



TRASH CITY

II

£1.25

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Editor Jim McLennan. Well, he doesn't actually do any editing as you may have noticed, but he does pretty much everything else so we'll let him off. Contributors for this issue (ping) are: George Houston, Per Porter, Jim Swallow, Steve Welburn. Pictures and pastes by Per Porter. Trash City is published sometimes when we can get Jim to finish the bloody thing. Then we spend several weeks trying to find suitable pictures. Ok, any pictures. We then take the whole sticky pile down to John London at Copyprint. What happens next is anyone's guess. Subscriptions save hassle and besides, you will get your copy warm (and we have to stick on the postage stamps - yeeuch!). Rates are a piffling 75p/issue (\$2 Europe, \$3 Elsewhere). Last time I looked in the box, there were a few pink issue 9s and some Issue 10s, available for £1/\$2/\$3. All cheques payable to Jim McLennan. All complaints to next door. If you think you could do better then you're probably correct. If you can't get your contribution printed anywhere else then it's probably crap, but it might give us a laugh. Send absolutely everything to this address:

7 Tummons Gardens, South Norwood Hill, LONDON SE25 6BD

WELCOME TO THE VIDEODROME

TC10 was available from Fantasy Inn, Top 10 and Psychotronic Videos in London, Trick or Treat (Alun Fairburn's mail order weird stuff company), and Videodrom and Michael Dericks in Germany. It was not available from Forbidden Planet, as they took phenomenally long to stump up the money for TC9. I've since heard they went near-bust in October, which explains some of the delay, but otherwise, well...

WHY IT TOOK FORBIDDEN PLANET 141 DAYS TO PAY FOR TC9.

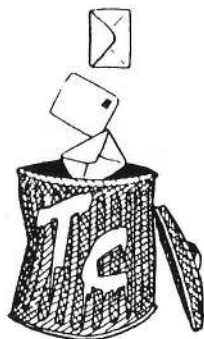
1. "Your invoice has been passed to the Accounts department"
2. "You've just missed this Friday's cheque run"
3. "We do our cheque run on a Thursday and you've just missed it"
4. "I'm afraid the person dealing with it doesn't work here any more"
5. "If you don't hear from me, the money'll be in the post"
[I didn't, it wasn't]
6. "I'll just find the invoice and call you back"
7. At 3:30 - "Call back at 4 o'clock"
8. At 4:00 - "He's gone home for the day"

Narrow escape of the past quarter. Went to the King's Head theatre to see an adaptation of Hardy's 'Far from the Madding Crowd'. However, a cock-up in Time Out meant it should have been the previous Saturday, and I came within inches of having to sit through an evening of feminist comedy. Fortunately it was "wimmen only", as I found out when I tried to buy a ticket. I've never been so grateful for reverse sexism, as it would probably have been as enjoyable as root canal work without anaesthetic.

Apologies to Dean Heathcote and Tony Lee for failing to credit them last issue for the 'Violent Anime' and 'Aliens III' pieces respectively. Thanks this issue got to Spencer Hickman, Dan Pydynkowski, Stefan Kwiatkowski, Anthony Cawood, Steven Cremin, Alun Fairburn, Lino (who's got to buy a copy now!), Andy Waller, Peter J. Evans, Tom Edge, Tim & Karen, Rick Baker, Dean Heathcote, Brian Bower, Jason Parker, Steve Moss, Kevin Haney, Trevor Brown and Ken Miller who gets the TC Cool Dude award this issue, for co-organising the show at the Scala (one of the best days I've had in a long time), fixing me a chat with Jorg & Manfred, lending me his cassette recorder and generally being a nifty guy.

This issue is brought to you under severe pressures of time, thanks to the approach of Christmas, leading to a maelstrom of holidays, Xmas parties and other, just as vital, activities. Any errors you may see are a) my fault and b) not surprising in the slightest.

Finally, subscribers should check the envelope (yep, the one you just threw away) - due to a hard-disk error, I lost the subs list and had to recreate it from a backup and two issues worth of letters! Any complaints, let me know...



High Weirdness By Mail

Andrej Karczewski, London - Okay, I'm a cunt and I know it, a bottom-of-the-barrel, low-life scum not fit even to lick the soles of Miss Kinski's leather high heel shoes.

If you're writing to the editor, a little bit of self-abasement never does your chances any harm. Alternatively, you could perhaps try to confuse the hell out of me:

John Worley, Northampton - Dear Mr. McLennan, (I feel like a corpse - hence the stiff formality). As I've been dutifully feasting my eyes, gloating my soul upon your accursed publication for the past five issues, I thought it was high time - not intended as a drug reference, please note - I wrote and made a few incisive comments about said zine-things; but as I'm not feeling particularly inspirational today, I'm just gonna ask for a bloody T-shirt.

Ah yes, the T-shirts. Or even the bloody T-shirts, using the word as an entirely accurate adjective. Civilization has not collapsed following their release into an unsuspecting world:

Steve Rag, Eastleigh - My own T-shirt has been officially declared garden-worthy. I wore it while I was cutting the grass last weekend, and not one single bird, grasshopper, slug, etc, etc, complained. The fish in the pond actually looked quite impressed. As for wearing it out on the streets...I'm not that adventurous.

Wise man, judging from this cautionary tale:

Glyn Williams, Mickleover - Derby is clearly not ready even for the 'polite' TC T-shirts! Upon wearing it for the first time in the city centre I was approached by an elderly chap who said that his wife found "The picture on your attire most distressing". I told him that it was another Benetton promotion. Feel free to use this recommendation on any future sales drive. Talking of your T-shirts (but this time the 'impolite' version) I actually saw the movie 'Heathers' last weekend for the first time. The line about the inappropriate use of the chainsaw seemed contrived (perhaps the lousy actress blessed with the line didn't help) and the whole film was very disappointing. Just remind me again: what is the attraction of Winona Ryder?

Ouch. How does it go? "For those that understand, no explanation is necessary. For those that don't, no explanation is possible". Perhaps the best justification is the simple one: she's not Julia Roberts. While still on the 'lust' front, but someone else's for a change:

Helen McCarthy, London - "Nice review of 'Hamlet'; I've been saying for ages that Ol' Blue Eyes is underrated as an actor, but sceptics put that down to mere lust...I had a long phone conversation with a friend about how much I was looking forward to Mel Gibson's Hamlet; he sounded a bit bemused, said "I wouldn't have thought it was a natural role for him" and listened for ten minutes

while I raved about the ice-blue, opal-blue eyes, the remarkable quality of stitawess, the physical presence, and so on - then he said "Oh, the Australian - I thought you meant Mel who's on with Griff Rhys Jones!"...It sounds as though your reviewer of 'Violence Jack' missed the bit where the monster eats the corpse of it's transvestite, hermaphrodite lover after Jack has finished preparing it for the sushi chef, and the bit where the gang of cute kids gets chopped - purely for being cute as far as I can tell. After 28 years in the manga/anime business, it's nice to see that Go Nagai [the creator of 'Violence Jack'] still enjoys doing what he's best at".

And here are a couple of other people enjoying their work for one reason or another, starting with some info on the sort of book I wished we'd studied at school, instead of 'Cider with Rosie'.

Todd Grimson, Oregon, USA - "I saw the mention of Trash City in the Joe Bob Briggs newsletter and I'd like to see a few issues, especially any that deal with Nastassja Kinski. I'm a writer...The novel I'm working on now, entitled 'Brand New Cherry Flavour' uses Nastassja Kinski as a sort of patron goddess -the heroine strongly resembles her and works in Hollywood, where people remark upon it... It runs on movie logic; anything can happen that would work onscreen. Zombie-bikers who once went to UCLA. Magic everywhere, spells using urine or piercing your tongue. Psychic tattoos (you wake up in the morning and they're just there). An evil dwarf. Several litres of blood. Body parts nailed to a wall. Untold scenes of nudity necessary to the plot".

Steve Moss, Liverpool - "I'm working in a new shop selling all kinds of cruelty-free/environmentally sound/political campaigning/etc stuff...Short of roadying for The Ramones, it's the ideal job - no bosses, no uniforms, flexible hours and a say in every decision that's made...If any cute babes come into the shop while I'm on the till, I ask them in my most innocent-sounding voice if they've signed our petitions, and then as soon as they go out of the door, go over and make a note of their names and addresses...It can't fail!"

Tsk, tsk - such an appalling lack of political correctness.

Jason Parker, Bromsgrove - "Remember when I told you about my foray into 'dingy shop land' to get my Japanese magazine? Well, I asked the shop woman if she had any comics :-

"Comics?"

"Er, manga!" replied I.

"Ah, you want Banga's", said she, as she then proceeded to lead me to a shelf and gave me a box of those "paper-snap-things-that-bang-when-thrown-to-the-floor"! After much patience, I bought a 120 page manga - £3 - and when I went to pay for it, asked her what the title was. After some scrutinising, she replied "Golf?" with a disconcerting lack of confidence...The content was remarkably similar to the Magic Cop/Encounters of a Strange Kind style of Taoist kung-fu magic. God only knows where "Golf" came into it..."

Andy Waller, enjoying life to the full at college - "By the way, if you print that at all, you're dead."

Probably the casual threat of the year so far. Hah! A brave writer like me doesn't bow to threats like that. At least not when I am entirely aware of the lucrative possibilities offered by blackmail and will hopefully be able to wring a few pints out of Mr.Waller on the strength of his preceding comment. Unless someone wants to make me a better offer? Bids to the editorial address, please...

INSTRUCTION AND ADVICE FOR THE YOUNG BRIDE

On the Conduct and Procedure
of the Intimate and Personal
Relationships of the Marriage
State for the Greater Spiritual
Sanctity of this Blessed
Sacrament and the Glory of
God

by Ruth Smythers, beloved wife of The Reverend
L.D. Smythers, Pastor of the Arcadian Methodist
Church of the Easter Regional Conference

Published in the Year of our Lord 1894



To the sensitive young woman who has had the benefits of proper upbringing, the wedding day is, ironically, both the happiest and the most terrifying day of her life. On the positive side, there is the wedding itself, in which the bride is the central attraction in a beautiful and inspiring ceremony, symbolising her triumph in securing a male to provide for all her needs for the rest of her life. On the negative side, there is the wedding night, during which the bride must pay the piper, so to speak, by facing for the first time the terrible experience of sex.

At this point, dear reader, let me concede one shocking truth. Some young women actually anticipate the wedding night ordeal with curiosity and pleasure! Beware such an attitude! A selfish and sensual husband can easily take advantage of such a bride. One cardinal rule of marriage should never be forgotten: GIVE LITTLE, GIVE SELDOM AND ABOVE ALL, GIVE GRUDGINGLY. Otherwise what could have been a proper marriage could become an orgy of sexual lust.

On the other hand, the bride's terror need not be extreme. While sex is at best revolting and at worse rather painful, it has to be endured, and has been by women since the beginning of time, and is compensated for by the monogamous home and by the children produced through it.

It is useless, in most cases, for the bride to prevail upon the groom to forego the sexual initiation. While the ideal husband would be one who would approach his bride only at her request and only for the purpose of begetting offspring, such nobility and unselfishness can not be expected from the average man.

Most men, if not denied, would demand sex almost every day. The wise bride will permit a maximum of two brief sexual experiences weekly during the first months of marriage. As time goes by, she should make every effort to reduce this frequency.

Feigned illness, sleepiness, and headaches are among the wife's best friends in this matter. Arguments, nagging, scolding and bickering also prove very effective, if used in the late evening about an hour before the husband would normally commence his seduction.

Clever wives are ever on the alert for new and better methods of denying and discouraging the amorous overtures of the husband. A good wife should expect to have reduced sexual contacts to once a week by the end of the first year of marriage and to once a month by the end of the fifth year of marriage.

By their tenth anniversary, many wives have managed to complete their child-bearing and have achieved the ultimate goal of terminating all sexual contact with the husband. By this time, she can depend upon his love for the children and social pressures to hold the husband in the home.

Just as she should be ever alert to keep the quantity of sex as low as possible, the wise bride will pay equal attention to limiting the kind and degree of sexual contacts. Most men are by nature rather perverted, and if given half a chance would engage in quite a variety of the most revolting practices. These practices include among others performing the normal act in abnormal positions, mouthing the female body, and offerering their own vile bodies to be mouthed in turn.

Nudity, talking about sex, reading stories about sex, viewing photographs and drawing depicting or suggesting sex are other obnoxious habits the male is likely to acquire if permitted.

A wise bride will make it her goal never to allow her husband to see her unclothed body, and never allow him to display his unclothed body to her. Sex, when it cannot be prevented, should be practiced only in total darkness. Many women have found it useful to have thick cotton nightgowns for themselves and pajamas for their husbands. These should be donned in separate rooms. They need not be removed during the sex act. Thus, a minimum of flesh is exposed.

Once the bride has donned her gown and turned off all the lights, she should lie quietly upon the bed and await her groom. When he comes groping into the room she should make no sound to guide him in her direction, lest he take this as a sign of encouragement. She should let him grope in the dark. There is always the hope that he will stumble and incur some slight injury which she can use as an excuse to deny him sexual access.

When he finds her, the wife should lie as still as possible. Bodily motion on her part could be interpreted as sexual excitement by the optimistic husband.

If he attempts to kiss her on the lips, she should turn her head slightly so that the kiss falls harmlessly on her cheek instead. If he attempts to take her hand, she should make a fist. If he lifts her gown and attempts to kiss her anywhere else, she should quickly pull the gown back in place, spring from the bed and announce that nature calls her to the toilet. This will generally dampen her desire to kiss in the forbidden territory.


If the husband attempts to seduce her with lascivious talk, the wise wife will suddenly remember some trivial non-sexual question to ask him. Once he answers, she should keep the conversation going, no matter how frivolous it may seem at the time.

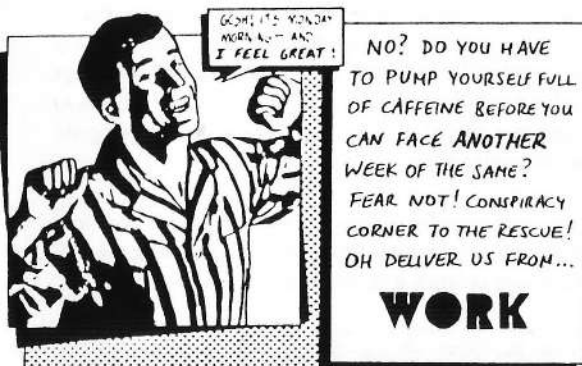
Eventually, the husband will learn that if he insists on having sexual contact, he must get on with it without amorous embellishments. The wise wife will allow him to pull the gown up no farther than the waist, and only permit him to open the front of his pajamas to make connection.

She will be absolutely silent, or babble about her housework, while he is huffing and puffing away. Above all, she will lie perfectly still and never under any circumstances grunt or groan while the act is in progress.

As soon as the husband has completed the act, the wise wife will start nagging him about various minor tasks she wishes him to perform on the morrow. Many men obtain a major portion of their sexual satisfaction from the peaceful exhaustion immediately after the act is over. Thus the wife must insure that there is no peace in this period for him to enjoy. Otherwise, he might be encouraged to soon try for more.

One heartening factor for which the wife can be grateful is the fact that the husband's home, school, church and social environment have been working together all through his life to instill in him a deep sense of guilt in regard to his sexual feelings, so that he comes to the marriage couch apologetically and filled with shame, already half cowed and subdued. The wise wife seizes upon this advantage and relentlessly pursues her goal first to limit, later to annihilate completely her husband's desire for sexual expression.





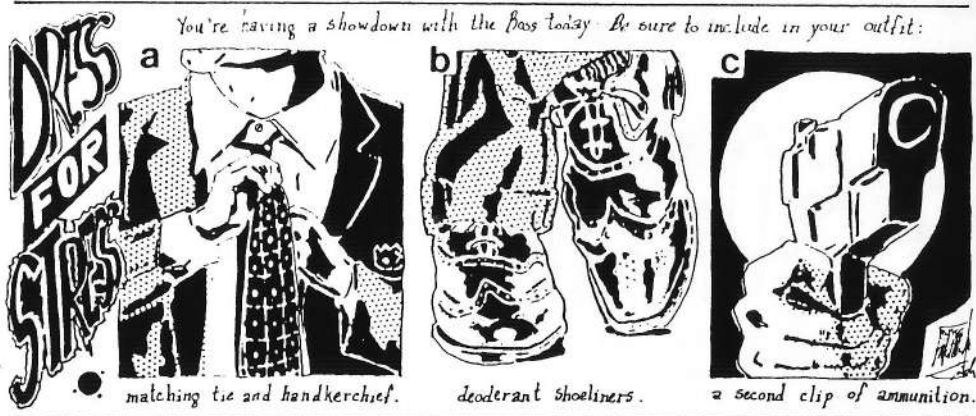
Certain unpleasant facts of life do occasionally have to be faced. Grim realities must sometimes be confronted. That knock on the door is not likely to be Phoebe and Winona popping round with a six-pack. The chances are slim that United Artists are going to lob \$75 million in your direction to allow you to direct "The Railway Children 2: The Beeching Years". And the odds are, you won't be able to get through life without having to work.

However, you can minimise the impact that work has on your lifestyle, and reduce it to being merely something you do between weekends. Here's a few I've found useful - though some examples relate to my personal experience, with imagination most of these can be converted to suit any job.

1. Many people, disgruntled with their life between 9 and 5, think they can escape by changing jobs. This only makes things worse; it's usually not the JOB that's the problem, it's WORK itself. The longer you stay in one place, the less you need to do, and people will eventually assume you have a divine right to spend your life photocopying.
2. If your boss takes lunch from 1 till 2, take your lunch from 12.15 to 1.15 - this will allow you to extend your break by half an hour or so without much problem. Early shifts and late shifts are also good, in that there are usually fewer people around to see you not doing anything.
3. The secret of minimising work through illness is, perhaps surprisingly, to come into work when you're feeling most wretched. Take the first couple of days AFTERWARDS off instead. There's no point in staying at home when you're sick; you won't enjoy it, and anyway, the working day really speeds by if you're tanked up on cough mixture. It also adds credibility when you do bunk off - people will think "It must be REALLY bad if he isn't coming in". One exception to this rule is if you

have a hangover: it's hard enough to manage simple things (like breathing), without having to pretend to work as well. You'll only get a reputation as a hard drinker if you're obviously suffering (and it's not easy to conceal) so stay at home, pull the blankets over your head and wait for things to get better. If you're having your wisdom teeth removed, say, get it done on a Monday - that way you can recuperate in company time and stagger in a couple of days later looking like you've gone 15 rounds with Jackie Chan, and winning instant sympathy.

4. Have a long-term, ongoing task that you can pick up whenever someone's watching you. In a shop, you can stack shelves. In an office, file reports. In a computer department, clear some disk space or check for viruses. The more impressive and obvious it is, the better.



5. The ideal situation is to work for a boss who doesn't understand what you do. This allows you to pull the wool over his eyes, nose, mouth and down to his belly-button. There's no point in doing a job fast - they'll just find something else for you to do. So, when asked for an estimate of how long something will take, pause, look at the ceiling for a while, then give double the actual time and move it up to the next unit. If queried, say something like "Well, I COULD always cut a few corners", while giving a look that implies "...but I'm not taking any responsibility if I do". My personal best is getting five days to change one line of one computer program and with schedules like that, it doesn't take much effort to come in right on time.

6. Dubious activities are best concealed in flocks. The chances are slim of anyone spotting the letter you're writing if it's on a desk top covered with bits of paper, and a nuke-the-alien-slimeballs game can easily be overlooked if you have more flashing screens than your average multiplex. Be careful with this, however, as it can cramp your style: it's easy for one screen to mysteriously short-circuit on a Friday afternoon, (especially if you drench it in coffee, with added salt for extra viciousness), less plausible for a deskful to simultaneously explode.

7. Your job should resemble your leisure pursuits where possible. Want to write letters? Offer to do reports, invoices, memos, etc. This also means that you'll get to use all sorts of nice word-processors, laser printers and other devices to make your letters/CV/zine look cool. Want to chat on the phone

The 01 One Minute Manager



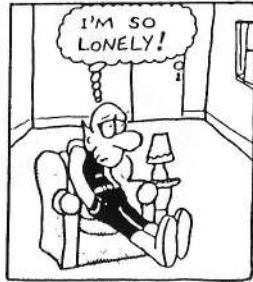
to friends? Do so right after a legitimate and well-publicized call, but use discretion - intimate discussion of your sex life is likely to provoke comment, unless you work for Electric Blue.

8. Cover for your colleagues and they'll cover for you. It is not good karma to answer a workmate's phone at 4.30pm with "she's out to lunch" even if it's true. However, there may be traitors with a warped sense of values who actually WANT to work. Drop them in it every opportunity - it's useful to have a scape-goat and they tend to possess bizarre notions like "fair play" which will prevent them from retaliating.

9. Become indispensable. Knowledge is not only power, it's also a comfy chair. Try and avoid teaching your arcane wisdom to anyone else or writing it down - should either case becomes unavoidable, leave out small but important points, which will sink anyone trying to replace you. If pulled up on these, affect an air of injured innocence and claim the missing info was "obvious".

10. Perhaps most importantly, ALWAYS HAVE AN ESCAPE ROUTE. The truth should be used where possible - it makes the lies, when they come, that much more plausible. Similarly, be prepared to take the rap for little things as you'll improve your chances of being believed when you deny the big cock-ups. Everything should be explicable, escapable or at least blamable on someone else. Panic doesn't help, a phrase like "Well, guess that's my lunch-hour almost over" does.

Most jobs require very little in the way of direct competence to survive -all you need to do is avoid being marked as INcompetent. Remember this, and you'll have a good chance of, if not quite ENJOYING work, at least being able to survive it.



The scene is St. Louis airport, gate 51. A herd of passengers is clustering near the exit to the plane for Los Angeles. Enter ILSA, SHE-WOLF OF THE DEPARTURE LOUNGE, an airline employee:

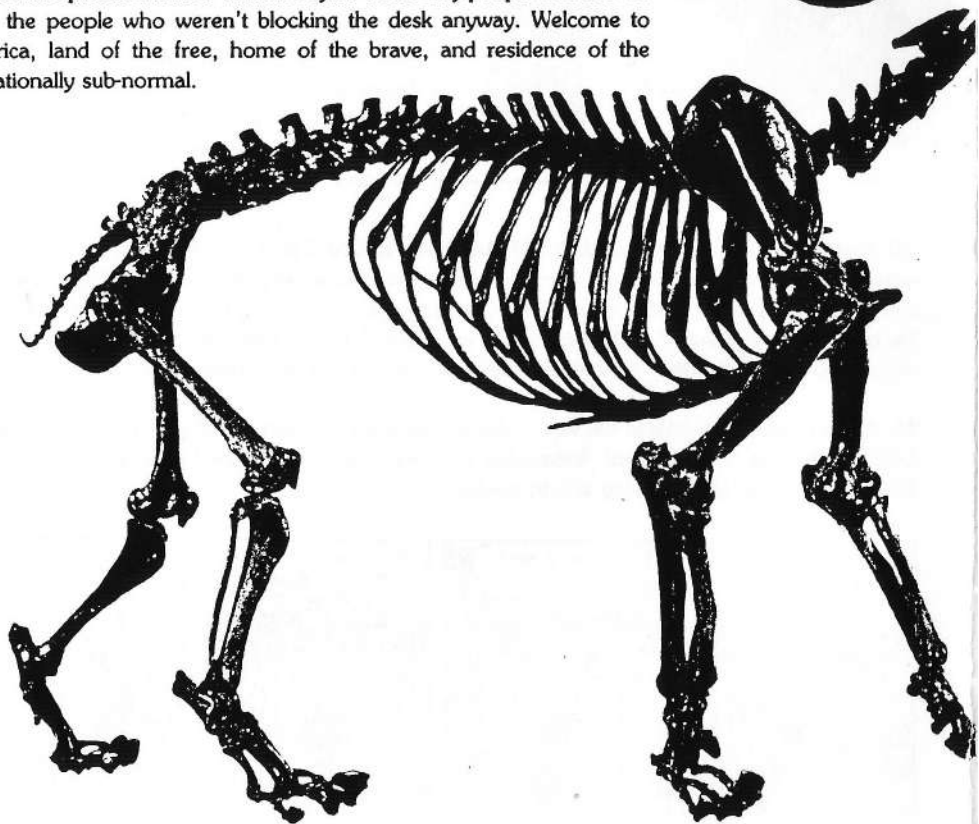
"We're about to begin boarding, by seat rows, ladies and gentleman, so could you all please clear a space so that other passengers can get on" She might as well have tried talking a beached whale into moving. The herd of passengers looked at her with a bemused expression and assumed she was talking to someone else.

"We're not going to start boarding until you clear an aisle!" Nothing. In a massive show of intransigence, no-one budged. Gandhi would have been proud at this display of passive resistance.

"Everyone take one step back!"

Zero. Perhaps she should have prefixed it with "Simon Says...". The only people who moved were the people who weren't blocking the desk anyway. Welcome to America, land of the free, home of the brave, and residence of the educationally sub-normal.

AMERICA



Los Angeles seems like half-a-dozen different places, without the coherence of London or Paris. Hollywood had all the feel of a seaside town - it just didn't have a beach. Beverly Hills was EXPENSIVE. Malibu was reminiscent of Nice. And Downtown LA most closely resembled East Berlin, pre-unification. Guess which one of these we were staying in.

N

It can not be said loudly or often enough - perhaps it should be stamped in your passport at immigration. **IF YOU'RE IN LA ON HOLIDAY, DO NOT STAY DOWNTOWN.** From the comfort of Britain, it's very easy to think that "downtown" is bound to be a cool and happening place. Wrong. Wrong. Wrong. It's the business centre, so on Sundays, when we arrived, the only people who stay there are the residents. Unfortunately, there aren't actually any of them, apart from the vagrants, and they're not the sort of people you want to share any experiences with, being neither interesting nor cute. We have perfectly good derelicts in London and don't need to fly 4,000 miles to see them... The best thing was a great diner, which is permanently open, to the extent that it doesn't have locks on the doors. This 24 hour approach was a great boon to the jet-lagged, who find themselves in need of

hotcakes, bacon and that great American invention, all-the-coffee-you-can-drink, at 4.30 am.



After a day of "Oh look - there's a tramp", we packed up and drove North in search of intelligent, or at least interesting/cute, life. We hired a car, a neat Toyota Paseo with a sun-roof, air-conditioning, and a stereo system with enough watts to dim the headlights when we turned it on. Unsurprisingly, it took some getting used to driving on the wrong side of the road and in an

EXCESS

automatic, but the main problem was sitting on the left of the car. In Britain, you normally leave minimal room to your right, but in an American car, you've got a passenger seat to think about as well. I kept forgetting this, which led to Steve holding his breath as our Paseo slid gently into the next lane.

Once I'd got the hang of this, it was a piece of cake. Most of the main roads in LA are straight and long, with two, three or more lanes, so you've got plenty of room for error. Steve navigated - good thing too as my usual London technique of pulling up every 200 yards to check the A to Z would not have worked here. Though the Californians would probably have coped: despite pulling some very odd manoeuvres, I barely heard a horn in two weeks. Presumably, Angelenos either don't mind or they spray your car with automatic weapons, there's no middle ground.



Speaking of carnage, the weekend we arrived, there were 15 murders. This came in about half way through the local news just before the weather.

We found a hotel on Sunset Boulevard (despite my pleas to be allowed to stay in the 'Winona Motel'). The recession had clearly hit the trade - we went into it and asked about their rates. "How much do you want to pay?" was the reply. Our celebrations at wangling a \$15 per day reduction in the room became rather muted when we returned to the car and found we'd picked up a parking ticket, which wiped out \$53 of the saving.

AMERICAN EXCESS



An average Californian enjoying a DIY beach barbecue.

Americans have 10 times as many TV channels as we do, so naturally have 10 times as much crap. However, every 7-10 minutes there's an ad break, which makes it possible to avoid seeing any actual programmes. As fascinating alternative viewing goes, the adverts take some beating, right down to the plugs for the Toxic Crusader toys, a set of "hideously deformed action figures" based on 'The Toxic Avenger', and advertised with the slogan "They're gross, but they still get girls". Alas, all my attempts to track down a Phoebe Legere bendy doll were in vain.

Another highlight was the 30-minute plug for a set of animated Bible stories, which would "help your children counteract the violence and immorality shown on network TV", accompanied by glowing testimonies from brainwashed children (believe me, the Moonies have NOTHING on American fundamentalists). I

kept hoping they might do the interesting bits of the Bible, like Revelations, but there was nothing doing.

No.1 on the list of places to go as far as I was concerned, had to be the Miracle Mile, thanks to the movie of the same name. We drove along, looking for the diner featured therein, and quickly found it, despite it not looking QUITE the same. The inside was very similar, and eating breakfast in there lead to a highly un-nerving sense of "deja vu". Had a phone rung, I'd probably have wet myself. The nearby La Brea tar pits were also very interesting ("mammoths" definitely live up to their name!), though I felt slightly conned to discover that the familiar ones with models of struggling creatures are actually artificial, being old asphalt quarries.

Apart from these, California doesn't have much history. While we Europeans were having crusades, wars and the Renaissance, their main inhabitants were chewing grass, pausing now and again to sweep majestically across the prairie (I'm talking about buffalo here, in case you hadn't quite grasped the literary nettle). Now, America feels the need to import the stuff, which is why they love our Royal Family, probably more than we do. However, it all gets twisted 90 degrees, warps under pressure and mutates into something...DIFFERENT.

Take, for example, The Cat and Fiddle English Pub, on Sunset Boulevard. It's as if it was designed by people who'd never SEEN a real British pub, but only read about them. All the trappings are there: the wall mirrors, the bar towels, the surly and aggressive service - though the last of these only lasted until we remembered the American custom of tipping the bar-staff - but it's all overdone, artificial and unmistakably alien. The pub grub was edible, for one thing, though I avoided the does not expect to travel 4,000 miles and see "bangers and mash" (with "home-made imported sausages") or "fish and chips" (did they realise our chips were not the same as theirs?). I still remain utterly at a loss as to what the bizarre item described as "bread and butter custard" actually was.

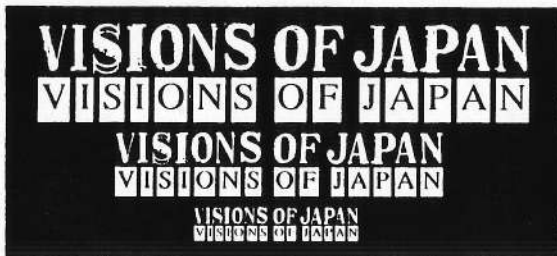
Disneyland is probably the closest America comes to history and even there, the castle is based on Mad King Ludwig's Neuschwanstein in Bavaria and the other major feature is a 1/100 scale model of the Matterhorn. Like most things in the States, it's accompanied by a ferocious hard sell: the aforementioned castle is jammed full of places like "Tinkerbell's Toye Shoppe". While the admission price of \$30 dollars isn't bad value, once inside, you're assailed by endless incitements to purchase Disney goodies. Unfortunately, the only "Little Mermaid" T-shirts they had were designed for 7-year olds, so I didn't bother.

The rides were impressive: the queues were massive (and mostly concealed, so you couldn't see how long they were when you joined them!) but moved quickly; the longest wait was about 30 minutes. The best one was "Star Tours" ("sponsored by M&M's"), not least because the wait was enlivened by animatronic chit-chat from R2D2, C3PO and Number 5 from "Short Circuit". When you got to the front, you were ushered into what was basically a state-of-the-art flight simulator: a large video screen at the front had you flying into space, crashing through a comet and bombing the Death Star while the cabin, and your stomach, moved in sympathy. Utterly convincing.

Stage one of the holiday finished, we flew on to San Jose for Stage 2. The excuse for this holiday was Animecon '91, the first seriously big convention devoted to Japanese animation. This isn't the place to discuss the Animecon - instead see 'Anime UK' number 8, available from Helen McCarthy, see Three-Pin Plugs for details. And as for San Francisco, you'll have to wait till next time.

Deep inside the Victoria & Albert Museum, amid the stark booty of marble and stone plundered from around the globe, lies 'Visions of Japan'. The exhibition is composed of three rooms: each a movement in a powerful symphony of experience, each truly Japanese at the core.

V&A



Room One, COSMOS, by Kazuhiro Ishii. Watchwords: Tranquility, Peace.

The symphony starts with a cool and soft tinkling of Koto music, and the smell of clean, fresh pine. Grids of wood stretch out along the walls, framing the massive Jodo-bashira pillar in the foreground. Behind the grids, invisible birds sing, and water flows in harmony. With a natural ease, the music swells and the pillar rotates, sweeping past the tattooed man and the fibre-optic Buddha. All then is silence, under the watchful eye of the master of the Pure Land. Amida Buddha himself stays half-hidden, behind the pinewood, glimpsed through holes barely finger-wide. We are boxed out...perhaps too gajin for him. Past the muslin shrouded hearse, to the folding tea-house which parts like an origami flower when your back is turned.

Room Two, CHAOS, by Osamu Ishiyama. Watchwords: Intensity, Overload.

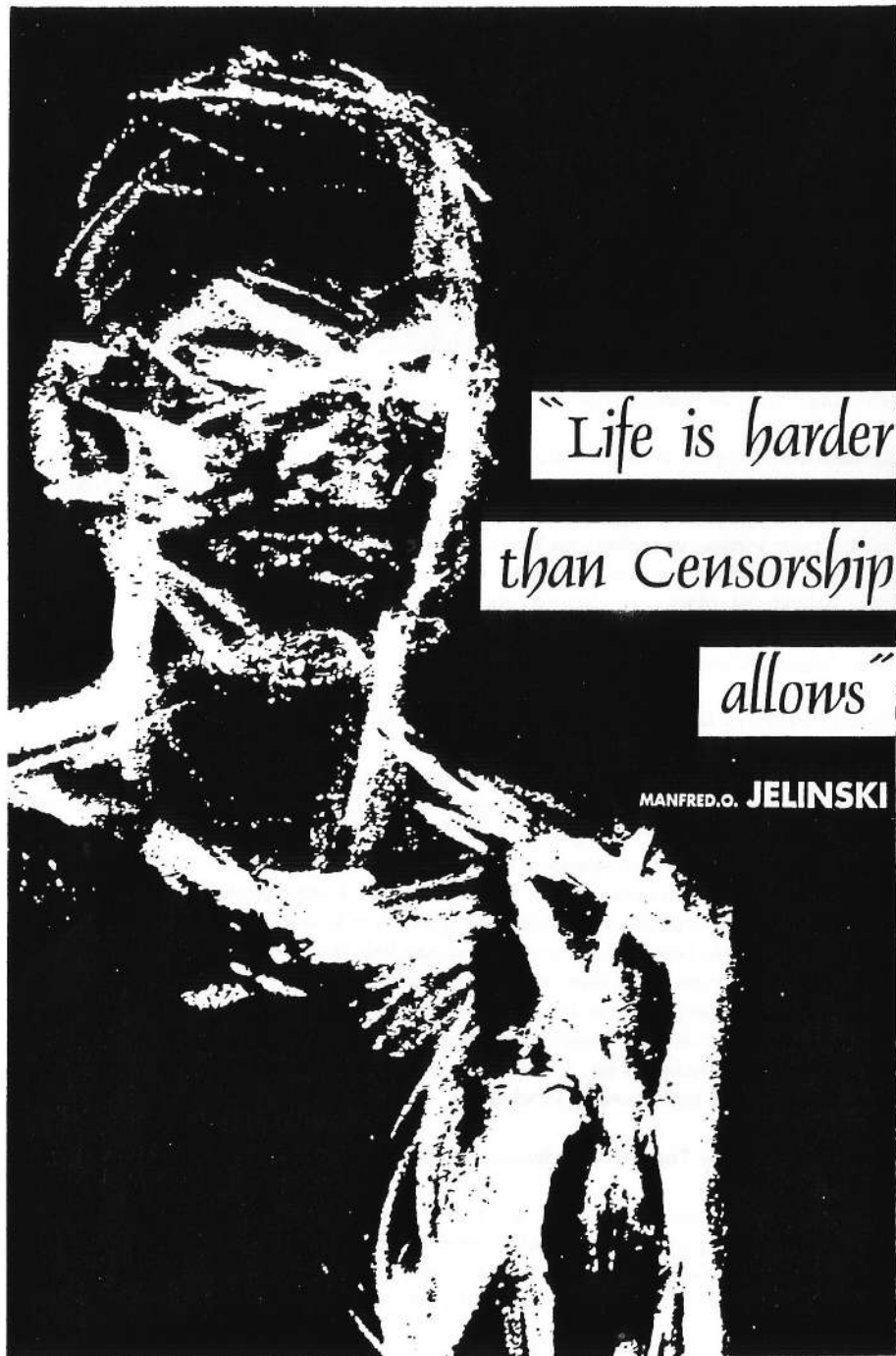
The new movement begins in a blare of teeny-bop rock. This is the present, smelling of cherry blossom, and icon-driven. Select: GODZILLA. And there he is, forty stories tall with bad breath and a skin condition. He stands locked in a grimacing contest with Ghidrah of the three heads, picking his teeth with a plate glass window, stomping on a Tokyo made of plastic and computer circuits. Tesselated manga line the walls under gales of fishermen's flags, leading you into a maze built from vending machines and car chassis, draped with fake garlands of leaves. Everything dispensers line the streets, straddled by Mr. Safety robots, ever waving their flags like cybernetic cheerleaders. Video games, karaoke and the Thundering Gate surround you, dwarfed by the Fuji-capped Sound Shrine, which roars Tokyo noises at you if you dare to spin the brass wheels. Between the shrines and the Shinto gates, fortunes lie in little numbered boxes, ready to be told. The wooden Gods wait to play oracle, but it's third time lucky for me. I leave with a can of coffee, three brands of Sapporo, a not-so-good fortune and a high score on Gradius.

Room three, DREAMS, by Toya Ito. Watchwords: Data, Totality.

And the final sonata in synthiKoto. This bare hall of plastic become a shrine to information, prominences of data rising and falling like solar flares. It is a digital urbana, a kazume world. The active air carries the shockwaves of facts, ongoing, unstoppable, relentless and engulfing. It is a voyage into cyberspace, a trip roaming across a digital metropolis. Reality fades like dead TV static.

"Visions of Japan" continues until the 5th of January, 1992.

(Jim Swallow)



*"Life is harder
than Censorship
allows"*

MANFRED O. JELINSKI

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Much of the fame, or notoriety, for 'Nekromantik' has come down on the head of director Jorg Buttgerit, but I'm sure he'd be the first to agree that it's just as much a team effort. A leading player on that team must be producer Manfred Jelinski - his efforts are not limited to financing the picture, he also is responsible for some of the visual effects, works on the subtitling, and tirelessly promotes all of Jorg's films around the globe. The two of them work together like any good double act, but when they were over in Britain recently promoting 'Nekromantik 2', I managed to corner Manfred for a chat, though his partner still managed to get the odd word in...

How did you come to work with Jorg?

MJ: I went to some screenings to see what people in the underground were doing and did some video transfers for him. The first film was 'Bloody Excess' in the Fuhrer bunker and I found what he is doing very new and refreshing. So we did a documentary together about the punk movement, and then Jorg did 'Hot Love' - after that I was pretty sure that this was a man with which I wanted to work!

Were people's expectations a problem with 'Nekromantik 2'?

MJ: The public did have some expectations of the film, but that's their problem! I found it very satisfying to give the story dimensions that I felt were missing in the first one.

JB: I'm the only one doing films about necrophilia and death-related things, and as no-one else is doing it, I have to do a second one. The corpse fucking is not the important thing for me in 'Nekromantik 2', the important thing for me was to make the audience care about the actress. It's really important for them to be on the side of the girl, despite what's she doing, and I think it works. The funny thing is that most of the women who've seen the film are really pleased with it. If you watch carefully, it's a kind of feminist movie. Some people may have a problem - they normally understand the things the guy is doing but in the sequel he's a little bit stupid.

Can you tell me what the censorship situation in Germany is like just now? [There's been something of a crackdown recently, culminating in a print of 'Nekromantik 2' being seized, literally from the projector]

MJ: There are District Attorneys in towns in Germany - I guess they're collecting films like this. They say to the public "We are fighting for a clean screen" but I fear they are collecting them. They know too much about these films, so I'm convinced that they are fans! I do not fear any interest in me, the only thing they can do is destroy some things in my private comic collection. What have I done? I've made some movies, and I stand by them. I think they have a good morality and I can defend them. After the confiscation in Munich, I made a sheet of clippings cut out from newspapers and put them together with a heading that can be translated as "Life is harder than censorship allows", and that's the truth. What we do in the film is to tell the truth through a picture of life.

Are you completely opposed to all censorship or do you feel that some censorship is necessary?

MJ: I would draw my own line like the chairwoman of the censorship authority in Germany. She sees all the violence that is done to adults but what she is after is sex with children - there are some

things you just can not allow. If it is special FX, I don't see any reason to take it off the market - it's better that people see it on TV rather than doing it themselves. I'm not convinced that watching something on TV will affect people afterwards in reality. I studied psychology and it doesn't say that such a cause and effect happens. The more I think, the more I'm convinced that if you are prevented from seeing something, the more likely you are to do it. It's a release, like the Greeks had with their theatre.

JB: If there's a need to show something, I'll show it. I don't have this approach of just showing things to offend people. It might sound stupid, but we care about what's going on in the story, but to convince people of what we're dealing with, we have to show them.

Are there many other underground film makers in Germany?

MJ: Yes, but we are the only ones who're doing it independently. We tried to get some support from German television for 'Nekromantik' - they have open screenings - but when the woman who runs it heard the name Buttgereit, she turned her back on us! The regular way is to do it is to try and get money from the Government. There's some money that can be given to film-makers: you send in your script and maybe they support you, with the whole money or half the money. It takes too long to give them the script and for them to reply and you know what they're going to say anyway! If we do it ourselves, we are free to do what we want. Hollywood pictures are for too many people - I prefer films that are aimed at a few people, a special group.

So no chance of a Hollywood remake of 'Nekromantik', like they did with 'Three Men and a Baby', and are doing with 'The Killer'?

MJ: I think this is unrealistic. They couldn't deal with a story like this. I think I'm too old for all this moving around - and not just with your body, but also with your mind. I don't want to do what other people want me to do.

““ Nekromantik 2
isn't Nekromantik 2

NEKROMANTIK 2 (Jorg Buttgereit) - Monika M, Mark Reeder.

Jorg Buttgereit is very anxious that N2 is not seen as "a gore film". He's partly right - while there's none of the fantasy element prevalent in most horror, this is still closer to the splatter movie than any other genre. It begins with the suicide of Daktari Lorenz, as shown at the end of 'Nekromantik', but he's not allowed to rest in peace. As the final shot of the original movie suggested, he's dug up by a female necrophile (Monika M) and used as a sex object. This brings the corpse into conflict with her boyfriend (Mark Reeder), who's worried about his girl - little things, like her insistence he doesn't move when they're having sex and the presence of some VERY odd stuff in the fridge...

-it's more like



Love Story

JÖRG BUTTGEREIT

It's effectively the same basic idea, viewed from a completely different angle. Sensibly, with everyone 'knowing' what to expect this time round, the makers avoided slavishly remaking the original. In some ways the two films are mirror images: while the original was very much a tragedy, the sequel is more upbeat - although he dies 30 seconds into N2, Daktari Lorenz finally gets the relationship he wants! Masculine becomes feminine, with most of the film told from Monika M's point of view, and the death-ending in the original is replaced by the creation of a new life, with one last twist of the knife which hints at a further sequel, though this isn't currently planned. Technically, the sequel is obviously more advanced in most areas, right down to the soundtrack, which is available on CD this time, rather than vinyl!

Jorg is developing a recognisable style and there are elements in N2 that will be familiar from his other work. A 360 degree circular pan and a "bridge shot" are very reminiscent of 'Der Todes King' and the film-within-a-film theme appears again, with another of the spoof movies included in all three features to date. The scene where the near-mute heroine dismembers a corpse in the bathtub and wraps the bits in plastic bags echoes 'Angel of Vengeance', which seems to be a favourite film of Jorg's judging from this and the scene in 'Der Todes King' almost directly copied from Ferrara's movie.

The direction of N2 is slow and documentary in style, almost real-time on occasion, in what Buttgerreit says is a reaction to the current wave of lightning-fast, pop-video visuals, as seen in the Hong Kong movies. This is occasionally carried too far, and a sharper editing hand might have helped the overall coherency as several scenes make their point and then meander on regardless. Odd touches of grubby realism abound, and add to the gritty atmosphere, for example, the men always keep their socks on, whether they're alive, dead or having sex!

The tone occasionally lightens, with some black humour which helps make the film more watchable than the original. Beatrice M, the girlfriend from 'Nekromantik', returns to dig up the corpse of her old flame, only to find she's been beaten to it, and the scene where Mark Reeder discovers a clingfilm wrapped penis in the fridge is a classic. However, the question of how his girlfriend explains this away is never answered, one of several slightly annoying such omissions.

However, N2 generally hangs together well, and there are dark hints of things outside the scope of the film, like a group of lady necrophiles who gather to watch dodgy videos (anyone who didn't like the rabbit-killing in the original will NOT enjoy this scene. Though probably less cruel, it's even grosser and, I reckon, more gratuitous). There are also various in-jokes to spot: the director in a cinema audience, some Karen Greenlee artwork (the female necrophile interviewed in 'Apocalypse Culture'), a Jelinski gravestone in the cemetery and a statue of a girl leading a monkey that curiously echoes the posture of the couple walking past it.

It may be slicker and prettier than the original, but the feel remains the same. Buttgerreit & Jelinski basically don't give a damn about their films finding an audience, and make the films THEY want - in these days, where the horror film is becoming ever more sanitised, 'Nekromantik 2' is a brave antidote to the waves of carefully researched Hollywood products. B+.





THREE PIN PLUGS

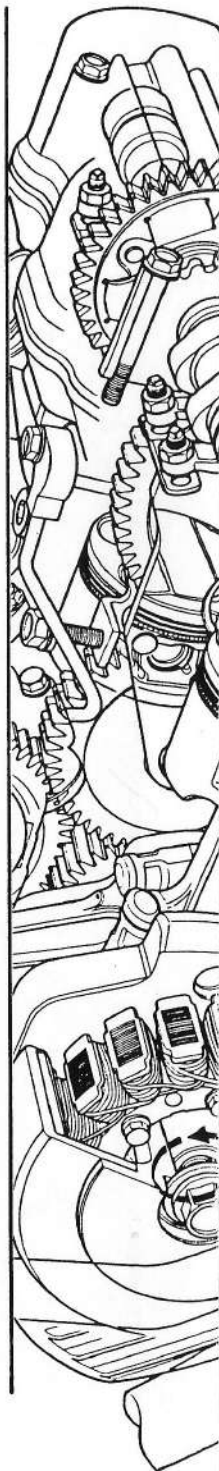
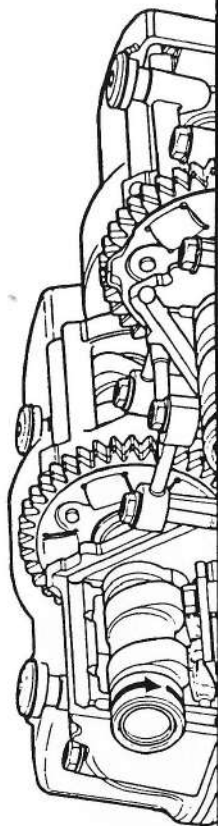
This particular article sees your editor in a fairly pissed-off mood as the TV is broken. I am attempting to stave off the withdrawal symptoms by writing TC11. It isn't working. You might be able to tell...

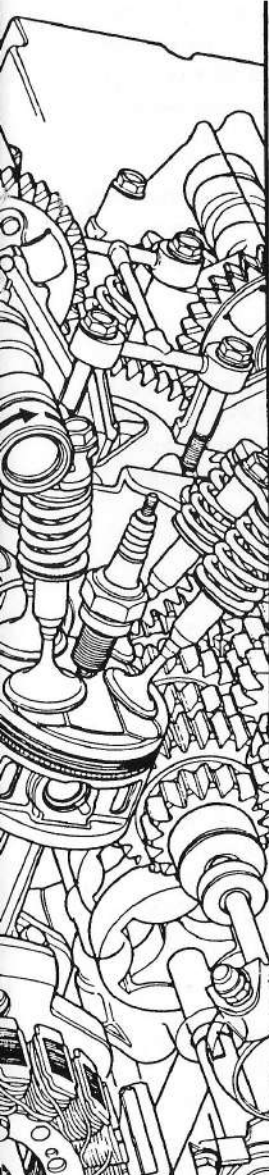
Killing Moon 1 (32 A4, £1.50) combines glossy production values with occasionally amateurish layout (but hey, look at our first issue. No, on second thoughts, don't...). You get a look at the video nasties, great eye violence scenes (stop me if this sounds familiar!) and a Sam Raimi interview. **Oddo** (22 A4, ???) is even more unstructured, but it's cut-ups of text and pictures feel like wandering through someone's unconscious. At the other end of the spectrum is **Mkultra Vol 2 No 1** (44 A4, £1.50), back under a new captain after a long break and worth investigating for an intelligent mix of reviews & articles.

Strange Adventures is also back, with a summer special on 'Women in Films', (28 A4, £1.50) covering vampires, prisoners, superheroines and, gosh, an article on 'Angel of Vengeance' by yours truly. Issue 32 (24 A4, £1.20) has an investigation into sword and sorcery films. The publishing empire of Tony Lee also takes in **Fax 21** (44 A5, £2.50), news reports from 50 years into the future, where a member of the Two Live Crew is the President of America. If you liked the news bulletins in "Robocop", you might well enjoy this.

Headcheese & Chainsaws 7 (12 A5, 35p) has been on a diet, but still crams in book, comic and film reviews. Another thin-zine, though less anorexic, more "slimly built" is **Scareaphania** 101-106 (10 A5, \$1), maybe the most reliable and consistent American 'zine, when Michael isn't getting sucked into his work for 'Fangoria'. Another American 'zine worth reading is **Monster** 63-68 (26 A4, \$1 or so), where Tim Paxton keeps the spirit of Godzilla et al alive. **Pretty Poison** 4-6 (20 A4, £1.50) is developing a fine laid back style, covering lowbrow entertainment, chemical abuse and...sign-language??? Gary also stands up for Pee-Wee Herman, for which he deserves praise. **Subterrene** 7 (30 A4, 50p) is good value for your money, and like many 'zines is branching into the Eastern genre, but still provides useful stuff like details of the cuts in 'Toxic Avenger'.

Midnight in Hell 6 (20 A4, £1) has a weird-but-good cover, draped around weird-but-good fiction, relatively normal reviews and a rather odd column that seems to come from Belgium.

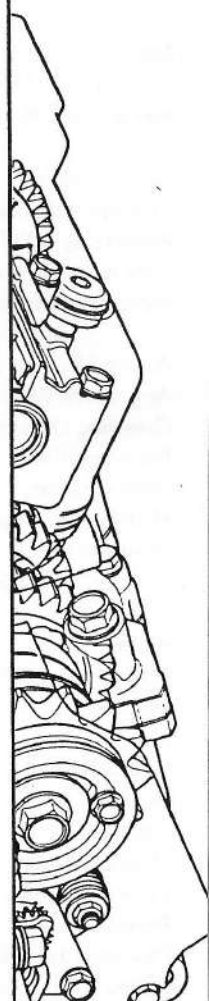




Trash Compactor Vol.2 No.5 (44 A4, \$3.50) will tell you everything you wanted to know about John Ashley. I didn't want to know much anyway, but still enjoyed it. **Anti Clock Wise** 14 (12 A4, 40p) rants about Reading, prison, time and the exploitation of beauty. Thought-provoking extreme liberal (??) drivel. Meanwhile, at the "thought-provoking conservative drivel" end of the spectrum is **Parachute Limit** Vol 1, No 1-3 (10 A4, an IRC or 'something interesting'). Produced by a bunch of guys with nothing better to do, it's the sort of stuff P.J.O'Rourke might have written at college. Some great pseudo-philosophical ramblings: "it intrigues me that women who have no qualms about oral sex have screaming heebie jeebies about letting you borrow their toothbrush", which may well be THE best line from ANY 'zine this quarter.

Most cunning ploy to get a longer review is from Anthony North, whose **Rattler's Tale** (24 A5, 75p) has now spawned **Gaia News** (12 A4, £3/year) and **Read With Mummy** (24 A5, £3/year), among others. Nice try, Anthony, it didn't work... **Orient Express** is another new 'zine (20 A4, £1.50), devoted to covering anime, Hong Kong movies, etc. More enthusiasm than knowledge, I fear, but not without promise. **Imaginator** 7 (36 A4, £1.95) shows how to do it and is bound to win any awards going for 'zine of the year. Some day, maybe, TC might be as good. Still on the Oriental front, **Anime UK** is into its second year. Impossible to give a page count, thanks to the many freebies and supplements i.e. how to read the script the Japanese use for western words! Call it "an A4 envelope full", well worth the £7.50/year.

Nora K 5 (32 A5, £1) also has a freebie, in the shape of a complete, definitive Traci Lords filmography, purely, of course, so you can avoid seeing any by accident... There's also news on TL's present activities and some more droolworthy pictures. I was going to slag off **Gore Gazette** 105 (10 A4, \$1) for describing TC as a "johnny-come-lately" 'zine, but the Rev.Sullivan later describes us as "excellent" so we'll let him off, but suggest he gets that schizophrenia seen to! This 'zine



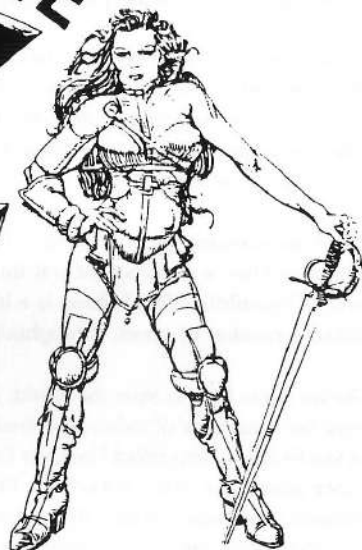
is a fanzine in the true sense of the word, and Kevin Lewis conveys his enthusiasm for the genre well. As does Spence, in **Psychotic Reaction**, Vol 2, Issue 1 (22 A4, £1) - he may have a posh glossy cover, but the sleaze and trash quotient is as high as ever (yeah!). **Factsheet Five** continues to amaze. Listing more 'zines than you'd have thought possible, if you want REAL high weirdness by mail, this is a great place to start!

And the long awaited (and not just 'cos I've got an article in it!) appearance of **Attack of the Sad Man-Eating Mushrooms 1** (36 A4, £1.25??), which gets the prize for title of the quarter, no competition. There's a selection of great death lines, an article on Albert Fish, some nifty artwork and a Giant Movie Monster filmography, all of which is interesting and varied reading.

Got a note from a company called 'Destroyers', who sell kung fu, Chinese & Hong Kong movies - for more details, write to Destroyers, PO Box 13, London SE15 6BS. Finally, the non-zine area. Anime-day 0092 is going to take place in Sheffield on the 7th and 8th of March 1992. Book now, if for no other reason than I'll be there so you get the chance to buy me vast quantities of alcohol... More details from Animeday 0092, c/o Sheffield Space Centre, 33 The Wicker, Sheffield S3 8HS.

- Anime UK: Helen McCarthy, 147 Francis Road, Leyton, London E10 6NT.
Anti Clock Wise: PO Box 175, Liverpool, L69 8DX.
Creeping Unknown: Nick Cairns, c/o 33 Maltby Road, Mansfield, Notts, NG18 3BN.
Factsheet Five: Mike Gunderloy, 6 Arizona Ave, Rensselaer, NY 12144-4502, USA.
Gore Gazette: c/o Sullivan, 49 Hazel St. Clifton, NJ 07011, USA.
H'cheese & C'saws: Rob Bewick, 33 Ernwill Ave, Castletown, Sunderland, SR5 3EB.
Imaginator: Unit 1, Hawk House, Peregrine Park, Gomm Road, High Wycombe.
Invasion of the Sad Man-Eating Mushrooms:
PO Box 7, Upminster, Essex. RM14 2RH.
Killing Moon: Alex J.Low, 17 Stewartville St, Flat 2/7, Partick, Glasgow G11 5HR.
Midnight in Hell: The Cottage, Smithy Brae, Kilmalcolm, Renfrewshire, PA13 4EN.
Mkultra: Andrej Karczewski, Top Flat, 24 Lordship Lane, London N17 8NS.
Monster: Kronos Productions, MPO Box 67, Oberlin, Ohio 44074-0067, USA.
Mortal Remains: Kevin V. Lewis, 1835a S.Centre City Pkwy, #145, Escondido, CA 92025 USA
Nora K: Steve Rag, 118 High Street, Eastleigh, Hants, S05 5LR.
Oddo: Oddone Ricci, C.P. 1045, Bologna Centro, ITALY.
Orient Express: c/o Astounding Comics, 61 Pyle Street, Newport, Isle of Wight, PO30 1UL.
Parachute Limit: c/o Max, 4122 Mt.Alifan Place #E, San Diego, CA 92111, USA.
Pretty Poison: Gary Gittings, c/o 307 Bloxwich Rd, Leamore, Walsall, WS2 7BD.
Psychotic Reaction: 50 Wingfield Rd, Great Barr, Birmingham, B42 2QO.
Rattler's Tale, Read With Mummy & Gaia News:
Anthony North Enterprises, BCM Keyhole, London, WC1N 3XX.
Scareaphanalia: Michael Gingold, PO Box 489, Murray Hill Station, New York,
NY10156-0489, USA.
Strange Adventures & Fax 21:
Tony Lee, 13 Hazely Combe, Arretton, Isle of Wight, PO30 3AJ.
Subterrene: Anthony Cawood, 6 Daleside Avenue, Pudsey, Leeds, LS28 8HD.
Trash Compactor: 253 College St, Suite #108, Toronto, Ontario, Canada, M5T 1R5.

A RETROSPECTIVE HEAVY METAL



Nothing could go wrong!

And for once, nothing did, as the greatest fantasy writers and artists met head-on with the Canadian born film-making magic of Ivan Reitman (whom - presumably in another life - had produced 'Shivers' & 'Raid' and directed 'Ghostbusters').

As early as 1979, Len Mogel (founder of 'Heavy Metal' and 'National Lampoon' magazines) had begun making enquiries

into the possibility of bringing his massive project to the screen. And by the summer of that same year, director Gerald Potterton was at work on budgeting and scheduling the 'Heavy Metal' film project.



Juan Gimenez

In the early stages, several talents were called upon to write a marketable film script, including Harry Harrison, Richard Corben, Berni Wrightson, Angus McKie and Dan O'Bannon. Many of these names were successful artists and designers responsible for the original magazine material, and so this new project must have provided a pleasant dose of *deja-vu*.

As thing progressed into a linear production running from eight individual stories, the following emerged from the plethora of rewrites and eliminations: Corben's "Den", Wrightson's "Captain Stern", O'Bannon's "Soft Landing" and McKie "So Beautiful and So Dangerous", together with original concepts for "Gremlins", "Harry Canyon", "Legend of Taarna" and the link - "Grimaldi".

Phew! Let's look at each one separately...

Soft Landing - A 1959 Corvette makes it's way to Earth to the grinding tones of "Radar Rider" by Riggs. Call it surreal, or call it psychedelic, it is certainly an impressive start, and so we are led into the link story... **Grimaldi**. A house, a girl and a glowing green ball - the ball threatens, but does no harm, and slowly unravels it's purpose, granting wishes and dreams, or nightmares (depending on the worthiness of the person). The green fades to a brilliantly lit neon city, and...

...the next segment. Meet **Harry Canyon** - A New York cab-driver of the 21st century. The New York of tomorrow is degenerate, filled with poverty and violence. This was the look that Juan Gimenez (the Argentinian illustrator) used, so as not to contrast with the New York of today - a statement maybe? And, as I make a habit of not talking about the plot too much when reviewing, I will leave it at that...

Next, an amusing reconstruction of the hero legend. Corben's **Den** character comes to life in the shape of Dan, a small boy who is transformed into the title character by the Lochnar (the green ball from **Grimaldi**). What follows is a hilarious take on the sword-and-sorcery cliché, as Den is almost killed a number of times, throughout which events the boy narrates with the voice of the warrior.

As we leave Den to save the world, a courtroom scene opens and a certain **Captain Sternn** is on trial for a number of hideously obscene crimes. Until, that is, his defense shows up in the form of a feeble little twerp called Hanover Fiste. This 'saving grace' turns against the captain as the Lochnar once again goes about it's work... Fiste metamorphoses into an outrageously powerful caricature of muscle, and wreaks havoc throughout the ship! Berni Wrightson's comic strip was used as a model sheet for the directors as they refined the storyboard into the allotted time. What emerges is a surprisingly violent but ultimately hollow experience that should have been a lot funnier than it was.

Gremlins was a rather strange and unsettling addition, as you aren't really that sure what's going on, other than that the Lochnar (yet again) is possessing the dead pilots of a battle torn B-17 bomber. After this, O'Bannon's story gets a little bit confused, but the design (by Mike Ploog) is nothing short of inspired.

So Beautiful And So Dangerous begins in a conference room filled with the world's press and politicians, all trying to allay their fears of alien world domination. A Pentagon secretary is possessed and jumps on a lady stenographer. Both are then unceremoniously sucked into a giant 'globe' ship. Only the woman survives and is then bedded by an amoral robot, as the ship spirals through space piloted by a duo of coke-sniffing aliens?!?! A brilliant premise that is the funniest segment so far: "Good landing, man...". But the best is yet to come.

And come it does (sic), in the luscious shape of **Taarna**, a female barbarian warrior who is called upon to save a race from the murderous machinations of a band of cut-throats and their barbaric leader. Soon we are led into a desolate but fantastic world of stark temples and endless skeletal vistas, and of course Taarna, as she glides gracefully across this barbaric landscape.

It took no less than three artists to finish the designs for Taarna (J.S.Goert, Chris Achilleos and Howard Chaykin). The sets and monuments are superbly majestic, my personal favourite being Taarna's temple where she dresses - can it be possible to be in love with a cartoon character?

What this amounts to is a sword-and-sorcery fantasy with more than it's fair share of heroic bloodshed, as Taarna decapitates the clientele of a rather rough bar and is subjected to torture and humiliation at the hands of the blood-crazed Barbarian. One of the techniques used was rotoscoping (using a live actress to mimic the movements the character would use) - I found this slowed down the movements considerably, in turn giving them a more dream-like, fantastic quality than is found in the other stories.

So, in conclusion, there's got to be something here to grasp the imagination of even the most boring and braindead members of the human race. 'Heavy Metal' got an "AA" certificate on it's original cinema release, but was never - to my knowledge -



Richard Corben

Howard Chaykin



Berni Wrightson



released on video in the UK. This is sacrilege - it's such a mind-blowing piece of artistry that I can't imagine it losing money on either rental or sell-through. If you do manage to get hold of a foreign release, spread the word!

Sadly, there is not the much merchandise presently available, but any collector should be able to hunt down at least a few of the following:

- The Art of the Movie **Heavy Metal**: Animation for the 80's published by New York Zoetrope, 80 E.11th Street, N.Y.
- Heavy Metal Music from the motion picture - CBS Records.
- Starburst #41: 'Heavy Metal' movie review and centrespread.



Well, this time I'm aiming for a winge-free comics article... between issues, there's been a crazy fortnight in California (see elsewhere for details) but it's good to be back somewhere with history & plant-life. Big surprise comics-wise, was that the States isn't that much better off that we are... okay, so there are more "dubious" comics on their shelves, but the good dubious stuff seems to find it's way over here eventually, and the British small-press style comics (for suitably good examples, see *Cosmorama*, *Over The Edge*, and *Behold the Hamster*) don't appear to have an American equivalent. Way up on the good side was the opportunity to pick up on issues of *Liaisons Delicieuses*, *Butterscotch*, *Faust* and other items that are a tad rare this side of the Atlantic.

Other comics-related blurb from States-side was the opportunity to meet Adam Warren (*Dirty Pair* artist); Lea Hernandez (Colourist on *Silent Mobius* & *3x3 Eyes*, plus letterer for *Appleseed*, *Lum* & *Pineapple Army*); & Colleen Doren (who painted the comics version of Anne Rice's *Master Of Rampling Gate*) and to see (albeit from a distance) such manga/anime luminaries as Johji Manabe (*Outlanders*). Ah... that's better... a nice spot of name-dropping always boosts the ego a notch!

I suppose that it was fairly certain that I'd fail to avoid wingeing, so here's a little whine about two titles I've really looked forward to this year: the collected *Eddy Current*; and *The Master Of Rampling Gate*. Why the whine? Principally because their publishers didn't realize just how good they were. Both these titles disappeared from shops immediately they appeared... Yup, the whine is because I missed out on them. If you spot a copy of either of these somewhere, drop TC a line and discover just how appreciative this little 'zine can be... [Late note: I've now got a copy of *Master Of Rampling Gate*!]

Anyway, down to business... what interesting little beasties have I got copies of, of late...

Okay, I lied, I haven't necessarily got copies of the things that I'm listing. First up is the *Vampire Lestat Graphic Novel* (i.e. all the issues from the comic-book series in a single bound volume)... if you liked the original novel, I'd hope you would like this... personally, as I liked this, I bought all three of the books (*Interview With The Vampire*, *Vampire Lestat*, *Queen Of The Damned*). Both *Queen Of The Damned* and *Interview With The Vampire* have been started as 12 (?) issue painted series and look to be following very much in the mold of *Lestat*. Highly recommended if you like Anne Rice's stuff...

Griffin is another painted work... a mere six issues of it, but in the chunky square bound three-quid a pop DC mega-format. Totally different to the vamp-horror stuff, it's the old staple of "realistic" super-heroes. Griffin himself was grabbed as a recruit for an alien army, loaded with super-powers and set against the alien's enemies. Eventually (try 10 years later), he misses the folks back home and decides to give up fighting for the aliens. The aliens are peeved. Cue mayhem. With a "banana-headed" alien side-kick for Griffin, this is a nice combination of serious comment on how naughty it is to "piss off for multiple years and not expect anyone else to have changed when you come back" [not a real quote...] and a light-hearted "men with big weapons trying to zap each other and causing major collateral damage" super-hero blast. I like it, but it looks nice, so I would.

OMAC is not at all painted. It is however in the aforementioned DC mega-format. In fact, it isn't even in colour (what a swizz!). Those of you who've bothered to plough through this rubbish before will, however, realize that I quite like black-and-whites. This isn't an exception. Plot-wise it's probably as close as I've come for... a while... to reading a straight-forward superhero comic. The author may not regard it as that, and it's probably a nice step left-of-field but up to issue 3 (of 4) there's been little really intriguing newness about it. Nice though.

Now for a real goody... **Billi 99**. I'd looked forward to this for a while when it came out, and so far have not been disappointed. It tells of Billi & her fight against crime in the future as Toledo, a vigilante type. Toledo was originally her (foster) father's pseudonym/alter-ego but after his murder, Billi's out for revenge and to kick society into shape. Again b&w, Billi 99 shows (what appears to be...) wonderful use of zip-tone. Nice looking, original(ish) plot, female-lead for a change, if you haven't tried it yet... give it a go. (P.S. Again in the mega-format, but from Dark Horse, not DC!)

Badlands is an interesting tale, black & white standard 30-odd-pages-and-two-staples-in-back format produced by Dark Horse and telling of a chap hired to assassinate Kennedy. Not the most original plot-line ever maybe, but very nicely done. A pleasantly unpleasant read, unfortunately dashing on for the sixth & final issue.

Time for a spot of *manga* I guess... **Outlanders** has now finished, so go out there and grab the collected editions as it's essential reading (so says the TC crew!). Taking it's place chez TC as "The whole house is buying the blighter" title is **Midnight Eye**. This tells of a private investigator (GokU) who gets grabbed with a mushed right eye and gets given a computerised replacement that can access the databanks of any computers worldwide (far-fetched maybe, but not that much so for manga!). Then it's back to the PI business and lots of major baddies. Three issues in (of six I think), and well worth the mega-format pennies. Finally manga-wise, try **3x3 Eyes** a mystical tale of a "girl" with three eyes from Nepal (or was it Tibet) who links souls with a human (to save his life) while hunting for a statue of what appear to be Siamese triplets so she can become a human. Somehow it doesn't seem as confusing in the manga, and is a lively romp with invisible demons and the usual "human" touches (even from inhuman cast members!)

A subject rarely touched on here now rears it's head... the comic strip!! In particular, **Calvin & Hobbes** a marvellously, wonderfully, orgasmically brilliant



strip. I've read it for a while in **Comic Relief**, a compilation of the best strips from American newspapers, and have finally splashed out on some of the books. Buy someone (preferably yourself) these books as a Christmas present. Even TC readers need a laugh now & then! [P.S. Buy **Comic Relief** while you're at it. The strips are great, and it has a nice line in "weird" news articles too...]

Night Of The Living Dead can't really need an introduction to TC readers, but it's now coming out in a nice mega-format comic-book. Art's decent. Story follows the original (So far! One issue down, more to follow).

Before signing off on the comics front, a brief comment regarding the lack of derogatory reviews: In brief... I like what I like and what I like gets reviewed (as Zirk would possibly say!). There are things out there in comics-land that I wouldn't enjoy and hence don't buy, and things that I buy and discover belatedly aren't my thing. These I don't review because I don't see any reason to put people off buying any comics - all cash spent on comics helps support the companies that produce the stuff I like... the more straight stuff that gets bought, the more weird stuff will be around for me to gloat over.



Surprise! Not the usual SFC material at all here... having been to the **London Film Festival** lately, for various oddities that our illustrious editor didn't see, here is the first (and probably last) selection of SFC film reviews...

Volere Volare is a movie from Maurizio Nichetti (who did **The Icicle Thief**). It tells the unusual tale of a man who dubs the sound onto animation; his brother who dubs porn movies; and a call-girl who doesn't seem to do sex, but does some very weird fantasies (at one stage a chef coats her in chocolate... mmm... hmmm!). Eventually, the animation gets too much for him & he starts to turn into an animated creature himself. The animation is great, the plot is weird, and anyone who can cope with a spot of indescribable oddity should try it!

Next up... **My Own Private Idaho**. Directed by Gus Van Sant (**Drugstore Cowboy**), this is not a cheerful movie. It tells of a narcoleptic rent-boy searching for his mother, and his assorted friends. A vaguely awkward movie to watch, but TC readers after another different "different" movie may find it worth a look. (Honest! I liked this! It's worth seeing! But expect a pretty dark movie...)

Additional down-beat stuff comes in the shape of **The Violent Cop**, judged by our editor as the most seriously "down" movie he's seen in a long while. No cheer at all in this story of a hard Japanese policeman. His mentally retarded sister goes out picking up guys in discos, he beats criminals... ostensibly because they deserve it, but maybe he enjoys the punishing too much. Not light, not fun, more worth having seen than seeing.

Pure weirdness and an off the wall crime tales gives us **Blood And Concrete** (starring Billy Zane of **Twin Peaks** fame, and a seriously sexy, seedy Jennifer Beals (as the director said afterwards... we won't mention the "F-movie")). A not entirely (but fairly) straight forward tale with a hyper-addictive love drug, and various folks hunting for it. I liked it, not sure if Jim did though!

Delicatessen is: post-apocalypse; set in a single building, with the title's delicatessen downstairs, and various lodgers upstairs; has a circus clown as the hero; stars the hearing-aid wearer from **Diva**; was directed by Jeunet & Caro (apparently of French comic fame... not that I've heard of them, gaping knowledge gap that this no doubt is); and is about cannibals. It plays like a cross between Brazil and God-only-knows-what. It's being released over here in the new year. Again odd, again funny, again worth seeing, but this time French, not Italian.

That was the films... then there were the videos. Within the festival, there was a series of screenings of electronic (i.e. video/computer-generated) sequences. These varied from the abysmal to the stunning. Over Christmas (or possibly sooner), Zbigniew Rybczynski's **The Orchestra** is to be screened on Channel Four (plug! plug!) - anyone interested in innovative use of video should see this. It's generally excellent, but gets a bit weary when you spot the political message. Stunning visuals anyway - try it & see what you think. Other "highlights" included **Behold, I Come Quickly: The Strange Revelations Of Reverend Swaggart**... a marvellous rapid-cut sequence of scenes from before, during and after the discovery of Rev. Swaggart's belief in the hand-job-of-God. Similarly, there was **Tunic**, a Sonic Youth video with tacky Karen Carpenter references (bound to stir up all socially normal mundanes out there). **Panspermia** must rank as the best of the computer animation seen, magnificent use of computing power. I need to see more of this sort of stuff!

Even weirder... this isn't really TC territory at all... book reviews! However, there aren't too many of them here and there is an excuse. After visiting the U.S. of A., I felt a need for more holiday and went hunting interesting travel books. The most interesting book on America I found was **Into the Badlands** by John Williams. This book is also a tour around American crime fiction, visiting authors and settings of assorted books. A flavour of the areas, the people, and their books are all provided by this (need I say highly recommended) paperback. One result of reading this was the hunting out of books by Andrew Vachss (**Flood & Strega**) and Carl Hiassen (**Tourist Season, Double Whammy and Skin Tight**). The A.V. books are good fun, but I found two in rapid succession a bit too similar - with a wider time gap between them, I would have no doubt enjoyed the second one more. No such problems with the Carl Hiassen, three 500 page (or thereabouts) books in a couple of weeks and all enjoyed thoroughly. Very dark humour, a very sharply observed set of (weird) characters and marvellously warped story-lines. You owe it to yourself to read his books (**Skin Tight** is the best written (and most recent) of the three, but is unfortunately only available as an (expensive)

American import at the moment, the other two have been published over here... **Tourist Season** is a Futura paperback at £3.50)). If serious book reviews appeal (not reviews of serious books you understand, but proper reviewish bits with column-inches devoted) hassle the editor!

Ta ta for now...





KLAUS KINSKI 1926 - 1991

It is a cliché that the line between madness and genius is a thin one, but Klaus Kinski proves it's accuracy as far as actors are concerned. When not pimping, or in an insane asylum (both of which he did - at least, according to his autobiography!), he brought a dark intensity to any role he took, no matter how crass and appalling the movie. And, it has to be said, there were plenty of them, thanks to an attitude to work best summed up as "Fuck the script, send me the cheque".

However, despite possessing a filmography which went into three figures as long ago as 1972, there were still many highlights. Kinski's tempestuous (to say the least) relationship with Werner Herzog provided a lot of these: 'Fitzcarraldo', 'Woyzeck', 'Aguirre, Wrath of God' and perhaps most notably of all, as 'Nosferatu' in the remake of F.W.Murnau's 1922 classic Dracula rip-off.

His upbringing in Germany during the war - he was 12 when it broke out - must have had an effect on his mentality. In the last days of the Third Reich he deserted the army, was caught, sentenced to death, escaped and made his way to Allied lines. After the war he was a pimp for a while before becoming an actor, first on stage, gaining notoriety for his poetry readings. His first film was 'Morituri' in 1948 (his second, 'Das Kalte Herz', was directed by Paul Verhoeven, though presumably not the Paul Verhoeven!) and his intensity brought him to the attention of people like Fellini, Visconti and Pasolini, all of whom he turned down because they weren't offering enough money. Only Werner Herzog managed to wheedle Kinski into acting for love - or at least, some strange, symbiotic hate-hate relationship:

"Herzog is a miserable, spiteful, envious, stingy, stinking, money-hungry, malicious, sadistic, insidious, backstabbing, blackmailing, cowardly person and a liar through and through". This quote is only the tip of the ice-berg. Also well known is the incident where Kinski threatened to shoot Herzog, which since they were in the Amazon at the time, would have been an interesting concept. The exact facts of the case are rather more difficult to discover - Kinski claims that he had the only gun and it was Herzog who threatened him! Despite the sparks produced by the clashing of two great creative forces, it's probably safe to say that Klaus Kinski did not like Werner Herzog. The feeling seemed to be mutual, as after the publication of Kinski's autobiography, Herzog sued for libel.

He wasn't the only one - our beloved Nastassja sued her own father for libel, after certain comments that their relationship had been more than close... Whether this is true or not will probably never be known. On the one hand, Klaus was a relentless womaniser, as three wives and an indeterminate number of more or less casual lays prove. On the other, his grip on reality never seemed to be too firm - overall, I'd probably be inclined to suggest, shall we say, that it would take someone with more moral control than Klaus possessed, to keep his hands off 'Passion Flower Hotel' era Nastassja!

His death has left the world of cinema a duller place. 'Rest in Peace' just doesn't seem an appropriate epitaph...

BIG MUSIC

It happens only occasionally.

Maybe the chemicals are right. Perhaps the two halves of your brain have buried the hatchet. Or it could be that your subconscious takes command. Whatever the cause, that fantastic, unbounded and unmapped mind of yours is freed. The obstructions placed there to protect you from an impossible, unkind and stultifying world are cleared away. The music mainlines, transports and exhilarates you. It's a drug, and it's free.

Don't underestimate the power of music. How many of you have spent an hour in a darkened room absorbed, motionless. Hallucinating waves of rhythm that wash over you, harmonies that collide and chase. Understand the emotion. Music communicates.

And if you believe that, you probably also believe that cockroaches make good soup. (In fact they don't - they can't reach the knobs on the cooker). Most of the time we are disappointed, but it keeps us coming back for more. In the boom years of the Liquorice Pizza, when vinyl was the fix, there were over eight million titles in print in the UK alone. If there wasn't something in the rack to interest you then you were probably dead. (On the other hand, there's always Vivaldi's Four Seasons arranged for sitar and maracas ...)

***"I have heard the Big Music,
And I'll never be the same -
Something so pure
has called my name***

***I climbed the Big Tree,
touched the Big Sky,
I just reached out my hand
and everything came into colour"***

Mike Scott

We were wary of CD. We didn't celebrate at the altar of four-fold oversampling, we didn't believe the awful hype and we didn't build shelves for library cases. We held our breaths. What we saw was too many cities lose their last live venue, prices rise and a change in the whole complexion of the

music business from the top down. And therein lies the rub, as Shakespeare would say (but only if he was paid by the word). If music has a lifeblood, then it comes from bands and artists full of things to say, few preconceptions of how to say them and the energy and optimism of stupidity. It comes from the bottom up. Our faces went purple.

It is rather easier to repackage known successes in a new form, to sign established artists for another five albums and to market videos and T-shirts than risking money and shelf space on bands unknown outside their native town of Northampton, who will probably break up or spend the advance anyway. In the past, the sheer volume of new material kept washing away the old order. "Regeneration or Death" as Paul Morley would say (witter, more likely). But vinyl was cheap. You could get your 8 track tape mastered and a thousand copies in a 2 colour sleeve for about a grand and a half. Want

If music be the food of love, I don't want chips again

to hear a record company rep. lecture you on the tooling costs and return on investment required in CD manufacture? I'd rather eat sushi.

So what is the state of the ghost of music future? Last week the TC cleaner succeeded in wiping out my treasured OC9LT with a duster. This, the Insurance Company have decided, does not constitute accidental damage since it occurred whilst cleaning (eh?). Thus, with a cartridge that exhibits a permanent masonic handshake, I have resorted to reviewing a demo cassette I was sent from Birmingham (the place where they eat Fish and "Cheeps").

The Big Noise are hard, come from Tamworth and probably growl at budgies. **'Repulsion'** starts the set with a bass line that perfectly supports a sneering lyric, all Polanski, disgust and hard knocks. Like a massive engine that carburets badly, the rollercoaster riff surges forward and then hesitates just long enough to sample your lunch before laughing at your discomfort. This track needs more production like it needs a cellphone. Pausing only to make you worry, the real success here, **'White Room'** throbs and muscles it's way in. A real Vee Twin of a sound, smooth when revved but wearing its edges on the outside, guitar break and all. Thoughts of Dinosaur Jr, Cardiacs and Screaming Trees (UK) are smashed on the rocks, to be replaced by a natty little stylophone reprise, an experience a bit like up-ending an empty sweet wrapper and catching a lump of chocolate in your palm. **'Twist and Burn'** is overshadowed, dragging its feet and boxing at your knees despite technically fine lead work and some wild chords. Needs to think bigger, build grander and believe in itself a bit more. **'Cherry Red'** sounds most derivative (and most commercial) and is carried on a growling guitar and punctuated with startling drum patterns (Chris is a gravedigger) which don't inject enough space and light to give it the room to soar. More singable is **'Song No. 6'** which balances ascending and descending guitars in a playful manner more reminiscent of Buzzcocks or Dead Kennedys. It doesn't overstay its welcome (although some of the linking samples do - who the hell wants to hear someone else's in-joke eighty-six times?) and **'Overtaken'** perfectly demonstrates the band's post-punk humour. The Big Noise are serious, they don't want you to like them, so you have no choice but to do so. Hell, they even finish up with a toilet flushing to make you wince!

The Big Noise, 'Bog' is available on tape (£2.50) from Ben A Machin, 38 Main Road Austrey, Atherstone, Warwickshire CV9 3EH. Oh, and tell 'em TC sent ya!

Fi



A change to the rating system from this issue. Since I only watch movies I think I'll enjoy, this meant a lot were scoring 7 & 8, and I found myself having to give significantly different movies the same mark. So I've re-scaled things, and now grade A+ to F-, with a C being about equivalent to a '7' on the old scale.

Angel II and III (Teresa Woo) - Ok, we cocked up. In TC9, I claimed 'Iron Angels' was the third in the Angel series. I was wrong, it's the first. And the best, as neither of the other two supply the same standard of manic slaughter. 'II' is set in Thailand, and contains such delights as a brief documentary on the production of palm oil, wrapped round a plot where an old friend turns out to be planning to overthrow the government. There's a massive gun-battle at the end. 'III' has Moon Lui going undercover in a Thai terrorist group who specialise in suicide missions (I'd just wait for them to die out...). The main entertainment value is because 'undercover' means beating up a lot of people. Meanwhile, the rest of the team are getting involved in tedious sub-plots about kick-boxing. Three guesses what there is at the end. A clue: it's massive. E+ and D.

A Chinese Ghost Story III (Chung Siu Tung) - A priest and his pupil take shelter in a temple only for the latter to meet and fall in love with a ghost. Together, aided by a powerful swordsman, they struggle against the forces of evil to try and allow the spirit to rest in peace. Sound familiar? Yep, this is virtually a straight, pointless, re-make of 'A Chinese Ghost Story'. About the only twist is that there's more than one incredibly cute ghost but apart from one lovely scene which implies a sapphically incestuous sado-masochistic relationship (phew!), it doesn't have anything new to offer. D-

Drop Dead Fred (Ate de Jong) - It's something of a coincidence that Phoebe Cates has Rick Mayall as a made-up pal here, as I've got this imaginary friend called Phoebe Cates, who comes to my bedroom every night and... Anyway, Phoebe's marriage falls apart and her psyche resurrects D.D.F. to wreak havoc. Feels a bit like "Beetlejuice", especially at the end when the psychological aspects take over; apart from that, there are some flashes of genius from Mayall worth waiting for, and Cates keeps an admirably straight face. It could (and maybe should?) have gone further, however, and remains generally too tastefully schmaltz. C

m





A Chinese Ghost Story III

ANNETTE BENING

IN THE ROLE OF
MARQUISE DE MERTEUIL



VALMONT¹⁵
a film by
MILOS FORMAN

FREELY ADAPTED FROM
LES LIAISONS DANGEREUSES¹⁵
BY CHODERLOS DE LACLOS

STARTS NOV. 22ND
PROG. 2.20 8.15 9.15 LATE FRI/SAT 11.15

"Superb...brilliant...a masterpiece of menace...
definitely one of the best of the year"

THE DAILY EXPRESS

"Brilliant...an artistic triumph"

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"One of the most important movies of the year...
I was enthralled...utterly fascinating"

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"A mesmerising pump-action thriller"

THE DAILY MAIL

"Compelling" FINANCIAL TIMES



IT'S NOT THE END
IT'S JUST THE BEGINNING
OF THE END

FROM THE DIRECTOR OF 'FATAL ATTRACTION'
& THE WRITER OF 'GHOST'

An ADRIAN LYNE Film

Jacob's Ladder

Written by BRUCE JOEL RUBIN



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AND AT
SELECTED
CINEMAS

MEG TILLY

IN THE ROLE OF
MADAME DE TOURVEL



VALMONT¹⁵
a film by
MILOS FORMAN

FREELY ADAPTED FROM
LES LIAISONS DANGEREUSES¹⁵
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Eve of Destruction (Duncan Gibbons) - The latest entry in the 'fetish thriller' sub-genre (check out the video cover!) has Renee Soutendijk playing both a scientist and the robot, Eve, she's developing, loaded with her memories. After being shot in a bank robbery during testing, Eve goes AWOL and starts re-enacting her creator's life the way it 'should' have been. Gregory Hines is the army man called in to track Eve, since she also happens to carry a ticking nuclear device. Lots of good touches: Eve's shredding of any man who uses the word 'bitch' (fortunately, she doesn't meet Ice T), Hines' nicely cynical edge, and Soutendijk (as Eve) brings much the same weirdness to her role as she did in 'The Fourth Man'. While these parts doesn't really gel to anything more than entertainment, I've seen a lot worse. C+



The German Chainsaw Massacre

Fists of Fury '91 - Missed the first five minutes of this, so I've no idea who was involved. Perhaps this is no bad thing, as it's one of the dumbest movies I've seen in a long time. Not, of course, that this stops it from being entertaining, as it sweeps majestically from sleaze to melodrama. It starts (at least, the bit I saw starts) with a snot-battle, the two heroes - yokel with megablast right hand and streetwise town rat respectively - gobbing frantically at each other. It works up to a savage beating of the yokel after he thinks he's killed his teacher, administered by the real murderer. Predictable stuff, albeit done with a lot of style. B-

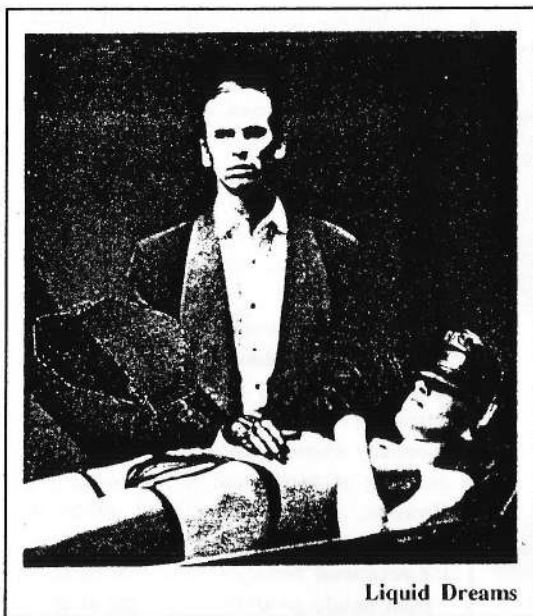
The German Chainsaw Massacre (Christoph Schlingensief) - Part not-very-subtle political satire, part splatter movie, set in the first days of a reunified Germany as a family of po' white trash (if such a term is applicable to Europeans) use the flood of Eastern refugees as raw material for lunch. The director denies being a genre fan, but this mixes elements from both TCM & TCM2, then adds in 'Psycho' and some very cheesy gore to provide an experience closer in spirit to Hooper's original than either sequel. It's certainly got the ham acting and the screaming heroine, plus Udo Kier (briefly), drawing a CND logo on the wall in his own blood. According to some German critics, this is art - presumably, these are the same ones who thought "Nekromantik" was, too... C-

Ghostly Vixen (William Chung) - Wildly deviant film about a female ghost that needs the sperm from 100 virgins born at 10 o'clock to attain eternal life. Her score ticks up to 99 and most of the film is about her prospective 100th victim, who's trying REALLY HARD to lose his virginity. The problem is, he's betrothed to an 'ugly' girl (she didn't look too bad to me!) whom he can't bring himself to make love to. For example, when he attempts to rent a hooker, she punishes him with a four foot long dick. He straps this to his leg, only to find all the girls in his office wearing short skirts. You don't want to know any more, believe me. C+

Jacob's Ladder (Adrian Lyne) - This bombed in the States, and I can see why. It must have been a shock to the audience, given Lyne's past record of wimpokinky stuff and boiling rabbits, to find their heads being fucked with quite so savagely. 'Videodrome' or 'The Fourth Man' seem influences, as a Vietnam vet suffers increasingly bizarre hallucinations and finds his world cracking at the seams. The visions are handled very well - perhaps too well, as 'reality' seems dull by comparison. But where is reality? The cause at first doesn't seem to live up to the effects, then the plot twists for an n-th time and, well, I haven't enjoyed a nose-bleed so much in ages. A.

King of New York (Abel Ferrara) - After his brief vacation for 'Cat Chaser', Ferrara returns home for a study in the psychosis of power, as displayed by Christopher Walken, a drug dealer just out of jail. His old gang rapidly drag him back up the ladder, painting rooms Drug-Dealer Red on the way (if you get my drift), and making no friends on either side of the law. Vicious as ever, Ferrara remains morally neutral - Walken perceives himself as a man of honour, concerned for his city. The film doesn't tell us anything new, but it's great to see Walken back on top form after the depths of 'Communion'. It's not often the guy on the popcorn stand suggests you've wasted your money on a movie - fortunately, he was well wide of the mark. B

Legend of the Dragon (Danny Lee) - I'm not sure whether this is a pisstake of heroic bloodshed movies or not; it's got all the dark glasses, slow-mo action and meaningful posing of things like 'A Better Tomorrow', but it's all about...snooker???? Our hero, an accomplished player and not-so-accomplished martial artist, is lured to town by his uncle who sees a chance to make a betting fortune. Through the kind of events that only happen in this kind of movie, they end up losing the family land and our hero has to beat Jimmy White (yep, THE Jimmy White) to regain it. Let's give the director the benefit of the doubt, since he throws in things (the hero falls asleep at midnight no matter where he is, a very clever bit where you'll think you fell asleep and missed 20 minutes!) to suggest tongue is not far from check. C+



Liquid Dreams

Liquid Dreams (Mark Manos) - This low-budget American movie spends 80 minutes successfully generating sleazy atmospherics, only to throw it away in the last five, with a plot twist that's badly fumbled by all concerned. It's a futuristic tale of a girl going undercover in a dodgy media network to find her sister's killer and it works well enough, thanks to plenty of flashy visuals, a thumping electronic soundtrack and not an insignificant amount of female flesh. Mink Stole & Paul Bartel beef up a just about competent cast, and the cheap sets add to, rather than detract from, the film. Then you get the ending, which drags it down from C+ to D-.

The Magic Crystal (Wong Ching) - Deep breath. An archaeologist in Greece finds a jade crystal with very odd powers, wanted

both by KGB spy Richard Norton (billed in the atrociously dubbed UK version as 'Ivan, all-Russian karate champion!') and Interpol agent Cynthia Rothrock. The archaeologist is KGB-napped, but slips the jade into the case of a friend's son who discovers the crystal is a telepathic creature that's fond of ice-cream before he's also abducted by Norton; will Interpol and his father get there in time? There's more that I mustn't give away, but it's a good example of the way HK can cram humour, drama and action together to great effect, and would be fine even without the martial arts (Norton's prowess with the sai would make a Ninja Turtle weep). Any story which combines UFO's, school bullies and the birth of Venus must have something going for it. A-

Naked Tango (Leonard Schrader) - Schrader demonstrates much the same eye for stylish, kinky sex his brother did in 'Cat People', and the plot is even more ludicrous. Apparently, the way to win a girl's heart is to force her into prostitution, slap her about a bit, have sex on the remnants of a broken windscreen and occasionally dance the tango with her, ideally in an abattoir. Still, it's all very lush, with lots of reds, and Mathilda May (remember the space vampire in 'Lifeforce'? Same girl) is undeniably gorgeous as the bored wife who takes over the identity of a suicidal mail-order bride from Poland. As pure sexual schlock goes, it's far better than '9 1/2 Weeks' and you get a neat, knife-through-throat scene, too. I can't really recommend it but, boy, did I enjoy it! B-

Noce Blanche (Jean-Claude Brisseau) - Roughly translatable as 'White Wedding', or perhaps more accurately as 'unconsummated relationship', the film promises much: a French teenager (Vanessa Paradis, looking a lot better than in her puppy-fat encrusted, 'Joe le Taxi' days) and the lure of drugs, prostitution and teenage sex. However, the posters fail to mention that they all happened some time before the movie starts and is now engaged in a deep relationship with a married, 50-year old teacher of philosophy. So there are long scenes of them explaining very carefully how they feel, and the film only kicks into gear in the last fifteen minutes when the spurned Vanessa turns nasty. E



Prison Stories

Once Upon a Time in China (Tsui Hark) - Hark's latest historical epic feels like an acidic version of 'Project A'; Master Wong (Jet Lee), a local militiaman in China, is seeing his country carved up by the super-powers, but can't do much about it as all his actions bring him into conflict with the authorities. The Americans and their henchmen are shipping off the locals as cheap labour for the California gold-rush, but when they kidnap Jet's true love (Rosamund Kwan, cute), it's time for him and disciple Yuen Biao to kick gwaillao ass. For any film to keep me utterly engrossed for 135 minutes is an achievement, especially when it portrays us "foreign devils" as being at best stupid and at worst evil. However, the politics doesn't affect the entertainment value, my only quibble being the occasional fantasy element that sneaks in - Hark should go all the way or not at all, as

they detract from the "realism". Otherwise, it's hard to find fault - acted very well (special praise for Jackie Cheung), directed very well (as you'd expect), an ambitious attempt to combine many genres, and could win over many new fans. A

The Outlaw Brothers (Frankie Chan) - Car parks rival restaurants as favourite settings for mayhem in Oriental films, since they provide much glass to smash and things to leap off, plus you have the chance to drive round at high speed, something not permitted in most takeaways. There's ample opportunity for such scenes here, as the title characters are two car thieves, specialising in Porsches & Ferraris. They get into, and out of, trouble with girls, the cops (Yukari Oshima is on their tail) and local mobsters, but the fan is really hit when they steal a car packed with drugs belonging to Michiko Nishiwaki. Needless to say, she's

not a happy budgie when she finds out. Our heroes strike a deal with Oshima, whose character hates Nishiwaki (the rumour is that art mirrors real life - Oshima's "close personal relationship" [Ahem!] with the director supposedly allowed her to boost her role and shrink Nishiwaki's. The pair have been playing Bitch Wars ever since) and we're ready for a megafight with chicken-, broom, fan- and scarf-fu. It's slick, it's fast and it doesn't tax the brain in the slightest. B



The Sect

Point Break (Kathryn Bigelow) - While everything I've seen about this film has concentrated on the surfing 'n' skydiving, this is only a small part of the movie: the rest revolves around FBI agent Keanu Reeves going undercover to catch surf-dude and part-time bank robber Patrick Swayze (who gets to take his shirt off again - he must have it written into all his contracts). Reeves is good, almost parodying his "Bill & Ted" persona, but the real highlights are the action sequences, notably the parachuting, an FBI assault on a house and a superbly filmed chase on foot. However, the much touted surfing may have been awe-inspiring in California in July, in London with 5 weeks to Christmas, I kept thinking of 'Old Spice'... B+

Prison on Fire 2 (Ringo Lam) - This film falls a little bit between two stools. Part of the time, it's almost trying to be like 'Porridge' with Chung Ting Ching (Chow Yun Fat) a wisecracking survivor very much like Ronnie Barker's character. However, there are some pretty brutal scenes establishing the tensions in the prison: not just between prisoners and guards but between Hong Kong and Chinese inmates. After the wrath of an especially sadistic guard descends on Chung for escaping to visit his son, he finds himself forced to team up with the head of the mainlanders. Make that between three stools, as the movie then slides towards "odd couple" territory. Individually, each of these work well, together, they're less than the sum of the parts. C

Prison Stories (various) - An HBO produced woman-in-prison story in three chunks, directed by Penelope "Suburbia" Spheeris, Donna "Desert Hearts" Deitch and Joan "er..." Micklin Silver. As you'd expect from female directors, it's notably low on T&A, but despite the earnest approach, you still get drugs, catfights, a shower scene, etc. The strong cast - Rae Dawn Chong, Talisa Soto, Anabella Sciorra - helps, even if it might have been nice to have a male character who wasn't a drug dealer or thug. It's not exactly cheery stuff, with no real happy endings, but then again, neither is life. Sober stuff, yet perversely, still entertaining. B-

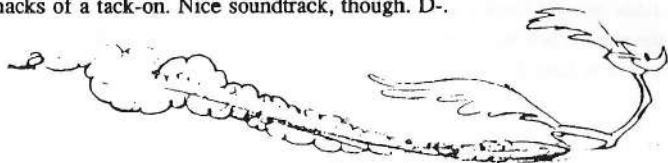
The Sect (Michelle Soavi) - One day, I hope to see an Italian horror film that doesn't suffer from "atrocious overload" or "camera vertigo". This one, as you might expect, takes the latter path, though for the first quarter, it's storyline bravely fights back, aided by sterling work from Herbert Lom. Reminded me of "To the Devil a Daughter", with a girl being chosen to bear the son of Satan by a devilish cult. The last quarter is at least intriguing, but the middle hour succumbs to the usual: woman-in-peril, kitchen knives, strange things happening for no apparent reason, dumb plot twists ("I'm a doctor, too!") and a very familiar interest in insects. Save a psychopathic bunny, it's all very ho-hum. D-

Valmont (Milos Forman) - See 'Dangerous Liaisons' for the plot; it was based on the same original source, and so 'Valmont' was held back for a couple of years to avoid comparisons. Not that this will stop me from comparing the two, though 'Valmont' does go a different route. DL was a two hour bitch war between Glenn Close and Steven Malkovich, Forman has expanded 'Valmont' to flesh out the other characters. Probably wise, as Peter Firth and Annette Bening aren't Malkovich & Close, though they're by no means bad. Their lack of years also makes them less overtly evil, suggesting youthful high spirits, instead of malicious boredom at having "done" everything. I didn't like the ending, which seemed flat, even if on reflection it's no less downbeat. Overall, though, while 'Valmont' is more 'A Hazard of Hearts' than 'Dynasty', it's none the worse for it. C+

V.I. Warshawski (Jeff Kanew) - The subtitle, "Detective in High Heels", tells you more about this film, Kathleen Turner playing the title role of a P.I. who finds a babysitting job (c'mon, a girl's gotta live!) getting very deep when the father of the child is blown up. The director seems uncertain whether this is 'Dirty Harriet' or 'Brenda Starr', which leads to some jarring moments, but mostly he treads the line between the two well. Turner is excellent, as ever, and the rest of the cast are just as solid, helped by snappy, crackling dialogue. While I wonder whether we needed QUITE so many shots of Kathleen Turner's feet(!), the 90 minutes absolutely flew past with never a dull moment. B+

Welcome Home, Roxy Carmichael (Jim Abrahams) - Based around a young girl's fascination with the legendary title character, who left home and made good, and her conviction that she's Roxy's daughter, this makes most sense if viewed as a part of Winona Ryder's career. It slots in nicely between 'Beetlejuice' and 'Heathers', and could be an explanation of how she changed from the doom-ridden Gothette of the former, to the relatively well-adjusted teenager at the start of the latter (which is also set in Ohio). Apart from that it's probably not really satisfying - while WR is good as ever, playing yet another teenage misfit, the other characters are neither plausible enough to be real, nor weird enough to be parodies, and the ending smacks of a tack-on. Nice soundtrack, though. D-

MEEP!
MEEP!





The world as we know it may end on July 5th, 1998. On the other hand, it might not. But, at the very least, it will be replaced by something much worse. And the odds are that you won't even notice.

Find that difficult to believe? Good, there's hope for you yet. And that hope is J.R. "Bob" Dobbs, the cosmic salesman and Lord High Everything in the Church of the SubGenius. Only he can bring you Slack. Only he can let you pull the wool over your own eyes. Only he can drag your ass out of the fire when the rest of the world wakes up to find that their nightmares are merely scraps of reality, slipping through the gaps in that collective hallucination which they have induced in us!!!

At this point, you're probably about to turn the page looking for the next semi-naked bimbo. Sorry, I get worked up about this because it's the only way people take notice: "The extreme always makes an impression". I'll try and calm down, remain cool and answer a few of your questions.

Q. Explain simply and coherently, precisely what you're jabbering on about.

A. Ok, hold onto those sanity atoms. The world currently seems to be run by the Conspiracy, a loose alliance of multi-nationals, politicians, organised crime groups, disorganized crime groups, neo-Nazi and crypto-Communist cells, multi-media moguls, religious zealots, heavy metal bands, masons, Illuminati and the CIA/MI5/KGB (delete as applicable).

Q. Oh, so that's what's going on.

A. No. If that WAS it, it'd be "alright" - at least they're "human". The problem is that it only SEEMS like that. If only you could see the Things, the shapeless, nameless, **things** that are pulling the strings with their slick, black tentacles. Nylarthop kr'll ja-bhor "Bob" pnumil 'n gharlg, as they say. And come July 5th, 1998, they're gonna foreclose their mortgage on the Planet Earth, roll up their sleeves, take up their options and when they do, boy, you'd better have "Bob" as your loophole, or else even this pathetic sham that you call 'life' will seem like paradise.



"He duplicates well."

“BOB TOLD
ME TO DO IT”





Q. That bad, huh?

A. Yep. Millions will die horribly and eating those green things they put in burgers will be compulsory.

Q. So who's this Bob guy?

A. Please, it's "Bob". "This "Bob" guy", as you so quaintly put it, is in there negotiating for us, or at least the 0.1% of the population weird enough to save (the rest of the population are either running the Conspiracy and/or are dupes of it). His powers stem from a series of visions (which he's described as "like the Book of Revelations done by a Saturday morning TV show") and a bizarre process which changed his flesh into something alien and indescribable - much the same as what happens to mutate the Big Mac you see on the menu into the one you get in the box. These events are commemorated in a solemn church ritual where our high priests send out for pepperoni pizzas, get a few beers in and sit around watching videos. Even though "Bob" was assassinated (possibly by one marksman using one bullet or several marksmen using several bullets, but probably not several marksmen using the same bullet) in 1983, he doesn't seem to have slowed down.



FORGOT TO DUCK?

Q. Why should I join you instead of any other church promising salvation?

A. Well we're more fun. We've a better sense of humour that just about any other religious group (except possibly the Jehovah's Witnesses). We're kinda flexible about our dogma and encourage, nay, require people to break away from us and form their own group with cool doctrines they can cope with. As long as you keep sending us money, we'll happily incorporate anything you say into the eternal, inviolate, sacred word of the Church. We don't promise salvation anyway - but if not, you'll certainly get a front row seat for the big firework show.

Q. Who else have you got?

A. Many famous people are involved in the Church of the SubGenius, though most of them don't know it since they are working deep undercover in the Conspiracy under hypnotic suggestion, just like 'Total Recall'. Speaking of which, Amie's one of us - you may have spotted the "Bob" reference in 'Terminator 2'. Obviously, I can't give too much away, but let me mention a few names: George Bush (a particularly successful case - he was a Hell's Angel from Des Moines before we saw his



CHURCH OF THE SUB-GENIUS:

PO BOX 140306, Dallas, TX 75214, USA.

potential), Amanda de Cadanet (we're not proud), Dannil Minogue (we turned down Kylie - there are limits) plus people holding key positions in the media, especially 'The Sunday Sport', 'Going Live!' and the woman who does the continuity announcements in the early hours of the morning on ITV - she's already implanting subliminal messages in there for us. We're negotiating for Kim Basinger, to head our 'Bimbos 4 "Bob"' group, but she's balking at the "available for use by Church members" clause.

Q. Ok, so how can I be saved?

A. Send us your money. I should stress that "Bob" isn't interested in the cash itself, his wheeling and dealing with alien races is more profitable than you can possibly imagine. The cash is just a handy way to obtain the psychic imprint (the 'Nental If' in SubGeniusspeak) he needs to recognise you come 1998. Everything you possess absorbs a little bit of it from you, currency just happens to be easy to post. Large-denomination notes work best, no small change or personal cheques please.

Q. What do I get in exchange?

Oh, the usual: Power, wealth, happiness, sex. C'mon, look at what Jim & Tammie Bakker got, and then think what a much more attractive, intelligent and interesting person like YOU could have... Though we can't promise that you will start seeing giant insects in the corner of your solicitor's office, like Jim did, or that "Maximum Bob" (or perhaps it should be Maximum "Bob"?) will slap you in the slammer for 50 years. Commandments written in stone, secret rituals and sexual guilt are optional extras.

So, the "choice" is yours (the illusion of free will, doncha jus' lurve it?). You can continue in the daily drudgery of life as a down-trodden minion of the Conspiracy, or you can join "Bob" for an eternity of laffs, yuks and (provisionally) Kim Basinger.

Bye bye... See ya soon!

TRASH CITY



LEGEND OF THE OVERSPILL...

Or, I've got half an hour to write something to go on the back of a colour picture of dubious nature, so apologies for any typos. This issue is late, tying TC9's record at five months - it must be something to do with post-Christmas apathy, it seems. It might also have something to do with another imminent change of address - yes, ANOTHER one, but this should be the last for a while, as I'm actually BUYING the place this time. As I write this, I'm anxiously waiting for the results of the building society survey, and for obvious reasons, I'm not giving out my new address until I'm 100% certain that I'll be staying there! All mail sent to Tummons Gardens SHOULD find it's way to me, courtesy of the Post Office, but I would hold back on those rare items of Kinski-mabilia.

Speaking of which, once I'm settled in there, I may be able to get started on the long-planned Kinski special, having now caught up with most of her back catalogue, and covering the recent press over her split with her husband (Hurrah!), and attachment to Quincy Jones (boo!). And with the death of Marlene Dietrich, could she now be Germany's greatest living actress? Or do we now need to carry out a hit on Hannah Schygulla?

The planned colour cover has been postponed - Per's test versions did not survive the process, going in cute, coming out more like napalm victims. The idea has not been shelved, and further experimentation will occur.

Film to look forward to: Abel Ferrara's latest, "Bad Lieutenant", from a script by Ferrara and Zoe Lund (aka Zoe 'Angel of Vengeance' Tamerlis), and starring Harvey Keitel and Lund. It's supposed to push the NC-17 certificate further than it's gone before, not just in terms of flesh, and 'Variety' gave it rave reviews. It's just great to see the wonderful Zoe Lund/Tamerlis back on the screen, as her other performances have been electrifying, and all too rare.

Finally, two reviews which got cut from Film Blitz - curiously, both star Rutger Hauer, and I knew I had to print them somewhere, or a certain Helen McCarthy would want to know why! His latest film, 'Split Second' opened in the States to "mixed" reviews and tolerable box-office - word is that it's a real mix of every genre you can think of, but Rutger is, as ever, worth watching (for whatever reason!).

Desert Law (Duccio Tessari) - Past experience of 'PG' films has shown they tend to be utter cop-outs, shorn of any redeeming sex or violence; I possess less 'PG' tapes than any other category, and more than half of those star Emmanuelle Beart or Nastassja. This film is a salutary lesson, being an Italian TVM (complete with obvious ad breaks, co-scripted by George Eastman), that runs out of ideas fast and seems twice as long as it's 140 minute running time. Even Rutger Hauer can't salvage it, though his character is easily the best thing in this awful cross between 'Not Without My Daughter' and 'The Desert Rats'. I really can't recommend this film, except possibly if you're looking for unfunny racial stereotypes. E-

Wedlock (Lewis Teague) - Rutger Hauer and Mimi Roberts are criminals "married" to each other by collar which will blow their heads off if they separate by more than 100 yards. They escape, but are followed by the warden who wants to find where Rutger's hidden the loot from his last robbery. Dumb premise, salvaged by the expected good performance from RH and an unexpected one from Joan Chen (rapidly taking over Jennifer Jason Leigh's mantle as Hauer's preferred subject of abuse), who wins the 1991 Anthony Perkins Rosebowl for Drug-Crazed Acting to the Max (Bitch Section). Pure fluff. C