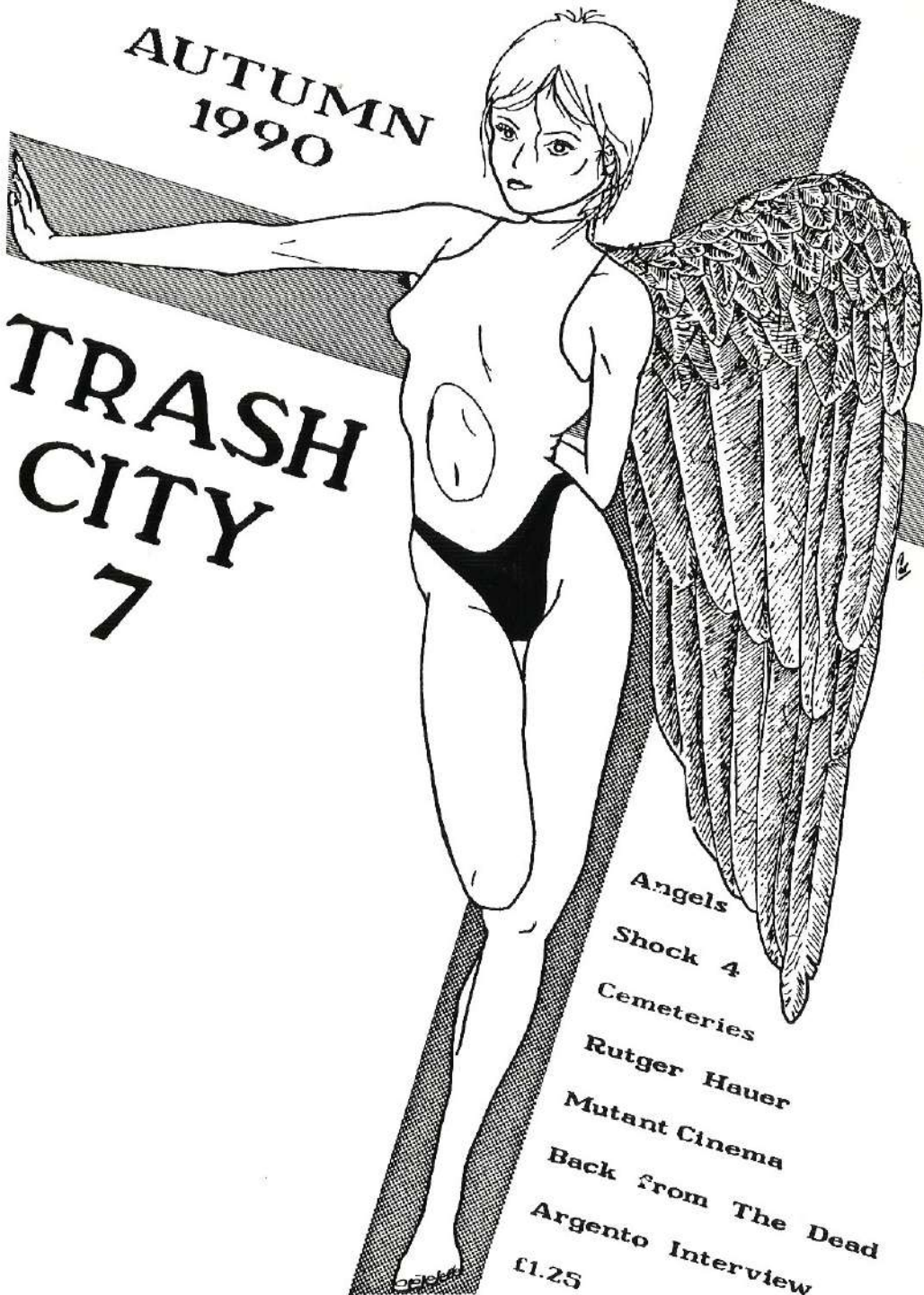


AUTUMN  
1990

TRASH  
CITY  
7



Angels

Shock 4

Cemeteries

Rutger Hauer

Mutant Cinema

Back from The Dead

Argento Interview

£1.25

# Trash City - Issue 7

Autumn 1990.

**TC-shirts!** The picture on the TC-shirt has now been selected and produced, and I think it sums up the ethos of TC fairly well: Nastassja Kinski and a blood-spattered chainsaw. Oh, and NK isn't wearing anything, did I mention this? It's tasteful, however, since it's a back view with her looking over her shoulder. All in all, very nice and not something you could find offensive unless your sense of reality had been short-circuited. Unfortunately, the man in the T-shirt printers could have been who P.J.O'Rourke was writing about when he said "**People who worry themselves sick over sexism...can not be expected to have a sense of humour**". "**That's sexist. We've got a policy against that**", said the printer, and refused to print it. So much for civil liberties. I am now determined to make sure they get done, and now I know the text on it: "**TRASH CITY - the shirt they tried to ban...**"

This is TC7, an organ, probably a gall bladder, for the free expression of views, especially when the views are about Nastassja Kinski, films, books, comics, music, death, travel, TV or the problems caused by small-minded people who refuse to accept the validity of views other than their own. I still have a handful of TC6, our Japanese special, but hurry: the rest are gone, but ask as I occasionally run some off.

## CREDITS

Chief Civil Liberties Slugger: Jim McLennan. Artistic freedom: Per Porter. Freedom for Fonts: Steve Welburn. People being allowed to express their opinions: Alun Fairburn, Roman Güttinger, Tony Lee, Des Lewis, Andrew McGavin, Jim McLennan, Per Porter, David Thompson & Andy Waller. Printers, who have never tried to interfere with us: Copyprint, London.

A strong pound means a hike in \$-rates, £-rates will reflect new postage soon but for the moment, the sub. rates (min. 2 issues) are 60p/issue UK, \$1.50 Europe, \$3 elsewhere. A label on the envelope tells you the last one you'll get + how much is left over after it. This is slitting my own throat and doesn't even cover production costs let alone postage, but goes back to when I produced TC on the computer at work. Single issues are £1 (\$2,\$4), including postage - this just about breaks even. I sell copies to shops for 75p, so a £1.25 shop price seems fair. Cheques/PO's to Jim McLennan. Contributions are welcome, and I reserve the right to publish correspondence unless specifically asked **not** to. Send everything to :

**Jim McLennan, 247 Underhill Road, E.Dulwich, LONDON, SE22 0PB**

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## Welcome to the Videodrome

This issue of Trash City is dedicated to Mark Durante. Mark is one of the guitarists with a band called The Revolting Cocks. They have single-handedly restored my faith in the music business as an oasis of free spirits, wild souls and truly weird individuals. This is their story...



The band were recently playing a club in Houston, as part of their world tour. Now, their latest LP takes the piss out of Texan rednecks - it's called '**Beers, Steers and Queers**', so it was no real surprise when the gig was picketed by a group of fundamentalist Christians with no sense of humour (is there any other sort?). No matter, the concert went on. Lead RevCos singer, Al Jourgensen, had also hired ten head of cattle for the occasion which were supposed to be driven on stage and into the audience during the encore, the title track from the LP.



His position during the whole concert was on the back of a mechanical bucking bronco, but during the song '**Stainless Steel Providers**', a number unlikely to be played on Radio 1 dealing as it does with the joys of artificially inseminating cows, he got off the horse and started simulating sex with it. Oh, and he also had a flamethrower strapped between his legs and at the 'climax', this was set off and incinerated the machine. This was too much for the local police, who stopped the concert and charged the band with lewd and lascivious behaviour, incitement to riot and cruelty to animals!

Fortunately, no-one wanted to press charges. Even the promoter, who previously had only booked country and western acts, thought the RevCos were wonderful. The police left, but the show was dead so the band members went back-stage and got plastered. Sometime later, Mr. Durante woke up alone, the rest of the band having headed back to the hotel. He staggered out of the venue and hailed a cab but it didn't stop, so not unnaturally he hurled a brick at it.

This was a mistake, as it wasn't a taxi at all, but a police car.

Durante was arrested and searched, the cops finding two tabs of LSD on him and adding a charge of male prostitution to the list on account of the Revolting Cocks T-shirt he was wearing (the reports do not say what was actually on it to provoke this response!). He was eventually released on \$3,000 bail and will stand trial round about the time I write this.

The band should, legal complications permitting, play London in November. TC will be there, needless to say, if they do and a full report of the goings-on will appear in the next issue.

Distribution: TC6 was available from Forbidden Planet and Psychotronic Videos (both London), the FP shop in Cardiff, Artware of Germany (eventually!) and Nostalgia and Comics in Birmingham. Thanks to Phil Mielewczyk, Andy Waller, Roman Gottinger for finding me the '**Reform School Girls**' LP, my pal Dario, Paul Mallinson, the Men in Black again, Damien Drake (for last issue), Damien Drake (for this issue), Angie who likes cheese 'n' onion crisps and anyone else whom I've forgotten.



# It Isn't Easy Being A Dolphin

When I die, assuming there's such a thing as reincarnation, I want to come back to Earth as Rutger Hauer. Best known for his role as a replicant in **'Blade Runner'**, he's played good guys, bad guys and a variety in between, all of them eminently plausible, and has even found time to increase the sales of Guinness on the way. Impressively, he's done most of this in a foreign language.

His finest moment so far is undoubtedly **'The Hitcher'**. His performance as John Ryder, who torments an innocent driver (C.Thomas Howell) to the edge of sanity and beyond, is the most calmly evil (as opposed to the manic evil of Hopper and Nicholson) ever seen. He doesn't rant, he doesn't rave, he just remains supremely in control throughout the film: you get the feeling, right up until the end, that it's all some grisly ballet he's choreographed. His wickedly twisted sense of style and humour as he sets up his victim as a mass murderer make it a wonderfully warped experience. Even when not on screen, his presence dominates the movie.

A slightly more flamboyantly ambivalent side to his character can be seen in **'Flesh and Blood'**, directed by Paul Verhoeven. To start with, Hauer is undoubtedly a bad guy, raping Jennifer Jason Leigh (who suffers more Rutger-abuse in **'The Hitcher'** when she is used as an ineffective tow-rope), looting,



killing and thoroughly enjoying every minute of it. By the end of the movie, however, we can't help feeling a sneaking admiration for him - he seems somehow more HUMAN than the hero. One dodgy angle is that JJ-L chooses to go off with him, suggesting women 'like it rough', but let's face it, he's certainly more interesting than the competition.

That wasn't Hauer's first film under Paul Verhoeven. The top Dutch director had previously teamed up with the top Dutch actor for **'Spetters'** (1980), an offbeat tale about motorcycle racers starring Rene Soutendijk (who also played the Black Widow to great effect in Verhoeven's **'The Fourth Man'**): it's available on video, and is worth keeping an eye out for, although, like all Dutch films, it suffers from bad dubbing. Even earlier (1973) Verhoeven & Hauer made **'The Sensualist'** with Hauer as a sculptor who suffers from bizarre hallucinations - uncertain reality being a theme common in Verhoeven's films). This was nominated for an Oscar as best foreign film the following year. And right back in the late 60's, a TV series called **'Floris'** and set in medieval times, was produced by the duo.





'**Wanted: Dead or Alive**' is probably the nearest to a 'straight' action pic Rutger's done. Hauer is a bounty-hunter and the owner of a VERY impressive collection of weaponry, he sets off after a terrorist who specialises in bombing cinemas. A very solid thriller, propelled into the realms of greatness by a brilliant ending [ **\*WARNING\* Ending about to be revealed!** ] - eventually the villain is captured, and led to the police with a hand-grenade in his mouth and Rutger holding the pin. He gets the cheque, plus the bonus for live capture but on considering all the pain the guy caused him, blowing up his boat, his girl and his best friend, only one option is open. "Fuck the bonus", he says, hands it back, pulls the grenade pin out and walks away... Sublimely cool.

His most recent movie to be released is '**Blind Fury**', directed by Philip Noyce ('**Dead Calm**'). Rutger plays the hero, Nick Kelly, who is blinded in Vietnam but rescued by the locals who teach him to live with his disability, and also educate him in sword-fighting skills. On his return to America, he has a run in with drug-dealing casino owners, who try to kidnap the son of a chemist to force him to make designer drugs. The chemist is one of Rutger's old army buddies, so conflict naturally ensues. An impressive performance by Hauer, who is totally convincing, and a dryly funny stance (best shown when the hero 'accidentally' wipes the floor with four thugs in a bar) more than make up for the lack of arterial fluid and just about undo the damage done to blind people by '**The Toxic Avenger**'!

Then, of course, there's '**Blade Runner**'. What more needs to be said? The last twenty minutes (omitting the tacked-on postscript) combine tension, atmosphere and superb acting from both Harrison Ford and Hauer, to produce undoubtedly the best section of an already brilliant movie. Totally unforgettable.

More...

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This isn't the only case where Hauer has shown he can act with the best of them. **'The Legend of the Holy Drinker'** (see TC3) had him playing a down-and-out in Paris who receives a gift from a mysterious stranger, which leads to all sorts of complications. No effects, action sequences or other distractions just a vivid demonstration of his talent, generating sympathy for the character and provoking laughter and sadness with equal ease.

The list goes on. Although **'Bloodhounds of Broadway'** has been quietly buried by the industry, **'Salute to the Juggler'**, **'Escape From Sobibor'**, **'Night Hawks'** (with Sylvester Stallone and Jamie Gillis among others) and **'Ladyhawke'** are all worthy of praise, not to mention the mouth-watering prospect of the as yet unreleased **'Up To Date'** with Nastassja Kinski. However, I can't finish without mention of his adverts for Guinness, the only advertising campaign ever to directly succeed in making me buy the product. Employed because of his resemblance to a pint of Guinness when dressed in black (seriously!), he transformed the adverts into something weird & wonderful, the total antithesis of the highly nauseating Gold Blend, isn't-it-nice-to-be-a-yuppie commercials.

Overall, if we're looking for a way to sum up the man, perhaps the best thing we can do is borrow a phrase from the product that he's singlehandedly made cool. Rutger Hauer is...

**PURE GENIUS**

## Filmography

- 1969 Floris (TV series)
- 1973 The Sensualist (Turkish Delight / Turks' Delight)
- 1974 Wind of Violence
- 1975 Keetje Tippel [ Kathy Tippel ]
- 1977 Man of Orange (Soldier of Orange / Survival Run)
- 1980 Spetters  
Femme entre Chien et Loup ???  
Mysteries (co-p, s)
- 1981 Night Hawks  
Chanel Solitaire
- 1982 Inside the Third Reich (TV)
- 1983 Blade Runner  
The Osterman Weekend  
Eureka
- 1984 A Breed Apart
- 1985 Flesh and Blood  
Ladyhawke
- 1986 The Hitcher  
Wanted: Dead or Alive
- 1987 Escape from Sobibor (TV)  
Bloodhounds of Broadway
- 1989 Legend of the Holy Drinker
- 1990 Blind Fury  
Salute to the Juggler





## High Weirdness by Mail



This letter column is brought to you courtesy of four pints of IPA bitter and a box of home-made cookies. Let's start with the random abuse.

**David Thomson, Newcastle** - "You're talking bollocks again, I'm afraid [ Again? Again? Oh, the 'Scarecrows' review. ]. I loved this and I think it's by far the most inventive horror film I've seen for at least, oooh, five years. Did you see it in a cinema or on video? I saw it at an all-nighter at my local cinema and thought at the time how much weaker it would be on video". I can quite believe it was better

at the cinema - it would have been hard pushed to be worse. Things that work in THX sensurround Dolby often don't on 22" of glass at home, and this film must be one of them. Further disagreement, over the talents of Christopher Lee:

**Mick Slatter, Crawley** - "I personally think Lee's talents as an actor are screamingly overrated; a cultivated voice and the ability to put on a half decent foreign accent do not a thespian make...I must correct you for the dialogue by Lugosi in 'I Changed My Sex'. He doesn't say "Beware, beware, beware..." he says "bevarre, bevarre, bevarre". Although I laughed with everyone else, I felt a bit sorry for Wood as I'm sure he was quite sincere".

**Paul Higson, Chorley** - "'Eat Them Alive' also had me chuckling. Have you read 'Keller: The Cannibal' - I have planned to run a list of the best quotes/sarcasm in a future 'Bleeders Digest'...trapped in tunnels in Vietnam, Kondor a forgotten soldier is alone, but others (Vietcong) are trapped too: "The candle went out and the eating stopped. Kondor heard a man snoring. Then what sounded like a burp. A burp. My God. He covered his face and wept." John Martin's favourite line from it is "You fuck. You stupid anthropophagist"

**Paul Kevern of Blandford** must have written something interesting as his letter is in the pile, but I'm damned if I can find out what. "I enclose £1 for TC7" seems to have been underlined in red... **Andy Waller, Bromsgrove** describes himself as "a difficult guy to satisfy" and says "the front [of TC6] is really a blatant and unapologetic salute to sexism", a phrase that rings bells for some reason - fortunately, he continues "It's a total knockout". Phew.

**Glyn Williams, Derby** - "The Roadrunner article was a little gem...It would have been fair, however, to make at least a brief mention of Michael Maltese who actually wrote so many of the Roadrunner scripts". Fair comment. It's easy to forget that there was an awful lot more to the scripts than 'Beep Beep'!!

**Mikael Bomark, Sweden** - "The Godzilla series showing on English TV sound just too fucking wild!!!!!! Can you tell me which episodes you have taped????? If you taped any?? sure you did, Jim. Got to have taped some....PLEASE!!!!". Er, well actually, I recorded none of them, Friday nights being reserved for the TC weekly droof-over-Oriental-girls-in-PVC-miniskirts outing,

but I'm sure some of our readers will have done so. Mikael's address is in the 'zines section and you would, I'm sure, receive his eternal gratitude and list of tapes... Continuing themes from previous issues:

**Cathy Barwick, Cambridge**, while in hospital - "One of the nurses went to work in King's Lynn and nursed NK during the filming of 'Revolution' - she couldn't say why NK was there, but said she wasn't very nice. Sorry to disappoint you, tho' I doubt you'll allow her opinion to alter yours!". Quite correct.

**Steve Moss, Chessington** - "I read of a Swedish band called To'emn Skr'umn (or summit like that) who allegedly had a song which included seven verses in 'slightly less than one second'. No sign in this TC of the story of Sinead O'Connor and the vacuum cleaner - but enough about my fantasies". Yes, more than enough - you'll notice, Steve, it didn't make it into this issue either... And to finish off with, more evidence that TC is walking a very thin line comes from these two letters, which arrived in the same post :

**Andrew McGavin, Liverpool** - "Nightmares 6 contained the usual quota of hilarious one-liners. You should give it four pages instead of just two".

**Sunit Ranmal, Leicester** - "The two stories you printed were crap - don't do it again".

One man's crap is another man's hilarious, or some such phrase. The biscuits are gone, the letters pile is empty and the IPA is wearing off. More random jottings next time.



## The Section With No Name

**Imaginator #6** (36 A4, 1.95): if TC grows up, I'd happily look like this glossy, well-produced item. There's a section on Hong Kong films, complementing TC6's Japanese section, and interviews with Ray Harryhausen, Patty Mullen & Steve Apostolof among others. Next is a two-in-one 'zine. **Headcheese and Chainsaws #5** with **Sludgefeast #1** (each 24 A5), not forgetting a pair of comics. The entire package is yours for a quid or so: the doubling up means some duplication of coverage but where this occurs, the editors' opinions differ so markedly it seems a miracle they ever produced a joint issue! Both are well laid out and have an informal, friendly style. **Strange Adventures #17-19** (16, 20, 20 A4, 95p) will soon catch up **Samhain** (the Granddaddy of all zines, to whom all bow down and pay homage) in terms of issues. Continues it's massive task of trying to cover the entire genre of escapist media; among the gems is a 'Cat People' review by some guy called Jim McLennan...

Down at the bottom end in cost terms, we have **Neros** (28 A5, send an SSAE). Plenty of exercise to be had here - you have to keep turning the damn thing as every page seems to be at a different angle! Very funny piece discussing the uncut **Tom & Jerry** cartoons is the



highlight, hidden deep in impenetrable layout. Also free is **Psychotic Reaction** 1 (12 A4, 55A1) again, all reviews in this issue. Plain and sparing with the artwork, but early days yet - as ever, I dislike commenting on first issues! No such problems with **Creeping Unknown** 14 (36 A5, 85p) - some editors sweat over covers, Nick just bleeds on it. Very artistic, and hopefully free from any blood-borne diseases... Distressingly, they've started printing page numbers, but this is offset by the ploy of having two page 2's, one after page 34. Joking apart, it's good as usual, concentrating on loads of reviews.

**Black** 6 (20 A4, 60p) is here, with a Cinecittà poster in it, some favourite Zombie movies and enough sleaze to keep you going until Dave Flint produces the next **Sheer Filth...** Pardon me while I drool over the layout (and the poster!). **Eyeball** 2 (28 A4, £2) has taken a long while to get here: more reviews of highly obscure European i.e. Italian movies. Almost like a telephone directory and thus tough to read, but worth the effort and a Barbara Steele paper doll adds a welcome note of levity to things. **Bloody Hell** 1 (21 A4, 1.50) is an interesting if expensive read (Tuler, censorship, etc) but needs to improve it's appearance: T/O was better, to give you some idea: at least we were double sided!

Slightly away from the film scene is **Green Goblin** 14 (28 A5, 50p). Superbly clear print, a Call of Cthulhu scenario (must get back into FRP one of these days!), bits about computers, an infuriating spot-the-lyrics quiz and a neat 'ghost' (for want of a better word) story. Across the Atlantic now, title of the month goes to **Cadavers, Fruit & Government Forms** 1 (36 A5, \$2.50?), more of a music 'zine, with lots of reviews of records by mostly thrash metal bands (tho' since I've not heard of them, I may be maligning them seriously!) but also films, computer games, TV and some chat, plus a handful of flyers, etc. Another editor who likes to rotate alternate pages, pah! Runner-up in the title stakes is another T/O, **Trash Compactor** Vol 2, #4 (36 A4, \$3.50). This one is a celebration of gay films - did you spot the homosexual subtext in **'The Hitcher'**? No, me neither - read 'em and worry... **Midnight In Hell** 2 (16 A4, ???) is a Lovecraft special - a bibliography, some film reviews and five pieces of fiction, which vary in quality from good down to fairly pointless, as such things do. Finally, two American slimzines I must mention: **Monster** 30-40 (8 A5, \$1?) is hyper-frequent (fortnightly!) and specialises in monster movies, tho' this is loosely defined (more on this one next time, no space here!) + **Scarephanania** 90-92 (8 A5, \$1), definitely recommended for reviews of hot new product.

**Black** - Mikael Bomark, Asp. 28, 14141 Huddinge, Sweden.

**Bloody Hell** - David Prothero, 11 Clos-Yr-Wenallt, Rhiwbina, Cardiff, CF4 6TW.

**Cadavers, Fruit & Govrnmnt Forms** - Jeff Dworak, 442 Route 146, Clifton Park, NY 12065, USA

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

**Eyeball** - 20 Kintyre Court, New Park Road, Brixton Hill, London SW2 4DY.

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

**Headcheese & Chainsaws** - Rob Bewick, 33 Ernwill Ave, Castletown, Sunderland, SR5 3FB.

**Imaginator** - Unit 1, Hawk House, Peregrine Park, Gomm Rd, High Wycombe, Bucks, HP13 7DL.

**Midnight in Hell** - G.N.Houston, The Cottage, Smithy Brae, Kilmalcolm, Renfrewshire, PA13 4EN.

**Monster** - Kronos Productions, MPO Box 67, Oberlin, Ohio 44074-0067, USA.

**Neros** - 57 Chedworth, Kingsbury Park, Yate, Bristol BS17 4RY.

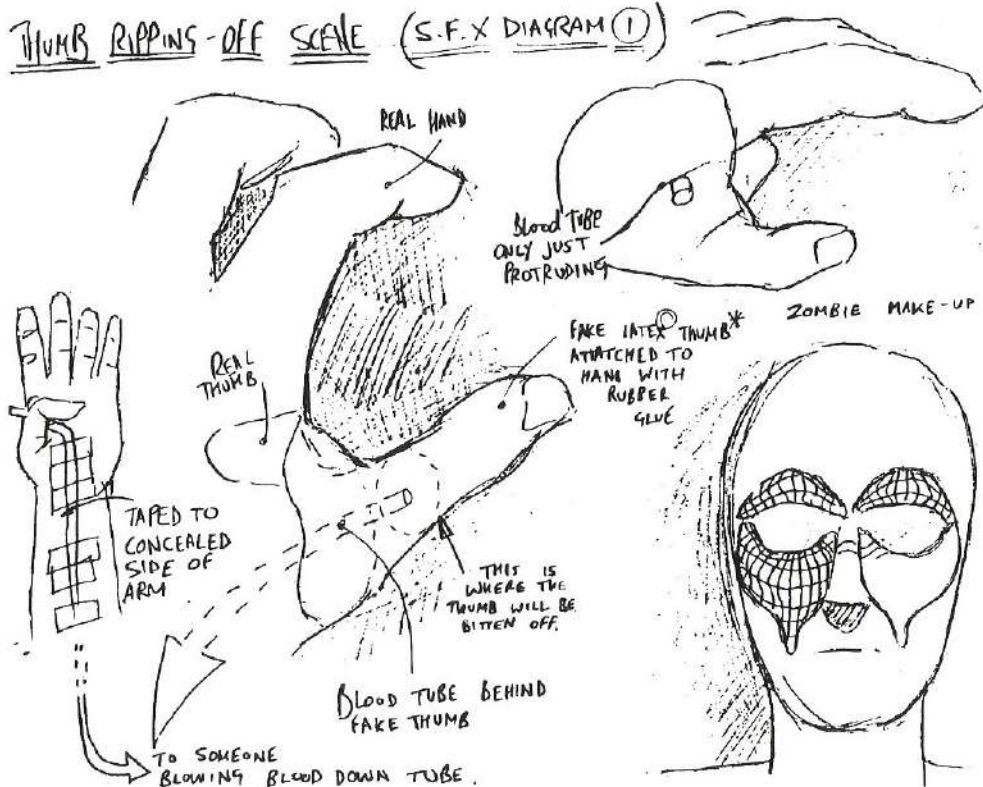
**Psychotic Reaction** - Spencer Hickman, 50 Wingfield Road, Great Barr, Birmingham B42 2QD.

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

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

**Trash Compactor** - 253 College St, Suite #105, Toronto, Ontario, Canada, M5T 1R5.

## THUMB RIPPING-OFF SCENE (S.F.X DIAGRAM 1)



The British film industry is not in a healthy state. Few films are wholly home-grown, and there's a tendency to pander to the American market, producing costume dramas, or, even worse, to Channel 4, by making isn't-Thatcher's-Britain-shitty films i.e. 'Letter to Brezhnev', 'My Beautiful Laundrette', etc. Did Hammer die in vain?

Not quite. Keeping alive the spirit nowadays are stubborn individuals who make films on minimal budgets, replacing money with ingenuity, imagination and plenty of red food colouring. 'Back From the Dead' is one such short film, by Paul Mallinson. The film takes place in Rochdale: round about ten minutes long, it's a mini-zombie pic - two men are attacked by a group of the living dead, who kill and dismember one of the men and drive the other into a multi-storey car park. He is eventually tracked down and also killed, but when day-break comes, his eyes suddenly open, and he too is back from the dead.

I asked Paul Mallinson to discuss some of the joys, perils and troubles of low budget film-making, starting with the obvious question :

# BACK FROM



**TC: How much did it cost?**

Paul Mallinson: Altogether, I'd say round about £200 - that covered just about everything. A large proportion of the money was used on Super 8mm film, which is £6 for 3½ minutes, and lighting: we rented a powerful (and noisy!) generator and halogen floodlamps. Other money was spent on blood ingredients, editing tabs (which are very expensive), plaster of paris, make-up and fuel for transport and the generator. It also cost about £15 to transfer the final cut to video, which I wasn't too pleased about, quality-wise. My Dad lent me all the money to make the film with [ which is how John Waters started, too! *Ed*], and I worked to pay it off at a later date.

**TC: Which came first, the locations or the story?**

PM: I chose the locations for practical purposes - I didn't fancy building any sound sets! I'd been around the large car park in Doncaster quite a lot and envisaged a few good ideas and thought to myself "This would make a good, atmospheric location for a film".

**TC: Did you have much hassle getting permission to use places?**

PM: The main problem was all the bloody red tape to go through to get permission to use the council car-park. Eventually, they gave the go-ahead on the condition we didn't go throwing dead bodies from the top storey! We also had to inform the local police of our activities so that we didn't get arrested mid-shoot.

**TC: Presumably, the next stage was the script.**

PM: There was no 'script' as such, everything took the form of a storyboard which I intended to stick to as closely as possible. In the end, I'd say we stuck to it for about 80% of the way, but sometimes we had to improvise due to some problem or another.

**TC: You didn't shoot things in the order of the storyboard - how did you work out what should be shot when?**

PM: After I'd drawn the storyboard, I then had to estimate how long the whole thing would take to shoot (five nights), and I broke all the scenes down into separate sections and allocated them to the correct day for shooting i.e. the scenes where I needed lots of zombies were shot on the Tuesday, the special FX scenes were left until the last two days and so on. The timescale I'd set was about right, although there were days when we didn't finish until 3 or 4 in the morning and others where we finished at 11 o'clock, apart from that, I was amazed at how everything seemed to slot-together nicely.

**TC: How many of the scenes worked first time?**

PM: Most of it was one-take material, but there were a few scenes we had to re-take. The scene where Man #1 runs up to the camera then stops and looks up took about five tries. The first attempt was unsatisfactory so we tried again - this time it was even worse, the nearby pub was emptying and a few pissed-up 'ladies' kept walking in front of the camera! Some scenes I shot a few times so that I could choose the best one for the final cut.

More...

# THE DEAD

# BACK FROM THE DEAD

## TC: What about continuity?

PM: I tried to keep an eye on the continuity and for most of the scenes everything was fine but the scene where Man #1 bumps into Man #3 in the car park was shot in bits on separate days. On the first day, Jon (Man #3) arrived in a yellow T-shirt, on the next day he wore a white T-shirt by accident - I didn't notice this until I edited the scene together, which meant I had to reshoot the scene some three weeks after all the shooting had finished!

## TC: Did you have have many serious problems?

PM: Problems - that's a good one! Where should I start? We were plagued with some problem or other during the whole five day shoot i.e. actors arriving late, FX not going quite so smoothly, stopping the actors from laughing while filming a scene. The first near disaster happened before we began shooting - I was fiddling with the camera on the tripod when it suddenly fell off onto the concrete; luckily, it was okay. The second, and biggest, problem was lighting. Even though we had very powerful floodlamps and three cars on full-beam lighting up the place, the light-meter inside the camera still insisted there wasn't enough light. We carried on shooting regardless - we'd gone too far to risk calling it off. Again, we were lucky, as everything came out okay. When I eventually had the final cut transferred to video, I wasn't totally happy because some scenes came out too dark - I should have sent it back to get redone, but never got round to it. I could go on for ages about the problems but you get the picture!

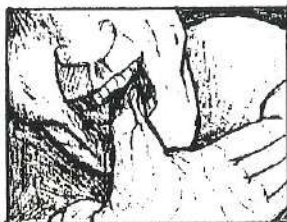
## TC: You added the titles and music to the video tape, didn't you?

PM: I did all the titles myself on my Atari ST computer. I hand drew most of the lettering, slotted them all together with an animation program and transferred them to video. The last thing was the music - originally, I planned to make a proper soundtrack but decided against this due to lack of time. I chose Pink Floyd's 'Atom Heart Mother' because it seemed to fit in quite well. Most people seemed to like it but I think I could have done better.

## TC: Why did you use the bottom end of the film range rather than video?

PM: I prefer film, even Super 8, to video for quite a few reasons. Firstly, with video, there's very little atmosphere - the medium doesn't seem to 'distance' the viewer enough from what they're watching, it's

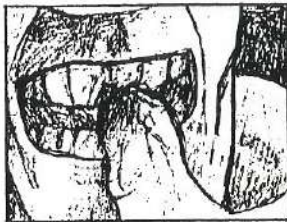
SCENE : 13



CUT TO FACE OF ZOMBIE BITING INTO THUMB. BLOOD SEEPS FROM IT'S MOUTH.

[SFX SEQUENCE ①(A)]

SCENE : 16



CUT TO CLOSE UP OF THUMB + MOUTH. ZOMBIE BITES DEEP INTO THUMB

[SFX SEQUENCE ①(B)]

SCENE : 17



CUT TO FACE OF ZOMBIE HOLDING HAND. HE BITES TOP OF THUMB OFF AND BLOOD SQUIRTS UNCONTROLLABLY FROM STUMP. (ZOMBIE STILL HOLDS HAND IN SAME PLACE.)

[SFX SEQUENCE ①(C)]





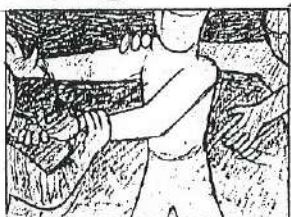
too much like being there which, I think, is not a good position for a film to be in. Also, the video medium flattens things out too much, reducing the feeling of depth. I found Super 8 a very worthwhile alternative, because it captures the atmosphere quite well, is easier to use and gives the whole thing a grainier, sleazier look that I quite liked. I've used video and although I'd hate to make a film with it, it does have it's advantages and can be very effective.

**TC: With the benefit of hindsight, would you do anything differently?**

PM: If I could do it again, I'd definitely need a better camera for better results. I'd leave all the scenes, etc as they are but maybe try a few more, different camera angles. I'd also try and get more help than I had with my first attempt!

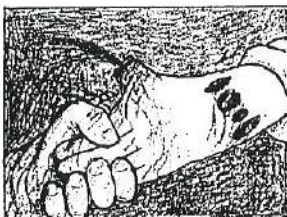
Next up for Paul is a series of 4 or 5 short Super 8 films, located in a range of places - the locations have been found and the storyboards are beginning to take shape. Once again, his father will be offering the initial finance but there's some distribution planned for this one, through a European company specialising in off-beat movies. The only problem, says Paul, is finding the time to make it, but he's sure of one thing - it'll be a million times better, even than **'Back From the Dead'!!**

SCENE : (18)



CUT TO SIDE VIEW. MAN #2 DESPERATELY TRIES TO PUSH ZOMBIE AWAY WHILE OTHER ZOMBIES ARRIVE AND GRAB HIM.

SCENE : (19)



CUT TO WRIST OF MAN #2. THE ZOMBIE STILL HOLDING THE ARM BEGINS TO PULL THE HAND AWAY AT THE WRIST (THIS HAPPENS VERY QUICKLY.)

[SFX SEQUENCE (2)(A)]



THE HAND IS PULLED OFF AND BLOOD GUSHES OUT OF THE STUMP.

# Escape To New York

On the Sunday, after more unhealthy American TV, it was check-out time. Managed to leave all the bags behind, a good thing, given the junk I'd accumulated, and headed towards the World Trade Centre. Took my life in my hands and went by subway - not so much because of muggers or anything like that (I kept an eye out for a dishevelled man with a wicker basket), just because the Subway is a lot better signposted internally.

After a visit to the New York equivalent of Psychotronic Videos, and a couple of posters plus an 'Ilsa, She-Wolf of the SS' t-shirt later, I attempted to comprehend the American phone system. It's highly bizarre - from a call box, you stick in a quarter, dial the number and chat to the person. Then, when you've put the phone down, if you need to put more money in, it dials you back and an electronic voice tells you how much more is needed. If you don't put it in, I believe it's charged to the person you were calling. Another problem is the lack of coins - if you're dialling internationally, as I was, you need an awful lot of quarters!

Went up top of the WTC and wandered round two sides admiring the view, taking pictures as I went. Unfortunately the open viewing gallery on the roof was closed, so I had to make do with pressing my nose up against the glass and squinting down - desperately attempting to see the ground (which logic, if very little else, told me had to be **somewhere** down there). Then **Bang!** the weather closed in and it started to snow - at least it was snowing at the top... at the bottom it was raining. It **chucked** it down - I don't think I've seen such *aggressive* rain before - which killed the plan to take the Staten Island Ferry and get a better view of the Statue of Liberty (although you could see it from the WTC, it was further away than I expected). Took shelter in a pizza parlour instead and gained a new appreciation of the word 'pizza'. Ordering three slices, I discovered it was totally unlike the **tiny**, tasteless, bland items sold in the UK - at a rough guess, each slice (an eighth of a full pizza) must have weighed about the same as a Pizza Hut 9" one. By the time I'd chewed my way through as much of it as I could cope with, the rain had stopped, and I wandered back up to the hotel and collected the bags.

In America, you tip everyone - barmen, waiters, porters, doormen, bell-boys, receptionists, etc, etc - and it's terribly easy to give them far too much money because the one-dollar bills are exactly the same size and colour as all the other denominations. A wallet belonging to someone of my cluttered nature rapidly loses any sense of order, so my normal tactic was to keep shovelling money at whoever I was paying, until they told me to stop. This was a little risky when dealing with taxi-drivers and other people of dubious moral virtue(!), which meant forward planning was essential.

Took a taxi to JFK airport, with the first really voluble NY cabbie I'd seen - all the others communicated in grunts, but this one expounded his view of life, the universe and everything in the 50 minute drive. Checked in, and discovered that JFK airport is even **duller** than Gatwick - got on with 'Silence of the Lambs'. On the plane back, my seat was next to an emergency exit, which meant more leg-room and also that I was sitting opposite a couple of the stewardesses but I was too busy worrying about why they get full harnesses while the passengers have to make do with wimpy lap belts. The film on the way back was 'Family Business', so I had no trouble drifting off to sleep.



Back here, the luck that supported me through five Inter-rails ran out. I was stopped by Customs. The limit on all goods from the US is only 35 quid, and let's say I was *pushing* the limit in books alone. After being reminded of the limits and asked if I'd packed the bags myself, the customs officer rooted through my bags and dragged out the Kinski autobiography. "Do you need this for your studies?", he asked. I embarked on a nervous lecture about KK, without going into details about my lust for his daughter. He flicked through the book, presumably looking for naughty pictures and returned it - fortunately, he didn't read any or I'd still be in custody... Now, despite feeling like I'd spent the weekend in a 50-storey glass-steel washing machine, I did enjoy it, bag men, Robo-cops, subways, mutant English and all. Some ways it wasn't as expected, in others it was; in any case it was one hell of an experience!

### 20 Films Set In New York City

#### Genre

Splash

Angel of Vengeance

King Kong

Q - the Winged Serpent

Gremlins 2

Inferno

Escape From New York

Rosemary's Baby

Taxi Driver

Ghostbusters

#### Non-Genre

Crocodile Dundee

Do the Right Thing

Wall Street

The Seven Year Itch

After Hours

Fort Apache, the Bronx

Every damn Woody Allen film

Cruisin'

Miracle on 34th Street

Serpico

### Joe Bob Goes Back to the Drive-In - Joe Bob Briggs (No British Publisher)

JB2 had this to say about sequels: "If you know what you're doing, the sequel can be *exactly the same movie* as the first one". Unfortunately, what he said about films is also true for books and this sequel (surprisingly not titled "Joe Bob Goes to the Drive-In II") is *exactly the same* as the original. Only less so. While the first book was a film column with odd bits about JB2, this one is little more than an ego trip for the author, with the reviews themselves being shortened or entirely missing in any given column, because someone took the rest of the space bragging about how he appeared in TCM 2, or whining about how said scene was removed from the final print.

Even the reviews themselves seem strangely subdued - although he does review 'Reform School Girls' & 'Gwendoline', he also does 'Rambo' & 'A Chorus Line' and the worrying thing is that they all gave *exactly the same* impression to this reader. There are still occasional flashes of the old Joe Bob, but as a rule of thumb these come when he is working with a well-known and loved film - I always feel that a critic should be able to convey enthusiasm for a film to an audience who know nothing about it and JB2 just doesn't do this.

The book gives the impression that this critic is now more important than the works he's reviewing, which is in it's own way just as hypocritical as the stars JB2 attacks, who put down their earlier movies in the exploitation field. Just about gone are the characters of red-neck Texas from the first book - in it place is some not particularly subtle 'satire' on world i.e. American events and mores. Overall, this book has to be regarded as a disappointment, with Joe Bob beginning to look distinctly like a one-hit wonder. One star, wait till it hits the bargain bookshops.





"For the mind to change and to understand more, the body will have to change"

----- David Cronenberg.

## THE FILMS OF DAVID CRONENBERG

# MUTANT CINEMA

While most films are about the changes that take place to a character or characters over a period of time, David Cronenberg's movies rarely restrict the alterations to the psychological or emotional. In almost every case, his heroes/heroines change physically, becoming mutated and abnormal, usually with tragic consequences - the mortality rate of his leading stars is closer to 100% than any other director.

The key phrase for Cronenberg's films is 'body horror'; the threat comes from within, rather than being an external threat as in monster movies. "My films are very body conscious", he said once and it can't be denied that biological change is the most pervasive themes in his work - others include the breakdown of civilization, sexual deviation and disease .

The causes of the mutations may be divided into two groups - we'll take one from each for further investigation later :

### Self-induced psychological

THE BROOD

DEAD RINGERS

THE DEAD ZONE

SCANNERS/STEREO

### Artificially induced physical

THE FLY

VIDEODROME

THEY CAME FROM WITHIN

RABID

These aren't clear-cut - a case could be made for putting '**Videodrome**' in the first section, as the film provides no evidence that Max Renn's experiences are really happening. However, the tumour initially responsible for the hallucinations IS artificially induced, though it could be considered minor compared to the massive 'mutations' which follow. Anyway, it offends my sense of order to have unequal halves!

Similarly, the physical/psychological barriers become blurred; mental problems slop over into the physical world in '**The Brood**' and '**Scanners**', and the reverse is true in '**Videodrome**'. Although the modifications generally prove ultimately disastrous, it's often the case that the sufferer/mutant can live with them initially, until an outside agency decides to interfere.

Enough general chat. let's get down to specifics, starting with a film that was critically slammed at release, yet crops up again and again these days on '10 Best' lists.

**Videodrome** (1982) - James Woods, Debbie Harry.

Max Renn (James Woods) runs a seedy TV station, Channel 83, and is on the lookout for some new shows. When his pet technofreak gives him some pirate tapes of a satellite transmission, he senses something new, even though the show, called Videodrome, is nothing more than torture and sadism. On a talk show he meets media guru, Brian O'Blivion and radio DJ Nicki Brand (Harry). He shows her the tape and she shows him some interesting tricks with a cigarette end, a needle and an ice-cube (not in the original video version - in an act of rank cowardice, CIC Video cut the film themselves 'just in case' it might be seized, and removed several 'offensive' sections. The sell-through version recently released is a hell of a lot better).



Max begins to suffer increasingly bizarre hallucinations - his TV becomes a living creature, corpses appear in his bed and his stomach develops a video-cassette shaped slot, in which he 'loses' a gun. He turns for help to Professor O'Blivion, only to find O'Blivion is dead - he exists only as a vast collection of video tapes, looked after by his daughter, Bianca (Sonja Smits). Meanwhile, Nikki has vanished, in search of the makers of Videodrome - that she's found them becomes clear when Max gets a tape showing HER torture.

Matters come to a head and Max discovers he's been the guinea pig in a bizarre mind control experiment. The tapes were NOT satellite broadcasts but were planted on him by his engineer - they contain a subliminal signal which causes the visions. He is 'programmed' to kill his colleagues at Channel 83, but after he has done this, Bianca helps him control the hallucinations and he destroys the people responsible before committing suicide.

Apologies for this lengthy synopsis, but no shorter one would make sense; you can't envisage anyone presenting a 25-word pitch on it to a coked-up studio executive. The film is astonishingly non-Hollywood - how many other films end with the hero blowing his brains out? But what is it all ABOUT? Let's take a few choice quotes, and see how much of my English O-grade teaching I can remember...

**"[ Videodrome ] has a philosophy, and THAT'S what makes it dangerous"**

The most obvious theme is the impact of television and other such media on the audience - I think Max Renn is meant to represent David Cronenberg, a comparison made explicit during one scene in an optician's when James Woods tries on a pair of Cronenberg-style glasses. The message is, it's not what you show that's important, it's the underlying meaning which counts, as against Channel 83's policy of showing anything likely to get an audience.

**"We're entering savage new times, and we're going to have to be pure and direct and strong if we're going to survive them"**

Cronenberg is worried about what happens when someone becomes unable to tell the difference between reality and fantasy - the hallucination sequences are played totally straight, with no clear border to give



the audience something to hold on to. It's especially worrying when 'reality' is being controlled by someone else - in this case, a multinational conglomerate, of uncertain right-wing mores, who discover the power of Videodrome while experimenting with night sights for soldiers (a fact not really made clear in the final cut of the film).

### **"To become the New Flesh, you first have to kill the old flesh"**

One of the many interesting side avenues to this video-eye view of the world is Bianca O'Blivion and the Cathode Ray Mission she runs. This is a pseudo-religious sect which gives down-and-outs the chance to watch TV; it helps "patch them back into the world's mixing board". The religious angle can be extended further - "I am my father's screen", says Bianca at one point and the relationship between her, the Professor (who exists only on tape) and Max Renn is almost a holy trinity of Virgin, Holy Spirit & Christ, with Christ/Renn dying yet expecting to rise again as the New Flesh.

### **"Television is reality, and reality is much less than television"**

Very little of our world view is based on personal experience. Beyond our immediate area, we rely on television, and have to take on faith that what it's showing us is actually happening. Simultaneously, all we see on TV are edited highlights, which means that most of our lives are less funny, exciting, scary, fast-moving, sexy and entertaining than an average evening on the network.

The entire movie is DEEP. And that perhaps is why it's appeal has taken so long to filter through. On one viewing, it's difficult to take everything in; given enough effort, however, it's one of the finest, most genuinely thought-provoking films of all time.

### **The Dead Zone (1983) - Christopher Walken, Brooke Adams, Tom Skerritt**

This was originally supposed to have been shot by Cronenberg before '**Videodrome**', but due to a mix-up, Lorimar (who had the rights at the time) offered it to another director as well as Cronenberg. Though



he lost out, that project was shelved - the option was sold to De Laurentis and happily, THEY took Cronenberg on.

It's based on a book by Stephen King, although the screenplay combines the three parallel views of the story in one. Walken plays Johnny Smith, who wakes from a five-year coma to discover he has the power to see incidents in peoples' pasts or future by touching them. Although he has misgivings, he lets the local sheriff (Skerritt) talk him into using this ability to help



track down a murderer. He succeeds, but the end result is further deaths (the gazebo where Smith has the vision of the murder became something of a cause celebre in the town. It was built for the film and a debate followed after shooting between those who wished to keep this architecturally correct prop and those who wanted to tear it down for the lumber. The former group won!).

The crunch comes when Smith shakes the hand of presidential candidate Greg Stillson (Martin Sheen), and sees a vision of him beginning World War III. Should he try to stop the man? After much thought, he decides to assassinate Stillson, despite the fact that his ex-girlfriend is helping in the campaign (she does play a bigger role in the film than this!). The attempt fails when Stillson snatches the girlfriend's baby and uses it as a shield, and Smith is shot, but as he lies there dying, he has a final vision, of Stillson's ruin and eventual suicide after pictures of the event are seen around the world.

In many ways, this isn't a standard Cronenberg film. Unlike his others, he didn't write the screenplay, although he did have a good amount of creative input. Despite this, and a lack of diseased sexuality, it still has some of the elements discussed above i.e. Smith is able to live with his 'gift', more or less happily, until people such as the sheriff come along to ask for his help.

Christopher Walken is pretty good as Smith - this film dates back to when his career was still above water - and the rest of the cast provide solid, if not outstanding, performances. The vision sequences are very effective; the start of World War III, with Stillson launching the ICBMs, is chilling stuff. "Hallelujah, the missiles are flying", he says with a smile.

King's movies are admittedly tough to film, the best results being where much of the wordy crap, for want of a better phrase, and dead characters are cut. Thus **'The Shining'** becomes an almost totally different story, and the same can be said of **'The Dead Zone'**, to quote scriptwriter Boam: "The book is not structured for film, it rambles". Hence, the removal of various sundry subplots and characters.

The effects in **'The Dead Zone'** are rather subdued when compared to almost all his other films, or at least it's restricted to relatively mundane things such as fires and blood squibs. One scene that did fall foul of the video censor came when the murderer sought by Smith commits suicide by falling face-first onto an open pair of scissors - only the after effects are shown, in a brief flash, but even that had to be excised. Note for trivia buffs : the effects crew on the movie included the daughter of Martin Scorsese, Cathy.

Probably Cronenberg's most mainstream and accessible film to date, it gives us perhaps the best example of the mutant as hero, another popular theme of his. If the results of the #1 horror film director making a film based on the #1 horror novel author aren't everything we hoped, it could certainly have been a whole lot worse.



MUTANT CINEMA

**Trials of Traci** (Jerry Ross) - Traci Lords, Jamie Gillis, Ginger Lynn.

"Traci Lords, Americas top adult star looks stunning in a film that has everything including a host of beautiful women" --- Video box blurb.



# SLEAZE CITY

I didn't want to buy this video, honest. I was forced into it. Y'see, last year I made the mistake of joining the Britannia Video Club, seduced by their three-films-for-a-tenner offer. I did notice the you-must-buy-three-videos-per-year clause, but thought they'd surely have three films I wanted in twelve months.

Wrong. Coming to the end of my first year, having bought precisely NO films, I decided I might as well get a couple of movies I'd probably be too embarrassed to buy from a shop - '**Trials of Traci**' and '**Emmanuelle 5**' (see below) were the most intriguing of the two so I sent off my form and the tapes duly arrived. So, does it live up to the description. No, it doesn't have "everything". There no cyborgs, car chases, zombies, aspidistras, microwave

ovens or (what else can I see from where I'm sitting?) word processors. This is no great problem. What might be considered a problem is the lack of plot, believable characters, good acting and exciting direction - except, of course, you don't buy this sort of video for those sort of things. And the BBFC have done their damndest to reduce the amount of what you did buy it for - the '18' rated version sold by Britannia comes in at eleven minutes less than the '18R' version, and even that was cut.

The story is definitely reminiscent of '**Splash**' - a mermaid (Miss Lords) goes up onto the land to try and find a lover. Her landfall is in a naturist reserve where she falls in love with one of the residents, Jack (Gillis) whom she follows around on his sexual exploits. At some point she's befriended by some female residents (one second she's wandering around alone, the next she's happily swimming with them, tail & all - clearly, "befriending mermaids" is something the BBFC comes down heavily on), and there's a baddie who wants to capture Traci and use her for financial gain. Naturally, this is an ecologically sound porno film, and the mermaid eventually escapes to the sea, taking Jack with her; fortunately, if a little mysteriously, he becomes a merman or it could have been the shortest romantic liason on record.



All of the above, naturally, is an excuse for lots of flesh, both male and female. This is a bit of a shame, as the most memorable moments aren't when some nondescript airhead is taking her clothes off (not Traci, who has more charisma and acting ability than the rest put together) but result from the mermaid's attempts to learn/speak English. "What's this? It's a pussy. Say it - pussy", says one of Traci's friends. "Poo-see", replies Traci, eager to learn. Another slightly amusing scene has Traci listening to a couple making love and using the phrases overheard to simultaneously carry on a conversation.

Directorially, it's not impressive. There's one visual idea in the whole 53 minutes, with a shadow of two naked actresses (and I use the term loosely - with their clothes on they could be used as bookshelves, but they fake a mean, and very noisy, orgasm) being cast onto a wall. That this totally contradicts the lighting in the rest of the scene is irrelevant - it's an idea, and it's presence should be welcomed without carping about trivia like the laws of physics...

The cuts are never particularly subtle - the most noticeable of them has a man getting up from a chair, then <CLICK> next frame, he's sandwiched between the two bimbos mentioned above. What's left is a great deal of breast-nibbling and fondling, a fair amount of 'poo-see' and the occasional willy, but only if, shall we say, it resembles last week's green salad. Odd how vascular pressure can make something obscene. Plenty of female orgasms, no male ones - it's a tough life for us blokes in the BBFC approved universe.

If it weren't for the presence of Traci Lords (who deserves to be a major international star) this film wouldn't have a great deal to recommend it. I may be old-fashioned, but I still prefer my lingerie to be wrapped round a plot, as well as a pack of nubile actresses. This one won't be replacing 'Gwendoline' in the archives, tho' I may find a use for bits when I do the next unofficial Transvision Vamp promo...

### **Emmanuelle 5** (Walerian Borowczyk) - Monique Gabrielle.

Discovering who the director of this film is was a little like finding out David Cronenberg had signed up to do 'Friday the 13th Part IX'. Borowczyk has in the past been responsible for some of the most originally depraved films ever made in the genre - '**Within Convent Walls**' is the most viciously anti-religious film I've ever seen, depicting as it does all religious figures as insane, sexually perverse, or both and '**The Beast**' is probably even more warped. It was thus somewhat of a surprise to find him directing this sequel to a sequel to a sequel, but the end result still bears the unmistakable hallmarks of a truly deviant mind.

Emmanuelle (Gabrielle - see also '**The Incredibly Bad Film Show**') is at Cannes promoting her latest torrid movie, 'Love Express' when she meets and has an affair with a rich industrialist, Charles Foster (who seems to be the son of a Howard Hughes figure). Then, she is kidnapped by Prince Rashid of Bengalistan (!) and added to his harem. Mr Foster isn't standing for that, and mounts a rescue...

None of which sounds startlingly original. The execution, however, is well weird, giving the impression of having stumbled into someone else's wet dream. Closeups of object, both inanimate and female, spatter every sequence in Borowczyk's usual way. Long sequences don't make a great deal of sense at the time, adding nothing to the plot and often occurring totally out of order. Even the story has weird and wonderful twists - the last five minutes has Emmanuelle convincing Charles to try and fly the plane his father built



(the Heron, which is close enough to Howard Hughes' Spruce Goose). The plane crashes, Emmanuelle escaping by parachute just before it blows up (the explosion is intermingled with shots of Emmanuelle's naked body).

Borowczyk hasn't mellowed his religious views in his old age - this time, it's Hinduism that gets stick for encouraging a sheep-like mentality and treating women like chattels. Other blasts suggest the Cannes festival has become a vipers' nest of corruption and hangers-on and that the US military is at the beck and call of the wealthy. This isn't your usual one-sex-scene-every-five-minutes dirty movie.

The characters are still fairly flimsy, admittedly, tho' much of this may be Borowczyk assuming that if we don't know enough about Emmanuelle from the first four films, we can't be all that interested. Not a great deal of acting is required from anyone, another common Borowczyk fault since he seems to believe it'll distract us from the more visual elements. And since you need all your concentration to work out what's happening, he may have a point. Still, Monique Gabrielle does what is necessary and she is pretty, in less of the airbrushed Barbie doll way than I expected.

It suffered a little at the hands of the BBFC, losing 2:41 minutes to give a running time of 76 minutes, less than 4% cut (compare **'Trials of Traci'**, approaching five times that), and the staccato nature of the film means that often the soundtrack jumping is the only clue to the cuts. It still occasionally was obvious, most notably a scene in the harem when Emmanuelle helps a prospective (coerced) wife to lose her virginity, with the aid of a rolled up towel. Can't say I'm overly distressed by having missed that.

How it compares to others in the series I can't say, since I haven't seen them, but **'Emmanuelle 5'** is odd, intriguing, artistic, confusing and erotic by turns, well photographed and high-grade stuff overall. It's certainly more evidence that the French possess a certain *je ne sais quoi* when it comes to depicting sex as more than a clinical exercise and imbuing it with classical beauty.

#### Monique Gabrielle filmography (Alun Fairburn)

- 1984 **Hard to Hold**  
**Bachelor Party**  
**Hot Moves**
- 1985 **Deathstalker 2**
- 1986 **Screen Test**
- 1987 **Weekend Warriors**  
**Amazon Women on the Moon**
- 1988 **Emmanuelle 5**  
**Not of this Earth**

# SLEAZE CITY



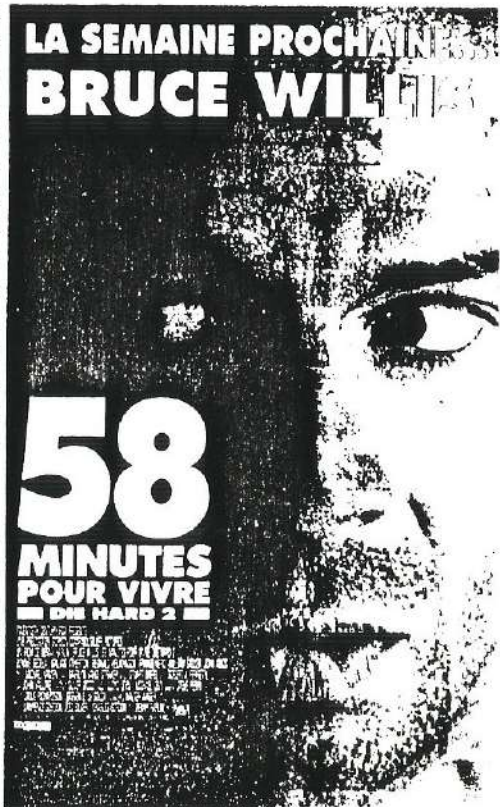
# Film Blitz

**China O'Brien** (Richard Clouse) - Cynthia Rothrock, the star of this film, isn't very pretty and she can't act for peanuts. However, she is 97 times World Terminal Karate Champion, or some such stuff and is thus perfectly suited for this picture, where kicking ass is the order of the day. Her father is a Sheriff, killed by some Bad Guys and Cynthia takes over his job. Fill in the rest yourself, it's not hard. Nice fight sequences, but why is every blow accompanied by a sound like a wardrobe smashing? 5/10.

**Cyclone** (Fred Olen Ray) - Not one of Fred's better ones, despite a promising start with Jeffrey Coombs as the inventor of a super-duper, top secret motorbike. Unfortunately, he is killed early on (too expensive for old F.O.R. no doubt), leaving his girlfriend to try and save the bike from all the baddies after it. She's played by Heather Thomas; whatever her considerable attributes might be, acting isn't anywhere on the list. Only a couple of nice car stunts at the end, and Heather getting 30 Amps through her thighs, made this anything above not-very-good. 3/10.

**Die Hard 2** (Renny Harlin) - If ever a film was damned by it's budget, this is it - every second you see on the screen cost over \$10,000 and there is no way any film can live up to that. It's a gallant attempt though. "Ten men went to blow, went to blow some airplanes" and only good ol' Brooce can stop them, armed with stealth, cunning and enough weaponry to take on Iraq. Definitely the highest death toll of any movie this year, thanks to 200+ people in a crashed jet, not to mention the first recorded case of icicle violence (reduced to get the '15' rating, I think!). Mindless, totally implausible and no attempt at any characterisation whatsoever, but suddenly, half way through, I realised I was enjoying it. From then on, I was happy - still not a patch on the first one. 7/10.

**Gremlins 2** (Joe Dante) - Incredibly cute, awesomely cuddly and impossible to resist taking to bed with you. But enough of Phoebe Cates, what about the movie? Like all sequels, it attempts to be bigger than the original and it certainly succeeds - no more smalltown America. Mogwai is in a New York genetic lab at the top of a skyscraper and before you can say 'bright lights!' (in a high-pitched voice), he's had a shower and exploded into thousands of you-know-whats.



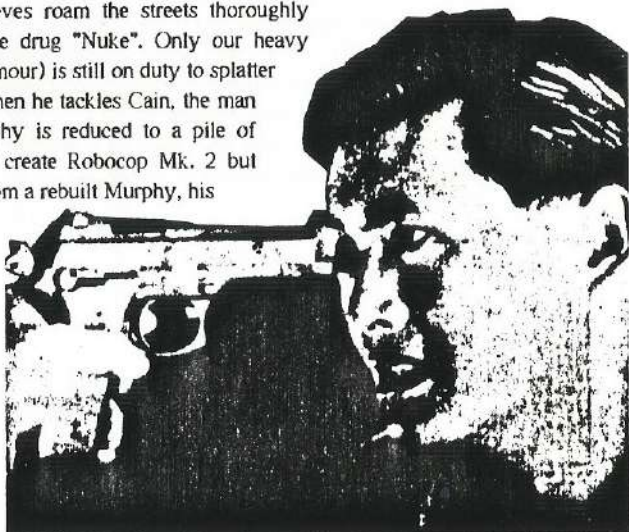


Courtesy of the genetic lab, they rapidly mutate to produce bat-lins, brany-lins and even a fem-lin and then things start to get really silly, culminating in a large musical number in the skyscraper foyer. Galligan and Cates return as the stars, but yet again the FX win: jaw-droppingly effective. And add Christopher Lee, too many film jokes to mention, office satire and Bugs Bunny. Awesome. 8/10.

**The Killer** (John Woo) - Trailers for this were shown at Shock 4 & Black Sunday 3, piquing my curiosity enough to go and see this Hong Kong cop thriller about an assassin who goes on one last job to pay for an operation to salvage the sight of a cute singer, whom he accidentally blinded in a gun-battle. Sweet, huh? However, 130, count 'em, people get shot - this excludes those beaten up, blown up, crashed up, stabbed and the unfortunate bystander who suffers a fatal coronary! In between these bursts of beautifully portrayed ultra-violence, are saccharine-sweet interludes straight out of Mills and Boon which give it all a surreal air and were, to this novice, hysterically funny. Given the high body count, it has a very coy attitude to nudity - a girl is shot in the chest and taken to hospital where the doctor staunches the wound by sticking the bandage down her dress! 7/10.

**Linnea Quigley's Horror Workout Video** (who cares?) - The purpose of this film is perfectly clear, to give adolescent American boys something to jerk off to in their bedrooms. Unfortunately, I don't have a video in my room, so I can't tell you if it succeeds in this aim, but I suppose you might enjoy this as a film if you like the sight of Ms. Quigley rubbing her crotch against a carpet, leading some zombies in an aerobics session or having four friends (combined IQs brushing double figures - it's very much a case of 'the bell is ringing, but Mr. Intelligence is not at home') over for a slumber i.e. lingerie party. Directed with a frightening lack of skill or imagination, just a single-minded obsession centred on Linnea's naughty bits. Now, a Winona Ryder Workout Video I could go for... 1/10.

**Robocop 2** (Irvin Kershner) - part sequel, part remake, all action; 'Robocop 2' is superbly-engineered comicbook-styled entertainment, that more than makes up for it's lack of originality with wall-to-wall violence and relentless pacing. The Detroit police force is on strike (again!) and social order is breaking down as gangs of murderous thieves roam the streets thoroughly freaked out on the highly addictive drug "Nuke". Only our heavy metal hero (Peter Weller, back in armour) is still on duty to splatter gangsters over the sidewalks but when he tackles Cain, the man behind Nuke, the cybernetic Murphy is reduced to a pile of rubble. OCP initiate a program to create Robocop Mk. 2 but after Cain gets his come-uppance from a rebuilt Murphy, his brain is transplanted into the new creature which proceeds to go on the rampage. A dazzling visual treat for action movie fans with some brilliant effects by Phil Tippett and Rob Bottin. The screenplay by Frank Miller & Walon Green is crammed full of movie references (Frankenstein to King Kong) and comic culture themes.



"Say Cheese" - The Killer

There are faults: the characters are mere cyphers and some of the illogical events, where commonsense is abandoned for the sake of narrative expediency and superheroeic vigour, do tend to be a little distracting. It lacks any of the humanist concerns of Verhoeven's original, replacing that film's erudite sub-text with the unsophisticated nature of pulp adventure. Excellent as graphic actioners go, but negligible as science-fiction. 9/10. (TL)

**Robot Jox** (Stuart Gordon) - See how the mighty are fallen. Difficult to believe the director of the all-time classic **'Re-Animator'**, the pretty-damn-good **'From Beyond'**, and the not-bad **'Dolls'** can be responsible for this live-action Transformers movie. Perhaps something was lost in the crash of Empire Pictures. After WW III, international disputes are settled by giant robots battling it out, controlled by men in their heads (remote control not being conducive to the plot, I assume). After an accident kills 300 spectators, the US champion, Achilles (yes, it's US vs USSR - passe or what?) retires, only to be dragged back for a last battle. Any guesses as to the outcome? The FX are more realistic than the acting, and in the future, you'll be glad to know white boiler suits are in. 3/10.

**Special Effects** (Larry Cohen) - One of the best psychological thrillers I've seen in a long time, has Zöe Tamarlis playing an actress, murdered by a director (Eric Bogosian), who films the event and uses it as a basis for his next film, getting the murdered woman's husband to play the murdered woman's husband, and an actress, played by Zöe Tamarlis, in the role of the victim. Then art starts imitating life... Inventive and gripping, with Tamarlis giving both characters depth, and Cohen's direction keeping the viewer locked in their seat. Is it real or is it Memorex? Who cares, when the result is this good! 9/10.



Phoebe Cates: Not to be smeared with black cherry yoghurt after midnight.

**Total Recall** (Paul Verhoeven) - Four directors, innumerable rewrites and \$63 million after starting, the most-expensive-movie-ever-made arrives. Was it worth it? First of all, forget the Philip K. Dick story: this was "inspired" by it but you'd have as much ground for claiming **'Robocop'** or **'Commando'** were the base sources. All the subtle nuances and disquieting paranoia goes out the window, except where it allows Arnie to blow up a few people/objects/vehicles, and you're left with a generally predictable story. Characterization is next to non-existent as far as Schwarzenegger goes - he plays the same character as in his previous movies, dumb and tough with a basically good heart. Yet it is one hell of an action pic - Paul Verhoeven could make **'Brookside'** a tense and gripping drama so given the large amounts of pyrotechnics available here, he's on home territory. Michael Ironside, as the chief violent opposition for



Arnie, is psychotically vicious and delivers the groceries. Overall, the film does so too - in terms of FX, sets and nice touches to give the future some substance you'll not see better this year, but I was sorta hoping for something more than 'Rambo on Mars'. 7/10.

**Wild at Heart** (David Lynch) - Judging from the furere round this one, I was expecting 'Dawn of the Dead' crossed with 'Debbie Does Dallas'. It's not, despite some messy bits that suggest Peter Jackson was a second unit director. Nicholas Cage and Laura Dern are Sailor and Lula, lovers who run off, pursued by a detective and a vicious hit man, both unleashed by Lula's vengeful mother. Lynch keeps his audience on their toes by spraying fragments from 'The Wizard of Oz' left & right and throwing in disconcerting sequences that would get laughed off screen anywhere else - it's all played with straight faces for most of the time. The occasional flash of genius succeeds in lighting up the movie like the fires which punctuate it and it's often these seeming irrelevancies that are most chilling, as when the lovers come across a car accident and are forced to watch one of the passengers die, but it lacks a really powerful central performance to hold the whole thing together. A flawed diamond. 8/10.

**Xtro** (Harry Bromley Davenport) - Small kid sees father abducted by UFO - no-one believes him. Then, some time later, Dad comes back. Or is it really an extra-terrestrial with strange desires? Three guesses! Interesting British horror/sci pic takes a while to warm up, though when it does, it belies it's low budget and scarcely world-famous cast and pulls off one top-notch sequence that will make you look askance at Action Man for a long time to come. Includes Maryam 'The Living Daylights' d'Abo as an au-pair and when she does take her clothes off, which has to be worth a few minutes of anyone's time... 7/10.

## Film Blitz

**Stop Press Darkman** (Sam Raimi) - It looks like our Sam has finally proved he can make a successful film without the words 'Evil' and 'Dead' in the title; has he sold out to join the Hollywood gravy-train? In a word, "No". While this movie has elements which could be compared to 'Robocop', 'Phantom of the Opera' and, of course, 'Batman', it produces something totally distinct, individual and really quite wonderful. The hero, played by Liam Neeson, is Peyton Westlake, a chemist developing artificial skin whose fiancée (Frances McDormand) comes across a memo which implicates her boss, property developer Louis Strack (Colin Friels) in corruption and graft. Strack sends in the heavies, who blow up Westlake's lab, leaving him hideously burned and barely alive. He escapes from the hospital where he's been treated (beats me why he'd want to do this when he has Jenny Agutter for a nurse!) and recreates his laboratory. He uses the artificial skin to make masks, which are then used to impersonate members of Strack's mob to try and bring the evil empire down, or allow him to rejoin his fiancée - temporarily, as unfortunately the skin only lasts 99 minutes before melting into sludge.

It all builds to a climax on top of a skyscraper, licking 'Batman' into a cocked hat, before the usual sequel-open ending. And it beats that obvious comparison in almost every other area too - the plot is far more coherent, justification being given for almost every detail, the acting is solid if unexceptional and the effects (with the exception of some shaky back-projection) look a lot better than they should given the budget. But, as in all his other films, the direction overshadows almost everything else - only Raimi could get away with a point-of-view shot for a riple! There is one sequence involving a helicopter which is just jaw-dropping and other scenes leave you with the breath ripped out of your lungs. It's not really violent or gory; the most squirm-inducing scenes all involve fingers (I'll leave the interpretation to the psychologists out there). It is tense, exciting and tremendously entertaining - if the rest of Hollywood could show as much imagination per dollar, the whole world would be trading in their TV sets. 9/10.

# Toxic Shock Syndrome

"Whenever two or three horror fans are gathered together in my name, they will hold a festival, and the name of the festival shall be **Shock Around the Clock**"

----- The Book of Jaworzyn, Chapter 13, Verse 10.

Four hours before the doors opened up, people were already queueing up for the most eagerly anticipated event since whatever-the-last-eagerly-anticipated-event-was. Not that I was here at 8 am, I only asked someone at the front. Having spent 30 minutes trying to find somewhere to park, the editors of TC and '**Sludgefeast**' arrived about ten to eleven, joining the advance party dropped off earlier to hold a place in the queue. Some frantic competitive 'zine selling to the bored masses in the queue followed, honours ending about even, though I wasted half the income thus obtained buying other bits and pieces. I had just sold to the back of the queue when the doors opened and we were allowed into the new venue of the Electric cinema on Portobello Road.

The opening film was Roger Corman's '**Frankenstein Unbound**', based on the book by Brian Aldiss. In it, Dr. Buchanan (John Hurt) is sent back in time to 19th century Switzerland, where Byron, Shelley & Mary Godwin are having their notorious party on the shores of Lake Geneva, and Something is killing local livestock and people. It will come as no surprise to learn of the presence of a Dr. Frankenstein... It's typical Corman hokum, enjoyable in a mindless way, but every time it starts getting momentum going, it manages to screw things up - the worst case of this is having Michael Hutchence, lead singer of INXS and Kylie's 'friend', playing Shelley (sorry, Cathy!). The audience found him highly amusing. Large amounts of picturesque pseudo-Swiss scenery (it was shot in Italy) give it a slight travelogue air - overall, it just about works thanks to some nice touches on the monster and imaginative use of optical effects.

Next up was '**Blue Steel**', reviewed in TC5 (I must admit the audience here seemed to like it more than I did), but preceded by a BBFC certificate, which provoked loud jeers from the audience. For some reason, this annoyed Stefan Jaworzyn, who came on afterwards and ticked us off in a pretty condescending manner - he seemed to think we were booing the film, when I, and I assume most people, were showing dislike for the BBFC. In any case, his reaction was a bit much given co-organiser Alan Jones' quote in Time Out: "**We do not show certificated or cut versions**". This was a lie, as '**Nightbreed**' was definitely censored. Now, to be fair, I've always found both organisers very helpful and friendly in any personal dealings I've had with them, but they are perceived by many as egotistic and superior, not wanting to be regarded as one of the 'fans'. This is a shame - with the access to films and guests they have already, if Shock could borrow the attitude of Black Sunday they'd have one hell of a festival. As it is, they don't seem too bothered after the event sells out. End of polemic, back to the films.

The first real treat of the festival came on next - a preview reel for '**Highlander 2 - the Quickening**'. Always difficult to get an accurate impression of such things, but it looks very expensive and very impressive. Set in 2024, after the collapse of the ozone layer, it stars Lambert and Connery again - how the latter fits in is unsure, given his demise in the original and his non-appearance in the promo reel - battling against Michael Ironside.

Every festival has its dog, and Shock's was the next film, '**Carnival of Souls**'. Made in 1962, before 90% of the audience was born, this newly-printed print may well be slavered over by the art-house horror



crowd for things like 'subtle black & white cinematography' and 'eerie, atmospheric restraint'. I found it dull, repetitive and almost totally predictable - imagine a Herschell Gordon Lewis film without the gore, and the acting toned down to the mediocre and you get my impression. Under different circumstances, I might have enjoyed it, but not here - I'd rather watch modern crap than antique crap!

I could cope with it, however, biding my time for **'Miracle Mile'**, originally dropped but reinstated when the reaction at Black Sunday was so good. This film has provoked total unanimity across all audiences - again, undoubtedly the hit of the festival and I have yet to hear anyone say they find it less than superb. Personally, I found it even better on a second viewing - the beginning dragged less and the ending was more harrowing this time, knowing the outcome in advance. All I can do is repeat the advice given last time: go and see it.

Clive Barker swept in, signed a few autographs, charmed the audience by making totally slanderous and 100% unprintable comments about Margaret Thatcher, and swept out, leaving us to watch **'Nightbreed'**. Based on **'Cabal'**, it bombed in the States, thanks to an advertising campaign that made it look like a stalk 'n' slasher but it is, more accurately, a monster movie - 200 or so of them, courtesy of some very impressive Image Animation work. It takes a little while to really get going, but it gradually builds up a large head of steam. This is more thanks to a surprisingly good performance from David Cronenberg, than the hero and heroine, who struck me as a little unconvincing. I enjoyed it - Barker said he was going for the atmosphere of the Hammer films, a slightly claustrophobic, set-filmed atmosphere, and I reckon he succeeded.

A welcome break followed, and then Dario Argento arrived, via a side door to avoid the massed hordes of his worshippers. He got up on stage, said a few words in his limited English and was then lost to view for half an hour under a scrum of autograph-hunters. I went to the toilet. Came back in time for **'Two Evil Eyes'**, a co-production between Argento and zombie-meister George Romero, with each directing a story 'inspired by' Edgar Allen Poe. Romero's was first, and was a little disappointing - his strengths are in plot and characters, almost the opposite of Argento's, and it needed more inspired directing to kick some life into a story that could have come from **'Tales of the Unexpected'**: a wife and her lover bumping off the husband to collect his inheritance, only to find him returning from beyond the grave. Scarcely novel stuff. The second half was Argento's, with "The Black Cat". Now, my feelings about Argento should be well known to you, but in all fairness, I have to say I liked this quite a lot. Although, again, the plot is an old one - a man kills his wife and walls up her corpse - it had some new twists, lots of typically flashy camerawork and more than enough gore, a substance strangely lacking up to now at the festival.

**'Hardware'** came in at no.6, see last issue for details - although audience opinion on it was definitely mixed. I still find it an astonishing film given the miniscule budget (less than a million pounds), and the relative inexperience of Richard Stanley, the director. He's only 24, give him twenty more years and he could be up there with Argento. Unfortunately, it looks like the film will be heavily cut, losing about 10 minutes, in the States anyway, after the distributors and censors have had their wicked way with it.

No such problems with the next film, because it has no distributor in the UK and is unlikely to get one, since it would be shredded by the BBFC. Mind you, if **'Bad Taste'** can get through, maybe Peter Jackson and the censors share a sense of humour, in which case his latest epic, **'Meet the Feebles'**,

might yet be seen. It's loosely based on **'The Muppets'**, with a troupe of puppets struggling to put on a variety show but there, the similarity ends, as Jackson gleefully slaughters every taboo within reach in a plot that would take several pages to summarise. You've got walruses having sex with pussycats, a junkie crocodile who's a 'Nam vet to boot (lovely flashback sequence), a shit-eating fly gutter journalist, a rat who makes porno movies (while selling smack to the croc on the side), a rabbit with AIDS, an elephant fighting a paternity suit brought by a chicken and a psycho hippo. Despite occasional weak points, it's astonishingly inventive, wonderfully stupid and unbelievably gross, another cult classic in the making.

**'Maniac Cop II'** - zzzzzzzzzzzz..... And I think most other people chose this one to catch up on a few winks, in preparation for **'Leatherface - Texas Chainsaw Massacre III'** (I wasn't the only person to look at the program and wonder what film 'Acre III' was, not having noticed it was merely the leftover from 'Texas Chainsaw Mass-' on the previous line!). Directed by Jeff Burr of **'The Stepfather'**, it's far better than the flaccid TCM II, returning to the spirit of the original, while fortunately dispensing with the flares. A couple driving through Texas encounter the family of cannibals, now extended to include a mother and a young daughter (that's another child who'll grow up totally warped!), and come off second best, at least initially. A healthy nasty streak runs through it, and it's another one you are unlikely to see here, although I believe the Scala are planning to show it.

And that was that, for another year. 20½ hours, 10 films, virtually all of them worthwhile at least for one viewing and we departed, leaving behind some vaguely miffed staff looking at the rubbish generated by keeping 450 people in a small space for 24 hours. The decision to move it to the Electric was a mixed blessing, the seats did have slightly more leg-room and the sound system was definitely better, but the place got far too hot very quickly and there was a lack of room to stand around and chat between, or even during, films. All in all, a worthwhile weekend, even if at £25 they're in danger of pricing themselves out of the market.

**HARDWARE**<sup>18</sup>





# A CHAT WITH DARIO

Some think Dario Argento is God, some think he's got a bad attitude when it comes to sex-violence but all agree he's one of the most influential and inventive horror film directors of our time. Recently, he spoke to TC's man in Europe, Roman Guttinger, in Profondo Rosso, the film shop he owns in Rome:

**TC: Two weeks ago, you were in London at 'Shock Around the Clock'. Did you like it and was it your first time in London?**

DA: I've been to England before, I've got a lot of friends there but it's quite a long time since I was last there. Yes, I enjoyed it. It's definitely important to talk to my fans, it's always interesting to hear their criticisms - some of them even make suggestions and tell me what they like...!

**TC: You presented 'Two Evil Eyes' at the festival, your latest movie which you did with George Romero. You worked with him on 'Dawn of the Dead'. Now, 11 years later you've done another. Do you like working with him?**

DA: George is an old friend of mine and so I enjoy working with him. We have a similar taste - we have a lot in common. That doesn't mean that our films are similar: on the contrary, we film totally differently, but our 'visions' are close together.

**TC: I heard he offered you another movie, but you didn't want to do it. Why?**

DA: Yes, the budget was too high. I don't like to work on too big projects - I can't do what I want to when I always have to care about the money. Anyway, at the moment I'm rather busy, I'm producing Michelle Soavi's 'La Secta' and next year I'm going to direct a movie in the States.

**TC: What can you tell us about these two projects?**

DA: 'La Secta' starts in the 16th century where you see a sect carrying out gruesome ceremonies. Then in the present day you see the sect still exists, practicing their unholy rituals. They wait for an important day - during the movie, the spectator realises what this special day is... Sergio Stivaletti [ 'Demons', 'The Church', etc ] is again doing the effects - there's one especially good effect with a very big bird. I can't tell you a lot about the other project next year. I can just say that Dennis Etchinson will be the co-writer for the script. He's quite famous in the States. The movie will be in the style of 'Tenebrae' and 'Opera', more mystery than pure horror like 'Demons'.

**TC: You also want to do some more short stories inspired by Edgar Allen Poe.**

DA: Yes, next year I'll be doing some shows for Italian TV. Tom Savini, with whom I worked on 'Two Evil Eyes' will do the special make-up effects again.

**TC: Why do you think the US and British rating boards cut your movies so heavily? 'Day of the Dead' or 'Re-Animator' for example are much bloodier than your pictures.**

DA: I really don't know why, it gives me a headache when I think about it... Most of the cut scenes don't contain violence, just dialogue. They destroy my whole work!! I think probably they don't respect foreign movies, they don't try to discuss with foreign film-makers about censorship because it's too far away. So they take the simplest course and cut the movies.

**TC: Have you had any problems in Italy with the censors?**

DA: When I'm making movies for Italian television, I sell them my pictures and they cut out what they think isn't possible to show on TV. For the TV companies it means money - the earlier they can show it, the more money they earn! when I sell them the rights to my pictures, they can do whatever they choose.

**TC: What about your popularity in Italy - when you walk through Rome, do the people recognise you? And do you like it when they start talking to you?**

DA: Yes, every day some people start talking to me, but I think it's ok. It makes me proud, finally here's my 'earnings' that people like my pictures. The people here in Rome aren't watching me like a star, more like a friend. "Ciao, Dario, how are you?", things like that.

**TC: You've got one Profondo Rosso shop in Rome and another in Ferrara [near Bologna]. Was Forbidden Planet in London an inspiration for your shop?**

DA: Yes, I know F.P and I wanted to have something similar in Italy. I also wanted to have some sort of meeting point for horror fans here in Italy. Luigi Cozzi [ aka Lewis Coates, director of 'Contamination', etc ] and I are going to open another store in Milano around November 1990. It'll be the biggest shop and there will be upstairs a museum of some of my movies. It'll be the same style as my other shops, just twice as big. But first there will be the official opening of the P.R. shop in Ferrara on the 6th of October. It's been open since the beginning of August, but we're having a party for everyone who's interested in it that Saturday. We'll have some special effects performances and... you'll see!

**TC: I heard there are plans for a Profondo Rosso magazine.**

DA: At the moment it's just a project but we hope that the first issue will be out in November 1990. Most of it will be comic strips inspired by my movies.

**TC: "Suspiria Strikes Back"?**

DA: [ laughing ] Yes, something like that! But there will be reviews of the latest horror-movies too.

**TC: Will there ever be a real third 'Demons' film? In Britain, they released a movie called 'Demons 3: The Ogre' by Lamberto Bava, but it's just one of his TV-productions.**

DA: Yes, it has nothing to do with a sequel to the movies. Actually 'La Chiesa' [ The Church ] should have been the third movie, but after I and II I changed my distributor and they didn't want to make sequels so they changed the script and took out all the demon sequences. So 'Demons III' died.

**TC: Do you have a lot of contact with other Italian directors like Bava or Fulci?**

DA: I've a lot of contact with Lamberto Bava because he's also a friend of mine but I've no contact with Fulci. I like his old movies more than the new ones - they aren't my cup of tea!

**TC: Which directors do you admire most in general?**

DA: [ thinking ]... There are just two - Fritz Lang and Alfred Hitchcock.



**TC: I've heard you're a vegetarian. Is that true, and if so, why?**

DA: Yes, it's true - I'm a vegetarian because I don't like the idea of killing animals. I could never arrange it with my conscience!

**TC: So what do you think of the cannibal movies which contain real animal killing?**

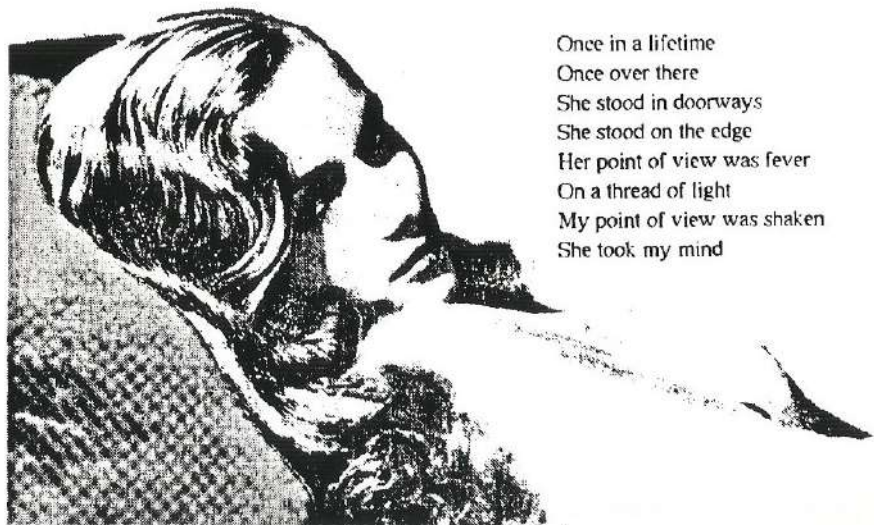
DA: I don't like them, they are disgusting! It's sick when they show the slaughter of innocent animals. It's the same with the child porn movies - disgusting, I could never do that!!



## Nightmares 7: Elektra Descending

She walked in a pool of light.

It tracked her perfectly, the endless battle between light and shade waged over her form - waxing and waning lakes of cream flowed across fields of blue velvet as her muscles bulged and smoothed away. She walked with the power and finesses of a Kung Fu extra on rice paper, with the patience of a Highgate angel. Every nerve ending in my skin applauded electrically, currents of heat and pain washed over my back, shorting across the sweat that formed like dew. An impossible breeze cooled me to the core, but I was already frozen.



Once in a lifetime  
Once over there  
She stood in doorways  
She stood on the edge  
Her point of view was fever  
On a thread of light  
My point of view was shaken  
She took my mind

I had just stepped out the back door of the joint into the alley - cool, dark and only slightly less full of boxes, bins, cans and abandoned Skodas than Janet Street-Porter's mouth was full of teeth. There are still a few pubs in London that haven't been turned into groovy wine bars, mock Edwardian railway stations or yuppie clone-zones, and this wasn't one of them. Though there had to be a seriously pressing reason why I was here, it's importance was rapidly diminishing in the face of two dangerously strange facts. I was watching the personification of Lust in a dress walk past, and the world was starting to career about like a turbocharged rollercoaster on the way to the Chemists.

Jeez, that last Bushmills tasted like a hippopotamus's underarm deodorant. I watched a guy in a trenchcoat sway alarmingly, teetering on the brink of gravity's domain, tracing a Mandelbrot with his arms. I don't know what he was on, but I'd have some of that and so would my parrot. Call me Finn. Mickey Finn.

The parrot on my shoulder guffawed like a Victorian clown marionette, scratchy and repetitive, mocking me through a Doctor Who sound effects echo. The angel seemed sublimely oblivious to the sudden plasticity in the local space-time continuum. My mother wouldn't like what I was thinking, but I figured there wasn't a lot of point doing something if your mother did like it. I tried to call after her, but my

words came out in Helvetica Medium and kept swimming around like sperm and arranging themselves into potential candidates for the names of new Balkan states. After a while they got bored with that and tried for the Guinness Book of Records for the longest palindrome ever, making "a man, a plan, a canal - Panama" seem like a four year old's first attempt to spell "video". As the words stretched out of sight they began to curl, form strings of DNA helix and promptly mutated into a hippopotamus with a clothes peg on its nose. And a large drinks bill.

Break open my body  
Hold my mind in your hands  
Drag me down in deep waters  
Down in fields of flowers  
For there's no sanity  
To stand me on my feet  
My point of view exploded  
She fucked my mind



She led me with a smile and a wiggle like a seahorse on a fishtank, and I waded after her robes which were white enough to make Persil's ad-men break down and weep. The door parted round her and left me wondering why my wallet contained so much that was either invalid, expired or both, and why my Visa card took its abuse so personally that it tried to bite me when I offered it up to the door lock.

The interior resembled a fifties Batman set rather better than I would have liked - all primary colours, four pane windows and giant telephones. An urban playground full of exciting niches for bad guys to leap out of holding Hollywood prop six shooters with eleven chambers. The man in my boots appeared to be trying to moonwalk while holding his breath for the benefit of a large but invisible audience who thought this was the warm-up before the appearance of some smutty northern comedian.

Abruptly, I had got my boots back again, and a man who was as familiar as Hell was arguing with the angel with the volume turned real low. She drew an exquisitely carved knife from the warmth of her thigh and slit his throat, the smile never leaving her lips.

The lights winked out. The knife in my hand was warm and slippery. Somewhere in the dark a man drowned noisily in his own blood.

Please don't disturb me  
Just wrap me in clean white sheets  
I've seen her cool white skin  
I've seen her hands  
While mine like desires  
Untouched, betray me  
With cruelty and love  
She left my mind





# The Incredibly **BAD** Animation Show

"Here he comes, here comes Speed Racer, he's a demon on wheels.  
He's a demon and he's gonna be chasing after someone.  
He's been around a lot, you'd better look alive  
'Cos he'll be revvin' up the powerful Mark 5.  
And when the odds are against him and there's dangerous work to do,  
You bet your life Speed Racer will see it through.  
Go Speed Racer, go Speed Racer, go Speed Racer, go!"

---- theme song

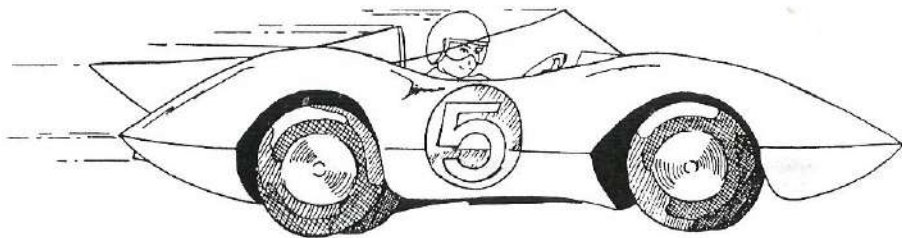
In TC6, we praised 'Akira' and 'Warriors of the Wind' as shining examples of Japanese animation. This may have led you to believe that all Oriental cartoon series are artistic and morally sound. 'Speed Racer' proves, beyond all doubt, that this is not the case.

The opening sequence of this surreal 1967 movie has the above lyrics, set to a hideously archetypal late 60's song, behind which we see a car-race going along a fly-over - suddenly two cars collide, one of which ploughs through a crash-barrier and explodes in a fireball! Those of you who've seen the A-Team and their 70-mph multiple pile-ups, rollovers and crashes, after which the baddies climb out uninjured, will understand my shock as this U-rated cartoon starts to resemble an animated 'Faces of Death'.

The first thing in the film proper is a clown driving a car. This explodes, leaving the driver with an umbrella dropping from the top of the screen, Mary Poppins style. The clown explodes. In his place is a girl; I use the term 'girl' for want of anything better as she could well be the result of some illegal, bizarre genetic experiment involving giraffe DNA - the length of her neck is only exceeded by the length of her legs. She introduces the Stunt Car Spectacular, where the aim seems to be to drive your car down a ski-jump and clear a number of sports cars piled vertically in front of it. The first contestant is Mr Guts Wheeler (sic) - he shoots down the ramp, crashes into the second top car and brings the whole lot down, leaving him trapped among the wreckage. The next driver up, Mr Hi Octane, fares even worse, hitting the top of the pile and the car smashes into a concrete wall and explodes. Mr Octane rolls onto his back, twitches and lies still. This sort of thing occurs irregularly throughout the 65 minutes of the cartoon.

Our hero, Speed Racer, is the driver for a racing outfit run by his father, with the assistance of Speed's kid brother Spridle (and pet monkey Chim-chim), his girlfriend Trixie and mechanic Sparky. Their car, the Mark 5, is entered in the Alpine Race, a gruelling endurance event, though judging from the number of Yawning Chasms present, the Swiss government stopped any spending on roads some time ago. Against them is the Car Acrobatic Team, seven drivers out to win at any cost in cars equipped with extending wings to help them cross Yawning Chasms. Speed's team (minus Sparky, thanks to an argument about whether Speed should race at all) work through the night to try and fit similar wings ("**even I'm going to help**", says token female Trixie in what seems a fine display of assertiveness until we discover she merely popped off to put the kettle on) but Speed's dad collapses with the effort.

Undaunted, Speed works on (Trixie's playing at nurses, naturally) and manages to fit the wings. "**Now I'll see if the wings work...They do!**", he says - to be strictly accurate, while they do go out and in fine, he never bothers to see if they're any good at actually keeping him up. Hopefully, Boeing operate slightly more stringent test procedures. Anyway, he makes it to the start line just in time, and is joined by



Racer X ("Speed does not know that the driver of this car is his older brother, Rex, who ran away from home years ago") who specialises in platitudes like "As a professional racer, I've got to meet the challenge". Within thirty seconds of the start, we have the first crash-and-burn and not long after we get the first Yawning Chasm.

Now, Speed argued with his mechanic so his brakes aren't working too well and he skids, backwards, down a Yawning Chasm. Naturally he's rescued by Sparky, who suffered a pang of conscience and lassoes the entire car from a helicopter piloted by, of all people, Nurse/Tea-Lady/Pilot Trixie. The brakes are fixed and Speed catches up with the rest of the field, including what's left of the Car Acrobatic Team, at a Yawning Chasm, appropriately named Yawning Chasm Pass. The six drivers who decide to go on, including Speed, Racer X, and chief C.A.T. driver Snake Oiler, draw lots to see who goes first but it's all fairly pointless since they all end up at the bottom of the Yawning Chasm, Speed included.

Fortunately, as Yawning Chasms go it ain't up to much - not only is Speed merely knocked out, but the Mark 5 has nary a scratch and starts first time. On regaining consciousness, Speed seems to suffer an acid flashback and stares at the sun for so long he is blinded. But Racer X is also there with another undamaged car and Speed is able to drive by following the sound of his engine... This isn't totally effective (Speed's eyesight might improve if he tried opening his eyes instead of driving with them shut) and to help Speed, Racer X crashes his car and pretends to have injured his legs so he can sit in the Mark 5 and give directions (yes, I know - why didn't he do that without resorting to self-inflicted smashes?). These start off as "left 10 degrees", but soon degenerate to "faster...even faster".

They catch up Snake Oiler, whose car, it will not surprise you to hear, still works (some damn Yawning Chasm!) but is leaking oil and will blow up if he doesn't slow down. Speed pulls alongside to try and warn Snake but he fails to believe Speed and, lo and behold, his car explodes torching the occupant to a cinder, leaving Speed the winner to the wild cheers of the crowd who would have instantly forgotten the messy fatal accident on the home straight. The C.A.T. drivers haven't, and swear revenge...

Animation quality is 'primitive' it's safe to say; plenty of loops with the same car going past multiple times. Dialogue fails to match the lip movements at all, despite more groans, gasps and moans on the soundtrack than your average porno movie. This film was clearly constructed of 3 twenty-minute episodes slammed together as every so often it pauses and you get a brief voice-over of previous events. An animated version of 'Death Race 2000', this film should be required viewing for anyone who thinks ultra-violent kiddie cartoons are a modern invention.

[Beware: at least two cassettes of 'Speed Racer' are available; the one reviewed here is on the 'MY-TV' label (MYTV 20027); the Parkfield Junior release may have been cut and is noticeably less vicious]



# mondo movies

Ah, those two magic words! Let's say them again...MONDO MOVIES. What do those words conjure up? Sadism? Reality? Revulsion? All of these and more? As the good Dr. Francis Gross would say, let me take you on a journey...

When we discuss mondos, we're talking about real life, or at least an attempt to persuade us we're watching real life. The Italian title of that old video nasty list resident '**Cannibal**' may have been '**Ultimo Mondo Cannibale**', but it's really just another fictional flesh-eater. True mondo films don't intentionalise or try to provide a plot - they serve up gleeful helpings of *the real thing*.

It's easy to film reality. Before 1910, the cinema had given us '**Workers Leaving A Factory**', '**The Kiss of May Irvin and John C.Rice**', '**A Fight With Sledgehammers**' and even '**The Electrocutation of an Elephant**'. Horses died in '**The Ten Commandments**', and extras in '**My Love For Ireland**', but it was not until 1961 that those enterprising Italians came up with the ultimate pessimism of '**Mondo Cane**' or '**A Dog's Life**'. This time, death was central to the film - the dogs of the title were dispatched under the opening credits. That unfortunate staple of the mondo film, the turtle, comes under attack in this one too, crawling onto the beach to lay it's eggs and then being overturned (not by the filmmakers, surely?) to bake in the sun.

'**Mondo Cane**' was, unsurprisingly, terrifically popular, and it was given an official seal of approval when it's theme song, 'More', won an Oscar. 'More' resurfaced again and again, as both the makers of '**Mondo Cane**' and many other directors realised that death, mutilation and sadism sold by the bucketload. Most of these films followed '**Mondo Cane**'s formula of tribal rituals and slaughterhouse footage, and for twenty years there was a steady drip of (mainly Italian) mondo films, all recycling each others' ideas and, very often, each others' footage. The bored mondo audience shifted it's attention toward 'snuff' movies and the debate about Roberta Findlay's '**Snuff**' in particular, and it seemed there was no place for the mondo any more.

All this changed with the release of '**Faces of Death**' in 1978. The aforementioned Dr. Francis B.Gross wishes to exorcise his recurring dream about a funeral, so he takes us on a trip through the world's abbatoirs, road accidents and death cults for 105 minutes (or 70 in the severely truncated UK release). American audiences lapped it up, undoubtedly due to the use of US news footage and the fact that the film returned every five minutes from Japan or the Amazon to some home-grown atrocities. '**Faces of Death**' was so successful that two sequels and more than one unofficial semi-sequel followed. Doctor Gross returns for parts two and three ("I would like to invite you on yet another journey") and the films get predictably duller by turns.

Mondo was back as a genre in it's own right (although it had always been present as an inherent part of Italian cannibal films - the turtle in '**Cannibal Holocaust**' is treated rather worse than it's cousin in '**Mondo Cane**'), and again the rip-offs surfaced, with films such as '**Fear**' (completely staged 'faces of near-death') and '**Death Faces IV**' (an FOD production). Legendary sleazemonger Doris Wishman was so embarrassed by the genre that she took her name off '**Let Me Die a Woman**', a hilariously tacky sex-change mondomentary.



'The Killing of America' took the mondo film to it's obvious conclusion with it's history of American murderers. Whilst not as out-and-out repulsive as the Italian mutilation films, this was generally more shocking, pointing out that death isn't just a foreign movie concern, it's something that happens on your doorstep. The film was withdrawn from release in America - obviously the great US public wanted their reality held at arm's

length. The Italians retook the mondo mantle and '**Addio Ultimo Uomo**', the ultimate display of depravities was born. Since then, we've had '**Mondo Cane 2000**' and the cycle seems to have come full-circle. The brutalities of the first '**Mondo Cane**' pale into insignificance as every imaginable display of hideousness comes out and gets thrown at the viewer. The mondo can go no further.

(David Thomson)

[ There's the facts - next issue, there'll be the opinions, with two writers expressing rather differing views on the subject! We'd also be interested to hear what you have to say - are mondo movies the ultimate in horror, or have they gone too far? Let us know... ]

## Oops!

A range of things from the last few issues that need to be corrected, amended, altered, fixed, added to and apologised for. Firstly, the Sybil Danning article back in TC5 continues to rumble on. '**Blood**' was also known as '**Eye of the Labyrinth**', '**Fire of Love**' as '**Freedom For Love**', '**Run Run Joe**' was probably called '**Run Joe Run**' and '**Sweet Dirty Tony**' is an alternate title for '**The Cuba Crossing**'. In addition to the guest appearance in the TV series '**The Fall Guy**' mention in TC6, she also appeared in an episode of '**Street Hawk**'.

As expected, the Christopher Lee filmography last issue had any number of errors, omissions and alterations, mostly in his early career. There are more of these than I have room for here, but by the time you read this, an expanded and hopefully corrected list will have been compiled - this, together with updated filmographies on Linnea and Nastassja, may appear in a future TC, but is also available if you send an SAE to the editorial address.

That's about that, except to say sorry to James Lorinz for getting his name wrong last time, and to point out that '**Marine Boy**' used oxy-gum, rather than an oxy-gun, to enable him to breathe underwater. Thanks to Brian Bower, Julian Grainger, Paul Higson, Ray Ridley, Pete Shepherd and Phil Taylor for pointing out various faults.



## Attack of the Brain-Dead Horror Cliches

### \*1 - The Pussy Shocker

The hero is alone in his house. He hears a noise in one of the other rooms and goes to investigate. He searches around, but finds nothing, when suddenly, **WHAM**, a black cat jumps out from nowhere, it's snarl mixed high in the soundtrack, giving the hero (and supposedly the audience) a split second shock.

Yep, the brain dead film-makers have pulled the hoary old "Cat Gag" again. Have you ever been jolted by a cat suddenly jumping out at you?

No, I didn't think so, but going by horror films you'd think that being shocked by your pussy (or someone else's) was one of life's inevitable bad happenings. Films as diverse as 'Stagefright', 'The Slayer', 'Hardcover', 'Psychic Killer', 'Alien', 'Night of the Creeps' and 'Friday the 13th, Part II' (plus a host of other slashers) have all used variations of The Cat Gag. The moggies involved have jumped out of windows, boxes, cupboards and garbage bins, all for the sake of a

cheap 'filler' shock. Of course, The Cat Gag doesn't always have to utilise a cat, other animals can be used, for instance 'Something is Out There' uses a white parrot. It helps if the animal has a loud shriek or snarl - rabbits and gerbils are thus out.

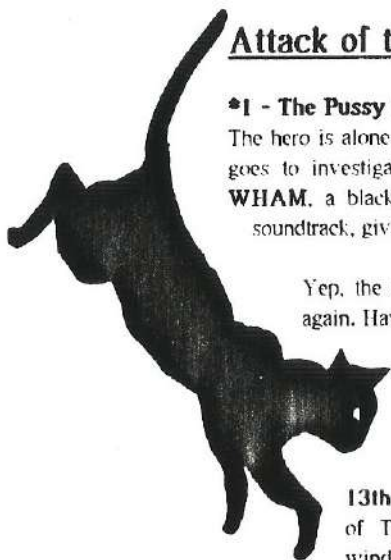
There's not always a suspenseful build-up to The Cat Gag, but when there is, most horror fans will see it coming well in advance and this anticipation probably makes the shock more successful. It has to be admitted, The Cat Gag is usually effective in making the viewers heart stop for a split second - just as well, because otherwise cats in movies are about as scary as the end sequence of 'Top Cat'. Need I say more than 'The Uncanny', 'The Corpse Grinders' or 'Eye of the Cat'? Even horror stylist numero uno, the giallo god himself, Dario Argento, could only muster luke-warm chills for his cat attack sequence in 'Inferno' [ That's being generous - you can almost see the bloke, standing just out of shot, throwing the recalcitrant felines through the air at the 'victim'. Hilarious. *Ed.* ]

### \*2 - The False Point of View Shot

A slasher movie fave, this one. The camera, supposedly rendering the psycho's point of view, menacingly tracks towards an unsuspecting character, whose gory murder is anticipated by the tension-racked (I don't think) audience. As the camera finally reaches the character, we discover that it's actually been the point of view of another protagonist and not the psycho, about to indulge in some slice 'n' dice.

The makers of 'Friday the 13th, Part IV' must have thought this one was celluloid horror's magic ingredient for surefire success, as they use it again and again (and again) throughout the film. As a rule of thumb, in a slasher flick, if the camera slowly tracks towards someone POV style, then you can bet your video tape cleaner that he/she will live to be killed off in another sequence.

'The Unnameable' contains what is possibly the most stupefying ever variation of this gag [ the entire film was pretty stupefying, I thought. *Ed.* ]. 'Burial Ground' (aka 'Zombie 3') has a text book.

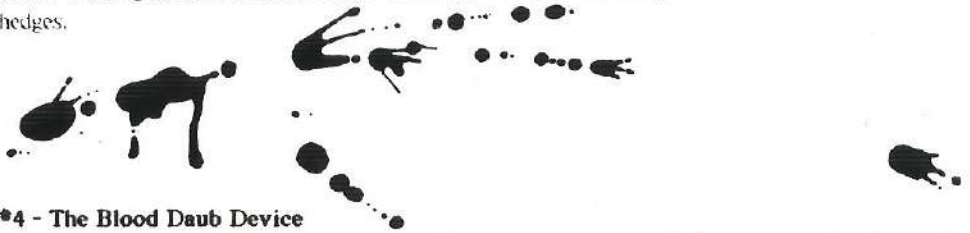


example of how this trick should be done, in it's earlier sequences, but blows it by ineffectively rehashing it later. When a film uses the POV gag more than once, it's a sure sign that the director is probably suffering from an acute case of brain death.

### \*3 - The False Capture Shock

This one is usually inflicted on a female protagonist. She's alone in the woods (usually the male who has been accompanying her has just 'mysteriously' disappeared). She suddenly realises that someone is watching her. Scared, she runs and after twenty or thirty yards, she stumbles into a figure whose identity is momentarily unrevealed, causing her to yell in shock. "Oh, no - the killer's got her", the audience think as their pulse rate doubles but after a second or two the figure is revealed to be a 'safe' character, usually the aforementioned male, who has no desire to cut her life short.

There are various setups to this gag, but the pay-off is always well telegraphed. 'Pieces' has an especially hokey version in which Lynda Day George rushes straight into big Paul 'Popeye' Smith, who's wielding a mean chainsaw. Tho' naturally, he's just the college caretaker out trimming some hedges.



### \*4 - The Blood Daub Device

A sorry cop-out to a violent murder, this one. The killer, holding a knife (or axe, sword, etc) traps his victim in a room, raises the weapon and violently thrusts it down at the victim. Cut to the wall, as the victim's blood spatters over it.

This device, used in many a low-budget movie, is nothing but a cheapjack substitute for a real gore effect. When the blood-drenched wall rears it's ugly head in a movie, I always hope that the blood daub will be quickly followed by the victim's decapitated head or hacked-off arm being thrown against it. Such Grand Guignol taste/imagination has yet to materialize.

### \*5 - The Triple Zoom Reverse

A cliché of technique. The camera simultaneously zooms forward while tracking back on a close-up of a character, displacing them from the background to accentuate a moment of shock realisation on their part.

Utilised in 'Vertigo', purely as a subjective device by Hitchcock (who invented it) to depict James Stewart's height induced dizziness, this shot became popular when Steven Spielberg used it in 'Jaws' in the sequence where Roy Schneider, sitting on the beach, suddenly spots a shark fin in the ocean full of swimmers. Since then, there has been no shortage of exploitation films (not just horror ones) that have had this shot thrown in, adding nothing but a moment of second-hand artistiness to the proceedings - 'How I Got Into College' is the latest. Funnily enough, whenever a film does use this shot, it's almost always shown in the trailer...

(A.McGavin)





## CONSPIRACY CORNER

### \*2 : I AM AN ANTICHRIST

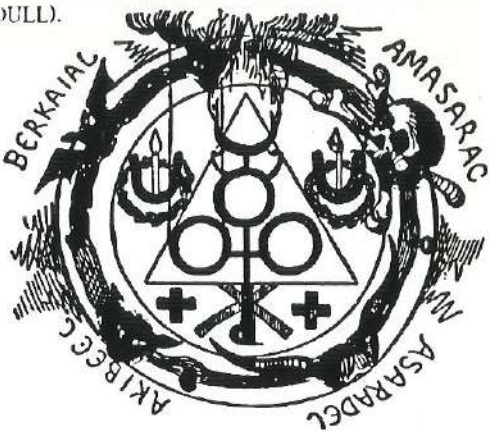
"Some telltale signs of youthful involvement in Satanism are :

- \* An unhealthy preoccupation with fantasy role-playing games like Dungeons and Dragons (D&D).
- \* An interest in Ouija boards and other occult games.
- \* A preoccupation with psychic phenomena like telepathy, astral projection, Tarot cards, I Ching and parapsychology.
- \* An addiction to horror movies like the "Friday the 13th" and "Nightmare on Elm Street" series, whose main characters kill and maim.
- \* An obsession with heavy metal music, particularly black metal bands like Slayer, Venom, Ozzy, Metallica, King Diamond, and other groups that evoke satanic symbolism.
- \* An affinity for satanic paraphernalia, including posters of black metal bands, skulls, knives, chalices, black candles and robes.
- \* An inclination to write poems or letters about Satanism or to sketch designs of upside-down crosses, pentagrams, the number 666, names of the devil, or skulls and other symbols of death.
- \* An attraction to satanic literature and such books as THE SATANIC BIBLE, the NECRONOMICON, the writings of Aleister Crowley, or keeping a private journal such as a BOOK OF SHADOWS (a self-designed secret chronicle of satanic activities and ideas).
- \* An involvement with friends who dress in black, greet each other with the satanic salute (index and pinkie finger extended, palm facing inward), speak and write backwards, or organise secret meetings."

----- Bob Larson, "Satanism - the Seduction of America's Youth".

How did YOU score? As the rest of the book makes clear, for "unhealthy preoccupation", "addiction" and "obsession", you can read "mild interest" - I'll admit six of the nine above could apply to me (as I write this, there's a plaster skull, bought on a whim in Camden Town, lying in the bottom drawer of the desk, and I've also read 'The Necronomicon'. It was DULL).

Recently, on both sides of the Atlantic, there's been an upsurge in paranoia about witchcraft, devil-worship and Satanism. This is worrying, because there is a severe danger that it's going to divert people from REAL problems. The worst example was the recent TV programme that tried to link Satanism and child sex abuse. Several people I know found the programme disturbing, yet no first- or even second-hand accounts were produced and the programme admitted police had totally failed to find evidence at all anything was happening. Yet the reaction of one social worker



interviewed, astonishingly, was "Just because there isn't any evidence, doesn't mean it isn't happening"!!!! I'll restrain myself from commenting on this, beyond saying that a lack of evidence certainly doesn't mean it IS happening. >

Meanwhile, back in America, Bob Larson, radio talk-show host, continues his crusade to save America's youth from the Devil. Let's see what he has to say on horror films :

**"The often chaotic plot lines and disjointed camera sequences of many horror films are randomly based. Instead of fostering mental stability, the cinematic techniques leave movie-goers wondering what will happen next. Such unpredictability enforces morbid fears that young minds cannot process. Tell the teen who wants to watch horror movies that the human mind can handle only so much stress before it becomes overburdened and desensitised. Scenes of gore galore can become so indelibly imbedded that the film becomes a living nightmare, triggering neuroses, trauma and ongoing phobias. Don't hesitate to declare something is tragically wrong with anyone who watches a movie for the thrill of watching blood flow".**

Wow! A living nightmare! Neuroses! Trauma! Sounds like my sort of film. But is the 'thrill of watching ARTIFICIAL blood flow' any different from the thrill of the (car) chase, the thrill of a fight sequence or even the thrill of a well-staged, tense piece of dialogue? The man has also completely forgotten that horror films are MEANT to be unsettling but that, almost by definition, a sane individual can distinguish reality from celluloid fantasy and keep them apart. On reading the following paragraph, you begin to wonder whether Bob's grip on reality isn't a little shaky:

**"The worst part was audience reaction as bodies were disembowelled and limbs amputated. Instead of hung heads and disapproving groans, the murderous mayhem met with cheers, laughter and indifference"**

No, Bob! FAKE bodies, LATEX limbs. THIS IS NOT REALITY. Show those teenagers footage of open-heart surgery and you would GET the hung heads and disapproving groans you want. And this inability to tell the difference appears in all the other areas he 'investigates'. His chapter on role-playing games (which contains several blatant errors, such as claiming the spell Slow Poison is used to kill, when it's actually a healing spell) makes the same mistake of assuming that because devil-worship and magic are part of the mythos, this will lead the participants to use them in real life.

Admittedly, the only Satanist I ever knew DID play D&D. However, his influence on the rest of us was highly POSITIVE, encouraging mutual collaboration and other 'good' deeds. The guy was a 100% sh\*t and whenever he played, the rest of us (including the referee) would instantly forget all differences and work together towards the common goal of killing the mother as fast as possible. The record was just over 35 seconds. He wasn't a great advert for Satanism, but it does show that D&D can just as easily promote positive traits!

Now, I hold no candle, black or otherwise, for Satanism, and I freely admit there are some highly dubious things going on 'in the name of Satan' but claiming that rock music, films or fantasy games will cause sane, stable people to commit murder is just not on. Neither is trying to link the completely separate problem of child abuse - we'll get nowhere if we ignore the atrocities committed by Christian families...



Spending your Sunday afternoons in a cemetery may not immediately strike you as a viable option, but on one of the hottest weekends of the year, 2/3 of the TC editorial team could be found in Nunhead Cemetery, not far from Underhill Road. But this is no ordinary dead zone - Nunhead, together with it's more famous relative Highgate, are burial grounds founded by the London Cemetery Company, which today still provide a gorgeously morbid insight into

## The Victorian Way Of Death

As Victoria came to the throne, the problem of disposing of the bodies of dead Londoners was coming to a head. The population of the city was increasing rapidly - from 900,000 in 1801 to more than 2¼ million just 50 years later - and the city churchyards could no longer cope; people received a temporary burial locally before being removed elsewhere. Eventually, fears that having all these corpses in the city would cause an epidemic led to Parliament passing a bill in 1836, founding the London Cemetery Company. Three years later, they established Highgate cemetery, in North London and the following year Nunhead, at that time in Surrey, followed. This was no philanthropic act - 17 acres at Highgate cost a mere £3,500 and even conservative calculations show enough graves could be crammed in to make **sixty** times this in burial fees.

The Victorian attitude to death was very different to the one we have today. They believed the way a society disposed of it's dead was a reflection of it's treatment for the living and so, for example, cemeteries were places of botanical education, containing specimens of foreign plants and trees. Whole families would come down on Sunday afternoons, go into their family vaults and take tea with their relatives (deceased). Even after death, they were still very class-conscious - often graves were built with glass panels in them to allow the quality of the coffin to be seen! Seeing such a picnic is supposed to have been one of the inspirations for Bram Stoker's 'Dracula'.

There were problems to be faced, too. In certain cemeteries, the water table was too close to the surface (both Nunhead & Highgate, being built on hills, are alright) which meant the grave-diggers often hit ground water. The solution was to place a board just above the water surface, and sprinkle some earth on it to give the appearance of solid ground. Then, once the mourners had left, the board could be removed and the lead-lined coffin would sink majestically beneath the waves. Lead-lined coffins posed problems of their own - although intended to slow down decomposition by being airtight, occasionally the build-up of gas inside them proved too much, and they would, quite literally, explode. Having bits of Uncle Fred spatter the proceeding would put a damper on any Sunday afternoon tea party.

Another ghoulish tale concerns the family grave of the Rossetti family. Dante Gabriel Rossetti was a famous Victorian painter and poet - when his wife, Elizabeth, died he placed his notebook of unpublished poems in the coffin with her as a gesture of love. Some time later, egged on by his literary agent, he regretted this move and obtained permission to exhume her body (no doubt with a little palm-greasing), retrieve the notebook and publish the poems. She is supposed to have been just as beautiful as when she was interred, tho' how much of this was to comfort Rossetti (who was, understandably, not present), I don't know.

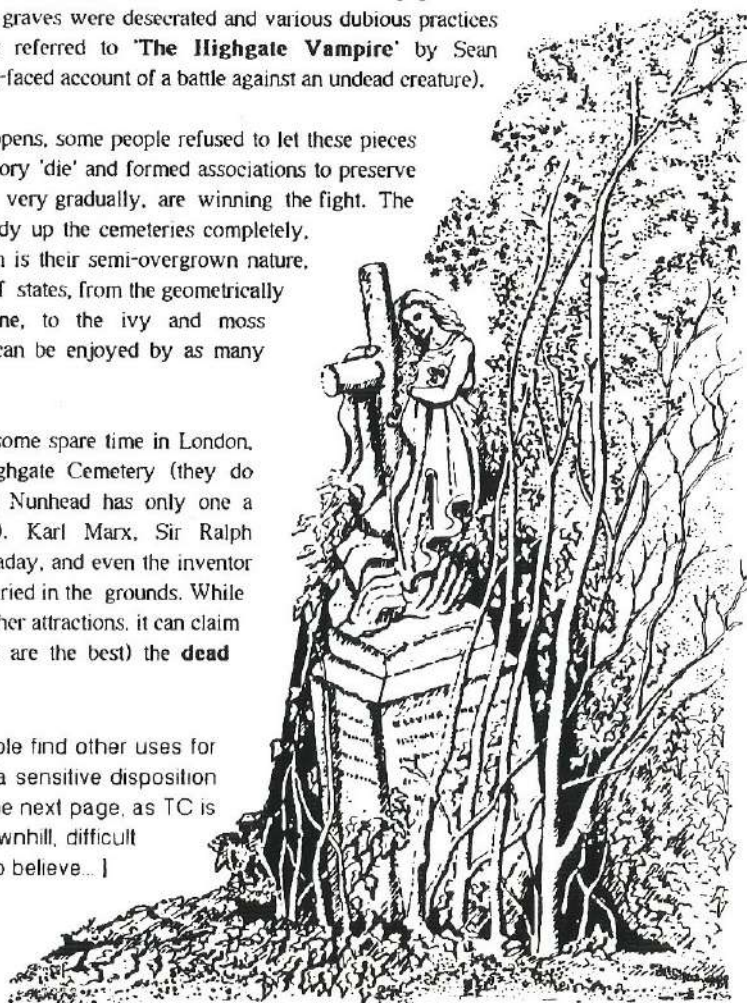
The memorials themselves are far more varied than those seen today, often reflecting the occupation of the internee; an animal trainer has a sleeping lion, a cricketer a set of demolished stumps. Symbolism is rampant, as in most things Victorian, (cf. Holman Hunt's picture 'The Awakening Conscience' for the best example) - everywhere, there are lights snuffed out, columns of life broken, serpents devouring their tails (a tad pagan, perhaps) and any number of weeping angels, most of which resemble Emmanuelle Beart. These monuments became extraordinarily ornate and expensive - in 1876, Julius Beer, founder of The Observer newspaper paid £5,800 for his memorial, including the cost of the land. Assuming a modest 5% rate of inflation, that's the equivalent of over £1½ million nowadays.

This obsession with death couldn't last and eventually the industries relating to the cemeteries and the cemeteries themselves had to be reduced in scale. The London Cemetery Company went bust in 1975 and for a while Nunhead, taken over by Southwark Council, entered a period of benign neglect, with only the modern areas being maintained (there's still plenty of room, however - it currently holds 250,000 bodies and won't be full until the year 2030 at the current rate). Highgate was in an even worse state - graves were desecrated and various dubious practices occurred (the reader is referred to 'The Highgate Vampire' by Sean Manchester for a straight-faced account of a battle against an undead creature).

Fortunately, as often happens, some people refused to let these pieces of social and natural history 'die' and formed associations to preserve them, which gradually, very gradually, are winning the fight. The eventual aim is not to tidy up the cemeteries completely, since much of the charm is their semi-overgrown nature, but to produce a range of states, from the geometrically precise Victorian pristine, to the ivy and moss encrusted ruins, which can be enjoyed by as many people as possible.

So next time you have some spare time in London, think about visiting Highgate Cemetery (they do daily tours there, while Nunhead has only one a month at the moment). Karl Marx, Sir Ralph Richardson, Michael Faraday, and even the inventor of Hovis bread are all buried in the grounds. While maybe not as lively as other attractions, it can claim to be (ah, the old jokes are the best) the **dead** centre of London...

[ Of course, some people find other uses for cemeteries... Those of a sensitive disposition should probably skip the next page, as TC is about to go rapidly downhill, difficult though that may be to believe... ]





It's not that immoral... Yes, I refer to the treasured pastime of those select few, including myself: necrophilia. Considered perhaps something of an acquired taste by the majority of society, it is my belief that this activity is in fact perfectly acceptable social conduct and should be acknowledged as such in the community. Too often, I find, is necrophilia represented in a bad light today - a stigma has surrounded it for years for some reason - whereas it is in reality wholly permissible, respectable and actually somewhat soothing in my experience.

## Dead Boring

One should not be made to feel guilty by the majority; surely it is a simple human right that one man be allowed to pop into a graveyard for a quickie and maybe bring back a corpse for tea with mother and a shag upstairs. Perhaps this kind of date isn't so talkative, but then you don't dig them up for their conversation. Necrophilia has other benefits, I might add. There is no risk of pregnancy or even sexually-transmitted diseases as generally the offending viruses are unable to inhabit a dead host. However, it is still advisable to wear a condom all the same, since it saves time spent scraping away all of the dead skin/flesh that has become attached during intercourse.

Despite what one may have been led to believe, a necrophile actually meets some genuinely interesting (or should I say 'absorbing?') people while on the pull. A date is always guaranteed - stiffs are not accustomed to washing their hair or an evening and naturally the irritating possibility of a headache at an inappropriate time is eliminated. Wherever one gets one's corpse, whether it be fresh from the site of a motor-vehicle accident, or a little aged, dragged out from its coffin beneath the moon, the stiff always looks damn nice in some quality lingerie, accompanied by some soft music and the enchanting odour of embalming fluid (or the coppery aroma of blood, depending on the state of the body). A morgue is often the best place to go: it can be considered simply as a showroom for the necrophile, he (or she) is able to select with ease the body that they desire - perhaps the corpse of his/her dreams. Additionally, you have the option, common to necrophilia in general, of return and replacement if the goods are unsatisfactory.

"Size isn't everything", they generally say, but for the female necrophile that likes a well-endowed carcass, the essential member is interchangeable with the help of some good scissors (or a hacksaw) and a needle & thread. And a dead date gives it to you straight. On the other side of the coin, the female corpse never gives you a faked orgasm with all the accompanying screams - the stiff just lies there squelching sometimes, at the disposal of the necrophile. You know where you stand with a cadaver.

Marilyn Monroe (Really?)



Nowhere else is the incredible unity between the living and the dead so tenderly and sensitively demonstrated as with necrophilia. A dating agency is a thing of the past, from now on lovers all over the world will be flocking to their local graveyards, morgues and motorways to find their ideal partner and build a relationship. Although a corpse can leave a dubious smell around the house, it is on the other hand fairly cheap to feed and with some teaching may even learn to do the housework.

At present I'm going out with a 23-year old road accident and things have never been better.

So: **"Get a corpse today, and while the hours away!!"**

(Andy Waller)

# The Incredibly **BAD** Film Show

DEATHSTALKER II (Jim Wynorski) - John Terlesky, Monique Gabrielle.

One of the delights of this job is that occasionally a movie turns up that surpasses all expectations. 'Deathstalker II' is such a film - it's predecessor was an amiable and instantly forgettable sword and sorcery romp, so before viewing the sequel I was expecting it wouldn't be long before I started doing something more intellectually stimulating, such as trying to hold my breath while the tape counter on the video ran for a hundred. I was totally, unexpectedly and wildly wrong.

It starts innocuously enough with Mr D.Stalker (Terlesky) stealing a jewel from a standard, Mark IV, evil warrior/sorceress. "I'll have my revenge", she says, "and Deathstalker too". Cue title : DEATHSTALKER II. OK, as puns go, it ain't great, but it was enough to make me stop holding my breath. I suppose I should have expected SOMETHING from Jim Wynorski, who gave Traci Lords her big break in (certificated) movies and provided the second best exploding head sequence ever in the wonderfully titled 'Chopping Mall'.

The film is set in a totally indeterminate time and location: references to Conan and Merlin spatter the script, accents are unashamedly alf-American and there's a brief glimpse of a signpost with pointers to Cimmeria, Lemuria, Kathmandu, Nokhandu, Altair and Golgotha.

Deathstalker rescues a seer (Gabrielle) from a beating at the hands of some guards after she made a slightly undiplomatic prediction involving the King's wife. She convinces him that there is a mission for him to accomplish, namely defeating an evil sorcerer and restoring a princess to her rightful position on the throne in a far land. The accuracy of this particular prediction is not to be doubted as Evy the Seer (aka Evy I) is also Evy the Princess, who has been replaced by a clone, controlled by Jherak the Sorcerer. At that end, all is not well as Zoltana, the female warrior who helped Jherak in his fiendish plan, is mildly miffed at being replaced by a mere duplicated bimbo (Evy II) and before you can say "Bitch Wars!", they're clawing each others eyes out verbally.

Meanwhile, accompanied by a sound-track that's part Ennio Morricone, part Walter Carlos, Deathstalker heads across country to try and rescue the princess, little knowing that she is already seated behind him on the horse.

Plans to stop them are afoot, naturally. The villains are plotting in a seedy tavern where all sorts of nefarious activities are taking place, including some bimbos-in-mud wrestling. Hang on, I've seen this bit somewhere before; enter flashback mode and marvel at how 'Deathstalker II' subtly steals footage from, er, 'Deathstalker'. Presumably this is a subtle dig at barbarian films which rip off any effect they're too mean to do themselves, as the budget here looks easily capable of stretching to three inches of slime and a couple of 'actresses' to writhe about in it.

Five villains are hired to dispose of Deathstalker. Naturally, they fail, despite a lot of flashy, and entirely gratuitous, pyrotechnics. Their leader reports back to Jherak, courtesy of a magic pool which only works AFTER you throw some coins into it; good job this wasn't a British film, or the pool would undoubtedly



have been marked '999 CALLS ONLY'. Jherak isn't chuffed and slams the pool down. Well, to be more exact, slams his SWORD down. Down his subordinate's throat, VIA the pool.

Along the way, Deathstalker decides to engage in a touch of grave-robbing to replenish his finances. This worries Evy I somewhat but despite her excuses ("Wait, I left the door to my hut open") and complaints ("I was just starting to enjoy poverty"), Deathstalker proceeds to make a withdrawal from the primitive ancestor of the cash machine, a family crypt. He is trapped inside and after a brief discussion with Jherak's ethereal form is faced with a pressing engagement in the shape of opposite walls moving together. "The old crushing walls routine", he taunts Jherak. "Couldn't you do any better than that?" Meanwhile, Evy I is doing no better outside, facing some zombies. Needless to say, with one bound, both of them escape.

Evy II has problems of her own; bits of her anatomy keep flickering out of view and her court minstrel insists on playing the Morricone/Carlos ripoff heard whenever Deathstalker appears. "Don't you know any other tune?", she snaps at him, before lurching on a quick snack of a teenage boy to restore her lost appendages.

After a swift re-run of a very old joke, namely "Is that your sword or are you just pleased to see me?", they are captured by a tribe of Amazons, who insist Deathstalker fights their champion, in a trial by combat for his crimes against womanhood (basically rogering anything in the appropriate chamois bikini). No hassle, reckons our hero, having detected the Amazons carefully manicured fingernails and deducing they won't be up to much in a fight. "I could beat them with my eyes closed", he declares. "Perhaps you ought to keep at least one eye open" warns Evy I, who's spotted the arrival of Gorgo (played by the aptly named Queen Kong), a full head taller than Deathstalker (not exactly dwarven himself) and built like Edinburgh Castle. 15 rounds of impressively staged wrestling later (the rounds indicated in classic sword-and-sorcery manner by a bimbo walking round the ring carrying a placard). Deathstalker wins but in heroic style refuses to administer the coup de grace.

It's after this that he discovers Evy the Seer is really Evy the (temporarily out of work) Princess but decides to stay with her when the Amazon Queen uses the words "you", "me" and "marriage" inside a minute. Evy I runs off and is captured by Zoltana, who dangles her over a vat of unspecified substance (probably Triple-C whateveritwas again!), with dark hints about what it'll do to Evy I's (Evy's I?) love life.

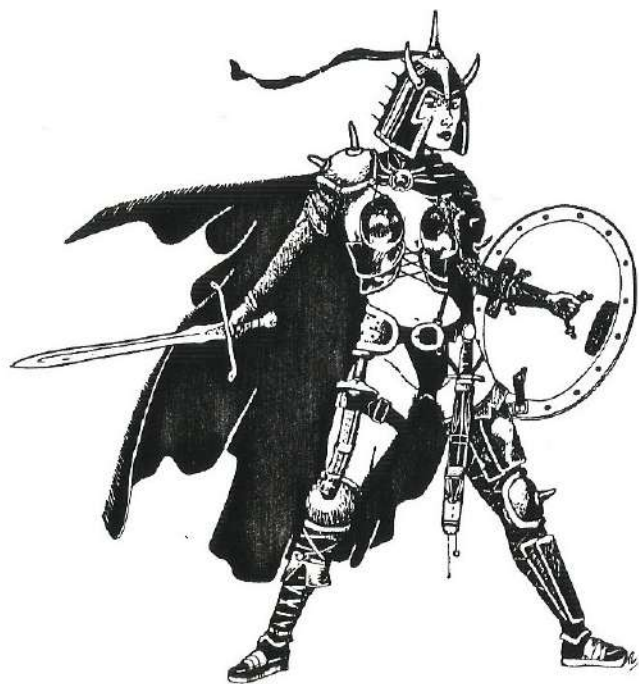
Needless to say, Deathstalker finds them and despite Zoltana using vaguely familiar lines like "It's payback time", she is killed and Evy I is rescued. But wait, Jherak recovers Zoltana's body and rescues her, the resurrection using a flashing strobe light dangerously near the epileptic frequency. The first thing Jherak does is bonk her brains out (I'll rapidly gloss over the medical problems here, to say nothing of possible religious symbolism) - unfortunately, Evy II sees them at it and exits, pouting petulantly. DS and Evy I enter the castle and the former is captured - luckily, Evy I escapes and goes to fetch help in the shape of the Amazons, pausing only for a massage. Yes, a massage. I kid you not. Zoltana consigns Deathstalker to certain death under a swinging axe, only for Evy II to rescue him. That's rescue, Jherak style, so she bonks his brains out, even if she's still wearing her panties, which is a little like being given a Xmas present and being told you've to keep the wrapping paper on. Evy I hits Evy II over the head and saves Deathstalker from becoming a between meals snack. Off they run to join the Amazons, only to be

met by Zoltana and Jherak first, although the Amazons do appear just in time to rescue them both, making five rescues in this paragraph, which is quite enough.

Then follows a great barbarians vs. bimbos fight, in the middle of which Zoltana gets bored and drifts off, never to be seen again, at least until the sequel. Evy I knives Evy II, causing the latter to crumple into a pile of dust and this writer to cheer with relief at the prospect of escape from the grammatical minefield of Evy's I & II.

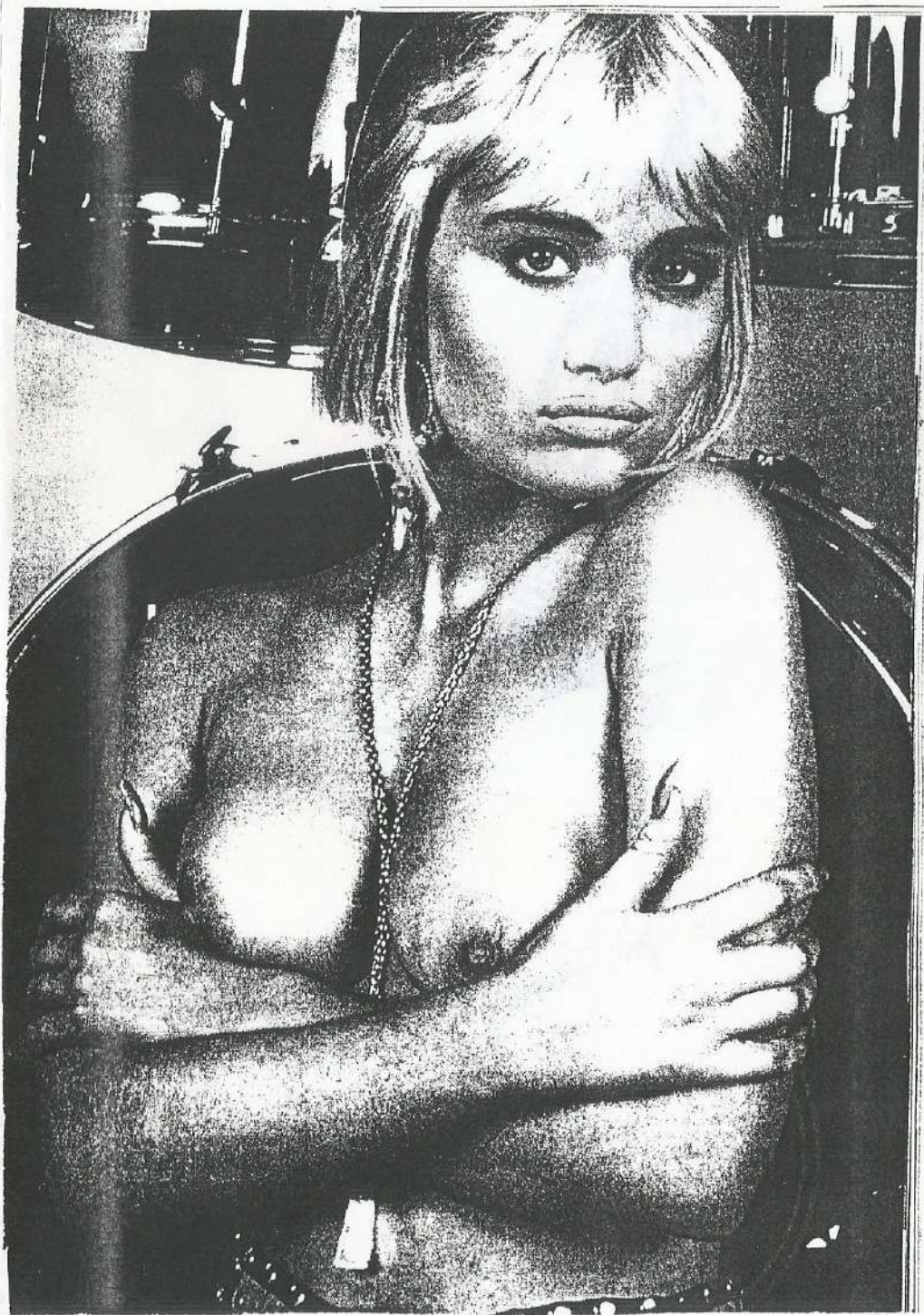
Needless to say, the film climaxes with a duel between Jherak, Deathstalker and some music ripped directly from 'Star Wars'. Jherak comes second, way ahead of the music, leaving Deathstalker to claim his prize, which of course is Evy - with her gift of prophecy, she foretells that in a thousand years, players will re-enact their adventures. "I hope they get a good-looking guy to play me" is Deathstalker's final comment.

This film's Incredibly Bad stance stems from the director's sense of humour; most of the lines and scenes are there without being historical accurate or necessary to the plot, but purely because they were fun. That this works, rather than falling flat, is largely due to the stars, Terlesky and Gabrielle. Both seemed to be thoroughly enjoying themselves, Terlesky resembling Kurt Russell at his best and Gabrielle clearly revelled in the chance to play two opposing characters; it's difficult to believe the scatty Evy and the catty clone are the same actress. Perhaps the best indicator of the film's attitude occurs as the end-credits roll over a series of out-takes, cock-ups and Monique Gabrielle having difficulty in walking. That the film-makers saw fit to flaunt their imperfections proves they're human and shows beyond a doubt their hearts are in the right place.













Here's all the bits that I didn't want the printer to see, mind you if he can cope with dead pictures of Marilyn Monroe, I can't see why he would balk at drawings of naked chainsaw-wielding blood-spattered sexpots. Nah, it's here more because I didn't have room for it in the 'zine proper. Overleaf, if you hadn't already guessed, is The Picture. This is the one that Clearaprint refused to put on a T-shirt - the original is in colour and looks a HELL of a lot better, but it'll give you an idea of the content of the picture if nothing else (should you want to indulge in a little spot of colouring-by-numbers, the bedsheet at the bottom is blue, the chainsaw is grey (with red splatters and Nastassja is a sort of pinky-brown). I'd like to gauge the interest in T-shirts with this picture on (not forgetting the words 'TRASH CITY - the T-shirt they tried to ban!') so I can get the numbers right, not wanting to be left with 300 sleazy shirts on my hands! Cost is now uncertain, but should be round about seven or eight pounds.

This issue is late again; I came back off holiday to find that a rogue program had chewed it's way through places no self-respecting program would go, and it took me a fair while to restore everything back to where it was before I went on holiday, never mind getting on with anything else! Then we ran out of paper and Per, the layout man, had his Honda VFR 750 bike nicked which didn't help.

Just room for a swift plug for Andy Allard, who's trying to organise a series of thematic retro presentations in (off all places) Scunthorpe. The first one was on Saturday October 27th, with Evil Dead 1 & 2, Videodrome, A Nightmare on Elm Street and C\*rn\*v\*l \*f S\*\*ls (hell, 4 out of 5 ain't bad!), all for four quid. For information on future events write to : A.Allard, Flat 6, 17 Westbourne Avenue, Hull, HU5 3RN.

Next issue might come out before Xmas, but will probably be just after it instead. Oh, and there's currently a possibility of getting an interview with Sybil D. so if there are any questions you think ought to be put to the woman, please let me know.

"I think Winona Ryder's very sexy"

----- Wendy James.

Finally, as an alternative T-shirt design, how about the picture on THIS side (again, looking a lot better and in colour), which given the name of the 'zine, might fittingly commemorate the singer who was responsible for it... Although agreeing with Bendy Wendy for one, I have to admit to several minutes of wild fantasizing on reading the above quote - my imaginary film script has undergone some subtle revision to make the most of this sexual quirk...

See you in three,

Jim.