exist where the naughty bimbo doesn't repent by the end) allows them to get past the censors more easily than movies with an ambiguous moral stance. Thirdly, and possibly most importantly, it's a good excuse for a lot of T & A.

The earliest candidate yet tracked down for the title of First Female Felon Film is '**Ladies of the Big House**', made in 1931 where the heroine ends up in jail after getting set-up when she Just Says No to a gangster. The 1950's saw any number of teenager-in-trouble movies, but few actually spent much of their running time behind bars; '**Untamed Youth**' and the original '**Reform School Girl**' (both 1957) are two that did, though in the former, prison was rather like summer camp, even down to Eddie Cochran being there to play the odd guitar solo. The next burst arrived in the 1970's when Roger Corman's New World Pictures were at the fore-front of things, with a battery of films nearly all of which can have their titles re-created by perming any two from 'Women', 'Heat', 'Cages' and 'Chained', then adding an appropriate preposition to taste. Few were shot in the States, partly to save money, partly (no doubt) to avoid law-suits from the American Correction Association. Tom de Simone, a name that should be familiar to regular readers, has become the Master of Misbehaviour, for films like '**The Concrete Jungle**' (1982), a film once described as "a movie of staggering ineptitude". I can give it no higher praise than that.

Although often highly similar in plot (thin), characters (stereotypes) and raison d'être (though inclined slightly more to violence than nudity) men-in-prison films have never had the same appeal for me. Despite '**Prison**' and '**Ghosts of the Civil Dead**' both being good films, they're a little too restrained and, well, SERIOUS to be in the same league as '**Reform School Girls**', a film well documented in a previous issue (TC2). And the more exploitative ones haven't a great deal to interest me...

This point of seriousness is something that does divide the female side of the genre as well. On one side you have deep, social comment such as '**Scrubbers**'; at the other end of the rainbow you have Fred Olen Ray's '**Prison Ship Star Slammer**', the most ludicrous sci-fi film I've ever seen, which used items from films as diverse as '**Logan's Run**' and '**Flashdance**' - in between, you have a full range of serious disguised as exploitation ('**Caged Heat**' directed by Jonathan Demme, who went on to do 'Stop Making Sense' and also New Order's 'The Perfect Kiss'; they had another of their promos, 'Touched by the Hand of God', directed by Kathryn Bigelow of '**Near Dark**' fame who has not, as far as I know, had anything to do with any women-in-prison films) and exploitation pretending to be serious. The best way to tell the difference is to look at the characters; if there's no doubt about 'goodies' and 'baddies', you're almost certain to be watching an exploitation film.

A fine example of the pseudo-serious is the utterly appalling **'Red Heat'**. No, not the Arnold Schwarzenegger one, this had Linda Blair as an American in an East German prison whose boyfriend mounts a rescue mission from the West. Sylvia Kristel was on the staff and the film was remarkable only for it's total lack of redeeming qualities to make it worth watching. Unfortunately, this was the first bad bimbo pic I ever saw and it did just as impressive a job at putting me off the genre as seeing **'Cannibal Holocaust'** when I was 15 did for horror films. It was not until a triple bill of **'Caged Heat'**, **'Jackson County Jail'** and **'Reform School Girls'** at the Scala that I realised the breadth of the genre. The second mentioned is something of an anachronism as it's really a WOMAN-in-prison film. Yvette Mimieux has one of those weekends when everything goes wrong and ends up in jail. It contains a scene where she is raped by a guard, which is one of the most unpleasant such assaults I've seen. Exactly how it should be.

It's interesting to note the self-cannibalism that goes on - certain scenes and incidents from **'Caged Heat'** appear, almost frame for frame, in **'Reform School Girls'**. The line between homage and plagiarism is very thin. Similarities to the girls-school film also mean it's possible to consider one as a sub-genre of the other. Both have women without men, uniforms and a large number of opportunities for shower scenes. This is more marked in some films than others - **'Picnic at Hanging Rock'**, which oozes repression and sexuality from every frame, is clearly more closely related than **'The Prime of Miss Jean Brodie'**.



At the other extreme, we have the concentration camp sub-genre, the *reductio ad absurdum* of the prison movie where nothing is left except the violence and the sex. Films like **'Love Camp 7'**, **'SS Experiment Camp'** and **'Ilsa, She-Wolf of the SS'** could almost be considered liberal, in a warped way, since they're about the only place where the sexes get to mix, more or less freely. These are unwatchable affairs with heavy sadistic tendencies, **'Ilsa'** being salvaged, at least partly, by Dyanne Thorne's manic over-acting. Unsurprisingly, these have come in for a fair share of flak from regulatory authorities for a variety of obvious reasons - on the other hand, 'normal' naughty nymphette movies usually escape via the moral and inconsistently illogical loop-hole that considers violence by women on women to be more acceptable than violence by men on women. Run that by me again, will you?

As we head into the 90's, the market for all these films shows no signs of diminishing - any halfway decent video shop will stock several chicks-in-chains pics, though whether you'll find them on the adult, action/adventure, comedy or horror shelves depends on the whim of the owner. Admittedly, you might rent a **'Red Heat'**, but on the other hand, you might get a **'Prison Ship Star Slammer'** or some similarly surreal epic, with sex, violence and humour. What more could you possibly want from a film?

BLACK SUNDAY 3



"Manchester? That's North London, isn't it?"

Phoebe Legere

Miss Legere, star of the Toxic Avenger sequels, wasn't a guest at Black Sunday 3, tho' whether she wasn't invited or was wandering around London looking for it is not known. Making 'Back to the Future 3' look positively slow, Malcolm and Dave put the next show on the road just 3 months after BS2. Thanks to the GPO, however, I only found out three WEEKS beforehand. No matter, the

tickets were bought (I must be the only 'zine editor who actually PAYS!) and we sat and drank in a nearby pub, meeting all the people we'd not seen since last time. When we got in, the place was mostly empty, probably due to the relatively short notice given to most people, which meant a pleasing amount of space to sprawl out in.

We began with '**The Boneyard**', a world premiere, and quite possibly the last time anyone will see it at the cinema. Spam-in-a-morgue, with rabid grannies (well, a rabid granny - Phyllis Diller, of all people!), rabid kiddies and a rabid, fifteen-foot high poodle. Tacky and not quite unwatchable. 'Bride of the Re-Animator' followed, now called '**Re-Animator 2**' (see TCS - improved slightly on a second viewing).

I confess to having slept through '**Black Rainbow**'; but those that watched it enjoyed it. So far no running order had been given (as it turned out we never did get one), which left us annoyingly uncertain when to snooze so as to be wide awake for the best films. I woke up for most of '**Halloween 5**' and liked it far more than I expected to. The final 30 minutes with Michael stalking his young niece are very tense, thanks to Danielle Harris as said 8-year old girl. I'm a little worried about her - she's either one hell of an actress or is now totally traumatised! Otherwise, standard fare, slightly lacking in the flesh department (teenage female). The first half ended with '**Never Cry Devil**', the first Society clone I've seen, had a boy convinced that his history teacher was a Satanist - the teacher and his retarded brother (nicely played by Michael J. Pollard) were a lot more interesting than the plywood hero & heroine. The film was unremarkably average save some unsubtle editing - it seemed that the BBFC provided a list of frames to remove and the company removed them, regardless of how rough the result looked.

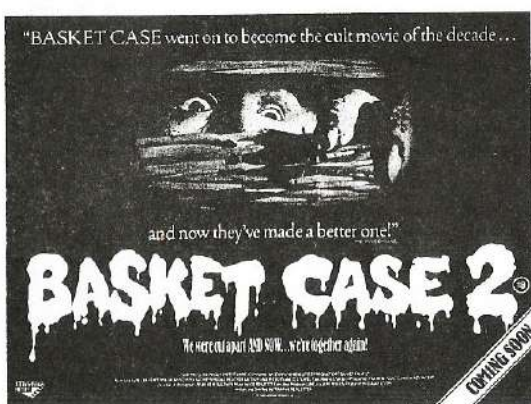
Overall, a disappointing first half. None of the new films would merit a second look from me, with the possible exception of '**Halloween 5**', though at 1.75 a shot they were passable. For me, the second half didn't get off to a much better start... I missed half the promo reel for '**Revenge of Billy the Kid**', because the promised interval was halved in length while I was out! What I saw of the promo looked interesting, however. '**Communion**', based on the 'true story' by Whitley Streiber, opened the second half and took too long to get to the I-was-kidnapped-by-aliens bits. I remain unimpressed with his tale.

Six films in, still nothing memorable - fortunately, this was all about to change. Next up was **'Basket Case 2'**, a worthy successor to one of the classic low-budget films of all time. Hennenlotter places his hero Duane (played again by Kevin van Heytenryck) and Belial, his mutant half-brother (in the literal sense!) in a sanctuary for freaks and then throws in a muck-raking journalist in order to get things going. Surprisingly passed uncut by the BBFC+, it is a stream of vicious inventiveness from beginning to (typically twisted) end.

After much fanfare, David Bryan announced one of their star films; **'Miracle Mile'**. Mass audience response: "Miracle **what?**". Despite having no 'names' connected with it (save a Tangerine Dream soundtrack), being gore-free and only borderline genre, it was almost unanimously voted THE hit of the festival. After a quiet opening, it becomes an astonishingly powerful film about... well, I suggest the less you know about it the greater the impact it'll have, so avoid the reviews but SEE IT. No film in the past dozen years has had me closer to tears. Bloody brilliant and worth the cost of the weekend on it's own. Following this anything would have been a let-down, so it was surprising that **'Fear'**, another world premiere, was still well worth watching. It stars Ally Sheedy as a psychic who helps the police track down serial killers - things go fine until she comes across a psychic psycho. Some lovely set pieces but spoiled for me by a weak ending.

To finish off, they gave us the second surprise film. A cunning double bluff - showing the trailer earlier on - fooled everyone so no-one really guessed it would be **'Frankenhooker'**, the other new Hennenlotter film. More sleaze as you'd expect from the man, it's about a guy who decides to rebuild his girlfriend, after she has an accident with a lawnmower, using local hookers to supply the missing pieces. Tongue totally in cheek, we have sex, violence, drug abuse, surgery and exploding bimbos. Lovely.

That's as much of a review as the deadline permits - very much a festival of two halves, Saint. If the second half had been like the first, I'd be very wary of returning - however, if all the films had been as good as the last four, it would have been the best weekend I've had in a long time. The organisation is improving each time (although a running order would have helped!) and they're beginning to worry the organisers of (the hideously priced) Shock Around the Clock, which has to be a good sign. Roll on BS4, and go see 'Miracle Mile'!!



+So was 'I Bought a Vampire Motorcycle', yippee!!



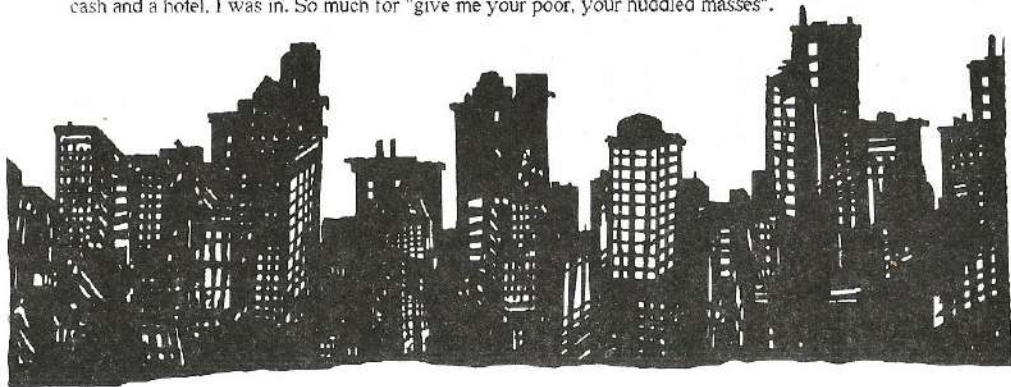
ESCAPE TO NEW YORK

Much of my life is governed by bizarre ideas that get out of hand - you're reading one of them at the moment! However, even as such concepts go, the idea of flying across to New York for a weekend is a little hard to take. There was some logic behind it: my main holiday this year is going to be two weeks spent learning to drive, not my idea of fun, so I thought it'd be cool to throw all caution (and rather more money than I care to think about) to the winds and head for New York on an ultra-cheap Virgin flight.

Arriving at the airport clutching my weekend bag (socks, toothbrush and a wide range of unpleasant T-shirts), I discovered one of the perils of cheap airlines, the inevitable delay in the flight. Paranoia was soothed on discovering that every Virgin flight was late, some of them by up to 12 hours, which made our 90 minutes seem **almost** bearable - Gatwick airport isn't somewhere I'd hang around by choice. In desperation I hit the book-shop, hoping to find something to kill time with and after some time rooting among Harold Robbins and Jeffrey Archer novels (and, oddly, P.J.O'Rourke's 'Holidays in Hell'), I went for 'Slaughter of the Lambs' by Thomas Harris, the nearest thing to a good book available.

We were eventually allowed onto the plane. "Hey, this is a lot roomier than I expected", was my first thought. Then we were left the Upper Class i.e. expensive section into the Economy i.e. our area. Sit down, belt up and wait for take off. I had to stifle giggles throughout the demonstration of the safety drill, being unable to forget the piss-take - "the emergency exits are situated over the wings of the plane, which means you people here, here & here have no chance". I was impressed with the power of the plane at take-off, which showed high acceleration and maintained it for a long while. I was also impressed with the Virgin stewardesses; an aisle seat meant I couldn't see out the window but who wants to see the top of clouds when you can gaze wistfully after long, stocking encased legs... I began to wonder for whose benefit the safety belts were provided.

The main in-flight entertainment was a film - on leafing through the flight magazine, we could have been lumbered with 'When Harry Met Sally', which made 'Black Rain' a relief. Interesting to note no-one at Virgin gives a toss about showing 15-rated films to an audience of all ages. Seven hours after leaving, we struck land, not too gently, at Newark. Since they've abolished the visa requirement for UK citizens, I was hoping for a quick passage through immigration, but it was not to be. After filling in a form that had intriguing questions like 'Are you a member of a Communist or other subversive group?' and warned me that I might be refused entry if I was mentally handicapped (into the nation that elected Ronald Reagan president?), queuing for 45 minutes and being quizzed to make sure I had a return flight ticket, enough cash and a hotel, I was in. So much for "give me your poor, your huddled masses".



Having taken the bus into New York, the next step was to get to the hotel. It was Bedlam outside, so a wise move seemed to be to take a taxi. This was fine until we arrived at the hotel - on pulling up at the curb, the taxi was approached by a bagman who suggested to the driver that he should move his fucking cab. The driver responded in kind, and the two began a contest to see which of them could cram the most swear-words into a sentence. The vagrant yanked open my door of the cab - was he going to get in next to me? He reached inside his pocket - ohgodhelpesgotagunletmeout. He got bored and drifted away. Welcome to New York. My state of mind wasn't improved when I went for a burger to calm my nerves.

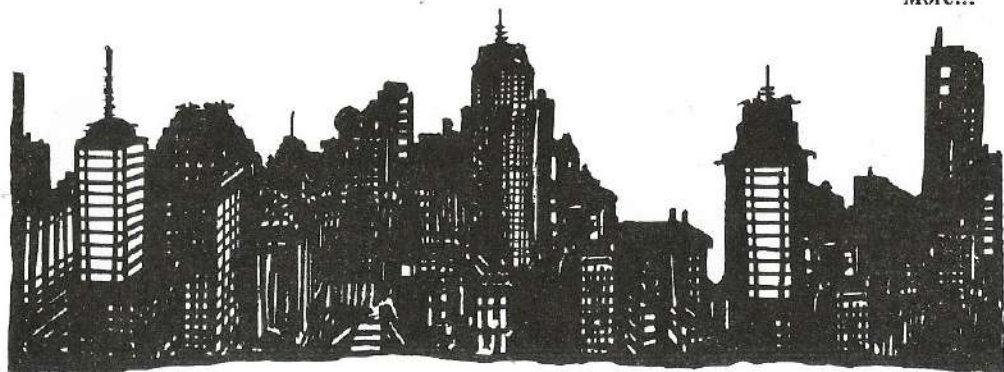
I'm sitting there eating it, when in walks a policeman. Second Chance body armor, large semi-automatic weapon, the works. At this point, I rated my chances of getting out of the city alive at about 50/50.

Saturday morning dawned bright & early, jet lag working in my favour this way. Watched a bit of American TV before getting up - great sports coverage, everything else was dross. Some of the adverts had a horrible appeal, like the programme (sponsored by some diet plan) resembling a revivalist prayer meeting with people telling their tales of how said diet had saved their lives, before bursting into tears and having to be comforted by the presenter, who resembled Russell Grant, only a lot more effeminate.

Much of that day was spent walking down Fifth Avenue, and up Broadway. I was impressed with how clean and quiet the streets were compared to London. Even on a Saturday morning, there were about one tenth of the numbers you'd see on Oxford Street. Most people drive enormous cars, I expect - I thought the SUX-6000 in '**Robocop**' was a joke, but it's hideously close to the truth. It was great to see places like the Chrysler building, home of '**Q - The Winged Serpent**' and the Empire State Building, climbing frame for large anthropoids. The latter was slightly disappointing, in that it's tiered nature meant that by the time you were close enough to appreciate it's size, it seemed to go up only twenty stories or so, compared with other slabs of glass-steel, which rose vertically up from street-level six or seven hundred feet without a pause for breath. It's the only place you can get vertigo standing on the ground.

Spent a fair amount of time in book shops, or rather running back and forth between them. There is no fixed price for books in the States, so you have to comparison shop between places to get the best price. Picked up some interesting bits and pieces, most notably Klaus Kinski's autobiography, 'All I Need is Love', following which he is now facing several libel suits. Had a quick drool in a couple of video stores, too, cursing the invention of the NTSC system, the Video Recordings Act and my finances in equal measure!

More...



Broadway goes on and on - I eventually gave up at Macy's, the world's largest department store with a turnover of \$5 million per day. Eight floors, five of which sell nothing but women's underwear. After heading back to the hotel, I got a call from Michael Gingold, the editor of *Scareaphantia* and the only person I knew within striking distance - he came into town and after one drink in the hideously expensive hotel bar, we headed out. Hit something of a problem in the first place we tried - they demanded to see our ID, to prove we were over 21 (the drinking age in New York). Having been asked to prove my age once in the past six years, I naturally hadn't bothered taking my passport, so after a brief delay, we found another bar, ready to prove our right to bear drinks. Naturally, they didn't ask. However, they served a mean steak sandwich, a good pint of Guinness and the juke-box occasionally played tracks from 'Blue Velvet' which kept us happy, though our Dennis Hopper impressions got the odd funny look!

(To be continued...)

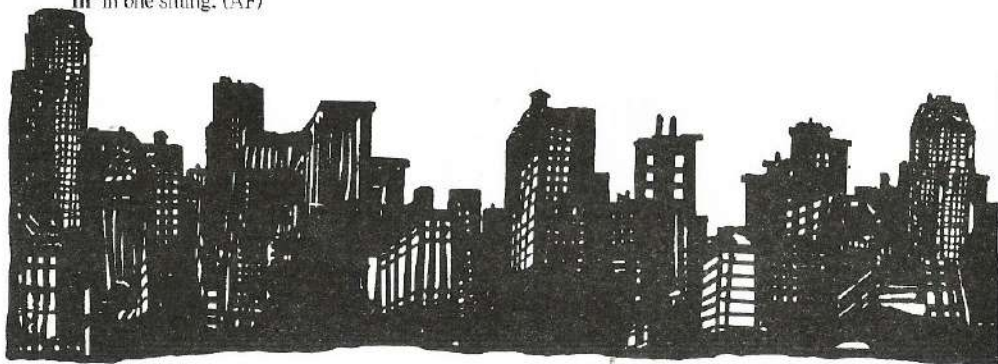
A Guide to Western Civilization, or My Story - Joe Bob Briggs (Penguin Originals, 5.99)

Published in the US in '88, this is the second book from Joe Bob, his first being '**Joe Bob Goes to the Drive-in**', one of last year's Penguin originals, first published in '87. 'Western Civilization' is a very different book, containing little about his favourite films (apart from a brief mention or two about '**The Trip**', '**Night of the Blood Beast**', '**Maniac**' or '**Bell, Bare & Beautiful**' or stars such as Steve Reeves or Annette Funicello, and more (much more) about his real-life exploits.

His first book was pretty much unreadable at one sitting (as you'd expect; it was, after all, a collection of columns in a newspaper), but enjoyable nevertheless. This second book, detailing such things as his earliest girlfriend Dede Wilkes, or how he invented the Titty Bar, his marriage to his star attraction and his exploits in Mexico helping the locals across the border and into America, land of the free.

There are a few occasional chuckles to be found but the rest is a bit of a strain, in parts even embarrassing. You'll have to read some of his first book before you even consider embarking on this one, and then only if you're really that interested in hearing about his (fantasy - Joe Bob, or Jose, as they know him in Mexico, is after all more of the writer's character than his true self) life, without the info about the many trash and exploitation movies covered in his previous publication.

It's hard to slag off a book which manages to come up with more than ten different phrases to describe the female breast in the space of two pages, but at times it just degenerates into plain silliness. The highlight of the book is his point-by-point description of the Kennedy assassination, so check this out if you see the book on a rack somewhere - page 165! For those who read '**Joe Bob Goes to the Drive In**' in one sitting. (AF)



IT'S COMPETITION (RESULT) TIME!

Section 1 : Spot the Quotes Take a bow, Michael Gingold of 'Scareaphania' for getting 8 right. Also take a bow, the entrant who failed to get any right at all, but gained bonus points for imagination...

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

Correct answer : **"Blade Runner"** - 40% right

Best alternative : **"The Toxic Avenger"**

2. **"I will not be threatened by a walking meatloaf!"**

Correct answer : **"An American Werewolf in London"** - 60%

Best alternative : **"The Rocky Horror Picture Show"** [think about it!]

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

Correct answer : **"The Hitcher"** - 60%

Best alternative : **"Re-Animator"**

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

Correct answer - **"The Thing"** - 40%

Best alternative - From a documentary, by the policeman outside 10 Downing Street...

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

Correct answer - **"Hellraiser"** - 50%

Best alternative - "Argh! Like #1 this is as familiar as hell!"

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

Correct answer - **"Gremlins"** - 60%

Best alternative - **"Santa Claus, The Movie"**

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

Correct answer - **"Repo Man"** - **0%!** [OK, it was a bit of a personal joke!]

Best alternative - **"Re-Animator"** again; the cut scene involving Barbara Crampton and Dr Hill's severed head, or **"Psycho 2"** or **"Rabid Grannies"** or **"Pink Flamingoes"**.

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

Correct answer - **"Blue Velvet"** - 40%

Best alternative - **"Manon des Sources"** [an explanation of this one would be appreciated!]

9. **"Although we may run out of Pan-Am coffee, we'll never run out of TWA tea"**

Correct answer - **"Crimes of Passion"** - **0%!** [Kathleen Turner, dressed as an air-hostess]

Best alternative - **"The Railway Children"** [and this one!]

10. **"We just cut up our girlfriend with a chainsaw - does that sound 'fine'?"**

Correct answer - **"Evil Dead II"** - 30%

Best alternative - **"Heathers"**

Special no-prize for the best non-answer goes to Glyn Williams, whose response to #9 was :

"A line from the forthcoming 'Airport 90' in which 700 passengers are trapped at Heathrow Airport by a French air traffic controller's strike (see also 'Airport 85', 86, 87, 88 and 89). Within hours, the catering manager, played by Arthur Kennedy, starts to run out of refreshments and only a daring mid-motorway transfer of coffee from the Newport Pagnell service station (closed) prevents unrest. Charlton Heston plays the called out of retirement coffee-truck driver, Linnea Quigley plays the bubble headed air-hostess who falls for Chuck's charms, Nastassja Kinski plays a singing nun (lynched by passengers in reel 2) and Marlon Brando plays a jumbo jet."

At the bottom is a scribbled note, "I've just got the TWA-T joke!"....

Section 2 : Part-time employment Given 10 famous people (someone didn't know who Jim Bakker was), the entrants supplied suitable screen roles, providing interesting insights into their psychology...

1. Wendy James (lead singer, Transvision Vamp)

Beyond the expected comments about home-made videos, the two best or at least most intriguing suggestions were the title-roles in 'Annie' or the combined sequel to 'Dumbo' and 'Bambi' : 'Bimbo'.

2. Jim Bakker (ex-TV evangelist, now serving a very long jail sentence)

The perverse Jesus Christ-like figure in 'God Told Me To' or Elvis' role in 'Jailhouse Rock'

3. Mikhail Gorbachev (leader of the Soviet disUnion)

At least one contestant got a little confused here and swapped his answers to #3 and #4 round - at least I hope so, or his suggestion of "the woman who beats up all the surfers in 'Surf Nazis Must Die'" is very worrying. Mind you, the alternatives of Leatherface or a role in 'Auf Ghanistan Pet' don't indicate much better states of mind.

4. Gabriella Sabatini (nubile advertising hoarding)

More semi-deviant ideas, the best one being Bo Derek's role in "10(is)". The bad news is she's already booked for "Gabi Does Dulwich". "A paper-clip" and "a dead donkey in 'Un Chien Andalou'" do not bear thinking about.

5. David Gower (English cricketer, though I use the term 'cricketer' loosely)

A wide selection : The Toxic Avenger, Pee Wee Herman or in any vampire movie, "an entertaining but inevitably short-lived appearance as a (middle order) bat".

6. Salman Rushdie (Satan incarnate)

Surprisingly, only one entry went for The Invisible Man. Rambo's testicle was suggested as being "nicely inconspicuous" but the best suggestion was "any movie which requires a nice, busty blonde..."

7. Edwina Currie (Conservative MP, For the moment...)

The eggman in 'Pink Flamingoes'? "With a little more cleavage", Elvira? The Wicked Witch of the West? Cruella de Ville? Attila the Hen? Who cares any more?

8. Kate Adie (BBC TV's #1 news reporter)

I've had a lot of respect for her for a long time, ever since a Panorama programme on violence on TV which was the best investigation of it I've seen. So had the entrants, with the suggestions being mainly complimentary : She-Ra, Princess of Power, Karen Silkwood and, probably most plausibly of all, replacing Sigourney Weaver as Ripley in 'Alien' and 'Aliens'.

9. Bob Monkhouse (game-show host and Mr Sincerity)

No respect here. Norman Bates was the least libellous, ahead of the evil ventriloquist's dummy in 'Magic' [look at the video - the resemblance is striking!] and Fuad 'Blood Feast' Ramses. Vitriol prize: 'The first victim who appears only briefly before being offed extremely bloodily and painfully'.

10. Pamela Bordes (bimbo of the year, 1989)

Oddly, two suggestions were for biographical films: one, replacing Julie Walters in 'Personal Services' and the other to play Mary Whitehouse... "The snake-woman in 'Lair of the White Worm'" probably falls somewhere in between!

And there it is. The three contestants all wanted different videos so I declare the competition a triple tie between Andy 'Surf Nazis' Waller, Glyn 'She' Williams and Simon 'Satan's Dog' Wood. Thanks also to Michael Gingold and Paul Higson for entering, even though they couldn't win anything, and to Psychotronic Videos for taking the unclaimed prizes off my hands and giving me an original of 'Videodrome' instead! I'm acquiring bad videos and good quotes at a steady rate, so there'll be another competition sometime. You've been warned...

The TC Interview

[TC doesn't normally go in for interviews, the idea that someone is interesting purely because they are famous not holding water, as Linnea Quigley proves beyond reasonable doubt. However, the following piece struck us as weird - Paul Higson interviews James Lorinz, star of Street Trash and the forthcoming Frankenhooker. No information was available on either participants' state of mind - we recommend putting this article away until you've seen the film, as it might make more sense then, though we're making no promises...]

Paul Higson: A cult is said to have arisen around you after your appearance in Street Trash. In what form has this manifested?

James Lorinz: A small group of Marxist London garbage collectors worship me and voted me most likely to throw tea in the harbour.

PH: Would you call yourself acerbic?

JL: No, but I have some relatives from the Baltic States.

PH: How much did you ad-lib on your Street Trash stint?

JL: Perhaps 60% ad-libs done with the writers on the set.

PH: In the John Hughes film Some Kind of Wonderful there was a doorman character that seemed to have been loosely based/ripped off from yours.

JL: Sorry, haven't seen it. My lawyers will look into it.

PH: Is there somebody you would like to see melt? If so, who?

JL(after some careful thought) : The actor William Hurt.

PH: Have you written any scripts yourself?

JL: Yes, I'm in pre-production of a short film I will direct titled Mr Softee: An American Tragedy concerning the trials and tribulations of a man made out of ice-cream.

PH: I know that after Frankenhooker was made, you were given a special credit for dialogue. With you, Henenlotter and Uncle Bob Martin on the script as such, we should be able to expect some of the funniest character interaction of the coming year.

JL: Yeah, I guess so. You're the boss.

PH: I have yet to see any explanation for the role of Honey yet. How is the character related to the movie?

JL: Honey acts as a liason between J.Franken and the girls he needs to rebuild his sweetheart. She also brought me tea promptly at 2pm every day.



PH: Another cult figure to appear in the film was Shirley Stoler [star of The Honeymoon Killers]. How did you get on with her?

JL: She must live in a "whine" cellar.

PH: Did you know that Napoleon Bonaparte was poisoned by wall-paper?

JL: No, but I know they auctioned off his shrivelled, mummified penis ten years ago [This is true!] and it had a distinctly recognisable paisley design from the wall-paper on it [Er...].

PH: In one part of the film, you seem to drill a hole in your own head from one of the shots seen or is this a potential suicide following Elizabeth's death? If the power drill was running and running through your head, how was the effect rigged up?

JL: What effect? That was real! The catch? After returning home from the war in Korea, I had a metal plate implanted in my skull.

PH: Patty Mullen is an absolute beauty. You did behave yourself with her on set, didn't you James?

JL: Yes, I did. Though I often felt like taking a lead pipe to her head.

PH: The make-up job on Patty was highly reminiscent of the work performed on Malcolm McDowell in Britannia Hospital, don't you think?

JL: What make-up? Actually, she looked more like Alex in A Clockwork Orange.

PH: I understand that Alan Jones was on the set collecting interviews.

JL: Don't know him, but I've heard he's a nasty bloke.

PH: Is there anyone you have a gripe with, be it in the making of Frankenhooker or otherwise? Offload it here.

JL: Why can't we all just love each other?

PH: Anyone you suggest we never trust? Absolutely anyone.

JL: The guy who wrote England on \$35 A Day.

PH: Where do you see yourself going from here?

JL: I'm currently starring in a television sitcom with Valerie Harper titled City on the CBS network, soon to be syndicated to the BBC. I shall return to fetures as soon as my schedule permits - I hear they're remaking The Crawling Eye [aka The Trollenberg Terror].

PH: Did any children's television programme ever scare you as a child or even today?

JL: A puppet show entitled Thunderbirds and the puppets would smoke cigarettes and perspire. It made me feel like I was on LSD.

PH: Thank you.

JL: Paul, you sound like a nice bloke but you are a little bizarre. Lay off those Robyn Hitchcock records for a while.

DESULTORY NIGHTS

It's an old fashioned story.

I wanted to be a hero. But I'd got to earn my spurs, prove to you that there is more to me than meets the eye.

The moment I had stepped into the house, the party was in full swing. Snogging couples even hung from the light shades, and the music...well, it sounded like a lot of fat boys snorting.

I idled up to the bar where my girlfriend's mother was rationing out the beer.

"Seen Cilla?", I asked, not really expecting her to reply.

"She's upstairs with another fella."

I took the stairs at a run, missing the middle section altogether.

Bob stopped me on the landing : "How about gatecrashing this party again?"

I laughed off the joke and progressed towards the bedrooms, not knowing in which one Cilla was ensconced.

Leaning against one of the doors was my long lost pen pal, Peter, who had evidently dropped acid in the not too dim and distant past, boldly going beyond the frontiers of sanity... He pointed along the corridor - I forged on, anger gathering itself for a sudden impending release.

I stormed through the door he indicated.

Peering through the half-light, I saw my moral tutor sitting on the floor, guiltily unhanding himself.

I decided this was not the right time to broach the subject of my Degree course, especially as he retreated under the bed in some apparent confusion as to my intentions. I nearly dragged him out again, to piss into his mouth. That would be no more than he deserved.

I tried the door of the ensuite bathroom.

"Cilla! I know you're in there."

Inside my head, I knew all along that I was pursuing a rat around the universe.

The space lanes were too obvious free-for-alls where peak capped individuals saluted the bright disco-like lights that jockeyed between the commodity planets.

If she was here, she would no doubt be disguised as a refugee from Star Trek, still bemused by the particular peccadilloes of her own version of Captain Kirk.

No, I must digress - towards the Dark, where lurked those monsters who had failed the auditions. She smiled at their inability to count their own limbs.

Little did I know she was crouching within her own womb, desperate to shed the outer skin that did her no justice at all.

The bathroom was a right sauna. It was just as if I had come off the cold Norwegian forest lands into the near reaches of a Sun system that only need to grow slightly hotter to disappear up its own arse.

I handled her pert, finely nipped breasts as if they had been poured from my clapped out motor's engine. I exploded the myth of her mouth with the legend of my tongue. And little bits that came off me explored further into her gullet.

There was also a man in the bath with her. And I bent down his head violently, so that he could feed off his own privates.

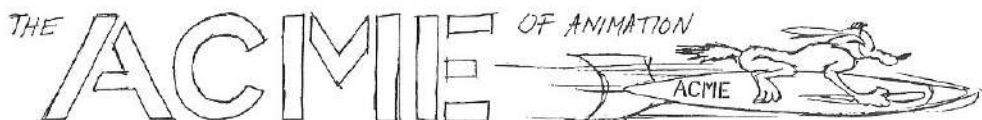
I sweated like a pig in an oven.

The party continued for another day and another night. Most gradually came off the medicine towards the end, but some never recovered.

Some are ever on call for dress rehearsal of an old-fashioned TV series, never knowing whether they are to be cast as hero or monster.

Cilla? She'll probably go off with my moral tutor to form a pop group called 'Insider Dealing'. Her mother will play all the instruments backstage, as they mime up front, during the desultory nights of the future...

The Sun has gone out on me. Somebody no doubt pulled out the light fittings - now there's nothing of me to meet the eye. I'm writing this in the dark - so maybe I've got the ending wrong.



Go into your local video sell-through store, bypass the feature film section, wander past the music videos and you'll eventually arrive at the children's section. Without a doubt you'll be able to track down several tapes of classic Warner Bros. animation - Bugs Bunny, Daffy Duck, Sylvester & Tweety Pie, Elmer Fudd, Pepe Le Pew and maybe even the odd Speedy Gonzales. Notice any missing names? Yep. You will hunt in vain for any Wile E. Coyote (aka *Famishius Vulgarius Ingenius*) and Roadrunner (*Birdius High-Ballius*) cartoons. It's difficult to see why they've been so ignored as for me they represent a distillation of all that is entertaining about animation, impossible to recreate as a live-action film.

The first cartoon 'Fast and Furry-ous' appeared in 1949. The series was originally conceived as a satire on the chase cartoons which were highly popular at the time, but nobody saw it that way, they were all too busy laughing at the chase sequences. The series continued for the next fifteen years under the guiding hand of Chuck Jones, culminating in an Academy Award nomination in 1961 for 'Beep Prepared' - other directors have since tried their hand at making the films, but just as Fred Quimby must be considered the essence of Tom & Jerry, so Chuck Jones is to Wile E. Coyote (*Evereadius Eatibus*) and Roadrunner (*Digoutius Hot-Rodius*).

Their appeal, to some extent, lies in the way they produced an infinite number of variations on the chase theme, a great many of which produced the same result; Wile E. falling down a canyon, accompanied by a whistling sound and with an expression on his face that says "Oh No, here we go again!" far better than any words. The tension is generated in a classic, almost Hitchcockian style - you tend to know exactly **what** is going to happen, you are just totally unsure **how**, or indeed **when**. An example: the Coyote is standing on an overhang, trying to reach the Roadrunner who is on the other side of a canyon. He sets up a see-saw and staggers onto it carrying a boulder, which he throws in the air. What happens next?

- a) It lands on his head?
- b) It propels him vertically upwards onto the bottom of another overhang above - he then drops down onto the see-saw, the boulder goes back up and then lands on his head
- c) It propels him horizontally across the canyon into the opposite wall, just below the Roadrunner, from where he falls down into the canyon.
- d) The boulder lands on the other end of the see-saw, doesn't move it at all and rolls down on top of him.

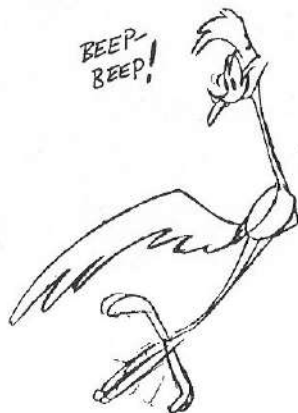
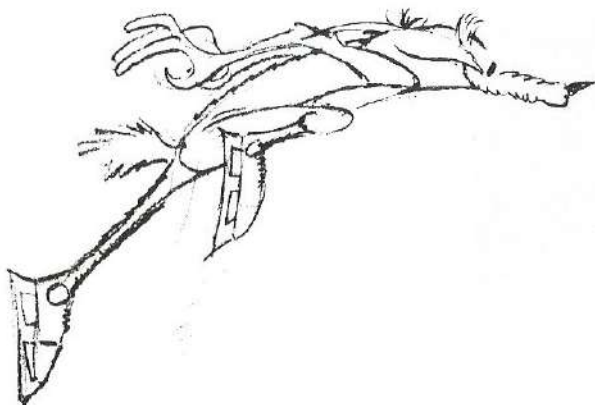
The correct answer, in fact, is e) The boulder lands on the other end, tipping the see-saw alright, then continues down **through** the overhang, leaving a nice hole - the Coyote slides down the see-saw and into the hole, cue Wile E. falling down a canyon, etc. Give yourself a point nonetheless; the other answers are almost correct as I've seen all of them, and several more besides, happen in various Chuck Jones cartoons.

One of the hallmarks of the series was the appearance of objects made by that well-known company called Acme; we have the Acme Giant Rubber Band (For Tripping Roadrunners), Acme Tornado Seeds, an Acme Rocket, etc. About the only thing these have in common is a tendency not to fulfill their specification, tho' to be fair, this is often at least PARTLY due to misuse by the client! The name 'Acme', incidentally, used to be chosen by companies because it put them near the start of the Yellow Pages, back in the days before AAAAAAB Taxis.



This reliance on Acme products is enshrined in Chuck Jones' Rules; these are taken from his book 'Chuck Amuck' (Farrar Strauss Giroux, New York), a part-autobiography, part-textbook on how to make animated cartoons. As he says, "there are - there must be - rules. Without them, comedy slops over at the edges. Identity is lost". Here are the rules in full :

- 1) The Roadrunner cannot harm the coyote except by going "Beep-beep!".
- 2) No outside force can harm the Coyote - only his own ineptitude or the failure of the Acme products.
- 3) The Coyote could stop anytime - if he were not a fanatic (Repeat: "A fanatic is one who redoubles his effort when he has forgotten his aim" - George Santayana).
- 4) No dialogue ever, except "Beep-beep!".
- 5) The Roadrunner must stay on the road - otherwise, logically, he would not be the Roadrunner.
- 6) All action must be confined to the natural environment of the two characters - the Southwest American desert.
- 7) All materials, tools, weapons or mechanical conveniences must be obtained from the Acme corporation.
- 8) Whenever possible, make gravity the Coyote's greatest enemy.
- 9) The Coyote is always more humiliated than harmed by his failures.



FILM BLITZ

Amsterdamed (Dick Maas) - Something nasty is prowling the canals of Amsterdam, doing away with a selection of inhabitants at a rate of knots. A swim 'n' slash pic? Maybe, it's just like we're back in 1981, save a lack of teenagers. There's a bit of a cop-out at the end - to say more would spoil the deftly (or indeed, Delft-ly) generated tension. A slight air of Dutch Tourist Board here: you get to see Rembrandt's 'The Night Watch' on a flimsy pretext, but is at least tulip-free. It reminds me of 'Taggart' with bad dubbing. Nice boat chase, too! 7/10

Blue Steel (Kathryn Bigelow) - Jamie Lee Curtis plays a rookie cop who blows away a low-life seum store-robber, only for said seum's gun to vanish. People then start getting shot, and bullet cases with her name on them are found at the scene... The plot of this is annoyingly flimsy, with any number of holes, contradictions and ridiculous twists - for example, we are asked to believe an untrained stockbroker is capable of wielding a .44 Magnum with 100% accuracy (except when shooting at Jamie

Lee, naturally!) from when he first picks it up. Ignore these, and Bigelow screws up the tension with skill, despite a climax ripped off straight from 'The Hitcher', presumably by Eric Red who wrote that one and co-wrote this one. Curtis still can't act for peanuts, though she does a fine Martina Navratilova impression. Leave your logic at home. 6/10.

**"LITTLE SHORT OF MIRACULOUS...
the most striking debut to reach us from Australia
during the eighties"** DEREK MALCOLM, THE GUARDIAN

A FILM BY
ANN TURNER

Celia

A tale of innocence corrupted.

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Celia (Ann Turner) - A little girl possessing an overactive imagination, a rabbit and Communists for next door neighbours are the ingredients in this impressive debut from Australian director Turner. Set in late 50's Victoria, it's another of those childhood-loss-of innocence films, with rampant McCarthyism and a plague of wild bunnies having disastrous consequences on the life of the title character, played with unsettling intensity by Rebecca Smart. Looking at the past through refreshingly non-sentimental eyes, it evokes the childhood world of rituals, gangs and the incomprehensible nature of adults with clarity and style. The first film I've seen with a credit for 'Rabbit Wranglers'! Recommended. 8/10.

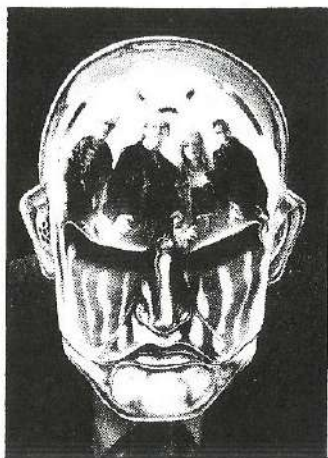
ROADRUNNER

Stop Press : A video is available, if you're lucky. It was issued as part of Warner Bros 50th birthday in '85 and is titled 'Roadrunner & Wile E. Coyote: The Classic Chase', catalogue no. PES 11507

Class of 1999 (Mark Lester) -

A storyline of robots-in-public-service, a la '**Robocop**', who are closer to '**The Terminator**' in style, may score low points for originality, yet ends up as further proof that if you purloin ideas from decent films you can still produce useful product. The robots in question here are teachers, sent in to control a Seattle school, where pupils check in their weapons on arriving. Needless to say, the androids get out of hand, killing the hero's brother and abducting

his girlfriend (the Principal's daughter) before leading a gang of students into the school for the final battle. Lots of weaponry on view, not the least of it on the teachers - the performance of John P. Ryan as the History teacher is chilling and the tension/violence build steadily until the (fairly predictable) end. A pseudo-rebellious film that succeeds in wasting a lot of property *en route*. 7/10.



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EXCEPT THE STUDENTS.



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Date With An Angel (Tom McLoughlin) - Blatant '**Splash**' clone in spirit, with an angel hitting a satellite and plummeting into a swimming pool to be discovered by the hero who has to save her from being exploited while she heals. His fiancée (Phoebe Cates) sees her and misunderstands totally, etc, etc. About rescued by nice touches as fiancée gets increasingly psycho; totally salvaged by the angel - she's played by Emmanuelle Beart who does little apart from squeak, open her eyes wide and flutter her wings yet still leaves fellow world ranked beauty Cates a moist smear on the carpet. Absolutely gorgeous: if angels are really like her, I'm converted. The film gets 6/10. The angel 10/10.

Dead Man Walking (Godfrey Brown) - Not read much about this one, surprising as the cast includes Wings '**L.A. Bounty**' Hauser and Jeffrey '**Re-Animator**' Coombs, and a pity as it's one of the better post-apocalypse (plague, to be specific) films. Coombs' girlfriend is kidnapped by an escaped criminal and taken into a plague zone; he hires Hauser, who's terminally ill (and enjoys playing Russian Roulette using a chainsaw!), to rescue her. A well-thought out world structure, excellent ideas and some memorable moments plus a healthy dose of violence to produce a film which could easily pass for '**Mad Max 4**'. Try not to confuse it with the TVM of the same name about capital punishment! 8/10.

Faceless (Jess Franco) - Rumours Franco was behind **Edge of Sanity** made me seek out this, widely described as better than his average. Not much of a compliment perhaps, but it is a classy mad surgeon movie - after his sister is scarred by acid, Dr. Flamand (Helmut Berger) tries to build her a new face with the aid of nurse (and French porn queen) Brigitte Lahaie by transplanting one from a beautiful model (Caroline Munro), whose father (Telly Savalas) sends a private eye to track her down. Good cast for a Franco movie, huh? After a shaky start, the effects fly: surgical splatter, a chainsaw decapitation and a syringe in the eye that deserves entry in TC4's Eyeball Violence chart. Only a heavily overused, rotten song prevent it from being watchable both on sex 'n' violence and aesthetic grounds. 7/10.

Hardware (Richard Stanley) - As a distillation of 80's genre cinema, this film is near perfect. Aliens, Terminator, Hellraiser, Predator, Max Headroom and Blade Runner are all ruthlessly milked of their best parts, not to mention 'Paris, Texas' and every woman-alone-with-a-psycho film to date. If the monster thus created isn't up to the sum of these parts, 'Hardware' is, to use the cliché, a roller-coaster ride, albeit one we've been on before. Plot is slim (android goes berserk) and there's a disconcerting change of focus in the middle when attention switches from hero to heroine but you don't notice the flaws at the time - the imagery (75% pop video, 25% Nescafe advert), a detailed futureworld, good effects, cool soundtrack and more flashy camerawork than I've seen in ages help execute the cinematic equivalent of the three-card trick. There'll no doubt be the usual predictable whining from certain predictable quarters, yet it surpasses its budgetary and location limits, setting up (and discarding, unfortunately) some lovely ideas on the way - Motorhead's Lemmy as a taxi driver??? 8/10.

Heathers (Michael Lehmann) - Suffering déjà vu? Yes, it was reviewed in TC4 when I expressed disappointment that it wasn't black enough. I recently saw it again, and enjoyed it a lot more, possibly because I had different, more accurate expectations; although I'm still not happy with the ending and dialogue that borders on the unintelligible occasionally, the lovely camerawork, good acting and a vicious streak a mile wide more than compensate. If perhaps I'm being swayed slightly by lust for Shannon Doherty and Winona Ryder, who cares? Upgraded to 9/10.




I Changed My Sex (Ed J. Wood) - aka **Glen or Glenda** aka **I Led Two Lives** aka **He or She** aka... An early plea for tolerance of transvestites, partly auto-biographical since the director is widely reported to have gone into several WWII battles wearing lacy panties under his fatigues. Not quite as exploitative as it might

have been, it still seems tasteless, even without Bela Lugosi saying lines like "**Beware, beware, beware the big green dragon that sits on your doorstep!**", for no apparent reason. You'll never be able to look at an angora sweater again without giggling. 5/10.

Kali-Film (Brigit & Wilhelm Heim) - Weird film of eight sections which seems to be trying to explore the way the cinema stereotypes both men & women. The best of these were two in the middle, the first of which was just a sequence of stills, taken from movies, of women being terrorised & assaulted. Taken out of context, their power is multiplied, leaving this viewer feeling very uncomfortable. This is followed by a series of clips, which show women acting aggressively themselves; far more acceptable, including bits from '**Reform School Girls**', '**Ms.45**', '**I Spit on Your Grave**', '**Chained Heat**', etc, making a *Violent Femmes Greatest Hits* compilation. Another good pair of sections contrast fictional war with grim reality. A slight tendency to over-kill everywhere doesn't hurt too much. 7/10.

Living Doll (Peter Litten & George Dugdale) - A classic case of a nice idea foiled by poor direction and a pedestrian script, despite valiant acting. Mark Jax plays a morgue worker who worships a flower seller from afar - when she's killed in an accident, he flips and steals her corpse, believing her to be suffering from a form of catalepsy. He dresses the body up, talks to and eventually 'marries' her; then she starts to talk back. Sort of "live fast, die young and LOVE a pretty corpse". Too tastefully done, skirting all the details you REALLY want to know; the highly average direction overpower Jax's neatly underplayed necrophile and the occasional frisson. 6/10.

Orgy of the Dead (A.C.Stevens) - If you removed the topless go-go dancing from this movie, you'd get a gorgeously silly horror movie about a couple that crash their car near a cemetery and discover the Emperor of Darkness within. However, it'd only be 15 minutes long, as at least 80% of this picture is taken up with various ghouls, all female, 'dancing' round a tiny, ultra-cheap set. This 'Eurovision Zombie Contest' is alternately numbingly & hysterically dull; not many films can provoke jeers at the Scala by showing naked nubile! 9/10 for everything but the dancing, 2/10 for that.



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Scarecrows (William Wesley) - No danger of this film wearing out the guns in your TV since it all seems to take place in a cellar at midnight. You've got to be a genius (Ridley Scott) to get away with lighting like that, and William Wesley isn't one. Despite scarecrows animated by the souls of dead people being a neat twist on a theme and a quite high mess factor, by BBFC standards, the characters aren't engaging on any level, being a mix of kooks, cowards & killers, and as spam-in-a-cabin films go, this is very ordinary. 3/10.

sex, lies and videotape (Steven Soderbergh) - This film could easily have been some sort of prequel to 'Videodrome'; James Spader looks very like a young James Woods, and his character, who goes around filming women talking about sex because he's impotent, also resembles a prototype Max Renn. It's a little slow in places, to the point of tedium, yet has a bleak beauty that does sustain interest and the characters are realistically complex. As a debut movie for the director, it's impressive - the man is clearly one to watch in future. 8/10.

A Short Film About Killing (Krzysztof Kieslowski) - The 12", disco remix cinema version of one of his 'Ten Commandments' series, shown recently on BBC2, is perhaps the best argument I've seen against capital punishment. It depicts the crime and the state's retribution in stark focus, comparing them and noting uncomfortable similarities. Initially a study of three characters, the murderer, his victim and the defence lawyer, it gradually focuses on the first & last, then finally the lawyer alone. A savage indictment of violence, committed by individuals or society. 9/10.

Der Todes King (Jörg Buttgereit) - In 1988, 'Nekromantik' crashed onto the scene, provoking acclaim, disgust and bewilderment in equal amounts by it's tender portrayal of necrophilia. Two years on, Jörg's back - has he mellowed? Well... 'The King of Death' is a collection of segments, one for each day of the week, each of which depict a facet of death; Monday, for example, has a suicide by overdose and Thursday is about a bridge and the people that have jumped from it. These segments are linked by time-lapse photography of a corpse decaying - very Peter Greenaway! The soundtrack also provokes comparison, sounding impressively like Michael Nyman on a bad trip. As with other 'compilation' films, the result is uneven. On their own, the segments are mainly intriguing and shocking - Tuesday was my personal favourite, being laced with poisonous irony and a delightful parody of 'Ilsa, She-Wolf of the SS' (especially remarkable given Buttgereit's nationality). This is the only time it plumbs the depths of taste as explicitly as 'Nekromantik' did, the others concentrate more on generating atmosphere (with success) and less on blatant shock tactics.

The overall effect isn't quite as impressive. After a while, apathy starts to set in and the episodes become blurred - was that Friday or Saturday? The links between the days (where they exist at all) are at best tenuous and at worst annoying. A couple of the later sequences are, let's be honest, disappointing and smack of padding - "we've still got two days to fill, folks!". Overall, however, it's a relentlessly depressing movie, perhaps a little too much so. Appreciate it best by watching it one day per day - that way it'll ruin your whole week... 3/10 to 9/10.

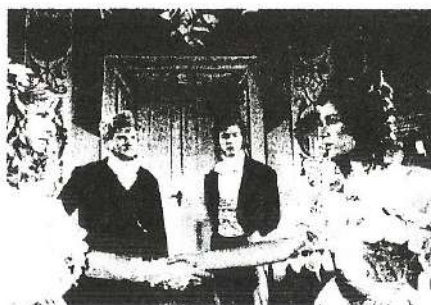


der
TodesKing.

Torrents of Spring (Jerzy Skolimowski) - Nastassja's latest, previously seen as **'Les Eaux Printenaires'**, now in English, albeit very briefly (it lasted two weeks in the cinema here!). Plot is as described before; Timothy Hutton falls in love with Valerie Golino and they get engaged. He then decides he'd rather have Nastassja. A wise move, until his fiancée finds out. Definitely a classy pic, probably her 'best' since **'Paris, Texas'** and she's looking lovely - there's one scene at a gypsy wedding which is the stuff of dreams, where she doesn't look like a mother of two in her thirties! As a film, 7/10, + bonuses as applicable depending on how much you value the Kinski content!

Tremors (Ron Underwood) - Wonderfully glopmy monster movie provides us with another new way to cook spam: spam-in-a-valley, an allusion made concrete when one character says "This valley's one long smorgasbord". The inhabitants of Perfection, Nevada (pop. 14 - no, make that 13. Oh, now 12...) are under attack by giant worms; wisely, no attempt at justification or explanation. "Them's not local boys for sure" being all we have time for. The rest of the film is just as unpretentious, social comment being restricted to a husband & wife survivalist team (car registration UZI 4U). Likable characters and a lot of orange slime add to the ambience - it's really tough to think of anything that would make this film any better as sheer entertainment. Even the '15' certificate is on the lenient side! 9/10.

When Harry Met Sally (Rob Reiner) - What was that flying out the window? That, Jim, was your street-cred. Films like this remind me why I prefer watching films like 'Nekromantik' to this predictable, over-inflated, mindless pap for people who dislike having to confront anything. It's not badly acted: Ryan & Crystal struggle bravely but are finally buried under a script so laden with inanities, cliches and desperate attempts to avoid offending anyone that it's the most vacuous viewing I've seen in a long time. As for the notorious 'orgasm' scene, I'm sure I saw an electric flex running up her leg.



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K E V I N B A C O N

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Nightmares 6: The Spy who loved pepperoni

A voltage appeared.

Electrons drifted away. Crystals rotated in a field. Polarised light scattered. A digit changed. A light breeze aligned the hairs on his wrist. The night air carried the sounds and smells of a million human lives, a million wonders. The earth rolled slowly beneath his feet, a cosmic dust ball charting a path through spiral lanes of stars. Start adrift. Time and space, chaos and order, truth and beauty. "Sod it, I'm going for a pizza" he muttered, stepped out from under the sodium umbrella and began to cross the street.

My quarry was not a happy man. He looked like the kind of guy who turns up dead in the fifth reel, floating face down in a canal in Amsterdam. He was not what you would call personable either, as I had already discovered. His English accent could only have been learned from an old Linguaphone tape, played endlessly in a used Skoda in a railway siding in Riga. I swear that when he spoke I could hear the trains rolling past on their way up the line to Leningrad in the gathering twilight. He had the cheery disposition of an arthritic undertaker with shares in the Channel Tunnel. Oh, and he smelt like a dispatch rider's helmet lining. He made me feel that living was good.

He never made it. The tarmac pressed into my face and hands, cold and wet, and I felt only joy at its presence, like meeting an old friend in a pub, seeing double yellow lines when you return from abroad or pouring yourself a glass of water in the dark. His blood ran past me, eager to reach the gutter, dark fingers cooling like lava, gleefully running away with the man that was Chekov.

There was only one thing that I couldn't handle. It wasn't the money. If the fee was more paltry, it'd grow feathers. It wasn't being shot at either. I was getting to like the sensation of time stretching away in all directions, and the silence like velvet earplugs immersing you in a soft and private cocoon. No, I just hated losing a lead. It was careless. Messy.

Anyway. So there I stood, shrugging into his trenchcoat, adding the contents of his pockets to mine, strapping on his digital watch, noting in the absent way you do just how much trouble someone was going to have identifying a man with no face. The ratcatchers downtown wouldn't mind clearing up the mess. It gave them something worthwhile to do. Well, more worthwhile than checking tax discs or telling you that you should expect to have your blue spot stolen if you park in Peckham.

I hoped that he found street names as unimaginative and unmemorable as I did. I was relying on that deep seated insecurity that rolls around in all of our subconsciouses. That fear of forgetting, of being the only one who doesn't know, the only one who has to ask and accept certain, silent, damning, contempt. I figured I'd have more luck finding a master chef in a Wimpy or a London bus conductor who didn't wear green corduroy trousers, but there it was, written on the back of a dial-a-pizza card with a chewed bic on a slippery surface while holding the phone. The address.

As I walked, the broken threads of my pocket lining lost their unequal battle with the death star, and the finger warm steel slipped into the fluffy netherworld of sugar cubes, return parts of cheap day return tickets and condom packets, carried in the misguided hope that they might be useful someday.

That our cooling cat was a pig there was no doubt, the Securitate pass was a first class piece of ergonomically terror inducing typography, almost as good as a metric spaces paper or a draft for jury service. I figured posing as Chekov was about as good an idea as being given head by an epileptic or making toast in the bath. Why was I always in these weird scenes? Typecasting, I guess. Ah well, put a sane man in a room with a tea-cosy and it's only a matter of time before he puts it on his head. It was only a matter of time before I ran out of analogies or ran out of luck, not a cosy thought, but then wondering just who was sane was worse.

The address was a dead end street between a canal and a railway yard. Chekov would have felt at home, but I would rather have been at home. The mist was backlit, throwing the 280SL Mercedes into relief sharper than Nanga Parbat. Two doors swung open, two figures placed a foot on the cobbles, rotated their heels silently and straightend slowly like synchronised swimming silver medallists. Even in silhouette, I had seen them both before.

"It's a great pleasure, lady", I drawled.

"I know, I've tried it". She laughed and froze. Her expression collapsed in an instant, elements of horror, disgust, surprise and crystal cool shock jostled for position, tried several entirely unsuitable arrangements and eventually settled, muscles twitching, into a cubist's nightmare. Her face simultaneously contained just about every conceivable emotion that could result from pastimes either illegal, immoral or fattening.

"I'm sorry, but I've run out of coffee", I joked.

"Where's Chekov?". She managed a hoarse croak and the effort showed. The thought I had been playing origami with finished nicely. I pulled the tail and it stood up. Everything clicked.

"Why not ask your friend?".

He moved so fast his suit changed colour, and sold me a dummy I sure as hell didn't want but something told me he wasn't in the business of giving refunds. He pulled iron as lightning flashed between my fingers. The shuriken danced across my palm like the Ace of Spades in the hand of a wild west card shark. With a burst of energy down my arm. I burst his pineal gland.

"Nice weapon", I murmured approvingly as he bounced. Once.

But she was gone.



CONSPIRACY CORNER

"The gods give us paranoia, so that we may occasionally grasp something of the truth"

----- Socrates

****1. UFO'S EXIST. THE GOVERNMENT KNOW ABOUT THEM AND HAVE RECOVERED A CRASHED ALIEN CRAFT, WHICH IS HIDDEN ON A USAF BASE.***

"On April 30th, 1964, the first communication between the aliens and the U.S. government took place at Holloman Air Force Base in New Mexico...During the period of 1969-71, Majestic-12 representing the U.S. government made a deal with these E.B.E's (Extraterrestrial Biological Entities)...The 'deal' was that in exchange for 'technology' that they would provide, we agreed to 'ignore' the abductions that were going on...The EBE's assured MJ-12 that the abductions (usually lasting about 2 hours) were for the ongoing monitoring of developing civilizations. In fact the purposes for the abductions turned out to be :

- 1) The insertion of a 3mm spherical device through the nasal cavity of the abductee into the brain. The device is used for biological monitoring, tracking and control of the abductee.
- 2) Implementation of posthypnotic suggestion to carry out a specific activity during a specific time period, the actualisation of which will occur within the next 2 to 5 years.
- 3) Termination of some people so that they could function as living sources for biological material and substances.
- 4) Termination of individuals who represent a threat to the continuation of their activities.
- 5) Effect genetic engineering experiments
- 6) Impregnation of human females and early termination of pregnancies to secure the crossbreed infant.

[Example] Sgt. Jonathan P. Louette...was found three days after an Air Force Major had witnessed his abduction by a 'disk shaped' object at 0300 hrs while on a search for missile debris downrange. His genitals had been removed, [his] rectum cored out in a surgically precise 'plug' up to the colon, eyes removed and all blood with, again, no vascular collapse. From some of the evidence it is apparent that this surgery is accomplished...while the victim...is still alive.

The various parts of the body are taken to various underground laboratories, one of which is known to be near the small New Mexico town of Dulce. This joint occupied (CIA/Alien) facility has been described as enormous, with huge tiled walls that go on forever. Witnesses have reported huge vats filled with amber liquid, with parts of human bodies being stirred inside.

During the period between 1979 and 1983, it became increasingly obvious to MJ-12 that things were not going as planned...Part of MJ-12 wanted to confess the whole scheme and shambles it had become to the public, beg their forgiveness and ask for their support. The other part (and majority) of MJ-12 argued that there was no way they could do that...and the best plan was to continue the development of a weapon that could be used against the EBE's under the guise of SDI (Strategic Defence Initiative) which has nothing whatsoever to do with a defence for inbound Russian nuclear missiles."

[The above passages come, not from an unmade Hollywood screenplay, but from '20/20 Vision', a journal produced by the Yorkshire UFO Society. They may be contacted at 15 Pickard Court, Temple Newsam, Leeds, LS15 9AY.]

Like all good conspiracies, the aliens one comes in a variety of flavours to suit personal taste. At the saner end we have people like Timothy Good, whose book is a weighty, 590-page tome of evidence that purports to show the existence of some sort of cover-up. Unfortunately, it has to rely rather heavily on the circumstantial, with a lot of un-nameable "reliable sources" and some arguable interpretations of generally equivocal Armed Forces documents. These were obtained under the American Freedom of Information Act which allows citizens to see documents unless there are over-riding considerations of national security. This get-out clause was used by various governmental organizations in some cases to avoid releasing certain UFO-related documents, a fact pounced on by Mr. Good despite protestations that it was done only to protect the SOURCES of the data rather than to hide the fact aliens had landed.

Which makes little or no difference to the conspiracy theorist. Denials by the Air Force can be met with knowing nods and a chorus of, "Well, they WOULD say that, wouldn't they" without in any way disturbing the 'reality' of the paranoia. Meanwhile, any documents allegedly leaked and all tales involving alien landings are eagerly swallowed, with a distressing tendency to gullibility.

To be fair, 'Above Top Secret' does recognise the weaknesses in the arguments and is generally a well balanced, written and researched piece of work. The same can not be said of all the literature on the subject, some of which, such as the example given at the start of the article, is so unbelievable the suggestion has been made it's actually a deliberate attempt by the CIA/FBI/NSA/insert own choice spy network to confuse the issue and make the whole topic a laughing stock.

If the above sounds highly sceptical, it's not intended to be. Over the past 50 years, there have been enough weird happenings to convince me that there are more things in heaven and earth, etc. Whether it's aliens, time-travellers, or merely psychological delusions, SOMETHING odd is going on in our skies. The question all U.F.O. conspiracy theories face, and which none I have encountered have ever successfully answered, is "Why the conspiracy?"

Various alternatives have been put forward to explain the need for secrecy: fear of causing a panic, desire to be the first power to acquire any new technology, UFO's are really secret weapons, etc. However, I believe it's a mixture of apathy, ignorance and force of habit that's to blame for any cover up - though governments undoubtedly do receive reports of UFO's, I doubt any sections investigate them beyond their immediate remit. Thus, reports sent to the Air Force will be examined for defence implications, then discarded; the police will only be interested if property or human life is at risk, etc. The reports will then be filed away in some dusty cabinet. Governments also do not like saying "we don't know". Admitting that they haven't got the faintest idea what's going on in the skies is not going to inspire a great deal of confidence in the mind of the electorate. Governments tend to operate on a 'need to know' basis: not many people need to know about UFO's, and it's always safer to keep the masses in the dark, isn't it?

My rule of thumb is that the weirder the theory, the stronger the evidence needed before I'll believe it. As theories go, this one is pretty weird and I find it very difficult to believe that the American government, who couldn't stop a model plane-maker from producing copies of their super-secret, non-existent Stealth bomber, are capable of keeping the lid on such a can of worms for over 40 years.



Tried to find an interesting UFO pic, but they were all either suspiciously fake or boring blobs of light. So here's a picture of Winona Ryder instead - far more aesthetically pleasing, I'm sure you'll agree. Notice the similarity to the cover of TC5, which is weird since it was inspired by something totally different. Must be a subconscious cultural icon.

THE INCREDIBLY BAD BOOK SHOW

'Eat Them Alive', by Pierce Nace, NEL, 75p (in 1977), pp158.

Described on the cover as "a new peak in horror", this book marks probably the lowest depths the great New English Library, publishers of James Herbert and Stephen King, have ever sunk to; in a genre not exactly noted for humour, this book succeeded in making me giggle hysterically on the train into work providing my fellow commuters with the edifying sight of a sober suited gent biting his hand while reading a book whose cover depicted a blood-stained insect chewing a goblet of flesh.

Let's be honest - it is no exaggeration to say I was capable of producing more coherent, better written stories when I was eleven, and I wasn't an especially gifted essayist. The whole book, presumably written under a pseudonym, is the literary equivalent of a 'Best of Italian Cannibal movies' tape put together by the Monty Python team while out of their collective heads on amphetamines. However, enough talk: let's continue with a prize example, in both style and content:

"I wonder what it's like to watch a beast eating a part of your body while you're helpless to prevent the gruesome snack that you're arm is providing. Well, he thought on, I'm right-handed. If Slayer bites off one arm, I'll still have my best one."

Slayer, in case you were wondering, is a giant preying mantis. An earthquake opens up gigantic cracks in the earth on the South American island where Dyke, the main character ('hero' is not the word, as you'll see) lives and these monsters crawl out and chew their way through the entire population. Inverse Square Law, get outta here:

"What were those giant creatures that were crawling out of the cracks in the earth? Were they animals of some strange kind? Were they outsized snakes...? But no. Snakes had no flailing legs, no bulging bellies, no shapes like - whatever those things were. They were insects!"

Fortunately, Dyke was out in his boat when the mantises appeared and was thus safe to watch the spectacle. As early as page 9, we start to suspect he may be a couple of sandwiches short of a picnic -

"But now I've got something to live for, because I LOVE watching a man being eaten by a monster! Maybe it's a substitute for my lost virility, I don't know"

The same page also sees an octogenarian ripped apart, with a flagrant disregard for the rules of English; one sentence contains the word 'and' no less than FIVE times. We are then treated to a flash-back, to explain why he's lost his virility. This is not his only problem:

"No man's mind could forget the viciousness Dyke had suffered, especially when it left ever-present headaches and impaired eyesight in it's wake".

This all came about when Dyke was young; he and his three criminal associates in the South of the States decided to try a big job - as can be judged for the following passage, Mr Nace has a keen, sympathetic ear for racial minorities and their patois:

"Pete Stuart was the really mean one. He was from an eastern ghetto somewhere, white enough to pass but gouging out the eyes of any man - or woman - who called him anything but black... His best leisure activity was chopping small animals to bits or maiming children... It was Pete who jolted the lot of them out of their lethargies one morning when he said 'I don't know about you damn whiteys. But I'm sick in'

tired of penny-ante stuff. I'm takin' me out to get me some bread that'll buy somethin' big. You damn whiteys can come along or not, suit yourselves" [The dialogue is reproduced word for word].

They go on to dismember another OAP (senior citizens have yet to catch up with teenagers as favourite targets, despite Nace's best efforts), but after making their getaway, Dyke tries to sneak off with all the swag. This action is not taken kindly by his partners in crime, who take their revenge by castrating him. Here, Pierce shows a mealy-mouth approach which is a little surprising; given his enthusiasm for sentences like :

"Slayer clawed at the abdominal cavity, tearing it apart, wrenching the intestines and stomach from their hold on the man, chewing down the coils of intestines as if they were the greatest delicacy he had ever tasted"

it's odd to hear him using phrases like "manhood" and "private parts". Dyke is left for dead, but is rescued and nursed back to health, or at least, NEAR health as we hear in this exchange between him and his doctor (all ... are Nace's, for once!):

"Will I be - all right? I mean, except for..."

"Yes, except for that. And..."

"And what?"

"You will not have twenty-twenty vision again"

Back in the present day, Dyke captures a mantis which he plans to use to extract revenge against his torturers who, handily, have also decided to settle in South America. He names the insect Slayer and tries to train it; before he has done so, the creature escapes - the descriptions of Slayer as lightning fast are slightly devalued by the discovery that it's prepared to hang round while Dyke delivers a soliloquy (Nace is unable to cope with his characters THINKING anything, possibly because he's incapable of it himself, so they all speak their thoughts aloud) :

"God, he's out! He'll kill this scum and me too! Nobody will have a chance against him. He'll kill everything in this whole jungle, animals and men and women and kids! Nobody'll be safe from him!"

Such respect for human life is a little inconsistent - "this scum" refers to a native he found in his hut, and who was about to be offered to Slayer as a snack.

Slayer is recaptured and eventually taught NOT to eat Dyke, who smears himself with a foul smelling stuff (that also kills armadillos when a pint is forced down their throat). He's then off, accompanied by Slayer, pausing only for a snack at a local village, or to be more accurate, OF a native village - he takes all the inhabitants across to the island (more sympathetic ethnic dialogue : **"Man come by yesterday, say green things there. Big, fierce. Scared to go."**); the insectoid equivalent of home delivered pizzas perhaps. These sights (entrails, glistening, blood, torrents, fill in the blanks yourself) turn Dyke on, because **"for a man who could never make love to a woman, who had put females from his mind years ago, the sight of one being denuded and dined upon should excite and delight him immeasurably"**. Er, yes.

Having acquired a few more mantises, he heads off to get revenge on his torturers. The first one he assaults is Pete, who mysteriously no longer speaks like Eddie Murphy doing an impression of a Black & White Minstrel. At first, he doesn't recognise Dyke :

"Remember me now, Pete? Or shall I take off my pants and let my castration jog your memory?"

Eventually, Pete remembers and, along with the rest of his family, is turned into a "muggy slush". The other three follow in rapid succession, with THEIR families - having spent 107 pages building up to this, it's a sudden collapse to 149 all out, leaving Dyke burbling to himself as ever:

"Am I insane?... Yes, I could be. But if I am, I'm a happy mental case."

In a sudden turn-around almost up there with "and it was all a dream", one of the murdered men turns out to have a brother, who gets his own mantises using a **"suit of armour they couldn't bite through"** and shoots Dyke; Slayer eats them both and is killed by the poison in Dyke's ointment, which suddenly stops repelling the insect.

The End. Of course, I may be entirely misjudging it - the book may be a subtle comment on totalitarianism, with Dyke representing a tinpot dictator and Slayer the secret police. I doubt it somehow - the overall impression is that even the *raison d'être*, the messy bits, were constructed by pulling words at random from Shaun Hutson books and rearranging them having carefully removed all traces of literary skill. A lot of trees died in vain for this one - perhaps we could get the same people who made 'Slugs' to film it?



You are now about to enter the Japanese section. Since they read from back to front, go direct to page 48, do not play Go, do not collect 200 Yen...



eat your heart out! The first four issues have been collected into one book, and the second four will follow soon. If you enjoy a laugh and are looking for entertainment rather than the "Arkham Asylum" comic-books-are-an-artform bit, read on...

Lum (Viz)

Humour is perhaps the trickiest emotion to translate, yet this book is one of the few that I have read that is capable of making me laugh out loud. Puns, astonishing situations, and weird characters flow thick & fast in this everyday tale of horny (literally!!) female aliens with ever-hungry, jealous boyfriends, teenagers possessing infinitely bad luck, and dubious religious types, all set in a small suburb somewhere in Japan. The first few issues of Lum have just been reprinted as a graphic novel, so if you get out there, you can probably find it in a comic shop.



Black Magic (Eclipse/Studio Proteus)

Masamune Shirow (for the last time!!)

Shirow's first work, Black Magic is set in the same world as Appleseed, so it contains bioroids, supercomputers at al. The first issue has our heroine (yup, another heroine, Shirow seems to like them!) having rockets launched at her, and a nuclear submarine being stolen. The nuclear submarine's load gets launched and a major Venusian genetic engineering program gets well & truly screwed. The results of this f*ck up ??? Well, you'll just have to read it to find out! The second issue is relatively mild, yet still fun, but for half way through the tale, I'm still somewhat uncertain what direction the story is heading!!

REAL Manga - AT Lady & Friends

Jim got a copy of a genuine manga from one of London's Japanese shops, and, apart from the obvious problem of not understanding a word (apart from the odd Westernism such as "AT Lady") the most noticeable thing was the atrocious print quality of the 200 page book! It was pulp paper in various yucky pastel shades, some of which made the text almost illegible (not that that really mattered, the problem was it spoilt the pics!!). At a couple of quid for this thickness of comics, you can't really complain too loudly, however.

Lone Wolf & Cub (Eclipse/Studio Proteus)

Kazuo Koike/Goseki Kojima

This comic was the inspiration for Shogun Assassin (well, the original 3 movies that became Shogun Assassin were written by Koike based on these tales!!). In the first few issues, this definitely shows - the story is very much that of the film, even down to spear-launching baby-carts!! Martial arts action in samurai style Japan. Need I say more ?? Okay then, one more thing... it has cover art by Frank Miller & is very, very long!!!

Fist of the Northstar (Viz)

Buronson/Tetsuo Hara

Well, I only ever got issue one of this - it was something new, so I had to give it a try. The story goes... in 1998, nuclear war broke out & the world was decimated, now only the human race populates the planet and they have yet to learn that violence doesn't work. Mutants run rampant, and the few peaceful people are at their mercy. Into the fray steps Ken. Ken's a disciple of the sacred martial art of the Great Bear, and has mastered the 'hundred-crack fist of the North Star' with which it is possible to break all the bones in a body by a single blow. In the first issue, Ken rescues a village from the biker gang of the evil Zeed, and gains a (very!) young female follower... where the story then goes, I can't tell you, but it's been action all the way if issue one was anything to go by!!



Xenon (Viz)

(Sorry, no help here either!!)

Xenon is a cyborg killing machine. The Bloody Sea made Xenon from a kidnapped college student (Asuka Kano). When a plane carrying him crashed into the sea, Xenon escaped & got back to Tokyo. Asuka wanted to restore some of his previous life, but the Bloody Sea wanted him back. He disagreed - violently. Other cyborg style soldiers were sent out to try and destroy Xenon... cue zap-pow action. There's a spot of romance chucked in, but that doesn't spoil the violence! Look for it in bargain boxes, and try it for size - if it ain't to your taste, then at least it won't have cost much!!

Dirty Pair (Eclipse/Studio Proteus)

Toren Smith/Adam Warren from Haruka Takachiho

Just a brief mention, as this isn't real manga - it's based on some genuine manga/anime characters, but is written by Yanks. I started getting this a while back, when I spotted issue 1 with a pair of 'Bunny Girls' on the cover, eventually issue 2 came out, & I got issue 5 at the start of April. Unfortunately, issues 3 & 4 slipped my grasp. This is particularly unfortunate as it was only a five issue series!!!! Book One of this has been reprinted as a single volume (entitled 'Biohazards') and you may luck out & find a copy of it lying around somewhere.

The Dirty Pair are special agents for an international defence organization, and are, for cuteness's sake, female. They're not humans, they're genetically engineered creatures who just happen to look & act human! They themselves prefer to think of themselves as the 'Lovely Pair', but a spot of bad publicity has made the press label them as 'Dirty'. They're efficient, ruthless & always get a job done... however, they do have a slight habit of causing damage to property & people in the process!!!

Nausicaa and the Valley of the Wind (Eclipse/Studio Proteus)

(Blank again!!)

The style can be summed up in one word... "motion". There's barely a frame without some motion, and the horizon rarely stays in the same place for long. See the animations section, as "Warriors of the Wind" for more details about this one.

Akira (DC)

Katsuhiro Otomo

The hardest and most mature comic art yet from Japan. Otomo claims to have been inspired by new wave American cinema and modern jazz, and its portrayal of drug taking, borstal skipping juvenile offenders running amok in the underbelly of post-apocalypse Tokyo is as breathtaking as it is stylish. Otomo's realisation of the city is simultaneously an architectural marvel and a squalid and uncompromising battle ground. Machine gunnings, knifings, exploding heads and an unbelievably exciting battle between motorcycle gangs (issue #5) pepper the pages, as craved by Japanese readers used to choreographed violence. Yamagata's death in #6 is sufficient to evoke feelings in the reader normally beyond the genre. The original is work is b/w, but the American run is being coloured by computer and, a slightly shaky start and a few image reversal problems aside, the use of colour to evoke mood and underline a feeling of space and time is up to "Ronin" standards, but darker still. That it readily leads itself to film is no surprise - Otomo has designed commercials for Canon and Honda. His motorbikes, military hardware, police patrol cars and helicopters are not mere flights of fancy, but give the impression of being next years styling sketches. I haven't mentioned the plot yet, but you're going to read it yourself anyway! The big question in #21 is this: will Kaneda return?

Outlanders (Dark Horse)

Juhji Manabe

It's nineteen-ninety-something and the Earth is being invaded from space by its original inhabitants, the galaxy spanning Santovasku Empire, who insist that the planet's present population is violating the sacred "Mother Planet". This manga chooses its heroes from both the overwhelmed superpowers and the aliens; a Japanese photographer, an alien princess (of the horned, armoured-kra wearing blonde variety!) and a renegade teddy bear. Manabe's giant bio-mechanical alien ships are far more than just H.R.Giger's cast-offs, and must be one of the most original realisations of space ships ever. Star Wars



OUTLANDERS

weird & wonderful tanks. Our heroine is Leona and her pride & joy is a tank called Bonaparte! So, you'll find plenty of mayhem here as Leona and an ever-suffering male friend (who, naturally wants to be somewhat more than just a male friend!!) go out to get the evil crimelord and save the world from being over-run with pollution!! This is what Green politics should be like - no namby-pamby "save the rain-forests stuff", but good hi-tech chaos!!

Bach (Viz)

Hirohiko Araki

I bought the first three issues of this, and it was sorta fun. It's a story about a cyborg who escapes from a secret government research lab with a couple of other genetically engineered freaks. However, it wasn't anything above Xenon, so I stopped getting it. It wasn't that it was worse than Xenon, just nothing new...

Cyber 7 (Eclipse/Studio Proteus)

(Whoops... new I'd forgotten something!!)

Book 2 (Rockland) is now on issue 7 and shows no sign of ending (yet!). The Cyber 7 of the title are a group of little robots that can open inter-dimensional portals. At the centre of the dimensions is "The Crystal World". The Princess of the Crystal World has been trapped on Earth and (fortunately for the plot) has forgotten who she is. Using a special manuscript, she can summon the Cyber 7 to her aid as Kakuo (a robotic heavy who is trying to take over all the dimensions) tries to prevent her from regaining her rightful place by suitably foul means. With a rabbit-headed guy who comes out with witty lines like dubbing cigarettes as "perfect for a low-grade suicide fantasy like mine", this is "cuter" than a lot of manga - not so much out-and-out violence, but a lot more story-telling.

Mai The Psychic Girl (Viz)

Kazuya Kodo/Ryoichi Ikegami

Mai, is a teenage girl possessing telekinetic powers inherited from her mother. A powerful & secretive group called the Wisdom Alliance, who have been controlling the world politically for many years, have noticed the potential of Mai & have decided to capture her and use her to further their plans for a 'Master Race'. To this end, they hire a private Japanese intelligence network - the Kaieda agency - to kidnap Mai. The deal is broken when the head of the Kaieda agency discovers Mai's incredible powers, and the gloves come off with other children controlled by the Wisdom Alliance being sent out to bring in Mai - dead or alive.

This comic is perfect evidence for the visual nature of Japanese comics - with sometimes only one page in four having any text on it at all. Simple acts (like a character falling) are stretched out over multiple pages, so the story can be scanned rapidly without loss of meaning (and a good thing too, as the whole story is not far off 1000 pages long) giving something very close to a cinematic experience!!

Applesseed (Eclipse/Studio Proteus)

Masamune Shirow (again!)

Well, the first three 'books' have now been published & it's still well worth looking at. Book four is due out about when you're reading this, and book five is currently coming coming out in Japan. If you're interested in hunting out issues, book 1 has been reprinted as a graphic novel.

Written & drawn by Masamune Shirow, it's about Deunan, an operative with ESWAT (Extra Special Weapons & Tactics ??), and Briareos, her bioroid lover/partner/mentor. With supercomputers, landmates & much politicking (not, I must emphasize by our heroic duo!) this is hi-tech action at it's finest. The artwork shows a pleasant mix of extremely good realistic artwork, punctuated with silly cartoon characters - generally when Deunan or one of the other humanoid members of the cast freaks out (through anger or laughter!). There's the usual Japanese quantities of nudity & violence (i.e. copious!!!) and the characters should keep you entertained even if the story ain't too mind-stretching.



Japanese comics (a.k.a. Manga) are currently a big hit over here and in the States. This is not surprising. In Japan, manga is the staple literary diet of people from all walks of life.. commuters read them on the way to work (no manga, no comment!); schoolkids read them like schoolkids everywhere. As a sign of the visual nature of Japanese society, the minimal reliance on the spoken word in manga can hardly be beaten. What manga do rely on is ART. The pictures in manga show an attention to detail rarely found in the DC & Marvel mainstream - background details & cityscapes look like technical plans or architects impressions; machines are believable (even when they are futuristic and bear no resemblance to modern day technology). The major "drawback" to be found is the Japanese approach to drawing people - eyes are always large for the good guys; bad guys look mean; women are short with big t*ts and good legs - but this is purely a question of style, and is purely based on the limited amount of manga that actually reaches our shores (anyway, who's complaining when it's good style!!).

To some extent, it is obvious that the average manga that gets published in English will be of higher quality than the average DC/Marvel comic - only the best of the manga get into English in the first place!! However, manga caters for a wide variety of tastes and grabbing a random copy of something off a shelf will not allow you to discover whether you like manga. Hopefully the following list will offer some hints as to what's around (whether it's being printed now, is back issues only or is available in posh collected graphic novels!).

Having said that manga are varied, there are some standard topics that have regularly raised their heads during our reading of them. These vary from Cyborgs & Psychic Powers to Totalitarian Governments & Secret Organizations, with Martial Arts, Conspiracies and Post Apocalypse Settings thrown in between.

Anyway, that's more than enough waffle - time to get onto the serious business and let you know what there is (or has been!) out there...

Grey (Viz)

Yoshihisa Tagami

Grey is a trooper. He went from class F to C in thirteen operations. In nine of those, he was the sole survivor - now they call him "Grey Death". Soon he'll reach class A, and then he'll get to be a "citizen". No more living in the slums with "people" the - a life of luxury under the caring eye of Toy, the supercomputer that looks after all the towns. Unfortunately for Grey, Toy has been thinking about the human race's actions & can find only one logical conclusion - that the human race wants to wipe itself out. Cue renegades, dolls, hi-tech weapons, lo-tech weapons and a whole lot of fighting.

Nice art, with good use of use of zip-tone and not too much to get in the way of the action. Grey was a nine issue series that ended about a year ago, however, it has since been reissued as a pair of graphic novels.

Dominion (Eclipse/Studio Proteus)

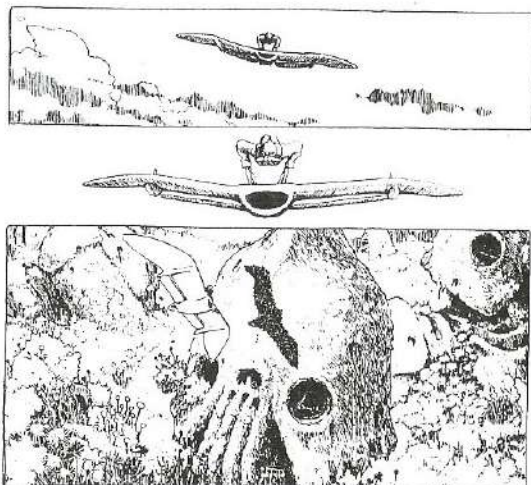
Masamune Shirow

A six issue mini-series from Eclipse. It's now on issue 5, but issue 6 is due out out soon. The story involves a genetically engineered fairy-like creature with the ability to breathe in polluted air & breathe out fresh air - a bit like a flying rain-forest I suppose. This creature escapes from it's creators and is "adopted" by the local criminal genius ("Buaku"). The good-guys in this story are (for a change!) the police-force, specifically the tank police - a special task-force with assorted



Warriors of the Wind

Despite the enormous amount of Japanese animation that is produced, not all that much of it makes it over to this country, and most of the stuff which does is low-grade, TV fodder. 'Warriors' is something of an exception, probably because it was adapted from a graphic novel, 'Nausicaä of the Valley of Wind' rather than conceived as a cold & calculating exercise in consumerism, like a large percentage of the animation we get to see. It helps that the man responsible for the comic book, Hayao Miyazaki, was involved with the celluloid version, which ensured that much of the atmosphere has been retained.



It takes place a thousand years hence, after civilization's fall following a vague, unspecified disaster not unlike a nuclear war, but not exactly like it either. The people left eke out a fragile existence along the edges of the Toxic Jungle, a vast, ever-increasing wilderness totally inhospitable to humans, inhabited by myriad forms of giant insect. The Valley of Wind is an enclave which benefits from purifying breezes, which quarantine it from the toxins left behind - it is ruled by an elderly king and his daughter, Zandra (aka Nausicaä), the latter of whom has to defend the realm against evil Princess Selena who is trying to resurrect one of the demons responsible for the original disaster, in order to destroy the Toxic Jungle.

Although suffering from some of the skimping that characterises much modern animation, this is more than balanced by the inventive nature of the film - it's U-certificate belies it's nature somewhat, and the subtle inferences of the plot might well be too complex for most children. There are some well-staged, impressive sequences which convey motion and a sense of speed beautifully; overall, it provided a highly entertaining hundred minutes. It should be obtainable from any half-decent sell-through merchant at a recommended price of 7.99, not that this stops HMV from indulging in a spot of blatant profiteering by selling it for a tenner. A rare little gem, and definitely one of the odder products of Vestron Video!

Akira

THE most eagerly anticipated film (by the TC staff, anyway) for a long time, 'Akira' is the full-length animated version of the Japanese comic book (see elsewhere for plot details). Over two hours long, undoubtedly heading for an '18' certificate and with subtitles, this is not your average cartoon. It perhaps strays a little close to live action now and again (the strength of animation is the ability to do things you can't do with actors) but most of the time it is truly breathtaking. Violent, bloody, funny, frightening in turns and always totally engrossing it's main fault is a tendency to forego any explanation of events - why IS that character turning into a creature from a Cronenberg wet dream? The animation itself is well up to anything I've seen recently, with the action sequences and cityscapes especially praiseworthy. It's a unique experience - it should be out in January 1991. We're not in Disneyland any more, Toto.

Animation

"The video shops in Japan are loaded with animated porno cartoons, which resemble American Saturday kiddie features. I happened to see one, against my will of course, where there are these 12-year old girls who are in the process of initiating a new girl into their school...All the girls in the class disrobe her, and attach her to an elaborate hoist and raise her naked... One of the girls attaches a wire with an alligator clip to one of her toes and the other girl attaches one to her other toe. The third girl flips a switch which sends a jolt of electricity through the suspended girl. She then urinates an eight-foot stream that arcs into a bucket. If they ask for a urine test in Japan, do anything you can to avoid it."

--- Mark Mothersbaugh.

Marine Boy

A fondly remembered Japanese animation series, clearly inspired by Gerry Anderson's 'Stingray'; this was produced by the Seven Arts company and broadcast by BBC1 in two seasons; February-April 1969 and July to October 1970. In all there were 26 episodes of 25 minutes, made in glorious black & white.

As the title might suggest, it was about a young teenage super-hero character, who was associated with a World Ocean Patrol through the nepotism of his famous-scientist father (or uncle, I can't recall which). The Patrol were led by one Commander Bolton - a grim hulking submariner, with a serious manner and gruff voice to match. He was the underwater cavilary, always coming to rescue Marine Boy when the brat got himself (and often the world too) into trouble. M.B.'s adventures were shared by a mermaid called Neptune, and the two of them would stumble into world-threatening plots, or weird sea monsters.

Marine Boy had an array of super-scientific gadgets and equipment; like the "oxy-gun" that enabled him to breathe underwater for about an hour or so, and an amazing electric boomerang that he used to subdue his enemies or zap a particularly irritating computer... whatever was menacing mankind that week.

The "animation" such as it was, allowed Marine Boy (and any other character) to cross rooms in only two steps, and race along lengthy corridors in no more than three. It was by all accounts very basic. M.B. had about four facial expressions; angry, determined, serious and on occasion, smiling. Marine Boy also had a pet/sidekick dolphin, called Splasher, who M.B. treated as little more than a sea-horse to ride about the oceans on. He could also communicate with Splasher, though it was not at all clear whether this was telepathy, or just a knack for translating the dolphin's gurgles.

Other regular hardware in the series included a seemingly endless fleet of flying saucer styled submarines, with deadly laser armament and an unknown top speed. The whole thing was set below sea-level, and I can't remember whether they ever surfaced or not. The Patrol had a number of bases on the seabed, some permanent and some mobile. And that's about it. The dates given above are listed in the excellent book, 'The Encyclopedia of TV Science Fiction' by Roger Fulton, but I think '**Marine Boy**' has been repeated since, possibly during the post-Tiswas era of Saturday morning kidshows. (Tony Lee)

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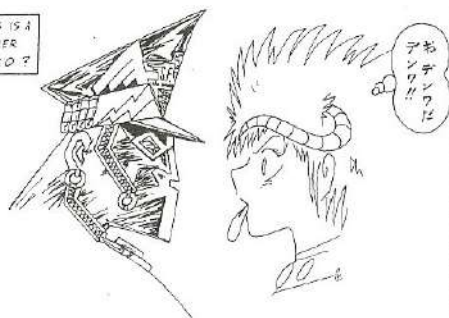
ANIME

his faithful adviser and a Fool. Meanwhile, all the sons struggle for power, destroying everything that their father had built up.

The plot may not sound entertaining but it reminded me, surprisingly, of a weird Japanese soap opera - if 'Dangerous Liasons' is 'Dynasty' in pre-revolutionary France, then 'Ran' is something similar in medieval Japan. All the characters spend their time conniving and plotting, the costumes are way out in left field and it bears little or no relation to reality*. Despite being comfortably over the two-hour mark, there are few dull moments. There are some impressive battle scenes, or at least post-battle scenes - for the *real thing*, you should watch 'Kagemusha', which makes 'Henry V' look like a fight in a school play-ground. There is a healthy interest in death, especially of the violent sort, which runs throughout a great percentage of Japanese films, which in this film climaxes with one arterial fountain of (on-screen) blood following an (off-screen) beheading. In Kurosawa's case, this may be related to an incident which took place in 1923 - when he was 13, his brother forced him to examine the aftermath of the Tokyo earthquake of that year. He asked his brother that evening why he'd done this and was told "If you shut your eyes to a frightening sight, you will end up being frightened. If you look at everything straight on, there is nothing to be afraid of".

This confrontational approach runs throughout Japanese film-making, resulting in an uncompromising and occasionally uncomfortable (to Western eyes) world view. Only the Japanese would consider making a film, 'Ai No Corrida', based on the true story of a geisha who cuts off her lover's penis with a knife after a torrid session of love-making and wandered around with it until she was arrested. More remarkably still, she is the heroine. Even in mainstream films like 'The Ballad of Narayama', death is accepted as a fact of life(?), rather than something taboo, as it still often is here. This contrast resulted in 'Ai No Corrida' being refused a certificate in this country and another film which ran into problems here was 'Shogun Assassin', often regarded as being perhaps the 'best' film to suffer under the 'video nasty' clampdown. Perhaps because of this artistic appreciation, it is still occasionally seen, even in reputable video shops - another, more plausible, explanation is confusion with any of the hundreds of similarly titled films. It was made by editing together a series of films, removing most of the plot, leaving only the startlingly sanguinal fight sequences, but even these have power and grace. No victim of Freddy Krueger uses his last words to praise the skilful way his wind-pipe has been sliced open!

THIS IS A
SUPER
HERO ?



A review of Japanese cinema isn't complete without mentioning the monster movies produced by Toho Studios. Although Godzilla is the best known of these, there were a supporting cast of characters, such as Megalon, Mothra and Gargon, who did basically the same thing i.e. trample Tokyo. Channel 4 are at the time of writing showing a season of these, late night on Fridays. Not to be missed, especially for fans of rubber though personally, after a while, seeing teeming cities crushed underfoot by very bad effects and hearing Japanese speaking with Californian accents begins to lose it's novelty.

Marshall Law meets Princess Kahm of 'Outlanders'.

Cinema

From our Western viewpoint, it is often difficult to appreciate the beauties of oriental cinema, brought up as we are on the conventions and standards of American, and to a lesser extent European, film-making. Yet it is perhaps here that we can best learn to appreciate their culture - non-animated TV series are restricted almost completely to martial arts series, such as **'Monkey'** (which while highly enjoyable, can not truly be said to give us much of a deep or meaningful insight into their psyche) and literature written in Chinese or Japanese is notoriously difficult to translate; how do you go about converting a phrase into English where each individual letter (or **kanji**) has a meaning?

映画

EIGA

Admittedly, 'films' and 'the Far East' to most people mean Bruce Lee and his descendants, Brucers Lea, Li, Ley and Lu. This is like saying all Western films have Streep and Hoffman in them. Mercifully, not



the case though if you look at a film like Ridley Scott's **'Black Rain'** to see that despite it being a damn good thriller and a far worthier sequel to **'Lethal Weapon'**, say, than **'Lethal Weapon 2'** was, the Japanese setting could easily have been any American city, save the odd mention of honour and a Samurai sword decapitation.

Undoubtedly the most internationally acclaimed Japanese director is Akira Kurosawa, possessor of many awards now including a Special Achievement Oscar for his contribution to the world of cinema. Despite having taken five years per film since 1965, the man's influence has been considerable - **'The Magnificent Seven'** was a remake of his **'Seven Samurai'**, **'For a Fistful of Dollars'** bears certain resemblances to the 1961 film, **'Yojimbo'** and even George Lucas has been influenced, R2-D2 and C3PO being based on characters from **'The Hidden Fortress'**, made 20 years earlier. As an introduction to his films, you could do no better than **'Ran'**, his 1980 version of Shakespeare's **'King Lear'** (he borrows things too - **'Throne of Blood'** was **'Macbeth'** in a feudal Japanese setting). An elderly Samurai lord devolves his powers onto his three sons in order to effect a smooth transition when he dies. The youngest son disagrees with this and is sent into exile for his pains. The eldest son then argues with his father after one of the former's soldiers is killed by the latter and the father is driven out. The second son proves no more hospitable and the ex-lord is driven out, insane, to wander in the wilderness accompanied only by

忍術

NINJUTSU

Handy Household Hints : Urban Ninjutsu

In any instance of street survival self-defence, it is highly likely that you will be confronted with an assailant who is bigger, stronger and faster than you, and who has some sort of advantage, be it the element of surprise, possession of a superior weapon, heightened pain tolerance through drugs or insanity, accomplices for backup support, or at least some experience at actually killing, maiming and/or terrifying others. Despite all the odds, you still have to win. You either go home healthy and happy or you do not. There is no such thing as 'second place' in a street fight or urban attack.

Moving and thinking like the wind is sometimes the only way to handle a violent attacker. By not being where the assailant expects you to be, and by not moving in the manner that the assailant has learned to anticipate, you can increase the likelihood of not being at the end of his punches, kicks and cuts. The Nija's '**fu no kata**' (fighting like the wind) response teaches simultaneous evasion, realignment and redirection to set up for a counterattack against targets the attacker might not be aware of as being vulnerable.

The Ninja's '**Nin Gu**' (Ninja tools) are far more than an ingenious array of antiques. The principle that the most practical weapons are those which fall easily to hand remains true today. The '**kyoketsu shoge**' ringed-cord-and-dagger resembles mountain-climbing gear, garage inspection lamp cables or even the common telephone receiver on it's cord. The '**shuriken**' can easily be replaced with coins from the pocket, coffee cup saucers, or shards of hastily broken window glass. The '**hanbo**' half staff is a walking stick, fireplace poker or baseball bat.

Most attackers see weapons as a special class of object, and can place too much reliance upon having a specific weapon brought to bear. Tools for self-protection are always available to the alert. There is no need to have a '**tanto**' at hand when there are kitchen knives, metal rulers, scissors and screwdrivers around. The '**kusari-fundo**' weighted chain can be replaced by belts with buckles, cameras on straps, neck ties or shoulder bags.

Camouflage ('**In-ton**') is one of the most effective means of self-protection. It is difficult for the attacker to defeat an enemy that he can not perceive. In times of war or revolution the considerations are even more urgent. Someone lurking about in a black 'secret agent' costume, let alone a 15th century Ninja costume, is certain to be assumed as being up to no good if encountered by police or security personnel. In urban or built-up areas, tones of grey, tan or blue are best suited for image-concealing clothing. The ninja wearing a dark grey tracksuit or blue denim jeans/jacket can easily fade into the shadows, and will stand a better chance of moving unchallenged.

The Ninja's legendary skill at moving undetected by employing a knowledge of stealth and silent movement techniques can be cultivated by personal familiarisation and bodily internalisation. Take time to watch as those around you move through daily life. Be aware of all the normally unnoticed, unconsciously awkward actions, like doors being opened and closed with too much force, heels banging and sliding on floors and stairs, books and tools being flung or dropped. Once you have observed the crude ungainliness that passes for normal habit you will simply be able to eliminate all unnecessary aspects of body motor actions. You will have come to know '**ninjutsu**', the art of invisibility.

ORIENT EXCESS

10 Potentially useful Japanese phrases*

1. Joshi-inranshō - **nymphomania**.
2. Uguisu no tani-watari - literally, **a nightingale jumping back and forth over a narrow valley** - a less florid translation is **a man in bed with two women**.
3. Rimbyō - **gonorrhea**. Slightly more poetically, **the lonely disease**.
4. Nikuyoku no gongō - **the embodiment of lust**.
5. Kobu-maki wo suru - 'kobu-maki' is **a roll of seaweed with a dried fish inside**. This phrase is actually a geisha term for **the first love act with a patron after the New Year**.
6. Wakame-zake - During 'O-Shōgatsu', a geisha may disrobe for one or more favoured clients, lie on her back and clasp her legs together tightly. A guest will pour sake over her pelvic region from where he then begins to imbibe like a horse at a watering-trough. **The floating motion of the pubic hairs in the puddle of sake** is fondly imagined to resemble the motion of the seaweed wakame in the ocean.
7. Danshu Tomo no Kai - **Alcoholics Anonymous**.
8. Tokkuri to shinjū suru - **To die from excessive drinking**. Literally, **to commit double suicide with a sake bottle**.
9. Zakone suru - the characters mean **miscellaneous fish sleeping**. It also means **sleeping together in groups promiscuously** i.e as done by Japanese rock bands.
10. Karyūkai - **flower & willow world**. More usefully, **red-light district**.

* - subject to word-processing limitations!!



Not many films open with nuclear war, but 'Akira' does! Here we see Tokyo getting the finger.

一般
日常
用語

IPPAN
NICHITŌ
YŌGO

TRASH CITY

Number 6 - A Pulp House Publication - Summer 1990

THIS ISSUE

CHRISTOPHER LEE!

DER TODES KING!

PARANOIA!

BIMBOS
BEHIND-BARS!

EAT THEM ALIVE!

JAMES LORENZ
SPEAKS!



SPECIAL JAPANESE ISSUE!