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Dream Come True

Last Spring, Gil Segel, known in the industry as a business manager and financial counselor, saw an advertisement and pursued it. It announced auditions for a month-long course in acting techniques to be given at Oxford, England, this past Summer under world-famous professionals from England, Moscow and Berlin.

After a series of competitive auditions against mostly pros, Segel, 54, who hadn't acted since school, was chosen. Daily Variety was curious about what happened next. The following are excerpts from Segel's diary.

7/10/87, 9:30 p.m., Oxford

I am here. We drove up from London this morning and passed through the green rolling countryside and forests.

I am at Oxford. The school started in 1262, and I guess I focus on its age as I have focused on mine. My wife said tonight, "Don't talk about Old Man parts anymore." I needed to do that, you see, because at 54, and soon to be 55, I did stand out in the group. I needed somehow to explain age when asked, am I an actor and what do I do. At this moment, I am surrounded by younger people; but, we are all here on a fantasy trip.

On to the Cotswold Lodge to check in for the evening. We walked Oxford a bit and then went to the reception at Balliol and dinner in the Hall — this incredible hall of "Chariots Of Fire" and where my desire throughout the meal was to say, "Please, sir, I want some more!"

I meet some of the faculty of BADA (British American Drama Academy); Rosemary Harris, Geraldine McEwan and Peter Jeffrey. Tony Branch (director of BADA, who had cringed at my audition) welcomed us. It is damned exciting. I can do it, and I do belong. Tomorrow we begin.

7/11/87

It's Saturday morning — to Balliol for our introduction. Tony with a list of schedule changes and the book list. Then Earl Gister, head of Yale Drama, to talk about Chekhov and the fact there is little time.

We are told we are professionals and on our own. He will list scenes, and we will partner up and work and do them. I watched the faces, and these kids know their craft and intend to hone it.

Sharon, the young blonde, asks to partner for Shakespeare. Hence, Ophelia and Polonius jump out. Last thought tonight: These people are young, bright and intense. They want this. There is not a follower in the crowd. The "fun" is about to start.

7/12/87 — Sunday

Read in Group "Heartbreak House," by Shaw. We read it today as Rosemary Harris has to go (Continued on Page 122, Column 5)

FINAL CUT

Cimino Blows Director's Cherished Privilege In 'Sicilian' Dispute

By JIM HARWOOD

n everyday use, "final cut" is one of those common showbiz terms everybody understands — but nobody really knows the meaning of when lawyers start to argue. What's worse, since final cut is a rare authority seldom granted, there have been almost no legal rulings for guidelines.

Sometimes, though, it can be equally illustrative to learn what isn't a final cut — and that lesson was put on the blackboards vividly this year in a controversial Directors Guild of America arbitration battle pitting a veteran producer against a major director, with a host of well-known secondary players.

The producer was David Begelman, the director Michael Cimino and the picture was "The Sicilian." On the surface, the issue seemed relatively simple - but before he could reach a decison arbirator Murray L. Schwartz had to look at 70 exhibits and hold nine days of hearings that consumed 2007 pages of tran-

In addition to the key contestants, Schwartz heard testimony from a who's who of filmmakers, including Richard Brooks, Stanley Donen, James Goldstone, Elliot Silverstein, Dino De Laurentiis, Barry Hirsch, Alan Horn, Norman Levy, Michael Ritchie, and received other sworn declarations from the likes of Francis Coppola, John Boorman, Milos Forman, the late John Huston and even the fugitive Roman Polanski.

"As may be inferred from the length of proceedings and names of the witnesses and declarants, the issues are significant not only to the parties but to the industry," arbitrator Schwartz noted, with some understatement. "What is not so readily inferred from the recital is the extent to which the testimony, not only about the specific events but about industry practice and contract interpretation, was in direct conflict."

The Contract

In January 1986, Begelman and his Gladden Entertainment banner signed Cimino to direct a film version of Mario Puzo's novel, "The Sicilian," which would run not less than 105 minutes nor more than 125 minutes. Gladden, in turn, had a 10picture deal with 20th Century Fox to distribute films running between 96 and 120 minutes.

The contract between Begelman and Cimino also provided that the director "shall have the right, after good faith consultation with producer, to determine the final cut of the picture.'

After principal photography was finished in Sicily, Cimino began constructing a 155-minute rough cut in September 1986. "Sometime in early 1987," Schwartz recounted, "Begelman became concerned" that Cimino would not meet the scheduled delivery date for his final cut, and that the editing was not sufficiently reducing the length of the picture.

At a meeting, Begelman gave Cimino until May 1 to submit his final cut of no more than 125 minutes, but indicated he might persuade Fox to accept 130 minutes. "The difference in running time is of course not de minimis," the arbitrator asserted. "For the domestic market, a running time in excess of about 130 minutes eliminates one evening showing, dramatically affecting the commercial success of the film.'

On March 18, Cimino showed the producer two cuts of the film: A 143-minute version, which the director said "I am extremely pleased with," and a black-and-white dupe of a 125minute version which Cimino said "complies with the letter of the agreement. Needless to say, at that length, great sacrifices need to be made, many obviously regrettable.'

A 'Bad Joke'

Begelman testified that he took the shorter version to be a "bad joke" and ordered Cimino to get back to work on the film. But by the May 1 deadline, Cimino was still offering two pix, one running 1211/2 minutes and one running 143 minutes. In a letter to Begelman, the director stated:

'I am pleased to deliver to you as per contract and as per agreement at the (March 9) meeting, THE SICILIAN which times out just under two hours and five minutes and represents my 'fi-

"I am also delivering to you today for your consideration an extended version that we discussed in detail . . . If you prefer the extended version, I will agree that it may be substituted as my 'final cut.' '

At that, Begelman informed Cimino that he had breached their contract and the director, supported by the DGA itself, sought an order to stop the producer from any editing on his own, arguing Begelman could show the short film or the long version, but no

Summing up the basic issue, Schwartz explained: "Under the

(Continued on Page 16, Column 1)

Some Poverty In Midst Of Plenty And Other Curious Hollywood Happenings

By THOMAS M. PRYOR

The financial misfortunes of Cannon and De Laurentiis, most notably, were not the most important developments of the last 12 months. This, by no means, is meant to dismiss, or diminish, the importance of their problems. Too many people and too many public dollars are involved, the latter to such an extent that the public might not be as willing to take a flyer on such film company investments as the case has been up to now.

In any event, there won't be much waiting time for a new test case. The merged Columbia Pictures and Tri-Star will be operating under a new corporate banner, Columbia Pictures Entertainment, with a New York Stock Exchange listing. Fact that Coca-Cola's resources still are involved certainly will have a considerable influence, but whether that will overpower the risk factor remains to be seen.

All that aside, and looking down the road for a considerable distance, as to events of the October-September span being appraised in this 54th Anniversary Issue, the top story of the year can be summed up in a word — EXHIBITION.

It was some 30-odd years ago that the last remaining vertical structure in the film biz, Loew's (that's how it was spelled then) and its productiondistribution subsidiary, Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer, were separated and ordered to exist independently under terms of the 1948 Paramount Consent Decree. Paramount, RKO, Warner Bros. and Fox were cast off earlier by their theater-owning corporate parents.

Now there is a growing rebirth of production-distribution and theater affiliations. Most dramatic was Paramont's acquisition, via its Gulf & Western Industries parent, of the 360-screen Mann Theater circuit for some \$220,000,000. That's a case of history repeating itself. It wasn't supposed to ever have happened, but a lot of things have changed since the government first filed its antitrust action in 1938.

And, of couse, Loews (as now spelled) has become the property of Tri-Star, which is about to become Columbia Pictures Entertainment. That's a

tidy grouping of about 250 houses, with a large N.Y. concentration.

It's hard to believe that almost 50 years have passed since the big divorcement crusade began, and the face of the business has changed drastically during the interval. For one, television emerged, and in a vertical context which had been ruled illegal for the

While all the experts maintained that it couldn't happen, film theaters prospered without their production adjuncts and, more astonishing, studio operations, which usually were "book-keeped" into losing, or slightly prosperous operations, became financially robust in their independence. Not every year, but over the long haul.

Entangled Now

There may be more dramatic and incisive ways of expressing it, but we can't think of a more appropriate term than intriguing concerning the entry into exhibition of two companies that in the "old days" had no theater entanglements. They are, of course, the aforementioned Columbia-Tri-Star (the latter wasn't around then) and Universal via its parent MCA, which has a 49% ownership stake in the exploding Canadian-based circuit, Cineplex Odeon, which last Summer opened an 18-screen complex on the Universal Studio property.

In addition, other circuits are building "screens" (before plexing it was one screen to a house) as if the public anticipation for films is inexhaustible. Wish that it were. However, the reality is that theaters are not necessarily depositories of riches, no matter that the owner keeps all the concessions income, and has a ready cash flow.

On the other hand, the cost of owning theaters can be a potential liability unless there is a plentiful supply of hit pix. It should be made unmistakably clear there is no equation between audience "want to see" and "quality," a truism preached many years ago by Universal's retired top ad-pub honcho, David Lipton. He worked into the "marketing" era but mostly

(Continued on Page 16, Column 3)

Animation: Vanishing American Art Form

Filmation Studios celebrated its Silver Anniversary on Sept. 12. What should have been a joyous occasion for me was tempered by the fact that the future of animation in the United States has never appeared to be more dismal.

Animation has faced difficult times before. When I started out in this business in 1955, the stu-

dios were in a process of cutting back, retrenching, even closing, and television was still in its adolescence and was a minor customer for animation. What really sustained a great



number of animators then, including myself, was doing commer-

But even in those difficult days we all had faith in the capacity of animation to come into its own and indeed it did. Within a decade the creative thinking of our animation artists opened up a marketplace in both network and syndicated television. The animation industry prospered and grew.

And yet today, in 1987, I fear for its very future.

The reason? Runaway production - the shift of work from By LOU SCHEIMER (President & Founder -Filmation Studios)

American craftspeople to foreign production lines — a direct consequence of runaway domestic costs.

In the 25 years since I founded Filmation, the cost of producing a series has doubled, then tripled to the point where only the highest rated domestic production stands a chance of showing a profit. I'm afraid that within the next four or five years, no animation company will be able to afford to produce all its artwork in this country.

But is sending work overseas the answer? I think not. Doing so creates problems of its own. It not only puts skilled, dedicated Americans out of work, but the relinquishment of creative responsibilities to foreign studios — no matter what the apparent economic advantage - ultimately carries within it the seeds of its own destruc-

For when we no longer have the capability of doing the work ourselves, we may well be at the mercy of foreign studios - not only creatively but economically, as

Lest there be any doubt, consider this: the prices now being charged by Japan for this artwork are almost the same prices being charged in this country. And now the Japanese are farming out our material, sending it to Taiwan, and believe it or not, it doesn't always stop there. I've seen this practice spreading and spreading. The work is going from the U.S. to Japan, from Japan to Korea, Korea to Taiwan, and sometimes even to the Philippines.

Heaven only knows where your work is actually being done.

And so to those producers of animation who say, "Okay, we're going to do the storyboards and the layouts here, and we'll send everything else overseas," I say, "Do that and you've given up effective control of your product."

There's a further problem with sending work overseas, one that particularly concerns me, and that's the question of the effect our productions have on our young audiences. Because our programs are primarily addressed to children I have always felt a sense of responsibility as to their content and quality.

In order to honor this responsibility we need to control each and every step from script and storyboard through final editing and first-answer print. This is not possible when a large amount of the work is sent overseas.

Obviously, I feel very strongly

(Continued on Page 18, Column 1)



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Young stockbroker Charlie Sheen and corporate raider Michael Douglas in "Wall Street."



The late John Huston directing his last film, an adaptation of James Joyce's "The Dead."



Jessica Tandy and Elizabeth Pena discover tiny flying saucers in "Batteries Not Included."



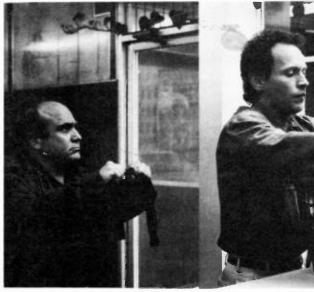
Unexpected foster parents Steve Guttenberg, Tom Selleck and Ted Danson In "Three Men And A Baby."



Amnesia victim Goldie Hawn (actually a pampered heiress) admires handiwork of Kurt Russell in "Overboard."



Lillian Gish and Bette Davis are sisters in Lindsay Anderson's "The Whales Of August."



Danny De Vito and Billy Crystal star as friends in "Throw Momma From The Train." De Vito also directed.



Aspiring comics Sally Field and Tom Hanks get to know each other romantically in "Punchline."



Cher and Nicolas Cage make an unlikely couple in Norman Jewison's comedy, "Moonstruck."



Richard Vuu is "The Last Emperor" in Bernardo Bertolucci's sweeping epic of life in China.



Cinderella is transformed by her Fairy Godmother in Walt Disney's enduring classic, "Cinderella."



Christian Bale is confronted by invading Japanese troops in Steven Spielberg's "Empire Of The Sun."

Hollywood's Bulging Christmas Stocking

16 Major Studio 'Gifts' And 8 From Indies Seek Public's Goodwill (\$\$)

By JAMES GREENBERG

What makes a hit Christmas film? One that people go to. So goes the old Hollywood joke, but beneath the slight humor is a truism about the marketplace. No one knows which pictures will turn up winners and which will fall by the wayside. Even with the millions spent on research and marketing there are no sure bets and always the chance of a sleeper. That's what makes it interesting.

And with more pictures released in a concentrated period, no time of the year is more fascinating, or the subject of more speculation, than Christmas. For an intense period of three weeks, this year from Dec. 18 through Jan. 3, some 8% of the year's boxoffice business will be done. Sixteen films will be released by the majors in December with an additional eight by independent distributors, making this season one of the most crowded in recent memory and one of the most difficult to handicap.

There are no sure things at Christmas and old dictums family films play well at the holidays; action pix can't miss, comedy is king — go out the window.

Witness last year, for instance, when boxoffice giant Clint Eastwood was slain by a band of unknowns in Oliver Stone's "Platoon." And two pictures reviled by critics, "The Three Amigos" and "The Golden Child," were vindicated at the boxoffice to become two of the highest grossers of the season.

The trick, of course, is to catch the public's imagination and make a film stand out from the pack. A good picture helps, but even that doesn't always work. Sequels such as last year's "Star Trek" entry, the fourth and most successful in the series, often have a high batting average but what about "King Kong Lives," a total flop at the

The five-week period from Thanksgiving through the weekend after New Year's can account for as much as 12% of the annual boxoffice. Therefore, some distributors try to get their pictures out early, before the onslaught of product, to get noticed and establish a foothold in the marketplace. "Star Trek IV" was very successful at that last year, opening at Thanksgiving and maintaining a strong presence right through New Year's.

Although more films are scheduled for broad breaks at Thanksgiving this year, none seem to be taking the approach popularized four years ago by "Terms Of Endearment," in which a film starts out with a select city release in late November and builds to a broader base in December. Latest pic by "Terms" director James L. Brooks, "Broadcast News," will open in New York, Toronto and L.A. on Dec. 16 and spread to 800 houses on Christmas

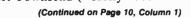
Prestige pictures that the studios are grooming for Academy Award consideration often get the slow and steady treatment and Universal will give it to Richard Attenborough's "Cry Freedom," which debuts in 30 cities Nov. 6 and spreads wide on Nov. 20 but could still be a factor in the Christmas boxoffice.

Debuting wide at Thanksgiving, but also possible Christmas players are Par's "Trains, Planes And Automobiles" from teen visionary John Hughes, and Warner Bros.' "Nuts," starring Barbra Streisand.

As for the Christmas crop itself, Hollywood is putting its faith in comedies with the action and adventure pictures of previous years at a minimum. Also missing from the line-up and making the season something of an open field are sequels and pictures featuring major boxoffice draws such as Bill Murray, Dan Aykroyd, Chevy Chase and Sylvester Stallone

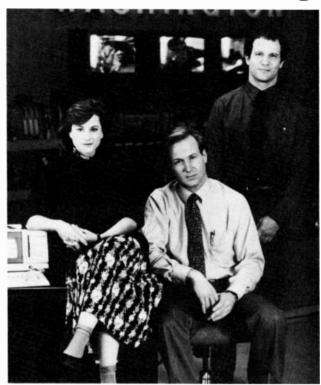
Overall, however, there will be more pictures than in the last two years when 13 and 12 pictures opened wide, respectively. This season will see some 14 broad releases in December along with eight indie entries. But even in this year's open field several films have emerged as early favorites

Eddie Murphy, a boxoffice winner the last two Christmases, is back with a slightly different vehicle, a concert film, "Eddie Murphy Raw," from Paramount. Directed by Robert Townsend ("Hollywood Shuffle"), pic is a





Pinocchio ponders the mysteries of the universe in "Pinocchio And The Emperor Of The Night.'



Holly Hunter, William Hurt and Albert Brooks work together in James L. Brooks' "Broadcast News."



Gregory Hines and Willem Dafoe are cops on a murder case in 1968 Saigon in "Off Limits."



Bob Hoskins and Maggie Smith take a dramatic turn in "The Lonely Passion Of Judith Hearne."



Daniel Auteuil speaks his mind at a town meeting in Claude Berri's "Manon Of The Spring."



Bill Cosby is Leonard Parker, crack secret agent, lured back into service in "Leonard Part 6."

(Continued from Page 9, Column 2) record of two Murphy concerts at New York's Felt Forum and New Jersey's Brendan Byrne Arena.

Although rumored to have been a rocky film in the making, "Leonard Part 6" cannot be ruled out as a hot b.o. prospect because of star Bill Cosby. Cosby plays an ex-secret agent who is lured out of retirement to save the world. Columbia is one of the most active distributors over the holidays with three pictures in release.

With a star line-up including William Hurt, Albert Brooks and Holly Hunter, James L. Brooks' "Broadcast News" also looks like a winner, on paper at any rate. Romantic comedy is set in the world of network news in Washington, D.C. 20th Fox will release.

Another prestige entry is Tri-Star's "Ironweed," based on the Pulitzer Prize-winning novel by William Kennedy. Jack Nicholson and Meryl Streep star with openings in New York, Toronto and L.A. Dec. 18.

Steven Spielberg's Amblin is up with two entries. Universal will release "Batteries Not Included," not surprisingly a contemporary urban fantasy.

Grand Troupers

Hume Cronyn and Jessica Tandy are tenants in a rundown city tenement who are about to be evicted when some unexpected visitors Hollywood's Bulging Christmas Stocking

lend them a hand. Ron Schwary directed.

Also from Amblin, but this time directed by Spielberg, reflecting his new preference for serious pictures, is one of the season's eagerly awaited epics, "Empire Of The Sun." Based on the novel by J.G. Ballard, story views the occupation of China by the Japanese during World War II through the eyes of a young boy.

Christian Bale plays the young boy and John Malkovich stars as an American merchant seaman. "Empire Of The Sun" is the first American film to shoot in China. Warner Bros. will open it in selected markets on Dec. 11, broadening on Christmas Day.

'Emperor's' Turn

Filmgoers will probably debate the merits of "The Empire Of The Sun" against another film shot in China, Bernardo Bertolucci's "The Last Emperor." John Lone and Peter O'Toole star in the story of Pu Yi, a three-year-old boy crowned as the last emperor in 1908. Columbia plans a three-city platform at the end of November, spreading out slightly in December.

Hoping to combine the success of "Platoon" with recent action buddy films like "Lethal Weapon," Fox has moved up the release date of "Off Limits," one of the few hard-hitting action pix set for the Christmas season.

Willem Dafoe and Gregory Hines star as police officers investigating a murder in Saigon against a backdrop of the 1968 Tet offensive.

And speaking of "Platoon," Fox will release Oliver Stone's latest picture, "Wall Street," again bucking the conventional wisdom that says keep things light for the holidays. Michael Douglas stars as an unscrupulous stock broker who is not above exploiting his friendship with protege Charlie Sheen. Daryl Hannah and Martin Sheen costar.

On a lighter note, at least two films promise to entertain the whole family. Disney is reissuing "Cinderella," one of its best loved animated features, first released in 1950

Following in the footsteps of another Disney classic, "Pinocchio," New World will release "Pinocchio And The Emperor Of The Night," a continuation of Collodi's fairytale about the puppet with the long nose.

In this all new adventure animated by Filmation, Pinocchio finds himself attracted to a mysterious, evil carnival. Among the first-rate cast of actors bringing the characters to life are James Earl Jones as the emperor of the night; Tom Bosley as Geppetto, Don Knotts as Globug and Ed Asner as Scalawag. Pop singer Rickey Lee Jones is the Good Fairy.

Comedy Time

Perhaps the most formidable cast of the holiday harvest belongs to Buena Vista's "Three Men And A Baby." Tom Selleck, Steve Guttenberg and Ted Danson star as three successful New York career men who are faced with the unlikely event of fatherhood when an infant is left on their doorstep.

Directed by Leonard Nimoy, film is an Americanization of Coline Serreau's popular French farce, "Three Men And A Cradle."

MGM has two high-powered comedies on tap to be released

through MGM/UA. "Moonstruck," directed by Norman Jewison, stars Cher and Nicolas Cage in a sophisticated comedy about the romantic travails of an eccentric Brooklyn family that falls under the spell of a magical Autumn moon.

Also aiming for the funnybone is "Overboard," a screwball comedy starring Goldie Hawn and Kurt Russell. Garry Marshall directs the yarn about a spoiled Park Avenue heiress who loses her memory and winds up the mother of four children in a new household.

Comedy itself is the subject of Columbia's "Punchline," a look at the complicated lives of standup comics. Sally Field and Tom Hanks star as aspiring jokesters who are trying to make a living being funny. Daniel Seltzer wrote and directed.

Orion will be looking for laughs when it opens "Throw Momma From The Train," a madcap comedy about murder, writing and friendship. Film marks the directorial debut of Danny De Vito, who also stars as a would-be mystery writer, but what he really wants is for someone to murder his mother. And in Billy Crystal he thinks he's got just the man for the job.

Plotline of criss-crossed murders is inspired by Hitchcock's "Strangers On A Train," but the approach here is more comedic than suspenseful.

Even the independents are getting into the comedy act with Atlantic's "Home Is Where The Hart Is," offering an unconventional look at old age. When 100-year-old Pappy is kidnapped by his young nurse, he is pursued by his septuagenarian twin sons. Cast features a collection of character actors including Martin Mull. Film was written and directed by Rex Broomfield.

Filmgoers looking for a little heartier fare should be attracted to Universal's "Walker," an iconoclastic look at one of the lesser known events in American history with surprising contemporary parallels. Alex Cox directs this action-filled black comedy about 19th century mercenary William Walker who, with a rag-tag band of soldiers, took over the government of Nicaragua and installed himself as president.

Ed Harris stars as the man with a mission and Marlee Matlin plays his wife. Film was actually shot on location in Nicaragua. Universal plans a select city release starting Dec. 4.

Along with "Walker," independent distributors will offer an alternative to the broad-targeted comedies presented by the majors. Vestron Pictures leads the field in this category with two specialty items on tap.

One of the cinematic events of the Christmas season for many filmgoers is bound to be the arrival of John Huston's last pic, "The Dead." Vestron will open the film in limited situations in December. Based on a short story by James Joyce, "The Dead" is one of the few literary-inspired films for the holidays and is a delightful look at a small, but universal, corner of Dublin society at Christmas time.

Anjelica Huston and Donal McCann highlight a cast made up largely of Irish stage actors. Script was written by Huston's son, Tony.

Also from Vestron Pictures, due for an exclusive engagement in several cities, starting Christmas Day, is Ettore Scola's "The Family," social history of Italy seen through the 80-year view of a family from 1906 through 1986. Vittorio Gassman, Stefania Sandrelli and Fanny Ardent star.

Another foreign-language film imported for the holiday season is the Russian "Repentence," a tragi-comedy about the irregularities of life in a small Russian town. Tenghiz Abuladze directed the Cannon pick-up, marking the first Russian import from that distributor.

Island will give "The Lonely Passion Of Judith Hearne" an exclusive city release starting in December. Maggie Smith and Bob Hoskins star as middle age boarding house residents who are drawn together. Jack Clayton directs.

Regular art house suppliers, Orion Classics will be represented by the Christmas Day debut of "Manon Of The Spring," the sequel to "Jean de Florette," critical and commercial success on the art circuit over the Summer. Both films are based on novels by Marcel Pagnol and follow the story of a young hunchback in Provence who inherits a valuable piece of land but spends a lifetime fighting greedy neighbors.

In "Manon Of The Spring," the farmer's daughter gets her revenge. Emmanuelle Beart plays the title role of Manon with Yves Montand as the unscrupulous neighbor. Claude Berri directs.

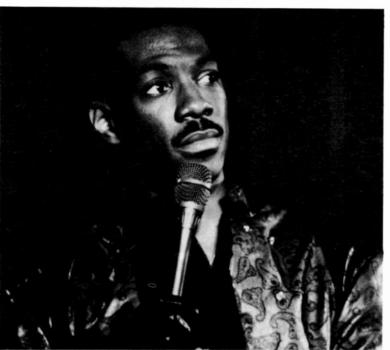
Filmgoers looking for a dose of that old cinematic magic will inevitably be drawn to the pairing of screen icons Bette Davis and Lillian Gish in Lindsay Anderson's "The Whales of August," which Alive (Continued on Page 64, Column 5)



Ed Harris leads a band of mercenaries taking over the government of Nicaragua in "Walker."



A political prisoner flashes back on his crime in Tenghiz Abuladze's tragicomedy, "Repentence."



This is no Beverly Hills cop, it's "Eddie Murphy Raw," featuring the comic in a live concert.

FILMDALLASIPICTURES

FROM OUT OF THE SOUTHWEST COMES A NEW FORCE IN MOTION PICTURES.

They thought it was a man's world



HI they met... Patti Rocks A SERIOUS ADULT COMEDY DAVID BURTON MORRIS

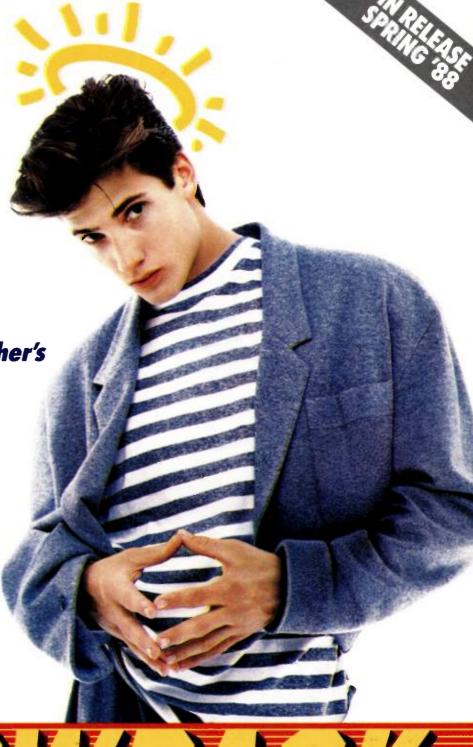
FILMDALLAS PICTURES PRESENTS A FILM BY DAVID BURTON MORRIS
"PATTI ROCKS" STARRING CHRIS MULKEY JOHN JENKINS KAREN LANDRY
MUSIC DOUG MAYNARD DIRECTOR OF PHOTOGRAPHY & EDITOR GREGORY M. CUMMINS
STORY & SCREENPLAY DAVID BURTON MORRIS CHRIS MULKEY JOHN JENKINS KAREN LANDRY
EXECUTIVE PRODUCER SAM CROCK, PRODUCERS CIMEN FIELD & CRECORY M. CHAMMINS EXECUTIVE PRODUCER SAM GROGG PRODUCERS GWEN FIELD & GREGORY M. CUMMINS **DIRECTOR DAVID BURTON MORRIS**

FILM DALLAS PICTURES



His Dad is in Sing Sing.
His Mom has a girlfriend.
And he just got the Godfather's only daughter in trouble.

THIS KID HAS GOT ONE HELL OF A FUTURE.



FILMDALLAS PICTURES PRESENTS A SUGARLOAF PRODUCTION OF A FILM BY PAUL MORRISSEY

STARRING

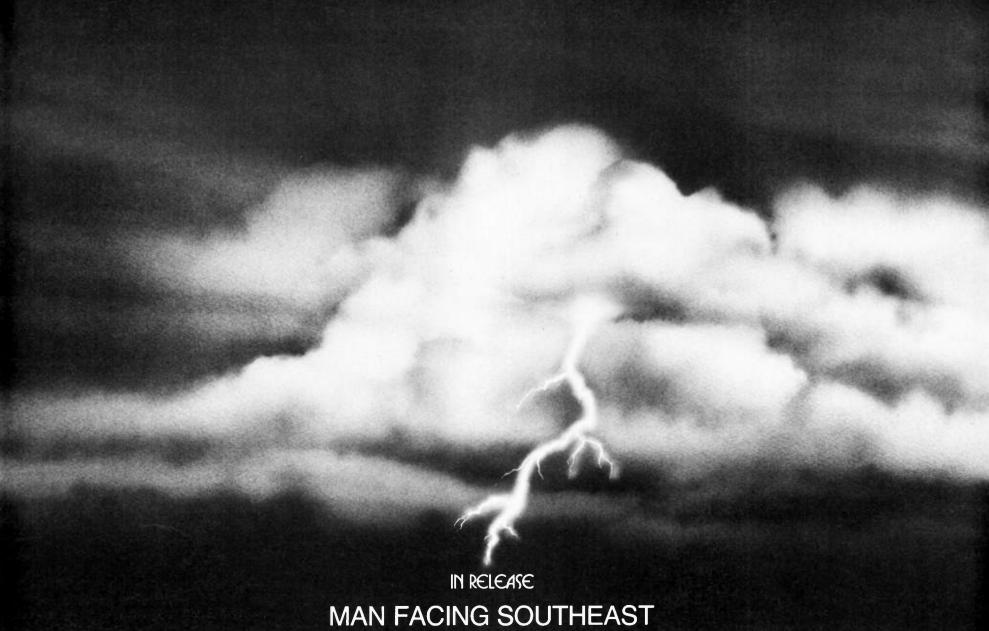
ERNEST BORGNINE SASHA MITCHELLETHROWED FACORE

MARIA PITILLO ▼ CHRIS YOUNG ▲ MARIO TIDISCO ▼ RICK AVILES ▲ TALISA SOTO ▼ GERALDINE SMITH ▲ ANTONIA REY ▼ SYLVIA MILES

DIRECTOR OF PHOTOGRAPHY STEVEN FIERBERG WRITTEN BY PAUL MORRISSEY & ALAN BOWNE CO-PRODUCER MARK SILVERMAN EXECUTIVE PRODUCER SAM GROGG

PRODUCED BY DAVID WEISMAN & NELSON LYON DIRECTED BY PAUL MORRISSEY

FILM DALLAS PICTURES



Directed by Eliseo Subiela Starring Lorenzo Quinteros, Hugo Soto

THE RIGHT HAND MAN

Directed by Di Drew
Starring Rupert Everett, Hugo Weaving

COMING SOON

PATTI ROCKS

Directed by David Burton Morris Starring Chris Mulkey John Jenkins, Karen Landry

BEETHOVEN'S NEPHEW

Directed by Paul Morrissey Starring Wolfgang Reichmann, Dietmar Prinz

NIGHT ZOO

Directed by Jean-Claude Lauzon Starring Gilles Maheu, Roger Le Bel

STEALING HEAVEN

Directed by Clive Donner Starring Derek de Lint

THROWBACK

Directed by Paul Morrissey Starring Ernest Borgnine, Sasha Mitchell

TWO IDIOTS IN HOLLYWOOD

Directed by Stephen Tobolowsky Starring Jim McGrath, Jeff Doucette

DA

Directed by Matt Clark Starring Barnard Hughes, Martin Sheen

SUBWAY TO THE STARS

Directed by Carlos Diegues Starring Guilherme Fontes, Milton Goncalves

FILM DALLAS PICTURES

For additional information contact Robert E. Berney, Jr., Senior Vice President and National Sales Director

FilmDallas Pictures 8625 King George Drive #400 Dallas, Texas 75235 (214) 688-4114

THE SPOTLIGHT FOCUSES ON 'OSCAR'

But There's Another Crowded, Little-Known World Of Activity Going On Daily At The Academy Of Motion Picture Arts & Sciences

on Dec. 8, 1975 the Academy of Motion Picture Arts & Sciences got its acts together for the first time in 45 years when all the departments of the Academy moved under one roof in its present, seven-story headquarters at 8949 Wilshire Blvd., Beverly Hills.

"From 1930 essentially 'til this building was built," said Academy historian Patrick Stockstill, "various departments of the Academy were split in various locations."

Contrary to most public (and a good deal of private) belief, the first office address for the Academy was not the Hollywood Roosevelt Hotel on Hollywood Blvd. The first office, opened in June, 1927 — 60 years ago — in Suite 212 of the Mauser Building, 6912 Hollywood Blvd.

Heart Of Hollywood

In November of that year the headquarters did indeed shift to the Roosevelt, where the offices remained until 1930. Various departmental moves fragmented the Academy somewhat — while the Academy Lounge and projection room stayed on at the Roosevelt, the executive offices were located in the Hollywood Professional Building, 7046 Hollywood Blvd., for almost five years.

In 1935 the Academy's new home became Suite 1201 of the Taft Building, Hollywood and Vine, while the library and the Players Directory (more on that later) settled in at 1455 N. Gordon.

In the Summer of 1946, the Academy moved into a renovated movie theater at 9038 Melrose while other departments found quarters at other nearby Melrose addresses.

Daniel Ross, assistant to the executive director of the Academy, still can't figure out how so much By TONY SCOTT

was accomplished at the Melrose Academy since it was so cramped.

In July, 1975, the Academy moved everything back under one roof; the Dec. 5 dedication was a triumph of faith, perseverence and need.

At the Melrose address life had been considerably looser. Robert Cushman, curator of the Academy's some 5,000,000 still photos in the Margaret Herrick Library, recalls those days, since he has been with AMPAS for 15 years. They started collecting photos virtually from establishment of the library in the early '30s, and no one particular person was responsible for the photographs.

"Prior to me, original photographs were actually loaned, even though this has always been a non-circulating library. Patrons would take photos off to be copied, since the library had no facility for doing it until I came. I was hired to do that: the copy work."

Cushman set up a lab in his own home because there were such space limitations at the Melrose address. Today, because space has again begun to cause problems, regular photocopying is still sent out, while Cushman does only special jobs in the darkroom he's set up at home.

"The problem is," says Cushman flatly, "when the building was designed, they were planning one here but it got eliminated when a lot of other things got eliminated."

After a month at the present address, it was determined that more security than maintenance was providing would be needed. An outside firm was hired, and subsequently replaced with an in-house security system headed by Bill Cox.

Ronald Tinsdale, day security officer, opens the doors to the

public at 9 a.m. Mondays through Fridays (the library is closed Wednesdays so the staff can catch up on its myriad duties), and he lets self-starting early-arriving staff members in at 7:30 a.m.

Originally the guard was posted at a desk facing the front doors and beyond the two elevators. But that arrangement proved unwieldy; a reception desk with a sign-in book now greets visitors to the left of the entrance.

The exterior of the building stands tall, impressive and restrained. The front is covered with reflective bronze glass, and concrete walls soar up each side in an air of guardianship.

Oscartime

What's being guarded is another matter. For most people, the Academy of Motion Picture Arts & Sciences means Oscartime, as though the heads of the organization and the staff members spent the year readying for this single event, only to sink down into exhausted stupefaction until time to mount another awards program.

There is, of course, an awareness of the 1106-seat Samuel Goldwyn Theater within the building, and some members of the public actually know that they not only can attend announced screenings — see the newspapers, sign up for the mailing list — or that they can wander into the lobby and mezzanine areas whenever the place is open.

The Academy, much to the surprise of many, welcomes the public. At least to areas so ordained and events so prescribed. To quote Doug Edwards, who handles the tributes and salutes, the photographic exhibitions and a host of other projects, "A lot of people don't realize we do anything in the way of public activity. They just see the [Oscar] show every year, and they're completely oblivious to what's going on."



AT HOME IN BEVERLY HILLS: The Academy of Motion Picture Arts & Sciences' seven-story headquarters at 8949 Wilshire Blvd.

It does seem odd — in fact, unenterprising — that some bridge hasn't been established between the most obvious television station, the Public Broadcasting Service's KCET and the Academy to follow what the AMPAS does do in the way of public affairs.

Perhaps copyright clearances on the tributes and salutes would make televising of these exciting events impossible. But the lectures, the Student Film Awards, the seminars, or even Academy staff members discussing film history, would seem a natural for the station representing the entertainment capital of the world.

Maybe, in that way, people wouldn't be oblivious to what's going on at the Academy, that bronze-and-sand-colored monument built on shadows.

Blueprint

Since the main entrance to the Academy is at the right side of the building, the grand lobby lies to the left of the reception desk. The lobby, finished in earth tones, is

used for receptions for films being shown in the Samuel Goldwyn Theater, which is on the second floor — the theater's downward swoop cuts into part of the first floor

Sectional sofas, once part of the grand lobby, were moved about so much they became bedraggled; never repaired nor replaced, they go unmissed and unremarked.

Part of the reason for that would be the exhibits put on by Edwards, also in charge of Academy tributes. Mounted in the lobby and the mezzanine for six to eight weeks apiece, the exhibits — or exhibitions — focus on various aspects of the motion picture world. And of the Academy.

Edwards tries to give balance to the branches of the Academy by paying attention to each one as much as possible. While Paramount's 75th Anniversary was a magnificent creative exhibition last Summer, other areas will again be touched upon — produc-

(Continued on Page 20, Column 3)



The Academy's archival collection of advertising posters, framed and under glass, is on exhibit on the second floor along the south wall of the mezzanine outside the Samuel Goldwyn Theater.

FINAL CUT

Cimino-Gladden personal services contract, Cimino had 'final cut' of 'The Sicilian.' The only relevant limitation was one of time — a cut no longer than 125 minutes. Inasmuch as Cimino de-

livered such a final cut — the 'short version' — he has satisfied his contractual obligation. Gladden may therefore not cut the longer version.

"On the other hand, Gladden strenuously argues that the short version was not a bona fide final cut at all, but was cut in such a way as to be unusable, requiring Gladden to exhibit Cimino's preferred longer version. There is a range of arguments in between these two polar positions."

Noting that the DGA's Basic Agreement does not deal with final cuts, the arbitrator said that item is solely a matter for private negotiations between the individual director and producer. But Schwartz drew some general conclusions about what final cut is considered to be in the industry.

'Coveted Right'

"There is little dispute that, absent qualifying language in the personal service agreement, a director with final cut has ultimate decision-making authority over creative and artisitic decisions about the final version of the picture. It is also undisputed that a director's final cut is a much coveted right given to only a handful of directors.

"It is recognition of the director's stature. It manifests the confidence of the producer in the ability, skill and vision of the director in the creation of the picture. It gives the producer the benefit of the name and reputation of the director in the financing, distribution and exhibition of the film.

"The ultimate extent of the authority of a director with final cut apparently has never been squarely considered in arbitration. That this is so is perhaps not surprising

ing.

"Final cut is a rare provision. It is a matter of private contract and the contracts vary. The prestige and skill of the directors are so universally recognized that producers have been loathe to interfere."

Rejection

Schwartz rejected all of Cimino's arguments that Begelman had waived the 125-minute limit or attempted to mislead the director into submitting a final cut in excess of contractual obligations, insisting that "the issue is whether the 121-minute version satisfied that obligation."

The arbitrator observed that Cimino cut some 20 minutes out of the long version to create the short version simply by "lifting 14 scenes, including all those showing physical violence." Gladden protested that this ruined the film and, Schwartz said, with the exception of the Cimino forces "that view is supported by every witness and declarant who saw the

short version, as well as those who had not seen the short version but were familiar with the book or the screenplay; without the lifted scenes, the film is unintelligible in crucial parts."

'Unreleasable'

Specifically, he said, the book's author, Mario Puzo, testified, "Without the action sequences, much of what remains would be impossible to understand." De Laurentiis, who has foreign distribution rights, said it was "not a releasable film." Steven Shagan, who wrote the original script, said he would be "mortified" if the short film were exhibited and Gore Vidal, who wrote the final draft, said it was "unreleasable."

After screening the short film himself, the arbitrator said he "would side without much hesitation with those who find the latter part of the picture too truncated to permit understanding of essential story points."

Said Schwartz: "The controversy has two facets: The first has to do with content, artistic creativity and responsibility. The second has to do with procedure. The relationship of the two is illuminated by the way in which Cimino proceeded to prepare his final cut."

Findings

He said Cimino never considered cutting the film to 125 minutes until March 9, having spent the previous months on the longer version. On March 16, he ordered editor Francoise Bonnot to lift the 14 scenes and the black and white dupe was delivered on March 18.

"At no time did Cimino view the 125-minute version as a whole," Schwartz said. After Begelman's protest, Cimino "did nothing with respect to the short version. He made no effort to view it on a screen in its entirety; he did not argue or attempt to discuss that version with Begelman. Indeed, Bonnot testified that Cimino did not discuss the short version with her again until the end of April, and that she simply 'forgot' it until then.

"In short, the only attention Cimino paid to the short version was during the several days in March when he was attempting to satisfy 'the letter of the agreement.' This inattention is a far cry from the attention, care and review that, according to the tesimony, directors normally accord to the versions they submit as their final cuts.

"Further, Cimino's behavior with respect to his 'final cut' was very different from the way in which directors usually treat their final cuts. He never screened it or reviewed it uninterruptedly. He never requested or demanded that it be shown, screened or previewed, although he was present at a number of showings of the longer version ..."

In a footnote, Schwartz commented, "At the hearing, Cimino testified that during March and (Continued on Page 18, Column 1)

Some Poverty In Midst Of Plenty And Other Curious Hollywood Happenings

(Continued from Page 5, Column 3)

laughed up his sleeve at it, as there was nothing within the marketing designation that he had not done in concert with the general sales manager or veepee.

Anyway, the re-entry of production-distribution into exhibition prompts the comment, "this is where we came in" as an observer of more than 50 years. The original plusses for the few were undeniably lucrative, and theaters grew in size, splendor and number. Now theaters are, by and large, in need of substantial physical repair and, even more important, maintenance. Housekeeping has grown sloppy over the years.

That can be corrected with relative ease. What Par, Tri-Star and Cineplex-MCA have to reckon with is a sufficient supply of "hit" or want to see, pix. Not impossible, yet not always readily available. And then what?

Booming Box-Office

On the bright side, more gold has been mined at the boxoffice since last January than ever before. Thus, 1987 is to be reckoned as a record year — a year in which gross boxoffice receipts in the U.S. — never mind the rest of the world — will set a new high mark: more than \$4 billion.

A happy and prosperous time for all! Hold on. Things don't work out that way in Hollywood. Believe it or not, there are pockets of poverty embracing major and independent production operations.

There is no even distribution of boxoffice spoils. Generally speaking, one gets out of the pot what one puts in, but not necessarily. It's variance in the input, and a lot of luck as well, that makes the difference. A basic, too often lost sight of, is that every picture has an audience at a certain price — a limited aud, more often than not.

Today, however, few pictures are evaluated as they should be at the preproduction stage. So, while the bottom line of all Hollywood success, the boxday costs more to market (it used to be called advertising, publicity and exploitation) than it cost 30 years ago to make an "A" picture. The argument today is that a picture has to be "positioned" in order to arouse public interest. When, indeed, was the time that a picture did not have to be "positioned" in the marketplace?

It used to be that the "positioning" began when the film started shooting. A script was dissected by the publicity director — just as, in another sense, the casting director did — in terms of story interest and then broken down more specifically in terms of saleable story angles to the wire services (AP, UPI, etc.), specific newspapers, magazine and radio outlets. Nowadays, there's tv, of course, and it often seems that "marketing" consists almost exclusively of tv — PAID — exploitation. Pictures somehow seem to get made without any attention until the tv sell in conjunction with release.

The current argument is that neither newspapers nor magazines have the space to give to "publicity" stories. Baloney. A cop out. Truth is that metropolitan newspapers (and the leading mags) even in the '30s, '40s and '50s, never had the space to promote pictures as they felt duty bound to do in N.Y. and Chi for the stage. But genuine news interest stories somehow found their way into the Sunday entertainment sections of the N.Y. Times, Herald Tribune and such mags as Saturday Evening Post, Colliers, Esquire.

The press would be just as receptive today, given the right kind of stories. But budgets for publicity are virtually nothing, while marketing budgets per picture can be from \$3 mil to \$10 mil and more.

So what's to be done about making pictures at a reasonable price, to preserve the resources of the business rather than squandering them to the winds for the most part. The answer is not for us to give,

Last Summer Was A Most Inopportune Time For Film Studios To Be Putting On A Poor Mouth — And The Directors Guild Contract Negotiators Knew It.

office, is overflowing as never before, there is hunger. A strange contradiction, but then there is no business like showbusiness, and all the extremes are abundant in Hollywood.

Trony: During contract negotiations with the Directors Guild last Summer, the Association of Motion Picture & Television Producers was proclaiming for all to hear that studios were being backed to the wall by rising production costs and could not afford to share pay-tv or other video income with talent. Yet, week after week the boxoffice receipts mounted. The fact that production costs are indeed rising again after a brief "leveling off" (but still unnecessarily disproportionate) was naturally overshadowed by the b.o. returns.

The basic issue of costs, not only production but also "marketing," has yet to be faced squarely. That control begins in the "front office" with a knowledgeable analysis of potential b.o. value. It is carried out secondarily by the director. He's the field general, the one individual who sets the pace of filming—and should function within budgetary limitations.

It most likely will not be met without argument, but it strikes this observer that too many pictures are being shot on unrealistically extended schedules. Consider the millions which could be saved by shooting in 60 rather than 90 days, and there's no doubt many of the latter could be shortened without any diminution in quality. In fact, the pressure could help the pace.

Talking of pace, why take two and three months to edit, and score? Some directors, of course, would never let go of a film if they didn't have to. However, it used to be possible for a rough cut to be assembled within days, not weeks, after a wrap was declared. And the quality of the craftsmanship was no less — often better, in fact.

But the big kicker is that practically any picture to-

although it would be easy. That's up to you who run the business.

Long Wait, For What?

There would seem to be little room to quarrel over a statement that the very finest of motion pictures made in the '30s and '40s in particular remain the equal in craftsmanship to the very finest of motion pictures turned out in the '50s, '60s, '70s and '80s. There is, however, a world of difference in how those earlier pictures were made, and it is a difference which has cost Hollywood millions upon millions of wasted dollars.

During the '30s and '40s the average film was turned out with 30-45 days, and it was a rare production which had a shooting schedule of 90 days. As a matter of fact, from the moment of conception to theatrical presentation the time lapse could range anywhere from 30 days (remember Brian Fay at Warners?) to three-six months. That included all the steps, of course — writing the screenplay to editing, music score, titles, etc.

Nowadays, it's not unusual for 12-18 months to slip by from the story development stage to a picture's release date. During this protracted interim, interest costs do only one thing — they keep mounting, and none of this continuing expense adds one iota of quality to the finished film.

By way of contrast only 11 months elapsed from start of photography of "Gone With The Wind" to the pic's premiere in Atlanta on Dec. 15, 1939. And after all these years, it's still recognized as an accomplished work of cinematic art — a classic, in fact. That was an extraordinarily long period of time then, but the Margaret Mitchell Civil War saga was a big-scale production and the re-enactment of the burning of Atlanta was a lavish and complicated un-

(Continued on Page 18, Column 3)

HAPPY 54th ANNIVERSARY

JAMES STEWART

FINAL CUT

(Continued from Pege 16, Column 2)
April, he viewed the short version on the Kem in the mornings before anyone else arrived. However, it is clear that he did not see the short version from beginning to end at one sitting, even on the Kem, and he did not recall whether he had actually seen all the reels during this period.

"In any event, even if this testimony is to be credited, it falls far short of the kind of continuous start-to-finish screening that one would expect of a director who had been told that version was a 'ioke.'"

Not A Script Problem

Schwartz sidestepped the issue of whether Cimino's cut could be rejected because he had departed from the screenplay. Though the director's view of that was opposed by writers Puzo, Shagan and Vidal, the arbitrator said he was still reluctant to interfere with Cimino's creative authority since both the long and short versions were still the same story.

"However," he added, "this factor cannot be regarded in isola-

tion. According to the evidence, in practically every case in which directors with final cut had made what were considered to be significant cuts or changes, there had been extensive consultation with the producer before those changes were made final. As such, in the circumstances of this case, mere substantial consistency with the screenplay — if it existed — cannot of itself control.

"According to the evidence, consultation between a director and the producer about the director's final cut is the industry norm, and in this case, there is no doubt about the obligation of consultation"

Except for the one conversation in which Begelman told Cimino the short version was a "joke" there was no more discussion between the two about the abbreviated film. "Cimino argues that it was Gladden's responsibility to initiate further consultation about the short version, not his. That interpretation seems inconsistent with the language of the contract.

"More importantly, given Begel-

'*** Consultation Between A Director And The Producer About The Director's Final Cut Is The Industry Norm ***'

man's rejection of the short version, it surely was reasonable for Begelman to assume that the short version was no longer a viable topic of discussion, and that the task was to consult about how to reduce the longer version to the maximum contract length. In these circumstances, the burden of initiating or continuing the consultation about the short version was clearly upon Cimino. This was a burden he did not attempt to carry."

Eight More Minutes?

The arbitrator also observed that Cimino never took advantage of Begelman's suggestion of a 130-minute film and, had he done so, might have been able to add nearly eight more minutes to the short version to improve it. "Despite these possibilities, Cimino never proposed to Begelman that they should consult about meeting Begelman's objections to his short version by exploiting the possibly available added time.

"He stood by his longer version as his preferred picture and his short verson as meeting his legal requirement."

That wasn't good enough, Schwartz held, although he took great pains that his opinion wouldn't be considered openseason for other producers to challenge other directors on their final cuts.

"A director's final cut is not vulnerable to every claim of pro-

cedural irregularity or creative misjudgment. A producer who alleges that a director has failed to perform his obligations with respect to his final cut has a heavy burden of establishing even a prima facie case that further inquiry is warranted. Objections to creative decisions, concerns about commercial viability, disagreement about treatment of individual scenes, characters, or even subplots will not suffice."

But this was a "rare case," the arbitrator insisted, holding that the short version was only a final cut because the director was willing to have it exhibited as such. "However, that version had none of the usual indicia of a final cut, nor was it the result of the customary process that occurs in the preparation of and inheres in a final cut. Realistically, it was his only cut of that version initially made as a 'proposal' that was unequivocally rejected by the producer and not discussed or referred to by him again.

"Although he spent from September 1986 through April 1987 editing the longer version, he spent no more than three or four working days on the short version, and no more than a day viewing it reel by reel on the Kemmachine

"Until at least the arbitration, he had never seen his 'final cut' from beginning to end in one sitting, even on the Kem, let alone on a screen, a failure that is more telling than it might be in other circumstances. ****

"The number and qualifications of the witnesses and declarants who testified that it did not avoid those risks suggest that at the very least, a full-scale viewing of the shortened version was in order, a review that would seem to have been required when Begelman characterized it as a 'joke.'

"Cimino clearly did not treat the short version as the final cut he expect to be exhibited, either in the technical preparation of what was submitted or in how he treated it after it was submitted. He did not engage in the 'good faith' consultation with the producer that is both customary and that his personal services contract required when he submitted the short version as his final cut."

After the ruling, Begelman and Gladden cut a new version, running 116 minutes, which opened in the U.S. Oct. 23. However, Cimino is also showing his longer version in some countries. Much the same thing happened previously, of course, with Cimino's superbomb, "Heaven's Gate." United Artists released a shortened version (over Cimino's protests) which was followed by a limited issue of the director's original vision.

Sometimes, especially with certain directors, final seems to take forever.

ANIMATION:

Vanishing Art Form

about keeping animation in this country. Animation is one of the things we do in the United States as well as anybody, in any other country in the world. But if you're going to do it right, you've got to do all of it.

I am proud of the fact that, to date, Filmation has fought to keep all of its production here. But it is a losing battle. It is no secret that we lost money last year, we're going to lose money this year, and we're probably going to lose money next year.

Encouraging

I would like to note here that despite this loss our parent company, Westinghouse, has been fully supportive of my efforts to find a way to continue producing all of our work in this country. However, when a company has a negative cash flow, it has no choice but to start looking around for ways to be more cost conscious, and find the means to do the same quality work for a lower price.

I'm sad to say that we at Filmation can no longer hold out by ourselves. We are now reluctantly planning to send a small portion of our work overseas. It is quite possible that our theatrical Christmas feature, "Pinocchio And The Emperor Of The Night," may be the last animated feature produced entirely in this country. As of now, our following feature, "Snow White — The Adventure Continues," will probably have a portion of the ink and paint work done overseas.

This situation could ultimately change by the introduction of computer technology to electronically paint the cels. At the moment, we are engaged in developing and creating a unique process designed for our particular needs. As with all new technology, the cost is high and the progress slow.

This technology may be animation's saving grace — a way to cut costs without hurting quality. But technology is not creative. For that we must always look to the gifted people who have made animation the art form that it is.

So while we have lost the battle, we have not yet lost the war. I believe it is still possible for us to bring the American Animation Industry back to life.

It will not be easy.

It will demand new thinking, open minds and an honest realization of the way things really are.

It will require the full cooperation of both labor and management.

Right now, the unions don't have the ability to keep the work in this country — they've lost that power. What they have to do — what we have to do, is think about how to regain it. We're not going to regain it by fighting and arguing or living in a world that no longer exists.

It is time to use that which binds us together rather than the differences that tear us apart.

This next year is crucial for Filmation. We will continue to produce animation here. We will be as cost conscious as we can be commensurate with quality. Westinghouse has promised to take a fair look at what we are doing and how we're doing it. And they will evaluate it to see if it's an economic reality to keep our work in the U.S.

All of us have pledged ourselves to make this happen.

I believe we can do it!

Some Poverty In Midst Of Plenty And Other Curious Hollywood Happenings

(Continued from Page 16, Column 5)

dertaking. And the Technicolor camera was then a cumbersome instrument.

The question isn't who's to blame for the way shooting schedules have gotten out of hand. Finger pointing doesn't solve anything and, moreover, no one individual is to blame. It's a system that has evolved and it appears the "front office" doesn't know how to deal with it.

Not to make him the scapegoat, but it seems reasonable to look for relief (and the business needs it badly) to the director. He's in overall control, he's the one who sets the pace of shooting. He may encounter strong-willed, or troublesome, stars on occasion. The front office should back him to the hilt, even if it means firing the uncooperative, temperamental performers. Things have gotten so far out of hand that drastic action is the only remedy.

Otherwise, the business will be devoured by lassitude.

Puttnam's Interlude

Weep not for David Puttnam. He will be returning (if not already there) to England a richer and wiser, albeit also somewhat saddened, man.

But weep for Hollywood. All the forces of darkness remain intact, and it never will be known whether or not Hollywood would have been the better off if Puttnam had been permitted to carry out his blueprint.

Never mind that Puttnam may have ruffled some feathers in not kow-towing to certain of the ruling forces, including agents, select producers, directors and stars primarily. He didn't, in the final analysis, fit into the plans of Coca-Cola, which apparently thinks it is just as easy to bottle films as Coke — as

long as you don't change the formula.

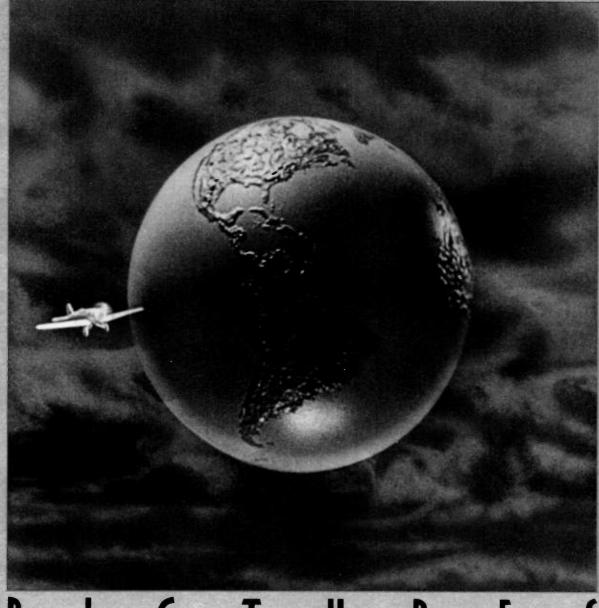
David Puttnam was a rare bird; a qualified film-maker. And it has been a long time indeed since such an individual ran a motion picture company. It used to be commonplace — Zanuck, Wallis, Cohn, Warner, Goldwyn, Thalberg, and others not quite so famous.

Puttnam didn't have a chance. His legs were cut off before he had begun to really run. It's sad when a proven talent can be discarded so cavalierly. He should, at least, have been given the opportunity to fail — not on the grand and vulgar scale which seems to assure continuity in modern Hollywood.

Talent is a precious commodity — and the life blood of the film business. There never has been too much of it at any given time — but there was a period from the '30s through the '50s when there was a real treasure trove of talent. All of them didn't receive equal recognition, but each was a unique force.

The thought came to mind with the recent death of Mervyn LeRoy, fifth in a series of exceptional talents who bridged the growth of motion pictures from the silent screen to talkies, to die this year. There was Hal Wallis, John Huston, Clarence Brown and Vincente Minnelli, with apologies to others who no doubt deserve being included in this honor roll.

These were men who were singularly dedicated to making the best films they were capable of doing. They didn't always excel. That would be asking the impossible, but the body of their works should remain an inspiration to all who have followed and they should be recalled often, not forgotten, as beacons of hope that the incredible resources of "the business" will be developed to greater heights and not squandered through ignorance and arrogance.



AN MCA COMPANY

Richard Barthelmess From Mother

The Caroline Harris Barthelmess Collection, gathered by the industrious widow whose husband had died when Richard was quite young, gives an overall impression of the rise of a likable young man of commendable background, fine principles, masculine good looks, plenty of talent and brains, and an enormous quantity of good luck.

Born in New York in 1895, his career lasted from 1916 to 1942; his leading ladies included Marguerite Clark, Alla Nazimova, Dorothy Gish, Lillian Gish, Florence Reed and Loretta Young, and nearly all the major actresses in between. D.W. Griffith prized him as an actor, but not nearly as much as young ladies out in the darkened movie palaces did — they adored him, and men respected him.

He had black hair and a stern face which appeared on magazine covers, posters and entertainment pages over and over again; the public couldn't read enough about him.

He was a presence, and he ranked with the Barrymores, Chaplin and Lloyd, even Valentino in a national poll in the '20s, and he was known popularly as "Our Dick."

Now he's all but unknown. Ask just about anyone under 35 who he was and you'll get a blank look.

But it wasn't because his mother, Caroline Harris Barthelmess, onetime actress and English tutor, didn't help him with his career. It was she who introduced him when he was at Trinity College in Hartford to the great Russian actress Alla Nazimova, whom Mrs. Barthelmess was coaching in English.

Nazimova gave the young college student, who had been working as an extra at Brenon Studios, and who had had some stage experience with his mother, a part in her film, Herbert Brenon's 1916 "War Brides," taken from a play by Marion Craig Wentworth. He



wasn't ready for a leading role, but he conveyed a sincerity that brought him attention, and he was good looking, to boot. In a word, he clicked.

Not only was his film career launched, but so was his scrapbook collection, all 50 volumes of it now part of the special collections unit. Caroline Harris began a personal clipping service a professional outfit couldn't beat; she was chronicling with pride and love her son's professional life.

RICHARD BARTHELMESS — VOL I — 1916-1920 has been stamped on the black spine in gold, and on the frontispiece Mrs. Barthelmess penned, "Richard Barthelmess from Muzzie — Christmas 1917." The inside of the tomes are sturdy, lined pages, three or four columns wide, crammed with clippings, programs, magazine covers, reviews, interviews, publicity and advertising copy.

The pages, heavy stock suitable for gluing on, which Mrs. Barthelmess certainly did do, provide an engrossing tour through the life of someone everyone seemed to like, to encourage and to admire. Moving through the pages, the reader picks up on the respect he engendered; it can't all be publicity.

An early review of "War Brides" mentions the work is cast "with players who have been associated with Nazimova and each other in numerous productions. Almost the entire original cast of the vaudeville production of the piece has been reunited in this engagement," and the 1916 notice points out, "... Richard S. Barthelmess has been doing motion-picture work (sic) for about two years, in his college vacations, previous to which he played stock engagements with his mother.

"He is still attending college, and has not yet decided whether or not to discontinue his education and adopt the picture career." He did finish at Trinity — with honors.

Volume I moves from "War Brides" and Barthelmess' good notices to his second film, another picture directed by Herbert Brenon, Lewis J. Selznick's "The Enternal Sin," described as a "dra-

(Continued on Page 26, Column 1)

'Oscar' An Annual Event, But Research Is A Daily Activity For Dedicated Staff At The Motion Picture Academy

(Continued from Page 15, Column 5) tion design, for instance, or cinematography, costume design, equipment and the technological side, and key individuals' work—and major history areas, as in the case of Paramount.

Mounting an exhibit dedicated to sound mixing is a stopper, admits Edwards, still pursuing the possible dream. "Someday I will have to reckon with that one, no doubt!"

A photo journalism display featuring the work of photo magazine contributors — probably one in particular — is set to follow a costume design exhibit. This Winter an exhibition will investigate the history of British cinema — well, British cinema involving Britishers who worked so successfully over the years in Hollywood.

Unless it's a pre-packaged deal coming from another hall, such as the Museum of Modern Art or the British Film Institute, Edwards prepares 90% of the exhibits himself using the photographic resources so readily available to him — those 5,000,000 photos.

Since the broad lobby was not designed as an exhibit area, Edwards works around the receptions, refreshments and milling groups of moviegoers, thus providing a filmic atmosphere for the post-screening sessions. "Given the daytime attendance and the incredible use factor of the theater for our own screenings as well as the industry screenings that go on there, we estimate that about a quarter of a million people see the exhibitions every year."

Outdoor Dining

Passing through the lobby with its warm, earthy tones and sense of spaciousness, you pass the cloakroom on the right and, beyond that, the patio where smoking is allowed — and staffers sit outside in the sun to eat the lunch they bring along.

Straight ahead is the wide staircase with one landing. It leads up to the mezzanine and the rest of the exhibit in glass cases along the northern wall. While the Paramount exhibit, cunningly mounted to intermingle time periods, presented an overall impression, like a mozaic, of the studio's output, other exhibits might concentrate on a costume designer, on a cinematographer, or on artifacts used in the history of films one way or another.

Selling films has been an art unto itself for many years, and the Academy's archival collection of one-sheet advertising posters, framed and covered with glass, turns up in revolving exhibits, thanks to space limitations, on the mezzanine's south wall. At the head of the staircase, on permanent display on the right, hangs a potent stone lithograph poster from the 1929-30 Oscar winner, "All Quiet On The Western Front." Across from that, across the stairway, hangs the only

known remaining copy of "Wings"; next to that hangs the current Best Picture award winner's one-sheet: in this case, "Platoon."

The rest of the posters, arranged by decades, bring on a combination of nostalgia, information and awareness, traits the Academy trafficks well in.

Technical Wizard

The late Gordon E. Sawyer, sound whiz, onetime technical director for the Samuel Goldwyn Studios as well as the Academy's special technical committee chairman when the Samuel Goldwyn Theater was built, has been quoted as saying:

"We fully expect this theater to be able to accommodate every technological advance in filmmaking for at least the next 25 years. Nearly every aspect of the theater has been custom-designed—the screen, sound system, projection room, even the seat placement—to make it the finest movie theater in the world."

That's what it is, agrees Ross, who's also theater operations manager for both the Samuel Goldwyn and the Academy Little Theater on the third floor. The Samuel Goldwyn has the best of projection systems, equipped to flash everything from 16m to 70m formats onto the 24-by-57-ft. seamless plastic screen. The projectionist, using electronic magic, controls the stark black masking, moving top and sides simultaneously to the proper picture size and shape. Push a buttom and it's everything from Sensurround to Todd-AO — with the exception of such experiences as the likes of Doug Trumbull's Showscan.

With its peerless projection and sound system, the Samuel Goldwyn has the distinction of being the definitive showcase for film. If a new picture doesn't come off well in its superb setting, the film's in real trouble when it hits the neighborhood.

The sound system has been designed to be as faithful, incidentally, to the soundtrack as possible; to reflect, not distort, the filmmaker's intentions. Anyone who heard the first ominous tones in "Jaws" with the sophisticated-but-worried audience, or first encountered "Close Encounters Of The Third Kind" and the warning rumbles from outer space can attest to the richness of the theater's sound range.

Used for Academy membership screenings at nominations time, for studio screenings for the press and for the industry, for charitable organizations and for retrospective screenings, the Samuel Goldwyn reflects the latest advances in film technology.

Daniel Ross recalls that the first film displayed on the gigantic screen was the 1967 Canadian short subject Oscar winner, "A Place To Stand." Ross and Gordon Sawyer were the audience. The final wire had been connected at last in the huge auditorium, and Benny Erlich, Academy projectionist for over 30 years, asked Sawyer and Ross if they'd like to try out the new wonder.

They did, and it did —wonderously.

One major factor in the Samuel Goldwyn Theater's aura that seldom gets mentioned is that, despite its glamorous status and its international recognition, the auditorium itself sticks strictly to its purpose — to show films to their best advantage. With projectionist included, the rental fee is \$1500 a night.

The showplace, blessed with excellent sightlines, the aforementioned sound system devised by Sawyer and Paul Veneklasen, with up to six inches of fiberglass

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Linda Harris Mehr, chief librarian of the Margaret Herrick Library, and stills curator Robert Cushman examine a newly discovered photo of Ben Hecht.



There's More Than 'Oscar' Going On At Motion Picture Academy

(Continued from Page 20, Column 5) on the walls and ceilings to muffle echoes and enormous reflective wall panels to direct sound along with five rows of ceiling panels, the Samuel Goldwyn still manages to retain an old-fashioned movie theater feel.

Like the lobby and the mezzanine, the theater colors are variations on tan, beige, red and brown.

Though there are never commercial screenings at the Samuel Goldwyn, its functions often do involve the public. Occasionally there are special screenings announced in the papers, the singular tributes that appear several times throughout the year.

But basically the theater, owned and operated by AMPAS, is non-public. It's available for press previews arranged for by the Association of Motion Picture and Television Producers — Ross suggests that it's booked 80% of the time after the Awards season, when, from the first of January until after the Oscars, the theater is reserved for nominated films.

Production company employes are invited to screenings on Saturdays, while Academy members are able to view new releases Sunday afternoons. There are film student series, Society of Motion Picture and TV Engineers confabs and other industry-related screenings.

Screening Policy

Executive administrator Bruce Davis explains the screenings:

"Most of the films that we hold, we hold on the basis of an agreement that we will not show them in commercial circumstances. Granted another museum is not really a commercial circumstance, so we do occasionally lend one out to the County Museum or the Museum of Modern Art just as we'll borrow one from them if we're doing a tribute to a director or an actor and we don't have one of the key films.

"We have what we call our Foundation Mailing List. Most of the cultural and preservation work of the Academy is actually under the rubric of the Academy Foundation, and so we have this mailing list that would give maybe 1300 people in the immediate area a couple of days' advance notice, and they can get their tickets.

"And, of course, we let our Academy members know. There are maybe 4000 Academy members within a 50-mile radius, by far the largest concentration in the world. I think we just went over 5000 members world-wide, so four-fifths of them are here in this

"They get a regular monthly mailing that lets them know the official Sunday screenings and then any other special programs the Foundation is doing. In addition to that, we have a mailing list of people who have shown an interest in the Foundation's program — the seminars, those kinds of things.

"Generally they come to some-

thing. They see something in the paper, they come to it and they say, 'How can we find out what other programs you do.' The charge is \$3 a year, and for that they get about 30 mailings letting them know what is going on. Anything we do that's open to the public. Not all of what we do, but much of what we do, is open to the public."

Incidentally, anyone can get on that Foundation Mailing List by calling the Academy's number, (213) 278-8990.

Academy historian Patrick Stockstill, by the way, speaks out forthrightly about the difference between the Academy and the Academy Foundation:

"The Academy is a non-profit organization incorporated in California; the Academy Foundation is a non-profit organization set up by the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences to be the recipient of materials donated to the Academy for tax purposes and also to be a sponsorship organization for various student film awards, other programs we put on - the tributes, the screenings we have that are open to the public, the seminars — they're all sponsored by the Academy Foundation."

When a group does rent the Samuel Goldwyn Theater, the group arranges with the caterer — there's little more than a sink for minimal kitchen facilities — and with the Academy for any reception following the showing. The Beverly Hills fire marshal says yea or nay if any permits are involved.

Life In BevHills

Anything that takes place outside the building — say, spotlights and a red carpet, plus valet parking — requires a permit under the Beverly Hills Premiere Ordinances. It's not every U.S. city that can boast of having its own premiere ordinance.

Partygivers also have to post a whopping insurance bond in case a passing motorist, unable to resist ogling the glitter, plows into somebody or whams into a lamppost.

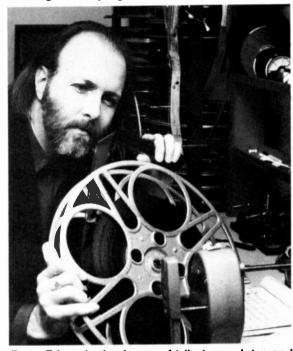
Doug Edwards, responsible for the lobby and mezzanine exhibits, also coordinates the tributes programs, many of which are held in the Samuel Goldwyn Theater.

The tribute programs, scheduled from May to January, singling out a particular individual an actor, director, producer, writer and so on - make an earnest attempt to be entertaining and informative. Using plenty of film clips, gathering the honoree's coleagues onstage at the Samuel Goldwyn — the stage, when not raked for screenings, can be raised to 2½-ft., and can stretch as far as 31 ft. wide, six feet deep — the Academy's tribute series draws packed houses whether it's held at the in-house theater, at UCLA's Melnitz Hall or in the

Whether it's billed variously as a salute or tribute, the honoree



Ric Robertson, in charge of seminars and the Visiting Artists program.



Doug Edwards, in charge of tributes, salutes and exhibits.



Howard Prouty, assistant special collections archivist.



Academy historian Patrick Stockstill.



Film curator Dan Woodruff with a camera used by D.W. Griffith.

in question receives accolades from those who appear onstage to talk about them — relatives, coworkers, colleagues — and clips from their films are shown as examples of their work. "Obviously in the case of Nunnally Johnson, which we did last December, he's been dead for nearly a decade so we had people like Lauren Bacall, writers like Daniel Taradash, directors and other

people who worked with him comment on both the artist and the man."

Anthony Slide, Doug Edwards' predecessor, coordinated the first tributes, salutes and special programs as early as 1975. Initially, on Monday evenings in that year, the Academy focused on "Best Picture Retrospectives," in which those films over the years that had

(Continued on Page 26, Column 3)



Archivist-historian Sam Gill displays a script from the collection donated by Paramount Studios.

THE CANNON GROUP, INC. CONGRATULATES DAILY VARIETY ON ITS 54TH ANNIVERSARY

BEST WISHES

MENAHEM GOLAN CHAIRMAN YORAM GLOBUS PRESIDENT



"THE BALLAD OF MARY PHAGAN"

ONGRATULATIONS OAILY WARRETY

PERRY MASON

MATLOCK

FRANK'S PLACE

JAKE & THE FAT MAN

VIACOM PRODUCTIONS



Richard Barthelmess — From Mother

(Continued from Page 20, Column 2)

ma in six parts," with Florence Reed as Lucretia Borgia, William E. Shay as her husband, and, as The Jester, Henry Armetta. After praising the cast in general, one reviewer added, "But honors should be awarded to Richard Barthelmess for his portrayal of Gennaro, Lucretia's son."

The young actor was being noticed. Publicity couldn't buy his reviews, which were almost mostly favorable, though his appearance in Dixie Films' 1916 "Just A Song At Twilight," with Evelyn Greeley and Pedro de Cordoba, was lumped with the others as "conscientious."

Leafing through that first book of notices and clippings, the reader begins pulling for the young, likable actor. His reviews and billings were getting better, and in Famous Players' 1917 "The Valentine Girl," he was described as "an unusual and attractive type, perfectly adapted to Marguerite Clark's coyly ingenious manner."

By the fall of that year Barthelmess had three films playing on Broadway. The next year he was sharing billing with George M. Cohan in "Hit The Trail Halliday," and by August he was a Paramount leading man with a full-page portrait in Photo Play to prove it.

He added substance to his career in 1919 when he appeared with Dorothy Gish in "I'll Get Him Yet," but it wasn't until, in that same year, he became a full-scale leading man under D.W. Griffith's direction in "Broken Blossoms." He was playing, in makeup "The Chinaman," with Lillian Gish billed as The Girl.



Richard Barthelmess, two years old in 1897, and mother. Photo: Courtesy Academy Of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences.

The scrapbook goes into all sorts of excitement over this event, which is exactly what it was. Over 30 pages record various aspects of "Broken Blossoms," even including columns of Oriental characters from the Japanese-American Commercial Weekly, though how Mrs. Barthelmess knew what she was pasting down is uncertain.

The film was booked into the George M. Cohan Theater, Broadway at 43d St., starting May 13, 1919, at 8:45 p.m. with matinees skedded for 2:45 p.m.

Caroline Harris (her maiden name was her professional name) was busy cutting out clippings that told such intimate things about her son as that he had eaten at Chinese Restaurants to get atmosphere for "Broken Blossoms" — praiseries have a long tradition.

Photo-Play Journal described him as "the newest great genius of the screen."

He was, too, a Griffith star, and commanded attention.

And letters to him and about him.

"To the editor of Picture Play Magazine,

"As a fan who has a wild, wild crush on Dick Barthelmess I would like to give him a bit of advice. Why can't we see him in more — well, society pictures?" asked R.W. of Mount Vernon, N.Y. "Every young girl is crazy about him..."

R.W. also wanted him to stop parting his black hair in the cen-

The concluding clippings about Barthelmess involved his marriage to Mary Caldwell, who had appeared in the Ziegfeld Follies as Mary Hay. It was 1920, and both the bridegroom and his bride were beginning to work on "Way Down East."

Mrs. Barthelmess concludes Volume I on a cliffhanger.

Volume I covers some 18 films, more than any single tome would again hold. Volume II looks at Griffith's 1920 "Way Down

(Continued on Page 30, Column 1)

Not Quite As Dramatic As 'Oscar,' But Preservation Of Screen History Prime Function Of The Motion Picture Academy

(Continued from Page 22, Column 4) won that designation are shown and discussed.

In 1976 the Academy presented its first tribute, an appreciation of Groucho Marx. Presented at the Samuel Goldwyn Theater, the program was the debut of a continuingly successful series of special occasions.

Pete Smith, whose witty MGM short subject documentaries enlivened many a Depression program, was honored while still alive that same year.

Joan Crawford, who died in May 1977, was honored the following Winter, and the National Film Board of Canada, celebrating its 40th anniversary, got a nod during the 1979-80 season. The 100th anniversaries of both Will Rogers and W.C. Fields were observed during that period, and the Academy tipped its hat to the UCLA Film Archives/Preservation Program.

Oldtimers

Mel Blanc and Jesse Lasky were both honored in the 1980-81 semester, the time at which Edwards joined the Academy and, in that same season, presented programs on Mae West and Allen Dwan.

Stricter definitions of "tribute" and of "salute" came into play at this time, with tributes paid to those who had died, salutes given to those still living.

In 1981-82, tributes honored the memory of Clara Bow, Cecil B. DeMille, George Stevens, Rudoph Valentino and Ernst Lubitsch. Salutes were handed Wolfgan Reitherman, Pare Lorentz, George Folsey, Ira Gershwin and Hal Roach.

Following those, tributes were given to John Barrymore in New York at the Beacon Theater, and to Judy Garland in Los Angeles, New York and San Francisco. Adrian and James Dean also received tributes at that time. Friz Freleng, Paul Francis Webster and Max von Sydow received salutes, as did Saul Bass and Maurice Binder.

In 1983 the tribute-salute was combined. Douglas Fairbanks, William Hornbeck and Grim Natwick got tributes while Luise Rainer, Eleanor Powell and United Productions got separate salutes.

Tributes were presented the following year to Alfred Hitchcock, Robert Flaherty, Jerome Kern, Norman McLaren, and Shirley Temple in Los Angeles, while the tribute to Myrna Loy was held in New York. John and Faith Hubley received salutes.

Last year, Nunrally Johnson, director Carlos Saura and Fred Zinnemann received tributes, and Fredric March was honored with a tribute copresented by the American Cinematheque this past September in the Samuel Goldwyn Theater, with a Johnny Mercer tribute slated for Nov. 9 in New York.

Information about attending tributes — general admission is \$5 — can be found by calling (213) 278-8990, ext. 287.

"We started off several years ago cranking out something like four to five a year," observes Edwards

AMPAS now averages about two Southern California tributes, or salutes, a year, with selections made by "an interesting mix of impulses," as Edwards terms it. As more and more century marks surface for film notables, he's on the lookout for such major anniversaries and is considering Boris Karloff's centennial coming up soon.

"As far as major programs in the Samuel Goldwyn Theater, my department generates about six events in the course of a year.

"Outside of the building, we have an annual survey of outstanding examples of documentary films which we do in conjunction with UCLA which is about every other week from late September to early March each year. That's a free series we present to the public"

Each year, as the docu committee screens all those documentaries with an eye to presenting an Oscar, the judges study hundreds of films, making notes about those they think outstanding. Besides the five Oscar nominees, the judges supply the names of two dozen titles they feel have merit enough to be seen in the noncompetitive dox marathon.

More Links

The Academy Foundation's monthly notices go out to some 1400 people in the Southern California area, and the memberships' monthly calender is sent to all 5000 members of the Academy with news of the event.

UCLA uses its own mailing list for film activities, so with direct mail, notices and press releases and a minute amount of advertising, the series draws good houses.

"Because it's our anniversary, we've done two new programs outside the premises. One was a 14-film series at the Museum of Modern Art in New York in May, 'Treasures From the Academy Film Archives.'

"We have about 8000 films in our film holdings, and what we did was go through and select particularly rare, particularly choice prints, a really eclectic selection we just put under that general heading — we showed that for two weeks

"And we're doing a variation of that at the County Art Museum. We're doing one program a month in the Bing Theater, and each month it is something particularly choice selected from the holdings of the Academy. Each picture won one Academy award in some category.

"We're trying to provide an overall balance of films that won in all branches. We have sound, special effects, that kind of thing.

We're also looking for films that had multiple nominations."

Last month "Green Dolphin Street," which won three awards, was shown and this month, it's "Coquette," which is almost never seen and presents Mary Pickford in her Oscar-winning

The tributes and salutes are only part of what emanates from Edwards' busy fifth-floor office. One of the Academy's best goodwill endeavors concerns the photographic exhibitions which regularly hit the road across the U.S. and Canada.

Available without charge (except for shipping and installation costs), the exhibits stop off at colleges and universities, libraries and hospitals, military bases, film festivals and non-profit institutions which could use the temporary lift of views of film legends.

Commercial areas, such as shopping areas, are charged a fee.

Varied Exhibitions

The exhibitions for the most part are made up of 16x20" enlargements mounted on heavy-weight cardboard and centered around a single theme. Depending on how elaborate, or limited, the borrower wants to be, the Academy readily suggests the best way

to set up an exhibition.

Exhibits range in size from 28 or 30 photos to the impressively large touring version of the Paramount exhibition with its 145 images — that has already been seen at two festivals, with two others scheduled.

One exhibition ordinarily lasts about one year before the Academy has a new set struck to replace it, although exhibitions can tour for as long as five years before they, in Edwards' term, "exhaust themselves."

"Blacks In American Film," particularly sought after during February, Black History Month, has been on tour for several years. With its 32 b&w (plus two color photos) 16x20" stills and six b&w 10x13'\(\frac{1}{2}\)" photos, the exhibition is a popular item wherever it has appeared and with people of all ethnic backgrounds.

Along with these exhibitions on tour, there are the "Chaplin," "The Marx Brothers" and "Joan Crawford" appreciations.

As with the tributes, ideas for exhibitions of photographs sometimes arise from outside suggestions. For example, a representative of the Air Museum outside of Washington, D.C., wrote to the Academy about the opening of the new museum with the idea that maybe the Academy would be interested in doing an exhibition that had to do with the Air Force in film.

The idea was to focus only on the enlisted man, but since Hollywood's emphasis has traditionally dealt with pilots, or officers, the museum went along with that, and

(Continued on Page 30, Column 3)



Tyro Producer Finds Indie Route Has Potholes, Detours

By JACKELYN GIROUX

When I was an actress I had a small part in director William Friedkin's "To Live And Die In L.A.," and he commented to met at one point that "men and cars sell more tickets than women do." That's when I decided that I wanted to be a producer. I wanted to make a picture about women, featuring women, that could still do well at the boxoffice. I told Billy about my plan and he said, "go for it." He was very supportive of me all along, but it has been an uphill fight. Let's face it, this is still a man's industry, in a man's town. But a female producer can make a movie about interesting women. I know. I did it. But it wasn't easy.

I had optioned the script for "Distortions," written by Tony Crechales, in October 1985 and knew it was the script with which I could accomplish what had now become my goal. I worked as a still photographer on a movie Tony had written a few years before called "The Attic," which starred Ray Milland and Carrie Snodgrass. I liked the way he wrote about fascinating women, and "Distortions" was a story with three female leads. It was exactly what I wanted to do.

In making "Distortions" I hadn't set out to make a low budget feature; quite the contrary. I felt that with names like Olivia

Hussey, Steve Railsback, Piper Laurie, Edward Albert, June Chadwick, Rita Gam and Terrence Knox, I would have no problem getting financing. But I quickly learned that "names" meant very little without a track record as a producer.

I had previously coproduced one low budget feature, "Trick Or Treats," with Gary Graver, but apparently that didn't count because I wasn't the only producer. Never mind that I had also cowritten the script with Gary, starred in the picture, and gotten the financing myself. It still wasn't enough when I went looking for financing for "Distortions."

Three \$trikes

At three different times I had private financing set up for the picture and each time it fell through. The first was a limited partnership group in Dallas, then a financier out of Texas, and finally I arranged a deal with a Canadian production company, which gets its money from the Canadian government. It was to go 50-50, but as I was signing the deal, after two weeks of negotiating in Vancouver, they tried to change it with me coming up with 75% to their 25%. I was really at my wits' ends, very depressed and while driving back from Canada I was in an auto accident that put



Husband-wife: Steve Railsback, Jackelyn Giroux.

me in the hospital for three months.

By this point I was desperate enough to find some alternate methods of financing. I decided to be open to the idea of lowering my budget and pre-selling to any medium that was interested. My decision was a good one, because shortly after being released from the hospital I got a television presell from King Features, which, combined with some smaller investors, mostly family, friends and my own and my husband Steve Railsback's money, gave me enough to make the film.

With the television pre-sell paper in my hand I visited banks to get a loan with the lowest possi-

ble interest rate. I went to 35 banks in California and Texas before I found a small Los Angeles bank that offered me a low interest rate. There were problems, however, because it was their first time ever financing a film, and they proceeded very slowly and deliberately. The letter of credit attorneys and the bank attorneys continued to argue over one sentence, and the result was a large bill for legal fees that I had to pay.

The bank loan was finally signed and approved in December and my next step was getting a completion bond. I went first to Film Finances, but they turned me down. I had contracts, letters and statements from every single cast

and crew member who would be working for me, but I had never been bonded before. All the other companies wanted to charge me a flat rate which was four times as much as what Film Finances wanted, so I went back to Film Finances. This time I took story-boards and acted out every scene in the movie. Two and half hours later I had a completion bond.

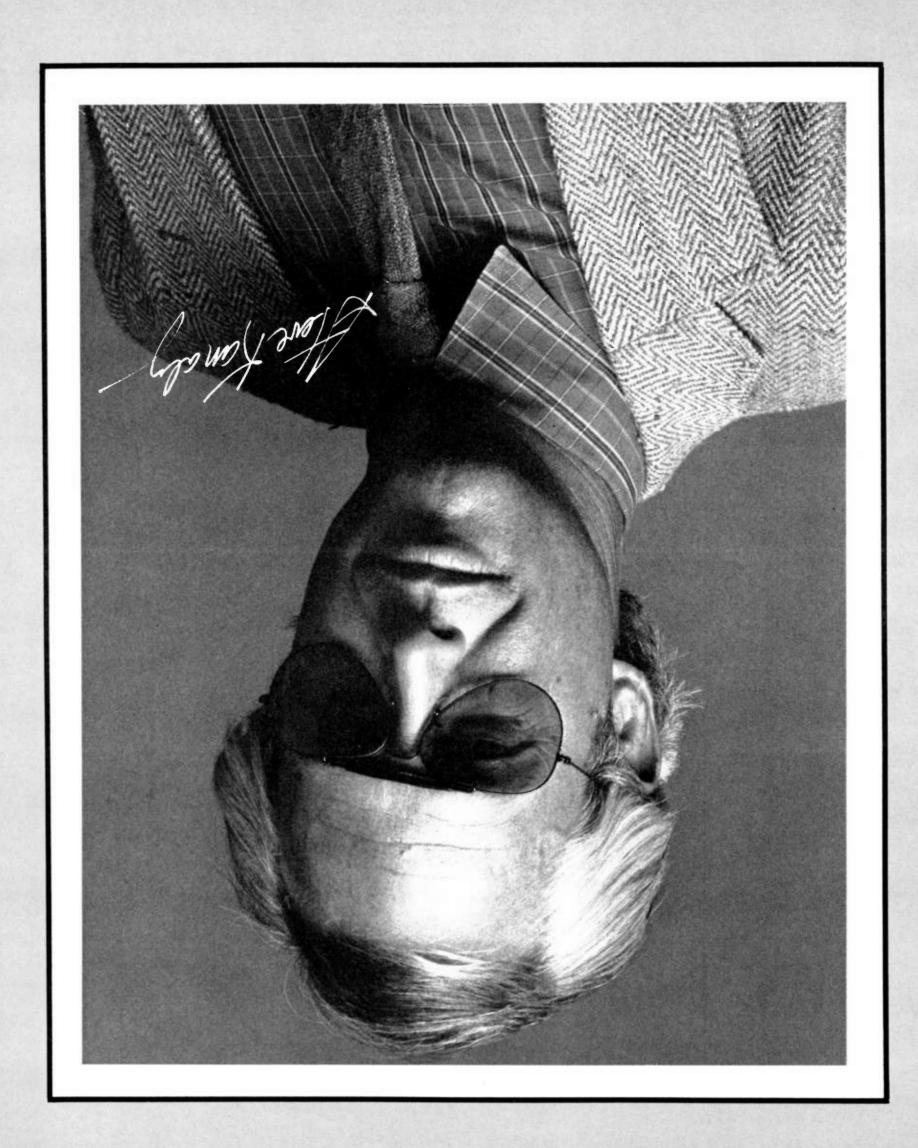
Bank Holdup

The completion bond came through on time, but now I had another problem — the bank was holding up the money. Even though the loan was signed and approved in December, the money hadn't come through by our scheduled January production start date. We waited and waited, but time was running out because Steve Railsback was due to go to another film in a little over a week.

I certainly didn't want to have to replace Steve, not only because of his capabilities as an actor, but also because his name was on the letter of credit. I knew replacing his name on the letter of credit could mean another six months of delay, which would mean I would lose all my other cast and crew members. So on Jan. 22d, with only six days before Steve was supposed to leave, I chose to start filming without any money. Everyone knew this was scary and that I might not get the money, which would mean we would have to close down.

But to me, not having the movie go through after all the work I had (Continued on Page 38, Column 4)





Richard Barthelmess — From Mother

(Continued from Page 26, Column 2)

East" and "The Love Flower," both for United Artists, and Paramount's 1921 "Experience."

Volume III continued with "East" and "Experience," and includes interviews and biographical material.

Volume IV turns to one of the actor's major triumphs. Mrs. Barthelmess, writing in her flowing script, noted "Tol'able David" was made in June-July-August 1921 ("from Mother — November 1921"). Directed by Henry King, and as Mrs. Barthelmess observes on the flyleaf, the filming was partially done in Staunton, Virginia. "Dick's first starring picture under Inspiration." He now had his own production company.

The critics were delighted. "The first star picture to be made by Richard Barthelmess, and the best thing he has ever done. A truly great photoplay." Unfortunately, as in most cases, Mrs. Barthelmess didn't note the paper from which she cut out the glowing reports — the glow seemed quite enough.

First National "adopted" the star at the Hotel Astor that year with a dinner and the works. A portrait in color and three of his roles appeared on the cover of Picture Play in November of 1921, and his mother was interviewed.

Feature after feature, review after rave review were faithfully pasted into the scrapbook. If anything bad was ever said, it was never noted — and there was not an empty square inch on 149 pages.

Volumes V-VIII move steadily, purposefully forward recording the actor's growth, and in Volume IX Mrs. Barthelmess was to record, "Interiors Biograph Studio, N.Y. Sea Scenes en route from Philadelphia to Gloucester, Mass."

She was writing about "Fury," the 1923 whopping success with Dorothy Gish and Tyrone Power (the stage actor and father of the late film idol). "Henry King — directing — Picture V. From Mother Feb. 1923."

The Saturday Evening Post full-page coverage noted the story was by Edmund Goulding (who also wrote the scenario); the reviews, again, were ecstatic. One in particular, after listing the cast and churning out the synopsis, added succinctly: "Photography, Lighting, Direction — All scenes are good. Ample lighting is supplied throughout ..."

Tub Thumping

The publicity mills were grinding, and Mrs. Barthelmess took full note. The headline on a Malden, Mass., story trumpets that Our Dick "Christens Strand Theatre By Breaking Bottle Of Wine With Policeman's Billy Over Marquee."

In an interview, Barthelmess states flatly that he likes Valentino in "Blood And Sand."

The star's old mentor, Griffith, decides "the production is one of the best in all screen history."

In March 1923, Picture Play, having taken a poll, ticked off "Our Greatest Screen Actors" — Chaplin, Jackie Coogan ("another of the favored few"), Valentino, John Barrymore, Mme. Nazimova, Barthelmess ("Our readers chose him without dissent as the leading screen actor. He is ranked superior to all others, not only because of his powers of expression, but also because of the greater number and variety of his portrayals. He is the most unmannered and most mental of our actors.")

Joining this god of gods in the pantheon were Lionel Barrymore, Lillian Gish, Norma Talmadge, Constance Talmadge, Harold Lloyd.

But Our Dick beat them all out, according to the Picture Play poll. Mrs. Barthelmess didn't miss that triumph at the polls — and the two-page, glossy spread with photos is anchored firmly in place among the 142 packed pages of that volume.

Barthelmess' high bounce began levelling off as the 1920s moved on. Volumes X-XXII (including "The Enchanted Cottage" for First National in 1924) suggested that the actor was holding his own, but with "The Patent Leather Kid" in 1927, he needed three scrapbooks packed with news and publicity, columns and photos—and curiously numbered Vol. XXIII-I, Vol XXIV-II, and Volume XXIV-III.

They show what a genuine victory looks like from a 60-year perspective.

On Aug. 21, 1927, The New York Times said, in part, "... Mr. Barthelmess, who up to this time, with the exception of his work under Mr. Griffith and in 'Tol'able David,' produced by Henry King, has invariably overacted, gives a most sincere, restrained and sensible portrayal of the cocksure, self-sufficient pugilist, who after shaking like an aspen leaf under fire, eventually bombs an enemy machine-gun nest."

As might be gathered, "The Patent Leather Kid" was about an East Side boxer who dismisses patriotism in wartime, watches his girl (Molly O'Day, who Barthelmess reportedly discovered) go off to the Red Cross, and, ending up in the Army, makes a

SPOTLIGHT FOCUSES ON 'OSCAR'

(Continued from Page 26, Column 5) the Academy came up with "The Wings Of Warriers: Hollywood Movies & The U.S. Air Force," which has some 66 images in it.

The stills, making their way around U.S. Air Force bases, show every way that the Air Force has been portrayed throughout American motion picture history.

Some touring Photographic Exhibitions grow out of in-house exhibits. "The American Musical" is one example, and "Silent Dreams," focusing on surrealistic imagery from the silent era and obviously a challenge to put together, grew out of an in-house exhibition. After having done the work of setting up the original display from American and European films, it seemed a natural progression to incorporate 50 dream-like images into a touring attraction.

A representative of the Sinai Temple library approached the Academy with an idea about screen portrayals of Jewish people and their history. The thought seemed sound, and Edwards researched the Margaret Herrick Library's stills, also finding around a dozen pictures in the Brandeis University collection. He created the remarkable "The Jewish Experience In American Film." Made up of some 70 b&w mounted stills, the exhibition has been touring for almost two years and is ready for a refurbishing, it's been so busy.

Other programs and other concepts well up. He's considering for later in the year a look at the three years in the '30s when the Academy presented Oscars for dance direction. Those winning dance numbers and the nominees in that short-lived but memorable category will kick up their heels again — an example of a little-known, au courant Academy Awards grouping gone west because its time had passed.

Edwards talks of international arrangements — an Argentinian program for next Spring with a delegation from South America coming on a visit for the occasion; a program surveying the history of Swedish film and coinciding with the visit of the King and Queen of Sweden next year — underscoring the worldwide recognition of the Academy.

Foreign powers make suggestions or bids for such attention, and if it seems warranted, the idea is seriously considered.

Upcoming is a retrospective of work from the Shanghai Animation Studio. The UCLA Archives will work with the Academy on the project, and the Westwood Theater as well as the Wilshire auditorium will be used.

Rediscovery, an intermittent program examining films that have reappeared from years past, is one of the Academy's more intriguing considerations. As an example, an

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Richard Barthelmess – From Mother

hero of himself. Adapted by Adela Rogers St. Johns from a Rupert Hughes story that ran in Cosmopolitan (the original story is included in the first "Kid" volume), the film was directed by Alfred A. Santell.

The New York Daily News lauded the actor's appearance as "Barthelmess's best film in years," and reviews and articles in The Herald Tribune, the World, the Mirror, the American, the Evening Graphic, the Post, the Telegram, Sun and N.Y. Reviews were heartening if not downright raves.

The press agents, the studio, the magazines and newspapers were working overtime to give Richard Barthelmess exposure. Divorced by his wife in Paris, he was seen with four-year-old daughter Mary Hay Barthelmess at their Beverly Hills Spanishinspired home.

Picture Play, getting in the Christmas spirit, ran a stiff, slickphoto of the actor sitting "at the knee of his mother just as any other boy would do and telling her everything that happened to him that day."

The point, of course, is how much films and actors and studios depended on the press to pump up the golden silents. And how the Barthelmess scrapbooks built an image, a likable image, about the public figure.

When the Academy was formed in 1927, Barthelmess was one of the seven original members making up the committee of the Awards of Merit, forerunner of the Oscars. In 1927-28, when the first Oscars were awarded, Barthelmess would be nominated for the best acting Academy Award for his appearance in the 1928 "The Noose" and for "The Patent Leather Kid."

German actor Emil Jannings, neither a member nor an American citizen, took home the hardware.

But Harrison Carroll in the L.A. Express had hailed "Kid" as "at the end of a series of discouraging roles," and a Topeka paper cheerfully reported that it was "Back To The Throne in Movieland" for both Barthelmess and Pola Negri, whose popularity was about as shaky as one of those aspen leaves the N.Y. Times had conjured up.

Louella O. Parsons in the L.A. Examiner saw that "Richard Barthelmess steps lightly, blithely and capably into an entirely new characterization."

She has the last word.

Sound Dawns

Sound arrived, and Barthelmess spoke right out. He writes in Volume XXXV, which is concerned with First National's "The Dawn Patrol," with Douglas Fairbanks Jr. and Neil Hamilton, that some actresses couldn't make it because their voices didn't live up to their silent screen image.

He was writing — at least the columns had his byline — features like, "Are Heroines Necessary?" and tactfully answering his own question by telling how much he owed his leading ladies such as Dorothy Mackaill, Lois Moran, Marion Nixon and Constance Bennett.

Fan magazines, once such a major force in sustaining a star, were in full bloom. Life said, "Mr. Barthelmess gives . . . a fine performance in the leading role . . . " A Bangor, Maine, newspaper proclaimed the all-male "Dawn Patrol" a "screen masterpiece" — the article's right there.

The New Yorker thought it "...the most ambitious of their offerings," referring to recent war films. But it couldn't stop there: "At any rate it is the longest..."

Now married to Jessica Sargent, signed up with First National since 1926, more than capable of working in talking pictures, some unidentified experts agreed that Richard Barthelmess had "the best recording voice."

By the time he was making "Heroes For Sale," though, something else was edging — if not sweeping — into Hollywood. Pictures were avoiding a head-on look at the Depression, but Vol. XLII, the final scrapbook, not only points that out with various clippings about those films that had been flirting with the economic chaos — and concentrates on "Heroes For Sale," the 1933 film in which Barthelmess played a WW I hero whose hard luck was depressing.

William Wellman directed, as Caroline Harris Barthelmess noted on the end paper in her strong script. "Loretta Young, Leading Woman — Strand Theatre, New York, July 20, 1933 — From original story (his last) of Wilson Mizner — Trip thro' Canal — Pages 48-49-50, etc."

On the flyleaf the enthusiastic scrapbook keeper penned, "Richard Barthelmess from Mother — Fall, 1933."

Originally called "The Breadline" (Louella O. Parsons broke that news Feb. 2, but called it "The Bread Line" in her column), "Heroes For Sale" played on how veteran Barthelmess, married to Loretta Young, is so ill-used because of the hard times.

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STRUTHERS





ACADEMY

(Continued from Page 30, Column 3)

early 1920s German production based on Daudet's novel, "Sapho," about a French courtesan, had been purchased and held in reserve — unreleased — by MGM. Dick May at Turner Entertainment discovered the picture in the MGM vaults.

It was chosen as an American vehicle for Garbo in 1931 and called "Inspiration" (Daudet got no credit), with Robert Montgomery and Lewis Stone. The Academy, in an inspired programming accomplishment, showed both films on the same program to the public.

Still another imaginative step involves Film Classics Revisited: The Making Of — The idea is to obtain the best print possible of a landmark film, assemble as many primary figures involved in its making, and put together an evening's program.

Last February the Academy mounted such a presentation at Lincoln Center to observe the 50th anniversary of "Dead End." Stars Joel McCrea and Sylvia Sidney were both stricken with influenza and unable to attend, but two of the Dead End Kids from the film, Huntz Hall and Gabriel Dell, as well as Sidney Lumet (one of the Small Boys in the 1935 Broadway stage hit) were present.

Moreover, Edward Albee was on hand to introduce playwright Sidney Kingsley to talk about the purchase by Samuel Goldwyn of a red hot-to-touch legit play and why director William Wyler so much wanted to make the film.

Edwards, always on the lookout for ideas for the various Academy programs, claims an open-door policy. A letter from the public sector, for instance, a phone call, or, as in the case of the Argentinian and Swedish events, officials approaching the Academy stand a good chance of seeing an idea spring to life.

If the suggestion seems valid and official, Edwards approaches exec administrator Bruce Davis with it; if Davis receives what's considered a valid concept, he sends the letter or memo to Edwards for his opinion.

Davis and Edwards, then, sit down with Academy officers — president Robert Wise, Foundation president Fay Kanin, for starters — twice a year with their lists and work out the priorities, and feasibilities.

The National Alliance of Media Arts Centers, in association with the Academy of Motion Picture Arts & Sciences and the Academy Foundation, the American Cinematheque, the American Film Institute, the Long Beach Museum of Art, and New York's Museum of Modern Art publish a quarterly trade journal, Media Arts, out of editor Edwards' office.

With a circulation close to 10,000, the near-tabloid size, off-set publication announces regional news items, prints features about media events, especially film and video, publishes committee reports and national education-



Laurence Olivier and Merle Oberon in "Wuthering Heights," directed by William Wyler for Samuel Goldwyn.



Jean Arthur and Alan Ladd in "Shane," directed by George Stevens for Paramount.

al guides in media info, opinions and viewpoints.

Serving as a network broadcasting ideas and impressions as well as happenings in the world of art, Media Arts draws from such writers as Fenton Johnson, Amos Vogel and Ric Robertson, the Academy's coordinator of lectures, seminars and visiting artists programs.

The staff is not adverse to talking about how little room the building has for storage and for ordinary expansion. As will be noted later, several public storage centers house some of the spillover, and desks are pushed too close for comfort.

Not that anyone's complaining, but there have been mentions.

One reason for a shortage of space is on the third floor — the Academy Little Theater. Originally designed to sit atop the roof of the Academy, it turned out to be over the height limit and was enfolded into the interior plans of the building.

Done out in earth tones and comfortable seating, the Little Theater has 73 seats, is fine for

seminars, committee screenings, special press screenings, workshop series and VIP-type programs. A rust-colored curtain covers the 10-by-20-ft. screen, and the theater can handle composite or double-system presentation in 16m or 35m formats.

The Little Theater shares the third floor with that eye-popping projection room for the Samuel Goldwyn Theater. Almost efficient enough to thread needles, clean enough to shame the word tidy, the projection room stares imperiously over its field of vision — the reddish-brown hues of the theater it serves.

Indescribably complex buttons that glow, hulking projectors that know how to synchronize, a sound-system spectrum that could scare the furies or sooth a baby are all at the hands of chief projectionist Tom Ogburn and those in the projectionist pool.

There are three main projectors

— 35m convertible to 70m — and two 16m machines.

One of the major headaches at the Samuel Goldwyn is only an echo of theaters throughout the

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Richard Barthelmess

(Continued from Page 30, Column 5)

Killed in a riot, Young leaves Barthelmess in trouble after trouble until he settles down, resigned, to do good deeds. The raw deals the character endures prompted the N.Y. Times to suggest "It is almost too much for an audience to bear."

The N.Y. Herald Tribune's article by J.C. Furnas was headlined, "The Depression Must Be Over If Hollywood Uses The Theme."

Barthelmess had starred in 51 pictures by this time, and there had been half a dozen films between the 1930 "The Dawn Patrol" and "Heroes." Times were passing, and the actor with the firm chinline, coal-black hair and brown eyes was not, as the Pittsburgh Post-Gazette indicated, right for "The Great Tragedian."

"Heroes" was not a washout. "The screen, not withstanding its hard-bitten sophistication, still has need of such a sane balance. And, since Mr. Barthelmess can supply that sane balance, it would be something of a pity if his ultimate comeback, like prosperity, were not just around the corner," philosophized the Post-Gazette.

In Portland, Maine, the paper trumpeted, "Barthelmess Looking For Comedy Role." It was something the actor had never played.

Jack L. Warner, quoted in an article on stardom by Walter Ramsey in Modern Screen, was saying that Barthelmess "is an example of a genuine star — so important to the public mind that he has been able to continue his career of success in spite of an occasional mediocre story."

The Atlanta Constitution picked up a syndicated comment by the actor himself: "I always suffer. Suffering seems to be what I do best."

In the back of the scrapbook, in an attached envelope, is a press sheet. Nothing was being left to chance about "Heroes For Sale."

Barthelmess, investor in real estate, was doing well. In 1934 he made three films — with a scrapbook dedicated to each one — and in 1935, working for Paramount, he appeared in "Four Hours To Kill."

In 1936 he starred in a New York stage version of "The Postman Always Rings Twice" (Joseph Cotten played the policeman), and Caroline Harris faithfully made another volume out of that

Off To England

In 1936 Barthelmess and his family sailed to England on a vacation — and saw a found version of "Broken Blossoms," an English version with Emlyn Williams and Dolly Haas, a German actress who was making a splash.

Barthelmess apparently liked Haas' work, and he and Haas, according to Volume XLVIII, began filming a Baroness Orczy novel for Twickenham Films on location at Loch Lomond. Entitled "Spy Of Napoleon," it was an epic costume picture, and the scrapbook was kept as neat as ever, with travel accommodations and names of people with whom the Barthelmess' hobnobbed. The progress on the picture was beautifully documented.

Our Dick was called in at least one instance the "screen's young veteran."

The scrapbook comes to an end on Page 75 with two brief clippings, one from the N.Y. Times, the other unidentified, but both on the same melancholic subject.

Said the Times: "Mrs. Caroline Harris Barthelmess, mother of Richard Barthelmess, the actor, died yesterday morning in her home, at 1 West Sixty-Seventh Street, after a short illness. She was 70 years old . . .

"Her son is her only immediate survivor."

He did survive, even if the scrapbooks stop. He had made a successful transition to sound with Betty Compson in "Weary River," and, if he was getting along, he was still in demand — in 1939 he was featured in "Only Angels Have Wings," the Cary Grant-Jean Arthur starrer, and that same year was featured in "The Man Who Talked Too Much," with George Brent and Virginia Bruce

There were featured parts in both "The Mayor of 44th Street" and "The Spoilers," both in 1942, before he joined the Navy. He was never interested in radio, so television had no attraction — he was reputed to be someone who shied away from the public eye, seldom attended premieres of his films, and stayed in New York, because that was, he considered, his home.

When he was 60 the doctors discovered he was suffering from cancer; in 1963, when he was 68 years old he died — at his home in Southampton. A man of charm, talent and dedication — he gave up his acting career to join the Naval Reserve in 1942 and never resumed it — Barthelmess is a man whose life is worth knowing about.

The factor he exuded is worth studying, and all the clues are ready to be studied at the Academy — and, as with many another celeb whose magic has gone into eclipse, re-examined in the hopes of illuminating a forgotten master. And with pictures.

Global U.S. Info Agency Happy To Help In Promoting Films

By WILL TUSHER

ollywood finds itself at curious crossroads in the selling of its films. On the one hand it agonizes (i.e., management's frequently invoked poormouth position in the recent brinkmanship with the Directors Guild) over wildly escalating marketing costs. On the other hand, as in the dramatically refocused sales priorities of Columbia Pictures, the industry is embarked on offsetting shrinking domestic boxoffice by aggressively tailoring not only marketing, but product, to the international market.

At a time when not only Columbia but Hollywood overall is poised to put so much money on the line cultivating and wooing foreign audiences, it is more than passing strange that the industry continues to operate in apparent ignorance of an enormous and highly credible international publicity resource — one of which it may avail itself at no cost.

That mechanism — representing a vast global linkup with for-



Don Jones — (Photo: Marilyn Weiss)

eign print, tv and radio media—is available through the little known, or certainly not sufficiently known, Foreign Press Center of the United States Information Agency. Foreign press centers operate yearlong and fulltime in Los Angeles, Washington, D.C., and New York City.

FPC officials in Los Angeles (the Federal Building in West Los Angeles) are bewildered and chagrined that little or no effort is expended by the entertainment industry to harness its international facilities to help promote films and personalities around the world.

Statistics on outlets at the disposal of the Foreign Press Center are little less than awesome. Representatives (journalists, correspondents, et al) of no less than 116 foreign media in Southern California are registered with the Foreign Press Center in Los Angeles.

Through them the FPC funnels what it calls positive stories about the United States to newspapers,

magazines, television and radio around the world.

"We work with them all," attests Don Jones, director of the L.A. Foreign Press Center. He is in charge of print media and radio operations. Others on the west coast FPC staff handle television and The Voice of America. There is constant crossover and coordination.

FPC's reach is measured by a totality of 9000 employes worldwide, a staff of 3000 working in USIA offices in 182 different countries, and the ability to plug in on some 962 foreign service officers stationed overseas.

In addition, FPC has around the clock access to the USIA's tv satellite, Worldnet — a global network which programs worldwide, Monday through Friday, and features a Euronet component in which there are one-hour interactive interviews as well as one-hour multipoint interactive interviews and one-hour one-on-one interviews.

Worldnet is the first global U.S. tv satellite network, providing a mix of news, sports, the arts and entertainment. It provides some 20 hours of programming a week, reaching 79 countries, among them Eastern Bloc nations. It broadcasts the Academy Awards live and provides spot after-the-fact coverage of the Golden Globes, sponsored by the Hollywood Foreign Press Association.

FPC also plugs in on poster shows and other exhibits placed in 150 to 200 libraries in cities around the world.

Willing To Help

"We are," proposes Jones, "the largest public relations agency in the world — trying to get stories about America in the media. People involved in the film and television industries are part of the story of America. We can, and we will, devote the entire resource to promoting these people and this industry."

His willingness to help is exceeded only by despair over industry ignorance of and/or indifference to his operation.

"Unfortunately," Jones sighs, "in my experience, nobody knows we're here. Nobody knows what we can do for them. We've been so under wraps nobody even knows we exist here in town — particularly the people involved in foreign promotion and foreign distribution of films."

In an apparently unavailing effort to awaken Hollywood to its existence, the Foreign Press Center tossed an open house and reception at its Federal Building headquarters last February. On hand to hype the occasion were USIA director Charles Z. Wick, Richard Burt, U.S. Ambassador to West Germany, and Academy Award Show producer Samuel Goldwyn Jr. Neither the turnout nor later response was over-



Korean television crew taping story aboard the USS OHIO at the Trident Submarine Base. Below: Foreign correspondents briefing by a border patrol officer at San Ysidro, Calif. — (Photos: Marilyn Weiss)

whelming. A handful of L.A.-based foreign correspondents showed up to have at Burt and Goldwyn in separate Voice of America interviews. There was a perfunctory press conference with Burt and Wick.

But the idea of tapping into the global publicity potential of the Foreign Press Center was, it seemed, not sufficiently articulated or dramatized. And in the wake of the consciousness-raising event, very little consciousness indeed seemed to have been raised. It has been no business — or no show business — as usual.

Jones does not pretend that the Foreign Press Center is anxious to flood the world with junk publicity on Hollywood ventures. What the FPC offers, he makes clear, is a global conduit for legitimate stories connected with — and therefore credibly publicizing — Hollywood product as a manifestation of something worth calling attention to as, in part, representative of contemporary U.S. culture.

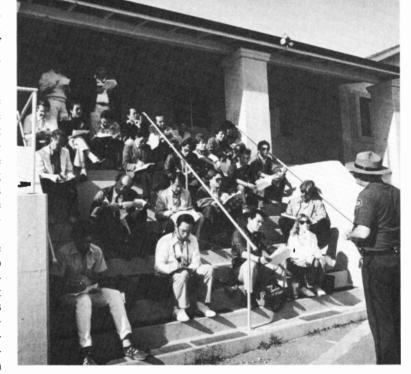
Easy To Qualify

"We're not in the business of plugging motion pictures," Jones cautions, "but we can be of assistance. Almost any (Hollywood story can pass muster) because we're so multi-faceted in this society that (we welcome) almost any story that reflects well upon the United States, that is positive about the United States."

Jones lets no opportunity pass to underline the requirement that stories must show the U.S. in a "postive" light if the Foreign Press Center is to feel comfortable as the honest broker making such copy available to the foreign press.

But he denies that the FPC definition of positive translates into subtle or overt censorship, or that the FPC is offering a sanitized, and therefore flawed, transmission belt which as a consequence could force the Hollywood community, or others, to think twice before agreeing to mount this gift horse, and ride it for all the coverage it is worth.

He insists diversity, controver-



sy and dissent are not ruled out as the antithesis of positive.

"We are a country of free speech," Jones attests, "and this is one of the things we like to show to other people. There's nothing like censorship involved."

In instances of controversial stories with a Hollywood angle, he states, that would not be a reason for shying away from them. But a balanced presentation, giving fair exposition to various conflicting points of view, would be essential.

Thus, Jones goes on, there would be no resistance to an exchange between Charlton Heston and Ed Asner over their disagreements about U.S. policy in Central America, or their differences about how the Screen Actors Guild should be run. Such activists as Martin Sheen, Jane Fonda and Mike Farrell would be accorded access to foreign media, as would their opposite numbers in the entertainment industry.

Nor would the flap over the editing of "Angel Face" be verboten. No more than the FPC decision not to rule off limits the U.S. debate over the miniseries, "Amerika."

"If a foreign journalist comes to us and says he's interested in this, his editor is interested in this, sure we would help them cover it," Jones avers.

"On this 'Amerika' thing, for instance, if we arrange, or facilitate, coverage of a controversial issue, we make every effort to get both sides, to make both sides available to the correspondent. We don't side one way or the other.

"We point to controversy. We try to point out what it is on both sides, and here are two people who disagree on a subject."

The USIA view, vouchsafes Jones, is that such coverage validates American freedom and, therefore, meets the criterion of being positive.

Former Newsman

Jones himself is a former newspaperman. He worked for the United Press five years before he defected to NBC publicity under Casey Shawan, under whom he served from 1955 through 1963. He has been with USIA for 25 years. After three years with the Foreign Press Center in Washington, D.C., he became

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Global U.S. Info Agency Happy To Help In Promoting Films

(Continued from Page 35, Column 5) west coast FPC director in March 1986. His previous Hollywood ties evidently alerted him to the need to invite Hollywood to plug in on his vast freebie global publicity network.

He feels neither he, because of his newspaper background, nor the USIA, because of its mission, is insensitive to the need for objectivity, nor oblivious to the gains in credibility stemming from telling it like it is — even when that represents painful self examination.

"There are no untouchable subjects," he asserts. "No subject is excluded. That's control and we don't do that."

Just what is it, then, that FPC does do, and offers to do for a Hollywood which has been so slow to take advantage of what it extends?

"Suppose," he explains, "you were sending a personality overseas. We could arrange interviews with the people of that country or those countries before he left. We could do print interviews. We could do a Voice of America interview. We could do what we call televised electronic dialog—using our people in that country or countries. We could put him or her together with journalists or (other) people from his or her profession—people interested in what he or she has to say.

"We put them on a telephone together, put tv cameras on both of them, shoot the telephone conversation, and then marry the two tapes so that it becomes one program. Then this program is played in this country. We also have poster shows. We have speaking dates. We can set up speaking dates for people who go overseas. We can do it here for Worldnet and send it out to the countries by satellite."

Even so, what's in it for Holly-wood ballyhooers if they are held to hard news?

"You don't just come and blatantly say, 'Hey, this is a great film,' "Jones agrees, "but every publicity man worth his salt can come up with an angle (there he goes again) that reflects well on the United States involving that film or that production."

Again, Jones submits the relevant USIA rationale.

"Let me reword that and say one of our basic missions is to tell the story of America abroad. If it's part of the story of America, then that's our mission. We don't want to gild the lily. I don't want to paint it black, either. We want to present an objective picture of whatever we're talking about. We have no control over what the journalists write."

He points to his three years with the Foreign Press Center in Washington, D.C., to authenticate the agency's claims of objectivity.

"Tass (Soviet news agency) was at all our briefings, counts. "And we gave Tass the same benefits. We treated them equally. They behaved very nicely. Personally, they were very nice fellows - but the stories they wrote were ridiculous. They were wrong in many cases, completely wrong. I'm not convinced that the journalists themselves have preconceptions. I think they know pretty much what the story was, but their editors demanded they write the story in a certain manner, which they did.'

The modus operandi of FPC, Jones stresses, does not involve making judgments. The initiative usually is taken by the overseas correspondent, he says. They designate the subject, or personality, of interest, and FPC arranges to bring the two together. A wide spectrum of activity is represented — in which, according to Jones,

the entertainment industry is all too infrequently involved. He calls that an oversight of Hollywood's own making.

"We've taken foreign correspondents to a Wild Animal Park to talk about preservation of endangered species; that was the pitch," Jones relates. "We had them at the San Diego Zoo a few months ago talking about the same thing with the frozen sperm and the embryos. We covered the border at Mexico with immigration officials, and went out on patrol with the border police."

USIA offices abroad as well as foreign embassies keep the FPC posted on overseas media requests for assistance.

"We set up advance meetings and interviews for incoming correspondents," he says. "We are told (by the USIA and/or embassies) who they want to see, who the correspondent represents, the kind of story they're looking for. Then we try to set all this up in advance so he (or she) doesn't spin his (or her) wheels when here."

What should Hollywood be doing to plug in on this potential for global media coverage?

"If a studio has a poster show, it may tie in with a story," Jones suggests. "If a star is going overseas for some reason, and they would like to promote it, let's get word about it. If a foreign correspondent comes to us, and even if it's a story that we would prefer they didn't cover — even though I can't think offhand where it's happened — we will attempt to help them. We're talking about freedom of the press, and that extends to foreign journalists."

One possible explanation for the lack of more aggressive interaction between the Foreign Press Center and the entertainment industry may be that film and tv publicists feel they already have access to overseas media through the Hollywood Foreign Press Association. On an ongoing basis, the studios produce big name stars for HFPA press conferences. All film companies set up special HFPA screenings.

But Jones is convinced that the entertainment industry is laboring under a serious misapprehension if it believes it already has every possible overseas base covered through its HFPA contacts. Jones assumes many, if not most, credentialed HFPA members already are registered with FPC, but he acknowledges the FPC does not elect to deal with HFPA organizationally. That is not the way PFC operates.

Moreover, Jones perceives the Hollywood Foreign Press Association as more of a "social" entity.

The preference — and charge — of FPC is to work with foreign correspondents individually.

"We work only with foreign journalists," he makes plain. "We're not allowed to work with Americans here. We don't set up stories for Americans."

Occasionally, however, an American would seem to slip through the net. Daily Variety covered the USIA open house in February, participated in the Voice of America press conferences with Burt and Goldwyn, and reported on them in two separate stories.

Perhaps security was lax, or guidelines were not enforced. In any event, such a lapse does not undermine or alter the purpose in which the west coast FPS has thus been frustrated — dealing on a much more ongoing and productive basis with Hollywood publicists. The door is wide open. The ticket is free.



DOROTHY MALONE

Photo From

"TEXAS WOMAN"

By Richard Pruitt & David Woo

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CARL REINER ESTELLE REINER



ACADEMY

(Continued from Page 34, Column 3) country, and it's the gumchewer. He can't be detected from the booth, but his tracks are seen after he's left — on the bottom of the theater seat.

Dan Ross is thinking Kleenex dispensers at the entrances to the auditorium. It might work.

The third floor also houses an editing facility for clips to be used

in such endeavors as the Student Film Awards, one of the tributes or seminars, for example. The films are not cut apart, since a frame is lost every time a film is edited. The Academy uses a process called "papering" so a piece of paper is stuck into the film at the right point. The projectionist knows that he hits the light at the number of frames beyond the first paper, and the second and third pass by, and he stops it.

Davis agrees that the Academy could get crazy about not lending films around to sister institutions, but some care must be taken. "If no one ever sees them, if you just put them in a dark, cold hole and never show them to anybody, then they're lost as surely as they would be otherwise. You have to show them some, but you don't want to wear them out."

The public doesn't seem to know it, but the Margaret Herrick

Library, on the fourth floor of the Academy, is ready and willing to direct them to the answers to a limitless amount of questions about film and film personalities.

The library, named after a former Academy librarian and longtime executive director who died in 1976, contains one of the largest collections of film-related materials ever assembled. Thanks to continuing donations, and despite galloping space limitations, the Margaret Herrick becomes more and more a mecca for students, scholars, researchers, members of the press, industry workers and just plain film buffs to dig to their hearts' content.

The National Film Information Service extends the library's services to those with a serious interest in film but living outside the Los Angeles area. The Museum of Modern Art, the Library of Congress, the American Film Institute and the British Film Institute are among the major research establishments that turn to NFIS for belongia.

Rich Repository

But the Margaret Herrick Library itself, with its helpful, courteous staff, is willing and able to serve. Biographers and would-be scriptwriters can find all their needs either on the fourth floor, or, with the staff's help, from the fifth floor, where the special collections are kept.

Linda Harris Mehr, knowledgeable chief librarian of the Margaret Herrick Library, has been in charge of the Academy's central nervous system since 1982. Involved in all aspects, she has the professional's eye to detail and the curator's appreciation of perspective and quality.

Aware that the public too often remains dismally ignorant of the library's existence and of its purposes, Mehr would like to serve the people genuinely interested in the film industry as much as possible. "The interest is increasing all the time," she points out. "We saw over 14,000 people last year, and they came through the doors just on the four days of the week we're open."

Busy Lines

The library also answered more than 30,000 telephone inquiries about films. The two-operator phone service — dial (213) 278-4313 — offers immediate answers to motion picture questions from not only local callers but from as far away as Japan, Australia and Europe. Since the operators have a good background in film and library reference work, they can usually come up with the answer to startlingly obscure questions in less than three minutes.

That's disregarding those questions which demand credits for 25 films made 23 years ago, or the names of all the Disney animated characters. The operators are there to serve as many callers as quickly and efficiently as possible; callers with convoluted questions should drop by the library

(Continued on Page 52, Column 1)

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Indie Route Has Potholes

(Continued from Page 28, Column 5)

put in was even scarier. So we rescheduled to shoot all of Steve's scenes first and kept our fingers crossed that every day would match. There was only one instance where I had to beg for an HM-1 light so I could match a grey day to a brighter one. And somehow, miraculously, on the sixth day, the money came through. We managed to finish all of Steve's scenes five hours before he caught his plane. Even better, we were able to pay him and everyone else too.

Working with a very small budget didn't allow us many luxuries, including a production office, so we used my home. The office in the back of my house was the production office, my dining room was the executive office, the living room was for the writer, Tony Crechales and his rewriter John Goff, and the spare bedroom was for editorial.

With quite a bit of effort, we were able to get trade-offs for locations, cars, and wardrobe. We visited many private homes asking if they would like their house to be in a Hollywood movie.

The word spread quickly about our "neighborhood movie" and we received all kinds of people at the door who wanted to see what it was like to be in or work on a movie. As a result, we had a great many production assistants and other people working for free. I also used film students from

UCLA and USC who got credit for working on the film and all I had to provide was gas money and meals. The majority of the crew people and all the department heads were people I had worked with before either as an actress or when I was a still photographer. A small salary plus points in the film (for the cast, director and writer) was all that I could offer.

I think a big part of the incentive for these people to work for me was the high caliber of cast that I had lined up. I did all the casting, starting with Olivia Hussey to play the lead, then hiring Steve Railsback. After that it was easy and everyone just sort of fell into place. Everyone liked the project and wanted to be a part of it. To get Armand Mastroianni ("The Supernaturals") as director, I flew to New York to give him the script and he proved himself to me. He hired some New York actors and showed me how he would direct a few scenes from "Distortions." I liked what he did and I hired him.

Once we started the film it was finished in 18 days and editing took another 10 weeks. We took "Distortions" to Cannes, and enjoyed all the glitz and glamor. By the time the festival was over, we were worn out. We still wonder how we did it. Most of it feels like a dream now. Now I'm getting ready to do another film, with a larger budget, in November. Somehow I don't think it will be any easier!

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REMEMBERING RAOUL WALSH

By ROY HUGGINS

In May, 1953, Harry Cohn sent me to Sedona, Arizona, to watch Raoul Walsh direct a script I had written called "Gun Fury," starring Rock Hudson. I had just directed a film for Columbia called "Hangman's Knot" and Cohn had signed me to a contract as a director. Obviously Harry thought I still had a lot to learn.

I had heard of Raoul Walsh, but did not associate him with any notable pictures. The fault was mine, of course. Those were the days when movies were innocent of all pretense, when there were no intellectual brownie points awarded for seeing movies, and no one thought you perverse or unenlightened if you didn't know much about them.

However, my friends did consider my taste in films quite lowbrow. I hated "Lost Horizon" with a passion, thought "The Treasure Of The Sierra Madre" was just okay, despised "The Best Years Of Our Lives," and wondered what it was about "Citizen Kane" that was not getting through to me. I loved "The 39 Steps," "The Maltese Falcon," "To Have And Have Not," and "Double Indemnity," but it never occurred to me that anyone would ever think of them as works of art, and at that time nobody did.

I went to Sedona in total ignorance of the work of Raoul Walsh. He had not yet been placed in the pantheon of great directors, that solemn and suspect process having only just begun; but I learned, by being there and seeing it, what it was that made Raoul Walsh a candidate for Olympus.

One of the first scenes shot for the film went like this:

A band of heavies, nearly 20, were to ride down a wooded hillside and cross a stream in hot pursuit of the hero. The camera was set up on the low bank of the stream, and the horsemen were to ride down the hill, cross the stream in front of the camera, no more than 20 feet from the lens, and ride on, the camera panning to follow as they disappeared into the woods. The wide stream-bed was only six inches deep and strewn with boulders of all sizes.

Walsh, who looked about 50 and wore a black patch over one eye, called for action and the horsemen stormed down the hill, crossed the stream and rode off into the woods. The action was filled with savage energy and wild sound, and I was soaked by the spray kicked up by those 80 flying hooves. It was a frightening experience; any one of those hurtling horses might have stumbled and thrown its hapless rider into the camera and crew, but I thought it was a magnificent shot.

Walsh did not; he was not happy. He was, in fact, indignant. He shouted the riders back and began to revile them as soon as they came within earshot. He called them pansies, among other creative epithets casting doubt on their manhood. He reminded them that they were being *paid* for this job and told them to get their asses back up there and do it right this time.

I was bewildered. What did he expect from these men? What more could he ask them to do? And even more important, why? The riders returned to the start-point in grim-faced silence.

Walsh called for action and down the hill they came once more. Every man seemed bent on outriding every other. When they crossed that stream it was an Armageddon of sound and fury and flying rocks, 20 men risking everything but their immortal souls to prove something, God knows what, to Raoul Walsh.

When the riders disappeared into the forest they were still riding as if God and country depended on it. Walsh said, "Cut, print" and told his assistant where to put the camera for the next setup.

I thought I knew now what was meant by the shock of recognition. I had just learned some vital, arcane truth about Raoul Walsh and the art of film directing. It was a chastening experience.

I was curious about Walsh now and talked to people in the crew who knew him well. He had ridden as a cowhand on at least one Texas cattle drive. He was in his 60s and had played John Wilkes Booth in "Birth Of A Nation." He had directed the first picture I ever saw, "The Thief Of Bagdad," and many others I had seen and enjoyed: "The Roaring Twenties," "Strawberry Blonde," "High Sierra," "White Heat," and on and on.

I started paying closer attention, and a few days later I discovered another mystery in Walsh's method. He was shooting a scene in which the leader of the band of heavies, played by Phil Carey, had tied one of his henchmen, played by Leo Gordon, to a corral post, where he was to be left to die.

Walsh called "Action" and sat down with his back to the actors while the two men played out the scene. The scene, I decided, was being played all wrong. Walsh was rolling a cigarette. Carey was screaming at Gordon. Gordon was screaming back. The scene was loud, and empty. It ended and Walsh said, "cut, print." But the cameraman reported that they'd run out of film about five seconds before the scene ended; they'd have to reload and do it

It was the last scene scheduled for that day but the light was still good and there was plenty of time. The actors drifted off to get a drink or check their makeup. I walked over to Phil Carey and asked if Walsh had discussed the scene with him.

Carey snorted and said, "Hell no!"

Walsh had complained to me that Carey couldn't act worth a

'Twilight Zone' Tragedy Brought New Safety Precautions To Hollywood

Tive years after the tragic "Twilight Zone" accident that took the lives of actor Vic Morrow and two children, after a protracted trial and considerable industry-wide debate, there is no doubt that the one positive development to grow out of the incident is a much safer climate on feature film and television sets.

Using the number of actors reported injured on shoots as a guide, it can be seen that there has been a "steady decline," per the Screen Actors Guild, in accidents since 1982, the year of the "Twilight Zone" explosion and heliconter crash

According to SAG's Mark Locher, 214 Guild performers were hurt on the job in 1982. By contrast, only 65 actors were reported injured while filming during the course of 1986, including two fatalities to stuntmen.

"That dramatic decline," Locher opined, "is directly attributable to the 'Twilight Zone' accident." He added that there are "More

By TODD McCARTHY

actors than ever who are saying 'no' to dangerous stunts and demanding their right to a stunt double. We also have stunt performers taking a greater responsibility to assure the safest possible condition."

Locher cautioned, however, that "as long as there are any performers injured or killed, we know we have much more to accomplish, and must be more vigilant than ever."

Importance Of Vigilance

In an industry in which every film and television show tries to outdo the previous one, and where explosives, gunfights and highspeed chases are the norm, it certainly behooves everyone involved to be vigilant in the matter of safety.

But in December, 1982, in the immediate wake of the accident, the State of California's Department of Industrial Relations reported that "the injury rate for

the motion picture and television industry is not disproportionate and that for the most part the industry has been successful at reducing hazards to workers. However, the potential for injury, especially with respect to the staging of stunts, is so substantial and involves such calculated and planned risks that periodic legislative inquiry is warranted."

Within two months of the June 23, 1982 "Twilight Zone" disaster, the industry began introducing measures designed to try to prevent such occurrences in the future. By 1983, a flood of new safety guidelines were proposed, all of which have undoubtedly led to safer conditions on film shoots.

The first steps were taken by nine of the industry's major guilds and the International Alliance of Theatrical Stage Employes, and consisted of a 10-point stunt safety program.

The consensus called for:

- Prenotification and full briefings of all crew members as to the nature of stunts to be performed.
- Removal of all personnel from the area not involved in the stunt
- That a member of the First Aid Employes Local 767 be present on all sets.
- That more than one first aid person be assigned to a shoot when large groups of people are on the set or when more than one stunt is being performed.
- That a committee be formed to investigate all accidents on the set.
- That a clean, well-lighted and fully equipped treatment area be established on all sets.
- That headphones be given to all those involved in stunts to replace cumbersome hand-held walkie-talkies.
- That some independent person or persons be given authority as to the safety of proposed stunts.
- That insert memos issued by the Motion Picture & TV Safety Committees be included in union contracts.
- And that state legislation be explored concerning the use of explosives and live ammunition on the set.

None of these recommendations actually made it into the IA contract negotiated in September, 1982, as it was essentially left to producers to judge the safety of a scene, but safety provisions were somewhat upgraded to include a stipulation that the Labor/Management Safety Committee meet "at least once a month."

The Labor/Management Safety Committee almost immediately called for a ban on the use of live ammunition in film and tv production, and while this was not implemented, an 11-point plan was adopted in early 1983 that severely restricted its use.

The Directors Guild of America announced its own safety code of ethics that year to create a "climate of understanding" regarding (Continued on Page 52, Column 3)

damn. I had said I thought Carey was doing fine and Walsh had said, "have you seen the bastard ride? He rides like this!" Walsh flapped his elbows like a disabled bird to demonstrate why he thought Phil Carey couldn't act.

I told Carey I was sure I shouldn't be doing this, but the scene hadn't been played at all the way I intended when I wrote it.

He wanted to know what I meant and I explained that the leader didn't hate the condemned man, he was leaving him to die because he had no choice. The rest of his men demanded it and he had to appear to approve when in fact it was killing him to do it, and the condemned man knew it.

Carey's eyes lit up, a happy grin erased the worried scowl on his face, and he gripped both my arms as he thanked me and started away to discuss it with Leo Gordon. I stopped him and asked if we shouldn't talk it over with Walsh first.

"Hell, no! When it's over he'll say, 'cut, print' and that'll be

"Phil, you can't do a total switch on the scene without talking to Walsh first."

Phil grinned happily and said, "Watch and see. And don't worry, if he says anything I'll tell him it was my idea."

He hurried over to Leo Gordon and they talked for a couple of minutes before Walsh yelled, "All right, get the Cherry Sisters over here and let's wrap this up!"

Once again Walsh called "Action" and sat down with his back to the actors. I don't remember whether he rolled another cigarette, but he and his camera were looking in opposite directions.

Carey played the scene quietly, a tormented man, and Leo Gordon projected a restrained and desperate hope. It was a totally different scene, longer than the first one and, I thought, deeply moving. But I watched it in mounting panic, convinced that when the scene ended the axe would fall, and it would fall right where it belonged, on me.

The scene ended and Walsh said, "cut, print," stood up and said, "Okay, that's a wrap."

Walsh came to the studio a few weeks after completion of shooting to look at a rough-cut. I was not invited but after the running he called and asked me if he could stop by my office.

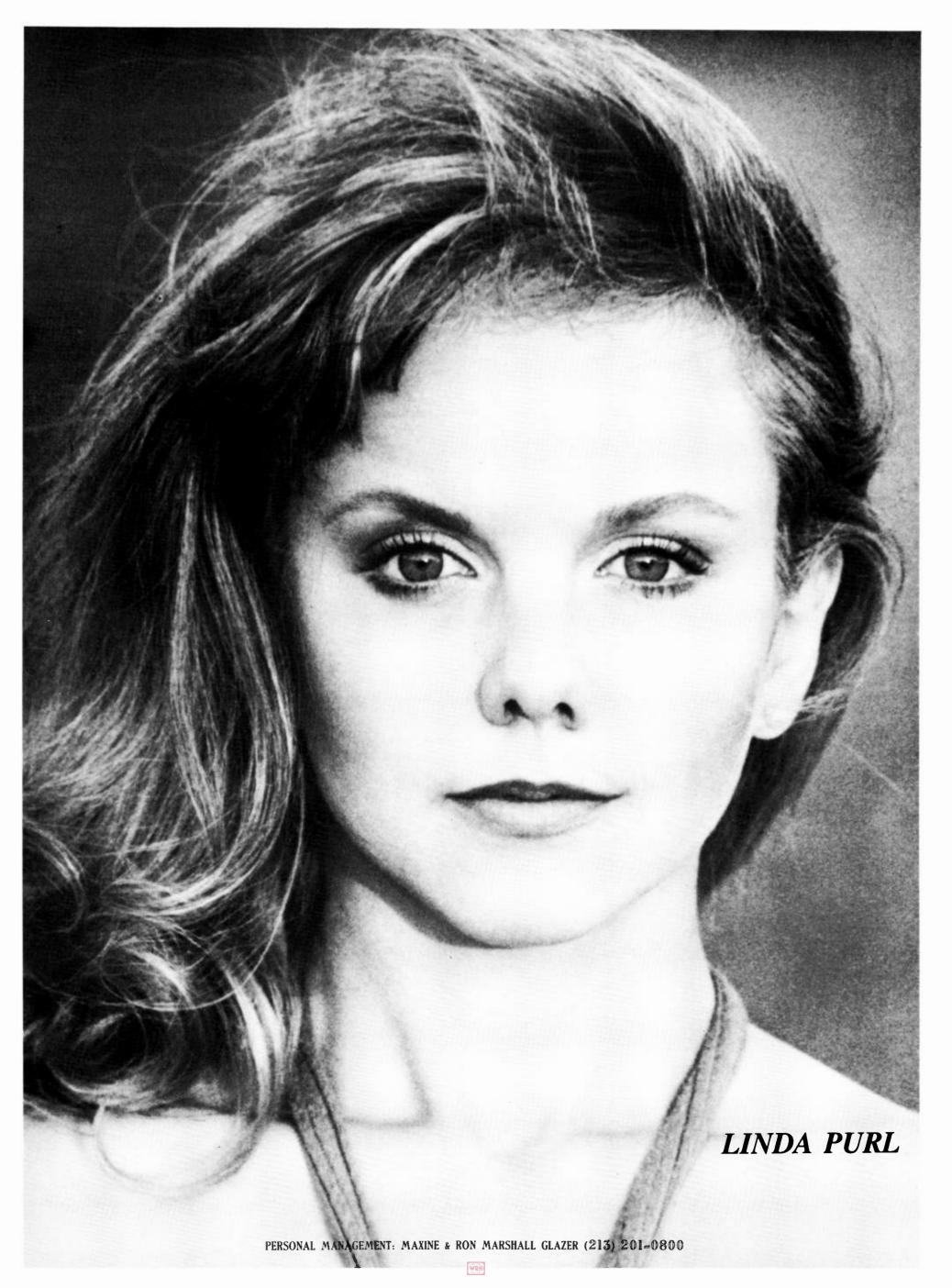
While I waited I told myself I was now going to hear about what I'd done. By the time he arrived I was awash in fear and remorse and ready to confess I had no excuse other than ego and ignorance.

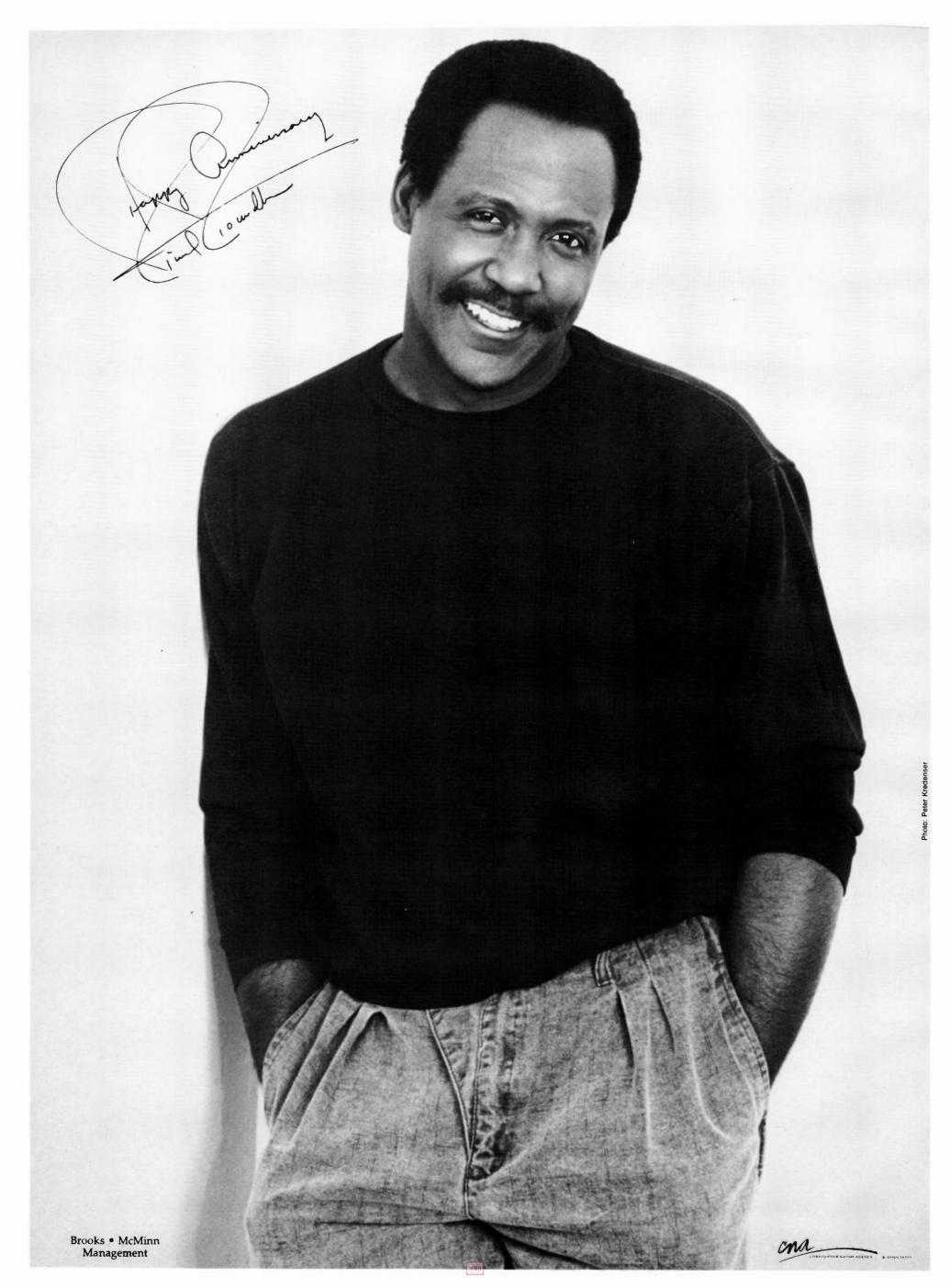
Walsh came in, gave me his warm smile, sat down, and began to roll a cigarette. He had come by because he knew I'd like to hear how the rough-cut looked. He thought the editor had done a fine job, and on the whole he thought the movie turned out okay.

I said I was sure it had turned out better than okay and I had learned more about directing on "Gun Fury" than I had on "Hangman's Knot."

He lit the cigarette and asked about my interest in directing. Was that what I wanted to do?

I had no intention of giving him an honest answer. You don't tell Brahms, when he's kind enough to call on you, that you don't (Continued on Page 52, Column 1)





Vestron Pictures congratulates Daily Variety on their 54th anniversary.



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Andy Warhol said someday we'd all be stars for 15 minutes. Well, from the looks of things, that appears to be 14 minutes more than we need.

By MARTY INGELS

It's a dilemma. On the one hand, with the one hat, I head one of the most successful promotion-endorsement companies in the world, its daily finger on all the hot trends and the hot trendees on the American scene. On the other hand, with the other hat, I can't help but see an epidemic decline of ethics and principles and righteous values blatantly reflected in the massive media exchange; and I am bewildered as to which hat to wear and which eye to close.

Some months ago The Wall Street Journal featured, on its front page, the bleak warning that the current avalanche of celebrity endorsements was fast approaching the saturation-point, citing bold statistics that suggested the American appetite for the fabulous pitchpeople was slowly but surely sinking. It spoke of the over-exposure of certain familiar personalities and the inevitable demise of those hard-won credibilities.

But more importantly, it pointed to old fashioned "greed" as the root condition. When I was called upon for comment by the Associated Press, my instinctive concurrence produced a rain of protest that started with the International Advertising Press and

ended with a mob of colleagues, an outraged Ingels staff, and my 83-year-old mother in Rego Park. Okay. So, let's talk about it.

To be sure, when Lilly Langtree climbed into that wooden tub in 1878 to bubble the virtues of Pear's Soap before that lone English Photo-Flash, she could hardly know the monster madhouse industry she was about to spawn. Or when the awsome likes of Charles Lindbergh hit the commerce scene (for Bulova Watch) and Eleanor Roosevelt (for American margarine), even presidential candidate William McKinley (Marley Hats), few eyebrows raised. For all that was to be the mere beginnings of a me-too march to the Trading Square that, for all its positive appearances, is about to devour us all.

Some of the super-luminary vendors that follow may surprise you: Douglas Fairbanks, Amelia Earhart, Charlie Chaplin, Carol Lombard, Bogart & Bacall, Jack Benny, Gary Cooper, Barbara Stanwyck, Clark Gable, Veronica Lake, Marilyn Monroe etc. etc., etc. — all sweet game for the Madison Avenue artillery at least once. But, for the most part, those were the rare and gallant excep-

Celebrity Pitchmen Big Biz, But Have Some Principles Been Sacrificed?

tions to a long and actual taboo that tacitly grew alongside the dollar temptations to hawk the fat man's elixer.

Big Cannons

It was not until 1953, when Edward G. Robinson made the astonishing cross-over from the big-screen to the new and scrawny little one (for Maxwell House Coffee) did the fair-haired floodgates begin to crack. And if anyone anywhere wasn't sure, the immortal Sir Lawrence Olivier (for Polaroid in 1972) sealed them open forever. The long list of commercial star "hold-outs" dwindled like an April snowcone:

Orson Welles, Jimmy Stewart, Gene Kelly, Fred Astaire, Frank Sinatra, Burt Lancaster, Kirk Douglas, Helen Hayes, Gregory Peck, Glenn Ford, Jackie Gleason, Charlton Heston; more recently, Ringo Starr, John Denver, Robert Duvall, Kenny Rogers, George C. Scott, Liz Taylor, and on and on until there is really NOONE in the way of big name hucksters that would surprise any

(To be sure, when Redford and Streisand and a few other hot abstainers — Hoffman, DeNiro — finally take the peddler's plunge, there'll truly be no one left but The Reagans, The Gorbachevs, and The Holy Father himself.)

Okay Ingels, what's your point here? Well, it's an "uneasiness"; maybe even a "fear" - not so much for the number of stars selling us everything from democracy to doggy dentures, or even the special sheen that may be fading from those once-dazzling dream spots (stern numbers quietly tell us that percentages traditionally assuring more successful ad campaigns with familiar faces have diminished by 17 in the last six years alone — from 63 to 46%). No. More I fear for the general erosion of a moral strand in this country that is too clearly indexed in the wares and the ware-pushers of our national marketplace.

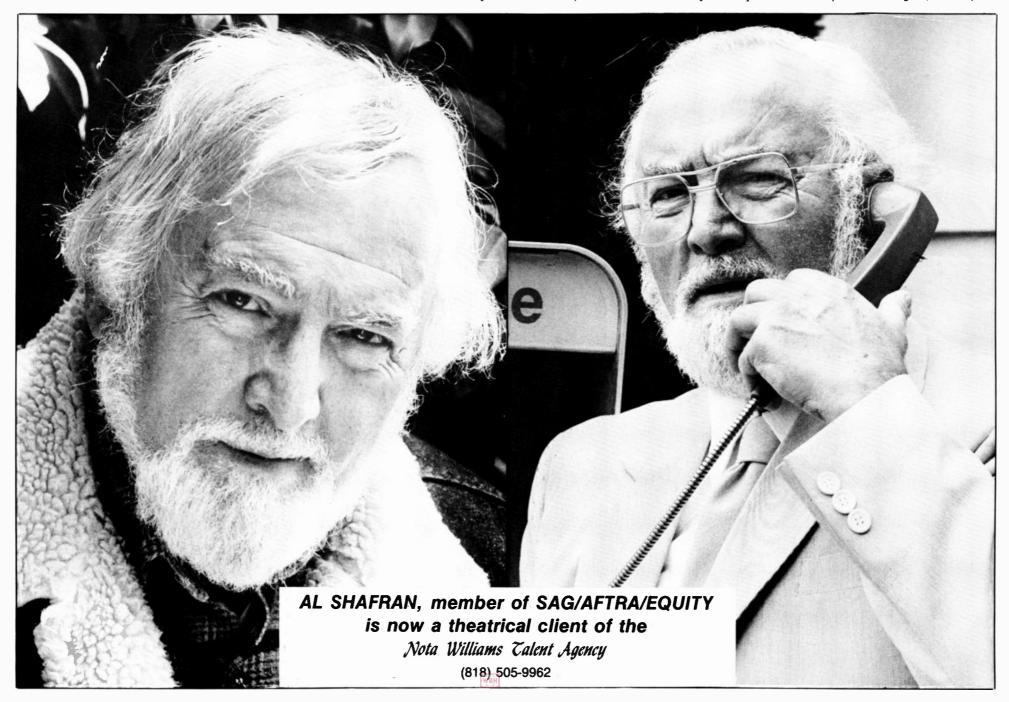
- · The budding practice of continuing the use of celebrity spots after their death is nothing short of gruesome, almost necrophilic. (I was responsible for the lone vote that recently killed an elaborate campaign featuring a wellknown personality, that was intentionally set for a multi-market air run three weeks after he died.) Tell me about those dear departed "Bigger Than Life"-ers; tell me about their "cooperative estates"; feed me those dumb demographics all you want. Dead people shouldn't be selling anything but sweet memories!
- The Geraldine Ferraro spot for Pepsi has no doubt opened the delicate door of political pitchmen

I'd sooner see steamed shut forever; thank you Howard Baker (USA Today); thank you Tip O'Neill (Light Beer AND American Express). Call it what you will, I just don't believe we yearn to see the untouchable shapers ofr our national destiny telling us that "Ace is the place with the helpful hardware man."

• And the lingering bugaboo: The persistent press of familiar and trusted images for a plethora of differing products every night, one after another, not only stretches our veracity tolerance to the max, but amplifies the simple sleazy grab for bucks that more than defeats its costly purpose. There are lots of popular offenders in that unfortunate club an esteemed blond golfer, a noted black running-back, a few famous funnymen, three or four over-sexed images, and even an adorable animated eight-year-old with a cute dog, a cold girl, and a tangled kite.

(Liza Minnelli is actually, as we speak, finalizing details for two—count 'em, TWO—all-out promotions, scheduled to run simultaneously, in which the incandescent Liza will beam the scintillating scents of Revlon and Estee Lauder, two fierce, and I mean fierce, rivals for the astronomical cosmetic commerce numbers.)

(Continued on Page 56, Column 1)





BIGGEST NORTH AMERICAN FILM BOXOFFICE WEEKENDS IN HISTORY

By A.D. MURPHY

This is a compilation of all reported U.S.-Canadian weekend boxoffice grosses of \$10,000,000 or more as of Sept. 30, 1987. See accompanying tables for various breakdowns of the data.

Weekend Data	Weekend Data				
Rank Picture (Dist.)(#) B.O. \$ #Scr Dates 1. Indiana Jones & The Temple Of Doom .(Par)#1 33,936,113 1687 5/25-28/84 2. Beverly Hills Cop II .(Par)#1 33,014,153 2326 5/22-25/87 3. Return Of The Jedi .(Fox)#1 30,490,619 1002 5/27-30/83 4. Rambo: First Blood Part II .(Tri)#1 25,520,843 2074 5/24-27/95 5. Rocky IV .(UA)#1 19,991,537 1325 11/29-12/1/85 6. E.T .(Univ)#4 17,254,946 1323 7/2-5/82 7. Return Of The Jedi .(Fox)#2 17,229,694 1002 6/3-5/83 8. Beverly Hills Cop II .(Par)#2 17,126,642 2326 5/29-31/87 9. Star Trek IV .(Par)#1 16,881,888 1349 11/28-30/86 10. Star Trek III .(Par)#1 16,673,229 1966 6/1-3/84	* * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * *	Rank Picture (Dist.)(#) B.O. \$ #Scr Dates * 41. Return Of The Jedi (Fox)#3 11,995,064 1002 6/10-12/83 11,995,064 1002 6/10-12/83 12/7-9/79 42. Star Trek (Par)#1 11,926,421 857 12/7-9/79 857 12/7-9/79 43. E.T. (Univ)#1 11,911,430 1101 6/11-13/82 44. Best Little Whorehouse In Texas (Univ)#1 11,874,268 1400 7/23-25/82 45. Cannonball Run (Fox)#1 11,765,654 1673 6/19-21/81 46. The Golden Child (Par)#1 11,549,711 1667 12/12-14/86 47. Beverly Hills Cop (Par)#5 11,515,665 2006 1/4-6/85 48. Beverly Hills Cop (Par)#2 11,514,444 1532 12/14-16/84 49. Gremlins (WB)#3 11,420,965 1511 6/22-24/84 50. Back To The Future (Univ)#1 11,332,134 1419 7/5-7/85			
11. Indiana Jones & The Temple Of Doom. (Par)#2 16,386,295 1687 6/1-3/84 12. Rocky III. (UA)#1 16,015,408 939 5/28-31/82 13. Cobra. (WB)#1 15,652,147 2131 5/23-26/86 14. Ghostbusters. (Col)#2 15,287,030 1479 6/15-17/84 15. Beverly Hills Cop. (Par)#1 15,214,805 1532 12/7-9/84 16. Rambo: First Blood Part II. (Tri)#2 14,810,543 2074 5/31-6/2/85 17. Star Trek II. (Par)#1 14,347,221 1621 6/4-6/82 18. Beverly Hills Cop. (Par)#4 14,238,060 2006 12/28-30/84 19. Superman II. (WB)#1 14,100,523 1395 6/19-21/81 20. Gremlins. (WB)#2 13,949,228 1511 6/1517/84	*	51. Ghostbusters (Col)#5 11,255,224 1469 7/6-8/84 52. Tootsie (Col)#3 11,222,714 1020 12/31/82-1/2/83 53. Return Of The Jedi (Fox)#4 11,217,546 1002 6/17-19/83 54. Beverly Hills Cop (Par)#3 11,215,462 2006 12/21-23/84 55. Ghostbusters (Col)#4 11,200,546 1464 6/29-7/1/84 56. Rocky IV (UA)#2 11,189,102 1325 12/6-8/85 57. Friday The 13th — IV (Final Chapter) (Par)#1 11,183,148 1594 4/13-15/84 58. Smokey And The Bandit II (Univ)#1 11,149,285 1203 8/15-17/80 59. Return Of The Jedi (Fox)#5 11,127,915 1302 6/24-26/83 60. E.T. (Univ)#7 11,089,490 1493 7/23-25/82			
21. Ghostbusters (Col)#1 13,612,564 1339 6/8-10/84 22. Jaws III (3-D) (Univ)#1 13,422,500 1300 7/22-24/83 23. E.T. (Univ)#3 13,383,704 1215 6/25-27/82 24. Ghostbusters (Col)#3 13,353,583 1506 6/22-24/84 25. Superman III. (WB)#1 13,352,357 1759 6/17-19/83 26. A View To A Kill (UA)#1 13,294,435 1583 5/24-27/85 27. Superman (WB)#3 13,135,498 818 12/29/78-1/1 28. Platoon (Ori)#9 12,875,690 1194 2/13-16/87 29. E.T. (Univ)#6 12,826,160 1487 7/16-18/82 30. The Karate Kid Part II (Col)#1 12,652,336 1323 6/20-22/86	* /79 * *	61. The Living Daylights. (UA)#1 11,051,284 1728 7/31-8/2/87 62. Never Say Never Again. (WB)#1 10,958,157 1550 10/7-10/83 * 63. Superman II. (WB)#3 10,905,892 1887 7/3-5/81 64. The Empire Strikes Back. (Fox)#5 10,840,307 823 6/20-22/80 65. Superman II. (WB)#2 10,765,687 1408 6/26-28/81 66. Rocky IV. (UA)#5 10,755,123 2253 12/27-29/85 67. Police Academy 2. (WB)#1 10,675,896 1613 3/29-31/85 68. Crocodile Dundee. (Par)#3 10,560,827 1378 10/10-13/86 * 69. Back To The Future. (Univ)#2 10,555,133 1435 7/12-14/85 70. Tootsie. (Col)#4 10,553,448 1115 1/7-9/83			
31. E.T. (Univ)#2 12,626,905 1116 6/18-20/82 32. Gremlins (WB)#1 12,511,634 1511 6/8-10/84 33. Beverly Hills Cop II (Par)#3 12,424,035 2326 6/5-7/87 34. E.T. (Univ)#5 12,415,037 1374 7/9-11/82 35. Poltergeist II: The Other Side (MGM)#1 12,357,190 1596 5/23-26/86 36. Nat'l Lampoon's European Vacation (WB)#1 12,329,627 1546 7/26-28/85 37. Staying Alive (Par)#1 12,146,143 1660 7/15-17/83 38. Return Of The Jedi (Fox)#6 12,038,626 1296 7/1-4/83 39. Predator (Fox)#1 12,031,638 1623 6/12-14/87 40. Indiana Jones & The Temple Of Doom (Par)#3 12,016,144 1685 6/8-10/84	* *	71. Dragnet (Univ)#1 10,542,669 1337 6/26-28/87 72. E.T (Univ)#8 10,359,961 1521 7/30-8/1/82 73. Back To The Future (Univ)#3 10,320,610 1436 7/19-21/85 74. Rambo: First Blood Part II (Tri)#3 10,228,608 2074 6/7-9/85 75. The Golden Child (Par)#3 10,118,277 1714 12/26-28/86 76. Star Wars (Re) (Fox)#1 10,068,095 1683 7/21-23/78 77. Aliens (Fox)#1 10,052,042 1437 7/18-20/86 78. Rocky III (UA)#2 10,028,555 939 6/4-6/82 79. The Untouchables (Par)#1 10,023,094 1012 6/5-7/87 80. Ghostbusters (Col)#6 10,021,932 1470 7/13-15/84 periods. Grand total of these weekend grosses = \$1,070,968,515.			

ALPHABETICAL LISTING of BIG WEEKEND PIX, and NUMBER of BIG WEEKENDS

Picture	(Dist.)	# Big Weekends
Aliens		1
Back To The Future	(Univ)	3
Best Little Whorehouse In Texas	(Univ)	1
Beverly Hills Cop	(Par)	5
Beverly Hills Cop II	(Par)	3
Cannonball Run		1
Cobra	(WB)	1
Crocodile Dundee	(Par)	1
Dragnet	(Univ)	1
E.T	(Univ)	8
Empire Strikes Back, The	(Fox)	1
Friday The 13th—IV (Final Chapter).	(Par)	1
Ghostbusters	(Col)	6
Golden Child, The		2
Gremlins		3
Indiana Jones & The Temple Of Doom	(Par)	3
Jaws III (3-D)		1
Karate Kid Part II, The		1
Living Daylights, The	(UA)	1
Nat'l Lampoon's European Vacation		1
Never Say Never Again	(WB)	1
Platoon	(Ori)	1
Police Academy 2	(WB)	1
Poltergeist II: The Other Side	(MGM)	1
Predator		1
Rambo: First Blood Part II		3
Return Of The Jedi	(Fox)	6
Rocky III	(UA)	2
Rocky IV	(UA)	3
Smokey And The Bandit II	(Univ)	1
Star Trek	(Par)	1
Star Trek II	(Par)	1
Star Trek III	(Par)	1
Star Trek IV	(Par)	1
Star Wars (Re)	(Fox)	1
Staying Alive	(Par)	1
Superman	(WB)	1
Superman II	(WB)	3
Superman III		1
Tootsie		2
Untouchables, The	(Par)	1
View To A Kill, A	(UA)	1

BIG WEEKEND GROSSES CAME IN ...

Weekend of Run	# of times
1st	37
2nd	12
3rd	14
4th	5
5th	6
6th	3
7th	1
8th	1
9th	1
	80

BIG WEEKEND DISTRIB SUMMARY, and Original/Sequel Analysis Pictures Big Weekends

		ricture	3	Dig	W CCKCI	ius
Dist.	#Orig	#Seq	Total	#Orig	#Seq	Total
Col	2	1	3	8	1	9
Fox	2	4	6	2	9	11
MGM/UA.	0	5	5	0	8	8
Orion	1	0	1	1	0	1
Par	4	8	12	9	12	21
Tri-Star	0	1	1	0	3	3
Univ	3	3	6	12	3	15
WB	3_	_5	8_	5_	_7	12
Totals	15	27	42	37	43	80

SEASONAL OCCURRENCES OF BIG WEEKENDS

SEASON/YEAR	1978	1979	1980	1981	1982	1983	1984	1985	1986	1987	TOTAL
SPRING:											
Wash. B'Day (4-day):										1	1
Other (3-day):							1	1		•	2
SUMMER:										+	†
Memorial Day (4-day):					1	1	1	2	2	1	8
Other (4-day):					1	1					2
Other (3-day):	1		2	4	10	7	12	6	2	6	50
AUTUMN:											
Columbus Day (4-day):						1			1		2
YEAR-END:											
(4-day):	1										1 1
(3-day):		1			2		5	3	3		14
TOTAL:	2	1	2	4	14	10	19	12	8	8	80
											ı

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Not Best Of Times For L.A. Legit B.O.; Off 31.6% With Tally Of \$32 Mil For '86-87

By KATHLEEN O'STEEN

Legit houses in Los Angeles were feeling the crunch from lack of touring product last season, with many of the larger theaters dark a good part of the year.

Undoubtedly it was a tough year for many — financially, artistically and even emotionally — but there also emerged a silver lining that will likely influence future seasons. That lining came in the form of homegrown productions, which not only thrived but many of them worked their way east.

From October 1986 through September 1987, which is the year this report covers, overall gross for the nine theaters reporting was \$31,507,092. That represents a 31.6% drop in revenue from the previous year, which can be attributed to more theaters being dark, a few closing (as in the demise of the L.A. Stage Co. at the Las Palmas) and less operating time overall.

Time To Refurbish

Financially speaking, this was probably the worst year the Shubert has seen in its 15 years of existence. The long-running "Cats" closed Nov. 30 (after a 99-week run), leaving the 1824-seat house dark the rest of the year. With no

highly marketable show on the horizon, the Shuberts decided it was a good time to refurbish the place, a task that is continuing.

While there was talk of bringing in the touring production of "Satchmo" for a short run there, the early demise of that show left the Shubert dark until the June 1 opening of "Les Miserables," a multiple Tony winner which will likely see a long run there.

At the Pantages, the touring dirth hit hard with the number of weeks for legit shows whittled down from 25 in '85-'86 to 16 in 86-'87. There was some filler brought in on the musical route, but the two-to-three-week runs of such shows as "Dreamgirls," "Singin' In The Rain," "Tango Argentino" and "David Copperfield" more than likely just managed to pay the rent. The longest running show there last season, "A Funny Thing Happened On The Way To The Forum,' with Mickey Rooney, ran for seven weeks and did respectable boxoffice throughout with an overall take of \$1,228,215.

Another theater that did not see black was the Ahmanson, which not only saw its subscription sales plunge from 52,000 to 46,700,

	Legiti	mate Th	neater F	Revenues			
	Playing	Weeks		Gro	Grosses		
	1985-86	1986-87	% Dif.	1985-86	1986-87	% Dif.	
Shubert	52	9	-82.6	\$19,207,321	\$2,787,002	-85.5	
Pantages	25	16	-36.0	8,022,935	3,370,522	-58.0	
Ahmanson	45	35	-22.2	10,746,019	6,601,093	-38.6	
Pavilion	13	12	-7.6	3,907,735	7,138,609	82.6	
Wilshire	5	8	60.0	855,804	885,335	3.4	
**Mark Taper	23	38	65.2	1,799,076	3,344,000	85.8	
James A. Doolittle	18	25	38.8	1,393,069	5,409,255	288.2	
Henry Fonda	13	4	-69.2	164,636	856,847	420.4	
Pasadena Playhouse		21	_		1,114,429		
	194	168	-13.4	\$46,096,595	\$31,507,092	-31.6	

but also experienced fewer weeks of operation.

"We've seen the signs," said William Wingate, executive managing director of the Center Theater Group. "We are just going to have to look to ourselves to come up with productions. We can't depend on touring shows."

For this new theater year, Wingate said things have already begun to look up with two of the four shows produced here and subscription sales heading toward the 48,000 to 49,000 mark. Reasons for the upswing include a season that was put together early on and the onslaught of telemarketing.

The big news at the Dorothy Chandler Pavilion was the decision by the Civic Light Opera to move uptown to the Pantages. This came about after the Music Center Operating Company made an offer they decided they could refuse — to reduce their time at

the Pavilion from 16 to 12 weeks.

The Wilshire Theater upped the

**Includes revenue from Taper Too and Itchy Foot Literary Cabaret

The Wilshire Theater upped the number of weeks in its legit offerings slightly, but not to much advantage when the touring production of "A Raisin In The Sun," (which came directly from Washington with good advance word and the high visibility lead of Esther Rolle) did poorly at the box-

Good For Taper

Of all the theaters in town, the one that fared the best was the Mark Taper Forum. Not only did ticket and subscription sales jump more than 60%, but the number of weeks also saw a good hike. In that season, some world premieres got quick word-of-mouth, such as Lanford Wilson's "Burn This" and the Julian More/Gilbert Becaud tuner, "Roza," which boosted sales.

As it turned out, "Burn This" could only play for four weeks, taking in \$323,723 in that time.

The repertory productions of "Loot" and "Entertaining Mr. Sloane" also did a nice Summer business, grossing \$555,729 for seven weeks.

Probably one of the most incredible theater spectacles of the year was Lily Tomlin, whose onewoman show (written by Jane Wagner) managed to captivate L.A. audiences for more than 25 weeks. Her outing at the Doolittle brought in more than \$5,000,000 and eventually provided the financial bedding for UCLA (which took over ownership of that venue from its previous joint venture with the Taper) to start its own musical theater company, Musical Comedy/L.A.

Tomlin's troupe finally decided to stop reporting grosses when she reduced her show to weekends at the end of June, but the comedienne continued to do good business until Musical Comedy/L.A.

(Continued on Page 52, Column 1)

DID YOU HEAR WHAT RICK DEES SAID THIS MORNING?



Congratulations OALLY ON YOUR OH THE TOTAL DESIGNATION OF THE TOTAL

ACADEMY

(Continued from Page 38, Column 5) and take advantage of its research facilities.

Do they answer all the questions? They try to, and the two operators turn to plenty of reference assistance all around them. The phone lines are open nine to five, Mondays and Tuesdays, Thursdays and Fridays, just like the library.

The library even subscribes to Videolog so that the operators can say whether or not a film is out on video. "We get a lot of those kind of requests now. It used to be for rental of 16m, but now it's all for video.

"And the Academy tries to collect info about estates — Marilyn Monroe, W. C. Fields, Mae West, or whatever. The staff has contact numbers that don't appear in the Pacific Coast directory."

"There are lots of contact questions — 'Do you have the name of so-and-so's agent?' 'Can you tell me what film Paul Newman's working on now?' 'Have you the

names of Burt Reynolds' last five costars?' It really is endless. Maybe Jayne Mansfield's bust size. Or, a still photo of the Invisible

If questions are too long or too complicated, operators will suggest the caller come in and the library staff will help with the problem. Or they can write to the National Film Information Service, an extension of the Library to help film students and scholars, programmers and those teaching aspects of film but living away from the Los Angeles area.

Through NFIS, the writer can, for a slight fee, get copies of stills, photocopies of articles, information to help fill out a particular project. "Unfortunately, there's only a half-time person doing the NFIS, and she gets backed up to where now it's a severalmonth delay before she can really write — there are so many requests to answer, and the questions are often quite involved," says Mehr.

(Continued on Page 60, Column 1)

'Twilight Zone' Tragedy Spurs Hollywood To Tighten Filming Safety Regulations

(Continued from Page 40, Column 5)

safety matters, and the Labor/ Management Safety Committee adopted a 15-point plan governing the safe use of helicopters on sets, one which concentrated specifically on improved ground-to-air communication and requirements that detailed graphics be prepared indicating landing areas, intended flight paths, designated emergency landing sites and the location and types of explosives to be detonated in the vicinity.

Through the busy year of reform in 1983, the Labor/Management Safety Committee generated new rules for the handling of animals on sets (although few serious incidents involving them were on record). An 11-point program was set into motion for underwater filming, new guidelines for the use of camera insert cars, special-effects smoke on the set and mobile dressing rooms and finally, in its 11th safety bulletin of the year, regulations covering the use of fixed-wing aircraft.

Provisions relating to camera insert cars were partly motivated by the death of one passenger, and the injuring of a dozen others, on an overcrowded camera car when it overturned on the set of "The Dukes Of Hazzard" in 1980.

The restrictions on specialeffects smoke and attention to dressing room trailers were motivated to some extent by Barbara Stanwyck's hospitalization due to smoke inhalation on the set of "The Thorn Birds" in 1982, and the death of actor Richard Kelton due to poor trailer ventilation on location for "Centennial" in

None of these measures covered the use of "blank" amunition, and it was just this that caused the death in 1984 of actor Jon-Erik Hexum, who accidentally shot himself with a .44 Magnum pistol loaded with blanks.

In the wake of Hexum's death, as well as the injury of an extra struck in the face by a 12-gauge "blank" shotgun blast on the set of "French Quarter Undercover," the Labor/Management Safety Committee recommended a number of preventative measures in this area. These included mandatory walk-throughs of scenes involving special-effects explosives and blank-loaded firearms, closer supervision of property masters and making the assumption that all firearms are loaded.

The DGA established a "safety hotline" in 1985, and California got back in the act, as a State Assembly subcommittee, prompted by a "number of major accidents in the last year or so," met to evaluate stunt safety. Moreover, the State Fire Marshal's office began making "surprise visits" to sets where special effects were being employed, with a particular eye to drug or alcohol abuse by crew members.

The adequacy of some of the industry's new guidelines were thrown into serious question with the death of one of Hollywood's top stuntmen, Dar Robinson, on Nov. 21, 1986, since the producers of the film in production,

"Million Dollar Mystery," appeared to have followed the guidelines to the letter.

Robinson died after being thrown into a boulder-filled ravine in Arizona from a speeding motorcycle on which he was doing what was termed a "routine" camera driveby. Critical, immediate ambulance and helicopter assistance was unavailable in the remote desert area when Robinson needed it, and it, therefore, took two hours for him to be delivered to a hospital after the accident occurred.

Safety ABC's

The latest move to enhance set safety came in May, 1987, when the national board of directors of the Screen Actors Guild approved an unprecedented qualifications ratings system for stunt performers and coordinators. The "A, B & C" rankings would be applied to stunt performers based on length of experience in the field, and the top "A" rating would be given only to those who had completed 150 days of stunt work over a three-year period.

As with all safety proposals, this plan was deemed "less than perfect," but in the realm of safety there is no absolute that can entirely guarantee that a stunt or special-effect will come off exactly as planned with no unexpected side-effects. However, the record has improved tremendously over the past five years, which indicates that the vigilance prompted by the "Twilight Zone" incident has been maintained, and perhaps even increased, over time.

RAOUL WALSH

(Continued from Page 40, Column 4)

care much for music. So I said yes I was very interested in directing.

For students of Raoul Walsh the following statement is verbatim, I wrote it down after he left.

"Well," he said, "the most important thing I can tell you is to stick to westerns and outdoor action movies. Learn how to do those and you'll be around a long, long time, and you'll never be out of work. Parlor directors have short careers."

When he left I realized he had come to see me simply as an act of kindness and encouragement, and I understood why those 20 men had ridden hell bent for destruction down that hill and across that rock-strewn creek.

I thought often after that of calling to ask how he was, and maybe to ask why he sometimes sat with his back to what the camera was photographing. I never did it and I'm sorry now that I didn't; or maybe I preferred to remember the mystery and the panache.

Not Best Of Times

(Continued from Page 50, Column 5) came in at the end of July.

Incidentally, Musical Comedy did not rack up the chips at the boxoffice, but they also decided not to report grosses. In fact, musical theater during the Summer, which included the Doolittle rep offerings and the Ahmanson's "She Loves Me" (which grossed \$519,860 for five weeks) fared

Pasadena Reopens

Another boon on the scene was the re-opening of the Pasadena Playhouse under the guiding hands of Stephen Rothman and Susan Dietz (the latter of the now disbanded L.A. Stage Co.). With little time to gather a season, this duo opened the season with a fourweek-long series of one-week stands called "Great Performance Series" featuring the likes of Peggy Lee, Ray Stricklyn and the late Dick Shawn

They then launched the season with John Guare's "House Of Blue Leaves," but got their most incredible business with the world preem of the Jerry Colker/Michael Rupert tuner "Mail." Show did five weeks of boffo business and is now skedded to return for an engagement this upcoming season.

With 21 weeks of performances

venue, the duo got the Playhouse back on its feet with \$1,114,429 overall.

In the midst of this is the activi-

under their belts at that venerable

ty at the Westwood Playhouse, where management decided early on not to report grosses.

"We just figured that it didn't serve any purpose to make public our grosses," said Eddie Davis, executive director of the 500-seat theater. "But we're not complaining about our year either."

The Playhouse did veer from its usual plan of having a long-running show (basically because there was not anything of that quality available) and instead offered a variety of theater and music. "We either booked the shows or leased out the theater," he said.

One of the more popular ventures was the move-up of the Ron Milner play, "Checkmates," from its Equity-Waiver run to an Equity outing there. The show lasted 10 weeks.

Other movement around town included the start-up of the California Music Theater in the Pasadena Civic, which offered four musicals for two weeks each. Since their season runs from March through December, their first season is not yet over. They also chose not to report grosses.



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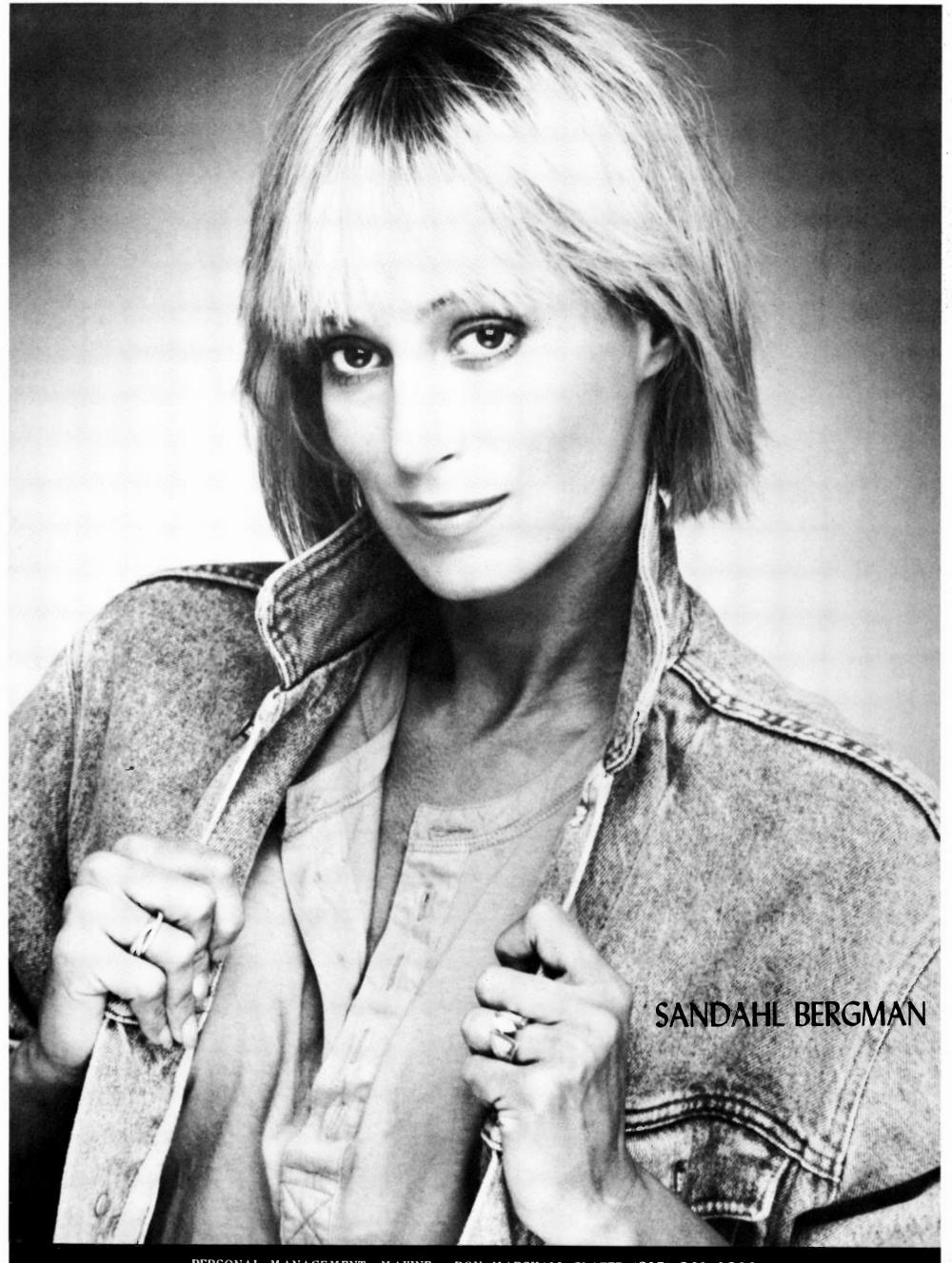
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PITCHMEN

(Continued from Page 44, Column 5)

What do we call that? We call that preposterous, belligerent, and nuts: the ultimate swipe at our already withered *EANIL* (Estimated Average National Intelligence Level).

• The unbridled tool of sexual entendre in all, but All merchandising, from wheat-cakes to water-beds, has sailed past the

Callous and Contrived line, over the Ludicrous bank, and so far into the "Gimme A Break" department that I'm about ready for Linda Lovelace and Harry Reems for Forest Lawn. (Jordache Jeans gets tv's Raunchy Haunch award from the first; but it pulled the wrath of the gods when it amplified its slithery "You've got the look" disco theme into the pre-teen neighborhood and, of course, it was the last we saw of that, thank

you please.)

• The flood of sports figures from Pele to Perry for numbers that pale the total sum of most athletic careers is, in itself, a sign of nothing more dissolute than the general bulge of the quick-buck bandwagon. I can only find myself privately tickled when I am hand-delivered super-glitzy press kits to match the best of what Universal has to offer, hyping the slick look and the product lure of

Ring and Diamond and Gridiron rookies who have barely bent the soles or soiled the numbers.

I fear I could go on forever (as I'm sure my office will as they read this, fashioning, no doubt, the trusty rope and the local tree — first for me, then for themselves). So, out of deference to them, and to an industry I really do love, I'll best leave you with one last proposition) to which you will most assuredly add your own reflections):

The spreading vogue of exploiting adverse exposure by quickly converting it to product endorsements (or, for that matter, "showbiz" shots of any kind), is, to me Desperate Hollywood Shab at its Sweetheart-Baby best (reminiscent cent of the gold-chained gold-toothed over-the-candystore agent days); at its worst, it is symptomatic and dangerous.

- John Erlichman for Dreyers Ice Cream; "I lied to you once, I wouldn't do it again."
- G. Gordon Liddy for something other that escapes me (Maybe it was that carnival sideshow tour he did with that old favorite of all of ours, Timothy Leary, that sticks in my head.);
- The Ever-Radiant Donna Rice for "No Excuses" Apparel, thank you very much.
- And the sea of inside scuttlebutt linking Ollie North — with "Contra" Hair Preparation; Jessica Hahn — with her own "Heavenly" lingerie line; and, can we forget — Fawn Hall —

with everything from Shredded Wheat to Ice Blue Secret;

What is the message we're getting here? Exposure at any price? Profit at any price? And, in the final analysis, even if we get away clean, will our children be paying it??

The implications are unmistakable; and, for me, symptomatic of a deep and disquieting chasm in the American moral frame. And it begs examination. Last year this country's advertisers spent \$67 billion trying to sell us one thing or another. On the other side of the pad write down that the American Cancer Society had to muddle through its timeless search to save us all with \$66,000,000. That's only \$66 billion, \$933 million less than the mascara merchants had.

What's New?

In the June 1986 issue of Advertising Age, it was reported that certain writings found etched on the Roman walls of Pompeii strongly suggested catchwords and slogans praising the wines of that time "that easily parallel our most modern beer promotions." So, perhaps all is not lost. Perhaps pestilence and purgatory is not the order of the day. Perhaps, if we've survived the onslaught of delirious drummers for all those 1900 years, perhaps we'll make it through the next eight or nine. And so maybe my staff was right. Maybe I am wrong and hysterical and way out of line. OK then. Nevermind.



By BERT REISFELD

BAD WORISHOFEN, WEST GERMANY

This charming spa 50 miles Southwest of Munich has a great distinction: it has no festival of any sort. You take the famous "Kneipp" treatments and forget about concerts, operas, plays and films — except for one motion picture, made 30 years ago in Austria, telling the story of Father Sebastian Kneipp, who insisted and proved that water will heal many an illness.

We saw the film on tv only recently and found it well done; much better, in fact, than almost anything that comes out of Germany these days.

In the old days one selected a festival according to the program and the artists. Then came a period when you selected the place you wanted to visit. The feature and programs were almost the same from A to Z (Athens to Zurich) only the dates made the difference. Artists, orchestras and productions moved from one place to the next.

Today you may go anywhere and find series of events called "Festival" in almost any town, village or hamlet that has an old castle or a medieval courtyard in the vicinity. You won't always find first-rate performances, but most people don't care. They have money to spend and want to brag to neighbors back home, "We've been to the festival."

This, of course, is watering down the original idea of a festival that was meant to be something special for discriminating audiences. These audiences are now replaced by tourists who don't mind sitting on the floor of a broken-down assembly hall or on wooden benches in the courtyard of an old castle, out in the open, carrying an umbrella in one hand and field glasses in the other. In many cases they could see and hear the very same performances back home in the comfort of the local theater or concert hall.

Authorities can't explain the success of those run-of-the-mill minifestivals, but hotels, restaurants, taxis and beauty parlors and city fathers are happy while it lasts. Tickets are usually available and admissions are reasonable compared to the majors in Salzburg, Bayreuth and Berlin.

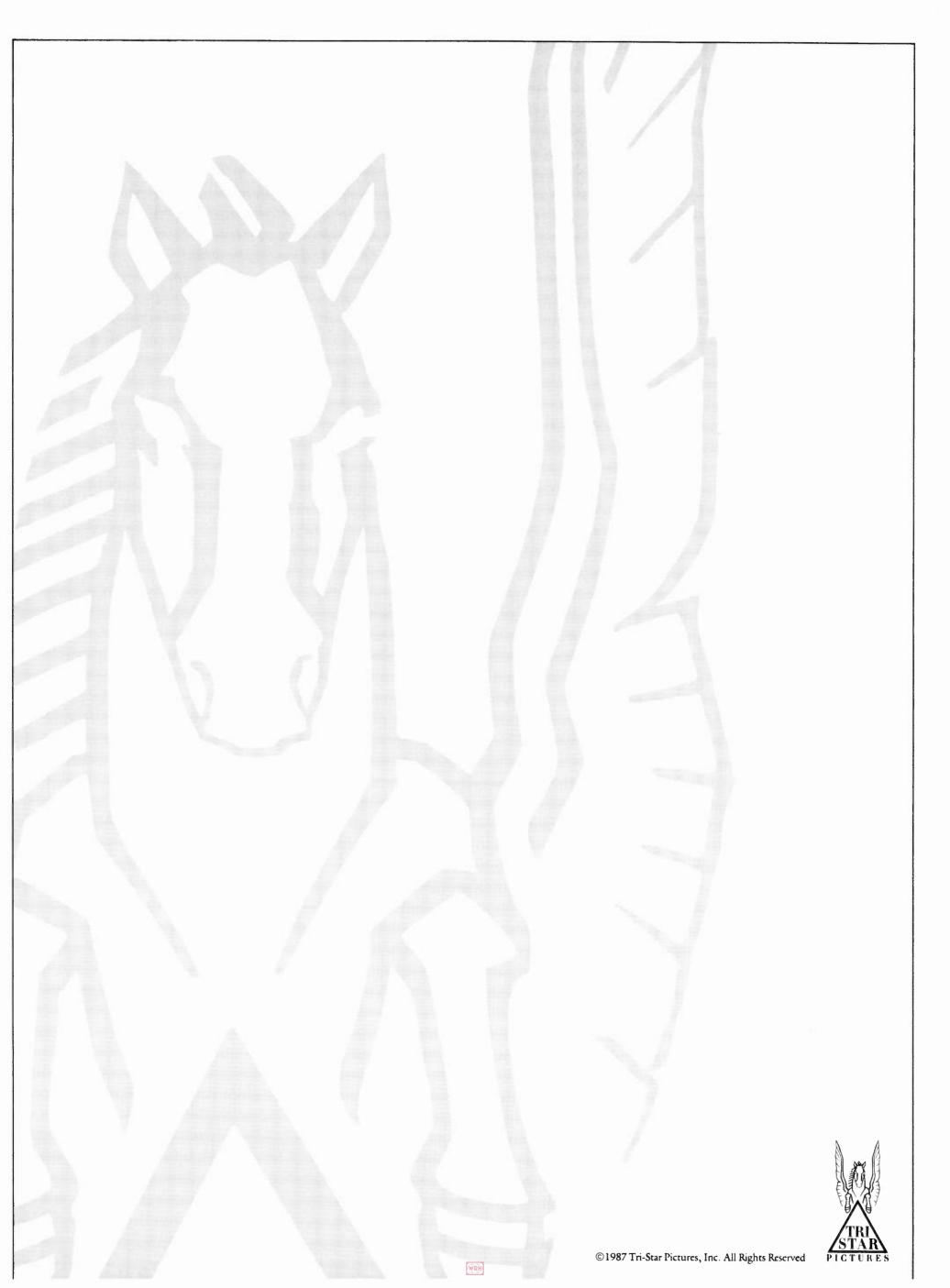
The cold and rainy Summer of 1987 was not kind to open-air events. Most of them couldn't move inside for lack of facilities and had to cancel in case of rain, losing money. However, the final count isn't in yet and in spite of all the problems there may be good results — financially, that is. Culturally, is another question.

One explanation for the success of the "mini's" may be the astronomical prices at the "majors," Salzburg and Bayreuth. But it seems the "twilight of the Gods" has already set it. Strange sight in Salzburg anno 1987: People standing in front of the festival hall, holding up tickets, trying to sell them at half price or less.

One year ago they used to fight over tickets and pay double or more to the scalpers. Karajan concerts are sold out — anywhere — but most of the others go begging. The ''glut'' may have helped to cut some of the 'majors'' down to size and may turn out to be a good thing, after all.



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Paramount Pictures Corporation

ACADEMY

Mehr, discussing the reading room and visitors, insists that anyone puzzled by the filing system march up to the desk and make inquiries. As with most universities, the Herrick is not Dewey Decimal but Library of Congress. The film books come under the PN classification, while the technical books come under TR.

The reference staff at the Herrick, including full-time and parttime, stands at 32 people: five librarians with masters of library science degrees and a film background of varying levels, and people with history degrees and an interest in films.

The Library attempts to corral every book written in English on the motion picture, both as art form and as an industry. That includes your general biographies and histories as well as technical tomes on cinematography, costuming, makeup, legal aspects of filmmaking, how to write a screenplay and how to sell a screenplay. And how to get out of a lawsuit over a screenplay.

The Library has an enormous accumulation of periodicals dealing with motion pictures right back to the very first publications devoted solely to motion pictures and aimed at early-day distributors and people in the industry. The Library boasts an extensive early-day collection of publications on the birth of an art form, with special, closeted collections, not only vintage stuff but indeed

Trade Publications

The motion picture trade newspapers are available in the Library's periodical section, including Daily Variety all the way back to its first issue in 1933. The Library, subscribing to multiple copies of the trades, binds sets for future researchers.

Everything in the Library comes from donations, which are tax deductible. There's a budget for books and periodicals, but many of the early items were gifts because they were so rare and are now so expensive.

Even the large, hexagonal table next to the service desk was originally Edith Head's dining room ta-

What makes the library unique are the special collections, notes Mehr. "One of them is the clipping files. While there are clipping files at other institutions, ours has the broadest kind of coverage in terms of the number of publications that we take items from. We not only clip from the local papers and from the trades, but from national publications, monthly, daily, New York papers, from the Middle West papers, all kinds of publications. Not only those oriented towards the industry, but general, like Time, Newsweek, Life and the Wall Street Journal, Commentary and Commonweal.

Members of the staff have multiple duties, including manning the telephones, periodical or service desk duties and countless responsibilities in the stacks. Since the Library doesn't subscribe to a clipping service, the librarians divide up something like 200 publications — Mehr confesses she goes through Vanity Fair herself.

A rotating group of five handles

weekly Variety because of its size. 'What they're looking for are articles on productions, on individuals, which if it isn't about a film being made, goes to the biographical file. If it's an article about a subiect like colorization or censorship, marketing or wide-screen processing, it goes in its own file.'

Because of the space situation, and because the Academy tries to cover motion pictures in detail, no attempt is made to include television, even tv films. USC and UCLA and the American Film Institute are covering the tv scene, and the Academy doesn't want to overextend itself.

'There are some overlap areas,' agrees Mehr. Tv programs relating to people in film, or tv documentaries about individuals, are sometimes included, but the cutoff point becomes hazy if some rule isn't established.

There are more than 500 drawers of clipping files just on film production alone. Almost that amount on biographies, and only a little less on general subjects.

There are over 6000 screenplays:

from the silent era to the present. available for study in the reading room. If a screenplay has not yet been produced, it won't be shown.

Produced screenplays are only for research, so they can't be Xeroxed. Students intent on learning a scene, or how to write a script, are welcome to study the pages of such masterpieces as "How Green Was My Valley" or "Little Women" or "National Velvet."

Incidentally, nothing can be checked out of the Library. Everything has to be used within the Library. There are no Academy Library Cards, and, for security's sake, a visitor wanting to examine a folder on a film or a collected biography from the stacks must surrender his driver's license or a passport, say, for identification. Something with a photo.

Lobby cards, posters, press books, programs and other adrelated materials are filed neatly away in the racks behind the service desk. The posters, unframed, some of them dating back to the teens, are kept separately in cabinets away from the light to protect the colors. Because of their fragility, they're not accessible, except in exhibits, to the public. Yet.

The rare book room, packed away in the far corner behind the fourth-floor library stacks, holds prized items such as one of the few autographed 1938 editions of "Gone With The Wind" - the flyleaf of the novel was autographed by all cast members except, for some unexplained reason, Barbara O'Neil, who played Scarlett's mother.

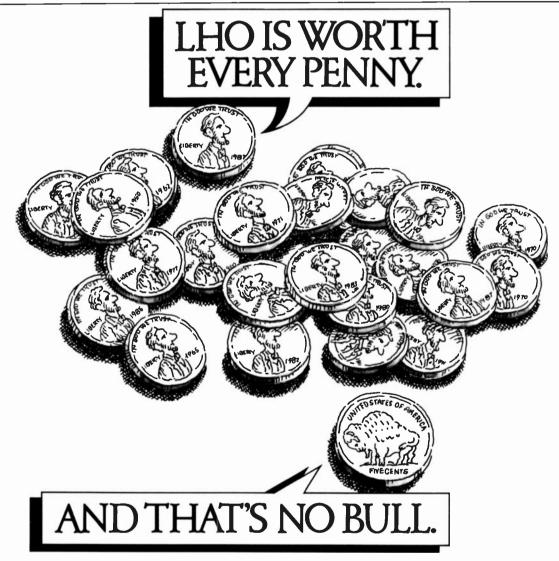
Bound scripts, photobooks, rarities are securely locked away, and among them is the first edition of English photographer Edward Muybridge's historic "Attitudes Of Animals In Motion." in which his sequential still cameras proved for all time that a horse's four hooves are simultaneously aloft during one moment in a gal-

Muybridge's 1881 book was a definitive step towards proving the absurd notion that pictures might move. That year was, incidentally, the year that Muybridge invented the zoopraxiscope to project animated pictures.

A warning sign reading AU-THORIZED PERSONS ONLY - PLEASE KEEP THIS DOOR LOCKED AT ALL TIMES hangs on a metal door between the company lunch room and the shippingreceiving area on the fifth floor near Doug Edwards' crowded office. Stashed away with particular care are two invaluable sections: manuscripts and other types of paper material under the jurisdiction of prime archivist Sam Gill, and almost 5,000,000 photographs, the province of photography curator Robert Cushman.

What has to be remembered is that the fifth floor special collections section is accessible to the public in its particular way. Given at least 24 hours notice by applying at the service desk in the fourth floor Library, almost anything on the fifth floor will be available for those with honorable

intentions, an honest desire for in-(Continued on Page 62, Column 1)



Okay, we'll be candid. The Lewis Horwitz Organization does charge a little more than normal bank rates. But to scores of satisfied repeat customers, it's well worth the extra cost.

They know LHO makes entertainment loans conventional banks can't or won't. And because LHO gets you your money sooner, you save time and aggravation so you can accomplish more.

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ACADEMY

(Continued from Page 60, Column 5)

formation, and identification with a photo attached.

The Academy's policy is no Xerox of the special collection files, except for printed or published items, items meant for publication such as a press release. Researchers sign a form freeing the Academy of any damage suits.

As for letters, the author of the letter or telegram holds the copyright.

In the case of the Motion Picture Association of America's files, the Academy asked Jack Valenti if it would be all right to quote from them. Notes Gill, "He said that was the point of it."

In some cases, because of security needs, the rare still in a collection can't be brought directly to the service desk to be seen. Instead, a photocopy of the picture will give the visitor some idea of what he's seeking; if that's it, he can order a print.

Tracking Family

Scholarship is not the only motive to secure a picture, as Cushman notes. People come in tracking relatives — fathers and mothers who worked in films. Maybe dad was a bit player or even an extra in some picture he once bragged about, and with Cushman's expert help, the searcher may pin down a still of dad with Elvis or grandma with Lionel Barrymore.

Or maybe someone wants to verify that someone famous owned

a house they now live in. Cedric Gibbons' home was the object of a search when the people who now owned the house Gibbons was supposed to have designed when he was married to Dolores Del Rio.

The MGM collection, which the studio donated from its still collection in New York in 1979, contains 50 11x14"s of the place showing Gibbons and Del Rio in most of the interiors — and showing in exquisite detail how the house was then furnished right down to the rugs and the wall sconces.

A man who acquired the beach house that once belonged to Mary Pickford and Douglas Fairbanks couldn't verify that fact and wanted to know if there were any pictures of them at the place. He had no record in writing of their ownership, but had been assured such was the case.

The Academy couldn't help with pictures, but it does happen to have the Mary Pickford collection of papers. Archivist Gill turned up a three-inch-thick ledger on the property with the address on the front of it. The ledger began on the first day Pickford and Fairbanks acquired the property and was kept up through the '40s. Similarly, people who owned houses that served as locations in a famous film will drop by the Library to get a copy for their display, if available.

In 1969, Paramount presented its still books, and shelves of

scripts representing more than 2000 Paramount productions. RKO Radio Pictures delivered its still collection as early as 1959, when the Academy was on Melrose.

The Thomas Ince collection, measuring Ince's career with 106 still books, boasts everything from copyright registration to promotion material of the pioneer company.

The Mack Sennett collection, covering the years 1913-1931, contains not only stills but invaluable financial records, scripts, contracts and correspondence, material to make a film historian's heart leap.

The still department finally is getting the thousands of items in the Sennett collection pulled together. That was the last big collection with no inventory, and the work is almost half done. Sennett himself made the gift in the early '50s, going over to the library and having a photo snapped with Margaret Herrick.

The William N. Selig collection, dating back to the early 1900s, contains stills ranging from 1908 to 1917. With a major part of the collection based on scenes from Selig productions, some of it still focuses on the early Selig Studios located in what was then Lincoln Park.

The first version of "The Spoilers" is represented, and the first successful serial, "The Adventures Of Kathyln," with Kathlyn Williams, appears in the collection

Irene Rich, who first appeared in silent films and in her radio days urged Welch Grape Juice on listeners, donated her collection earlier this year. Her daughter, Francis Rich, a prominent sculptor, handled the business end of the donation, but Rich at 96, now living out near Palmdale, though tending to fraility now, is aware and pleased with the representation.

Starting in 1918, she made more than 60 features in the '20s before going to the airwaves and doing an occasional sound film. There are over 2000 photos, really good, overall coverage in good condition.

Research

Cushman recalls that Disney was planning yet another theme park somewhere, and the idea was to reproduce or create sets of famous movies. They needed photos of these particular sets, which their designers could replicate. They were especially interested in famous MGM films, and delved into some 200 boxes of MGM set reference stills originally taken for production purposes.

"They came about a year ago and they said this was something that they pre-plan years in advance. We haven't heard since. They came in and looked at a lot of stuff and took a lot of Xeroxes, and whether they'll go on with this I don't know yet.

"They looked at 'Gone With The Wind' and 'Wizard Of Oz' and 'Meet Me In St. Louis'." Speaking of Cushman, exec administrator Davis points out that Cushman has developed lots of techniques for saving, restoring and uncurling all the things that can happen to still photographs.

"We have the largest collection of movie-related still photographs in the world. More than are in the Museum of Modern Art. It really is an extraordinary collection," Davis elaborated.

"I'd like the film stills area to move towards an at least breakeven situation, but it won't. That isn't what we set it up for, and when I have to go into the board of governors and say, 'Look, we lost X number of dollars this year!', they always say, 'That's okay. That's what the library's for. We're not in this to make money — that's just a service'."

Service Fees

There are, necessarily, charges for reproducing the photos. For reproduction of a still for private, personal, non-commercial research, it's \$7.50 per copy. Service fees are graded up depending on the uses. The prices vary — for a book, a magazine, for a record cover, for example. For a commercial or for an ad, Cushman cites a \$100 price, the top service fee.

The service fee is added on to help out the Academy, which has saved and stored the original picture at enormous cost. "We feel that if someone does come in here with the intent of making some

(Continued on Page 66, Column 1)

British Columbia is a knockout when it comes to making movies.



(At least Stallone thinks so.)

Two of Sylvester Stallone's blockbuster feature films were filmed in British Columbia, Canada: First Blood, in 1981, and Rocky IV, in 1985.

The budget probably had a lot

to do with it the first time: the Canadian dollar exchange rate and crew fees can save a whopping 40% on below-the-line production costs.

But the second time it might have been the dazzling locations,

or the skilled, enthusiastic crews, or the world-class lab work. Maybe it was the fact that at two and a half hours north of Los Angeles, they could stay in touch, but still stay out of reach!

So land a few punches of your own. Call the British Columbia Film Commission at (604) 660-2732. Or send us a script, at #802-865 Hornby Street, Vancouver, B.C., Canada, V6Z 2G3.

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MGM/UA Communications Co.

SUMMER SESH OVERHEATS L.A. BOX-OFFICE

healthy Spring quarter and a sizzling Summer boosted the Los Angeles County film boxoffice for the 12-month October-September period to a recordbreaking level.

Final tally for the '86-87 frame of \$102,943,330 (\$1,979,679 per week at an average of 222 screens) represented an 8.1% increase over last year's count (\$95,257,723 or \$1,797,316 weekly at 203 screens). Figure was 7.8% above the previous record of \$95,499,994 set in 1984-85, also at an average of 203 screens.

Initial quarters were languid in comparison to the previous year. First quarter tally (\$23,140,410 at 210) trailed that of last year's comparable 13-week period (\$23,711,605 at 202) by 2.4%. Second quarter closed the gap just a bit, with \$23,320,476 at 211, representing a 1.4% decrease from \$23,651,858 at 206.

Big Jump

Third quarter take (\$23,655,-860 at 218), however, rose 11.3% from that of the previous Spring (\$21,256,479 at 193). The final 13-week Summer period was a brawny 23.2% above last year, \$32,826,584 at 247 compared to \$26,637,781 at 212. (Increase during this period can also be partially attributed to the opening of new screens in the L.A. area, most notably Cineplex Odeon's Universal City multiplex, which debuted the weekend of July 4).

Figures reported are final grosses for the 52-week period beginning Oct. 3, 1986 and ending Sept. 25, 1987. These figures measure the *actual* tally for the Friday-through-Thursday periods and are not based on *estimates* from weekend performances that are published each Tuesday in *Daily Variety*.

Methodology

B.O. receipts are derived independent of distributors' reports, and are supplied by the theaters to an independent tracking authority.

In addition, the weekly survey of L.A. County does not reflect boxoffice figures from outlying areas such as Orange County and the West San Fernando Valley. Figures would approximately double if these screens were added during a typical week.

In terms of the number of topgrossing pix, business was up nicely in the latest survey period, with a total of 25 pix crossing the \$1,000,000 b.o. mark versus 22 titles which surpassed that tally in the 1985-86 frame.

On the distributor front, Paramount and Warner Bros. duked it out for dominance (as they did on a national basis). Of Paramount's five releases above the \$1,000,000 mark — "Beverly Hills Cop II," "Crocodile Dundee," "The Untouchables," "The Golden Child" and "Star Trek IV: The Voyage Home" — three finished in the top five. (It can also be noted that two of those pix starred Eddie Murphy).

Not to be outdone, Warner

New Record Set At Almost \$103 Mil, Up 8.1%; 25 Pix Pass \$1-Mil Mark

Bros. also landed five top grossers

- "Lethal Weapon," "The
Witches of Eastwick," "Full
Metal Jacket," "Innerspace,"
and "The Mission."

Orion claimed the big winner,

By MARIE SAXON SILVERMAN

"Platoon," plus "Robocop" and "No Way Out." Universal also had three releases on the top-

grossing chart — "The Secret Of My Success," "Dragnet," and "Born In East L.A." Buena Vista's entries were "Stakeout" "Outrageous Fortune," and "The Color Of Money."

had four titles on last year's chart) with two top-grossing films, "La Bamba" and "Roxanne." MGM/UA ("The Living Day-

Next up was Columbia (which

MGM/UA ("The Living Daylights"), 20th Fox ("Predator"), Tri-Star ("Peggy Sue Got Married"), and New Line ("A Nightmare On Elm Street Part III: Dream Warriors") finished with one release apiece.

Benefitting from an extremely long session (21 weeks), "Platoon" charged into first place with \$3,989,784. Film was 1.5% below last year's victor "Top Gun," which garnered \$4,049,778 during a comparable run.

Tracked for just 10 weeks, "Beverly Hills Cop II" (\$3,-890,166) slid into second notch. Original "Beverly Hills Cop," with \$5,775,096, was 1984-85's top finisher.

"Crocodile Dundee," which opened just before the surveyed period began, was toothy in third, biting off \$2,699,635.

"The Untouchables," pursuing \$2,657,886, stalked the fourth-place slot, while "La Bamba" (\$2,648,101) rocked into fifth.

In sixth position, "Lethal Weapon" was strong but not silent, scaring up \$2,286,464. "The Golden Child" (\$2,050,-279) shone in seventh.

"The Witches Of Eastwick" brewed up \$2,047,258, followed by "Robocop" (\$1,955,428), placing eighth and ninth, respectively. Climbing up the ladder in 10th was "The Secret Of My Success" (\$1,791,994).

That's the top 10. A complete list of the top finishers is contained in the accompanying chart.

TOP L.A. FIRST-RUNS, OCTOBER 1986-SEPTEMBER 1987

(Films Grossing \$1,000,000 Or More)							
Production (Distributor) Opening Date (Wk. of) 1. "Platoon" (Orion) 12/19/86	Key Screens (Westwood-Hollywood) \$1,448,538	Weeks On Survey/ Avg. # of Screens 21 Weeks 14 Screens Per Week	L.A. Area Total \$3,989,784				
2. "Beverly Hills Cop II" (Par) 5/22/87	\$1,164,988	10 Weeks 21 Screens Per Week	\$3,890,166				
3. "Crocodile Dundee" (Par) 9/26/86	\$ 800,071	20 Weeks 14 Screens Per Week	\$2,699,635				
4. "The Untouchables" (Par) 6/5/87	\$1,234,805	15 Weeks 10 Screens Per Week	\$2,657,886				
5. "La Bamba" (Col) 7/24/87	\$ 715,465	10 Weeks 19 Screens Per Week	\$2,648,101				
6. "Lethal Weapon" (WB) 3/6/87	\$ 902,091	l6 Weeks l6 Screens Per Week	\$2,286,464				
7. "The Golden Child" (Par) 12/12/86	\$ 678,430	10 Weeks 16 Screens Per Week	\$2,050,279				
8. "The Witches Of Eastwick (WB) 6/12/87	\$ 797,354	8 Weeks 16 Screens Per Week	\$2,047,258				
9. "Robocop" (Orion) 7/17/87	\$ 708,522	9 Weeks 15 Screens Per Week	\$1,955,428				
10. "The Secret Of My Success" (U) 4/10/87	\$ 475,149	13 Weeks 17 Screens Per Week	\$1,791,994				
11. "Star Trek IV: The Voyage Home" (Par) 11/28/86 12. "Stakeout" (BV)	\$1,288,937 \$ 475,961	14 Weeks 13 Screens Per Week 8 Weeks	\$1,763,014				
8/7/87 13. "No Way Out" (Orion)	\$ 766,073	20 Screens Per Week 7 Weeks	\$1,670,279 \$1,635,365				
8/14/87 14. "Outrageous Fortune" (BV)	\$ 516,353	17 Screens Per Week 11 Weeks	\$1,599,089				
1/31/87 15. "Dragnet" (U)	\$ 566,017	16 Screens Per Week 7 Weeks	\$1,533,976				
6/26/87 16. "Full Metal Jacket" (WB)	\$ 667,009	16 Screens Per Week 10 Weeks	\$1,487,591				
6/26/87 17. "The Living Daylights"	\$ 691,476	10 Screens Per Week 8 Weeks	\$1,463,781				
(MGM/UA) 7/31/87 18. "Born In East L.A." (U)	\$ 248,125	11 Screens Per Week 6 Weeks	\$1,433,737				
8/21/87 19. "Predator" (20th)	\$ 384,336	21 Screens Per Week 7 Weeks	\$1,270,223				
6/12/87 20. "Roxanne" (Col)	\$ 494,997	15 Screens Per Week 9 Weeks	\$1,269,327				
6/19/87 21. "The Color Of Money" (BV) 10/17/86	\$ 404,943	12 Screens Per Week 10 Weeks	\$1,268,342				
22. "Peggy Sue Got Married" (Tri-Star) 10/10/86	\$ 489,268	14 Screens Per Week 10 Weeks 12 Screens Per Week	\$1,196,874				
23."A Nightmare On Elm Street Part III: Dream Warriors" (New Line) 2/27/87	\$ 282,442	9 Weeks 15 Screens Per Week	\$1,174,222				
24. "Innerspace" (WB) 7/3/87	\$ 533,649	6 Weeks 16 Screens Per Week	\$1,152,352				
25. "The Mission" (WB) 11/14/86	\$ 631,895	22 Weeks 4 Screens Per Week	\$1,086,587				
** Picture opened prior to period surve	eved						

** Picture opened prior to period surveyed

QUARTERLY SUMMARY

~~.		
Quarter/Weeks Of	Key Screens/Avg. # Of Screens	All Screens/Avg. # Of
	Per Week	Screens Per Week
First (Oct. 3-Dec. 26)	\$ 9,869,198 @ 48	\$ 23,140,410 @ 210
Second (Jan. 2-Mar. 27)	\$ 8,877,389 @ 45	\$ 23,320,476 @ 211
Third (Apr. 3-June 26)	\$ 9,067,054 @ 49	\$ 23,655,860 @ 218
Fourth (July 3-Sept. 25)	\$13,524,322 @ 64	\$ 32,826,584 @ 247
Weekly Average	\$ 794,961 @ 52	\$ 1,979,679@222
Totals	\$41,337,963	\$102,943,330
(10/86-9/87)	, ,	, = ==,= 10,000
Last Year	\$39,437,544	\$ 95,257,723
(10/85-9/86)	, ,	, , , , , , , , , , , , , , , , , , , ,

Hollywood's Bulging Christmas Stocking

(Continued from Page 10, Column 5)

Films is releasing in a gradual rollout pattern throughout the holiday season.

Gish and Davis star as sisters living on the Maine coast who alternately confront and take care of each other. It's a sparkling meditation on old age with few of the saccarine platitudes of "On Golden Pond."

Other films will undoubtedly be added and still others pushed back as is the yearly dance of distributors looking for an opening in a very crowded field. With so much product available it is inevitable that most of them won't make any money, but for the few that hit, the holdiays are truly a feast. What is unfortunate is that occasionally worthy films get lost in the celebrating.

Nonetheless, with boxoffice returns at a record level through September, there should be enough hits at Christmas to push the cumulative gross for 1987 to new heights. And that, indeed, will be a merry Christmas for Hollywood.



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ACADEMY

(Continued from Page 62, Column 5)

kind of profit or commercial use of an image we should somehow be compensated. It helps us to some extent, even though it doesn't anywhere near offset the costs we have to maintain this collection,' Cushman explained. "We do waive any service fees for any non-profit or government use. They just pay the costs."

In 1975, when the Academy moved into the Wilshire head-quarters, collections such as the RKO and Paramount gifts were brought out of storage, so Cushman had hundreds of thousands of items more with which to work. Those are now inventoried, but as yet there is no per item catalog.

With the MGM donation a cohesive part of the special collections, anyone looking for a particular film, or actor, can first examine what the library has in its regular files; in the MGM separate collection there's an enormous volume of material few scholars would need in such detail.

The MGM collection was delivered in almost 1000 storage boxes containing 1500-2000 stills apiece and it took three years just to examine and list the contents. The gift, which will occupy some 100 file cabinets, will remain a totality unto itself and can't be integrated into the other files. So far it's now in about 70 cabinets, awaiting to be put in alphabetical order after processing and placing in envelopes.

The Academy's agreement with MGM is that the studio is given a copy of any request form for material from the special collection. No other studio has asked for that.

After nine years work, over 80% of the organizing has been accomplished. That means it's processed, cleaned, rewashed

when necessary, slipped into an envelope, put in a cabinet in alphabetical order.

Cushman, aided by two or three people, sometimes part-time work study people, have been doing the washing and cleaning of all the stills. It's not a full day's work because, as Cushman, notes "anyone who had to wash photos full-time would quickly jump off the roof"

Long Project

The cleaners are about twothirds of the way through the RKO still books, and that's been going on for years.

Usually the photos have to be pried loose from the black scrapbook paper to which they've been glued. Once free of the glue, the still goes into a print washer to wash away other surface dirt or individual chemicals that may have been with the print since it was made. After the print drier, the old print now has a new gloss.

Yellowing can't be removed, but it can be stopped. A new copy of that print will clear up the yellowing. Mucilage and scotch tape can leave stains or residue.

Protecting stills now in the Academy's possession — and they are admittedly crowding the Academy beyond its limits — means farming out the photographs in local storage buildings for safekeeping. They are all within a day or so of retrieving.

But that can cause inconvenience, Cushman well knows. "We have Cecil B. DeMille stills, something like 60,000 stills, five or six cabinets full, and for years it was asked for, but not in enormous amount of volume. I decided to put DeMille in a separate storage. As soon as we did it, there was this enormous demand for the DeMille collection."

What good is it to have collections of people who are now unheard of, who are not acknowledged, who are long gone?

Cushman recognizes that the general public may not know who a specific celebrity was, "But you still have to leave room for the several thousand people who do and who are interested. That's what researchers come in for—they're writing for people who do know."

The manuscript collections prove to be among the largest collections in the library, and it's an area that seems to mushroom. The names of the collections are dazzling: Mary Pickford, George Stevens, George Cukor, Fred Zinnemann, John Huston, Alfred Hitchcock, Sam Peckinpah, Hal Wallis, Edith Head, for example, a variety of people who have given the Academy their papers themselves.

"What you see from these collections is the background for making the film," advises Mehr. "You begin to see the creative process from the other side, not just the finished product but what went into making it: The choices made, the changes made. It's a rich store of information for scholars, for students trying to study film styles."

Just by looking at their files, you can see how Fred Zinnemann worked the story out with detailed annotations. Hitchcock had worked it out with storyboards before filming any of the script.

Archivist Sam Gill will provide the scripts, which are read out in the reading room under close observation of the staff.

"We're very security conscious," explains Mehr. "We do not allow people to bring in briefcases and purses or sacks. It's unfortunate we have to be that way, but we feel that we're charged with the responsibility of protecting the material available not only today but tomorrow. If we're not vigilant, unfortunately there are people who don't really care, only that they want it for themselves."

No one has vandalized the volumes since the stringent new rules went into effect three years ago, possibly because names are on record. Says Mehr, "The vast majority of patrons using the library respect the material and wouldn't think of trying to cop a still or anything."

Fatal Misstep

When someone has been caught trying to lift anything, the offender is told firmly and without any confusion that he can no longer use the library.

The audio arts as related to films have not been neglected. The Lux Radio Theater's long-standing Monday night distillation of current films, most often with the original stars, were recorded on disks, which the Academy has along with most of the original scripts.

What the radio adaptors did, of course, was boil down the original script so it could play as a digested version. Studying how the original was reduced reveals the structure of those original scripts — or shows that many original screenplays were such works of art that breaking them down revealed how much wisdom was used by early-day screenwriters in telling their stories. They were dealing in essences that could be translated to another medium.

The Academy is working on a preservation program of those live-from-Hollywood broadcasts hosted for the most part by Cecil B. DeMille by transferring them to audio cassettes as well as to reel-to-reel tapes. Students will find them invaluable.

Librarian Mehr notes that filmmakers have often made record-

(Continued on Page 162, Column 1)

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THE DAVID GEFFEN COMPANY

When the major tv studios in Hollywood lost their dominance over network television series production several years ago, they were jarred out of their complacency — and haven't yet recovered.

An example of how it's all running against the biggies is the arithmetic on the current (1987-88) season, where the indie entrepreneurs have 29½ hours of series on the nets each week, as compared to 21½ for the majors.

In trying to rationalize this loss of production (and face), exex with the majors have come up with a myriad of alibis, some of them just short of paranoid. Their favorite off-the-cuffer is supplied in a hushed tone, to the effect that this is all a conspiracy by the three networks to get even with the majors for their role in the dispute over financial interest rules in syndication. The networks want a piece of the action and studios are reluctant to go along, hence the "conspiracy," it's whispered.

Another excuse is that the falloff is due to stations no longer wanting to buy hour series in syn-

Independents Still Leading The Way In Tv With 29½ Hours Of Series Airing This Season Vs. 21½ Hours Supplied By Majors

dication, one of those ideas which becomes fact by sheer repetition, it would seem. Hour-long series remain on the networks, the networks do buy them each season, stations around the country do purchase repeats, but the catch is the stations no longer want to pay the astronomical prices they did a few years ago, which galls the

studios considerably.

The major tv studios also complain the networks won't give them sufficient license fee increases for production costs. That is disputed by networkers who respond if the studios don't like it, the webs will take their business elsewhere — indies, for example. It's a hard-nosed attitude, perhaps reflecting the change in ownership at all three networks, where costcutting has become an obsession.

Actually, this applies not only in series but also for telefilms and By DAVE KAUFMAN

minis, according to some producers. They say networks insist they film their commitments in Canada or abroad, because it is cheaper, and that is their principal interest. There has been an exodus north of the border on such tv movies, but not all producers are happy at having to put costs first, quality second, as they see it.

Some studio exex complain loudly to network brass that they are tired of filming series at deficits, i.e., spending more on shows than they receive from a network.

Their cries are largely disregarded by network exex who urge suppliers to get their costs in line and not just expect automatic price increases anytime they want it. These are tough times, and if you don't like it there are ample other suppliers who will work for us on our terms, the web reps seem to be telling studios.

To date, no studio has announced it's pulling out of tv production.

There is no question that the studios have been spoiled by the past. There was "MASH," one of the major hits of all tv time, which raked in record profits in syndication. Ditto "Magnum, P.I." But these are rare, and suppliers don't seem to understand why every series going into syndie isn't going to draw such prices. They do quite well, but not well enough, in the eye, of studio chiefs.

One solution is a truly practical one offered by some networkers—to reduce production costs. But it doesn't seem to be one taken kindly by most suppliers. They usually blame the unions, but it's not the unions or guilds who are responsible for filming so many mediocre (and unsold) pilots and series each season. That's the sort of thing which boosts costs with little chance of recoupment.

Yet in the face of all this, there

is a curious aura of generosity at the studios. In the olden days say, five years ago — if a studio production chief had a bad season, he would be looking for another job. To revive a cliche heads would roll.

No more. A couple of years ago one major tv studio had seven series on the networks and lost them all. What happened to the production chief? He got a promotion. At another major, they made 12 pilots and sold one, and did dislodge one exec. Next year they made about seven and sold none. There was no upheaval in the executive suite

The rules of the game evidently have changed, and while it's a cause for rejoicing for those involved, it defies any logical explanation. In the motion picture business, when a production chief had a bad year or so, he was seeking employment elsewhere, and the tv arm followed suit. Not now, however. It's all curiouser and curiouser

All this may partly explain why the major studios have had disappointing seasons in terms of production volume. Another reason could be that they have not really delivered any megahits to the networks in recent years. Certainly an exception is "Murder, She Wrote" (CBS) from Universal,

(Continued on Page 80, Column 1)

VIDEO BLURBS: WHO'S WATCHING?

If you're a tv advertiser in 1987, you've got some problems. You're finding the familiar ad vehicles are now reaching fewer viewers, and the people who're disappearing are often the ones you need to reach the most.

Even the viewers who are left have discovered "zapping" or "zipping" — two maneuvers, made possible by the remote control, that allow the watcher to escape unwelcome commercials by flipping the channel or fast-forwarding the tape.

It isn't hard to identify the biggest cause of these problems. It's the VCR — the machine that allows millions of viewers to turn their backs on ad-supported programming and watch a night's worth of uninterrupted motion picture entertainment courtesy of the local videostore; the machine that trains viewers to reject programs calculated to satisfy mass tastes, and seek out shows that truly meet their specific viewing preferences; and the machine that allows people to tape adsupported programs and zip past all those commercials.

But to any advertiser who believes the VCR is the enemy, Michael Nesmith, owner of the maverick vid program supplier, Pacific Arts Video, says they've got it backwards. The VCR is going to be the key to an exciting future for advertisers, he believes.

Nesmith foresees a future in which the video business parallels the book business, and videostores start to look like bookstores. So, just as there's a thriving business for ad-supported special-interest periodicals in the bookstores, there's going to be a section of the future videostore filled with successful, high-circulation vid periodicals that are primarily ad-supported, he predicts.

For advertisers, the Pacific Arts

By TOM BIERBAUM

topper says, that's going to mean a tremendous opportunity to tap into the video revolution — the real video revolution.

According to Nesmith, the true breakthrough with the VCR — the "irresistible force" that's rapidly making it the country's principal source of tv programming — is not the capacity to play back rented movies or to timeshift network programming. It's the VCR's ability to free the viewer from "the tyranny of time."

Made-For Muscle

In Nesmith's scenario, once people get hooked on the freedom of choosing exactly what they want to watch, and then watching it exactly when it suits their needs, the market will have irreversibly changed. Networks will no longer dominate, nor will rented motion pictures rule as king of the hill. Original video programming - exciting, entertaining new product that will exploit the specific advantages of the vid technology — will muscle in as a major force in entertainment programming, Nesmith believes.

And for advertisers, that means the first chance — so far the only chance — to hook up with a "controlled-time" program that becomes a consumer event, for which there will be a powerful "intent to view," Nesmith said. That means the advertiser will suddenly enjoy a vehicle that the viewer will want to be watching, and that he can program to his own scheduling needs.

In other words, the advertiser will be a partner in the video revolution, not one of it victims.

Down The Road

But Nesmith's vision is hardly a reality today. It could take years before the conditions are right for his scenario to play out.

His Pacific Arts Video attempt-

ed to take a first bold step in the direction of that "video-publishing" future with the introduction last January of "Overview Magazine," a monthly ad-supported tape that featured offbeat entertainment and previews of the month's vid releases.

The "Oveview" strategy called for 12 minutes of commercials within the two-hour vidcassette programs, produced at a cost of about \$500,000 per episode.

According to Nesmith, virtually every aspect of the project worked. Most importatly, consumers and advertisers were ready for the project, he said.

But the vidindustry wasn't. Conventional distributors gave it a game try, Nesmith said, but they're simply not set up to handle an ongoing series of monthly releases. Their operations are entirely geared to the pace of motion pictures that come out with fourmonth lead times, he said.

But "Overview" could be back soon, Nesmith reports. He's in the process of teaming up with an established distribution network not connected with the video business that he feels can come up with the right combination to get "Overview" into the consumers' hands.

An announcement of the new distribution setup could come later this year, he said.

Pivotal Year

But while Nesmith attempts to lay the groundwork for what could be the revolutionary ad vehicle of the future, the video industry as it exists in 1987 has a long way to go before advertising is an important part of the business. The industry today is completely dominated by commercial-free product, and many vid consumers shudder at the thought of commercials invading the medium.

But 1987 will probably be (Continued on Page 90, Column 4)

Humanitas Awards Remind Tv Creators There's More To Life Than Numbers

By GENE REYNOLDS

(Following is a partial text of a speech Reynolds made at the Humanitas Awards presentation July 7, 1987. He is a trustee of the Human Family Institute.)

There must be a reason why the Humanitas Event has grown from a modest meeting of a few dozen people to this impressive congregation . . . why recipients value this prize as much as they do other prestigious awards. Maybe it's the money. Or, maybe writers appreciate the encouragement Humanitas gives them in the face of the enormous profit imperatives of our business that flatten even the most committed.

(Total of \$70,000 was awarded to writers of five tv shows.—*Ed.*)

We are head-cuffed to a numbers game which says "win or die" and we're obliged to pull every trick within and without reason to stay alive. And, because we are desperate, we look for help in all the obvious places. We roll still another car, we send more gunsels spinning to the deck, we double up on the double-entendres.

In the midst of all the pressure, Humanitas reminds us yearly that there are other values to express, other experiences to convey beyond the shocking and the sensational, that America's viewers can get something more from primetime than a quickened pulse. Because we see the rightness of the cause, we gather each year to salute the nominees for the Humanitas prizes.

As a rule, if you enter the arts as a life's work, you cannot expect to make money. The painter, the poet, the playwright follow their professions out of love, compelled to express their talents. The odds against making big money are long, except in Hollywood — where rewards can come in gross lots, even to the semi-pro.

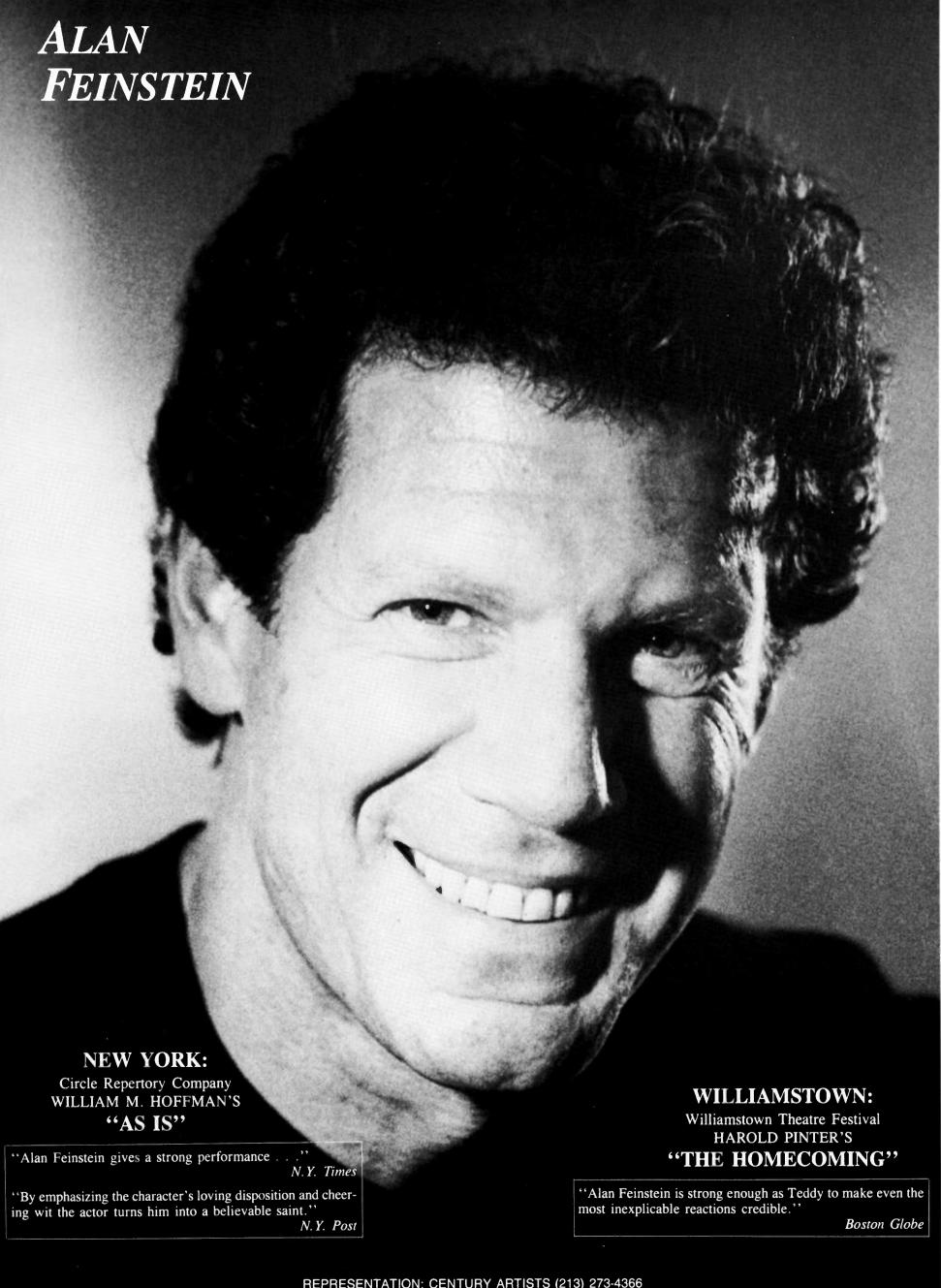
We take our salaries for granted and often let the money dictate what we do. Often, it's not how good is the material but how material is the deal. Humanitas encourages us to put a little back into the business that has treated us so generously, if not always kindly.

I don't believe writers sit down and say "This one's for Humanitas. How can I get a puppy into this show?" "If it kills me, I'm going to write something soft."

We all need to make enough to look our business manager in the eye, but I don't think the nominees, who inspired today's attendance, did it for the money. Maybe it's because they just happen to be stuck with standards, fixated at a point in their development where they cling to substantial values and a premise they can live with.

Some people, in defending "Give 'em what they want" to programming say it's not been proven that violence on the tube affects the behavior of viewers. They say people are not necessarily moved to emulate what they see on tv. If that's the case, someone should tell the big advertisers they're tossing away billions trying to get the audience to identify with the happy guy in the sports

(Continued on Page 80, Column 1)



MEDIA ART

A FRESH APPROACH TO



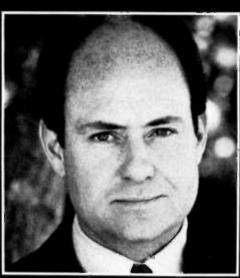
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Warren Stanhope



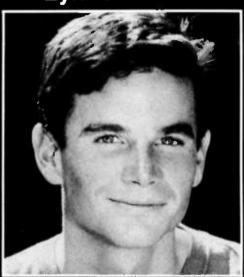
Lynne Ritchie



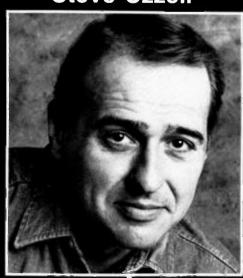
Steve Uzzell



June Chandler



Bob Pelham



Peter Sherayko



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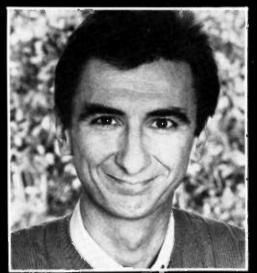
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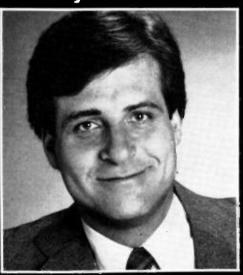
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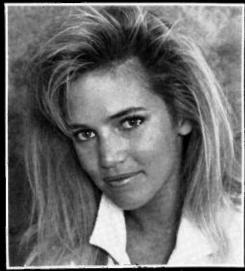
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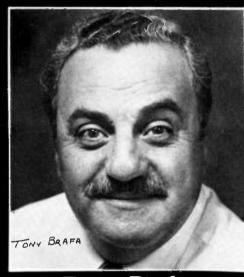
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Raymond Garcia



Jill Sanders



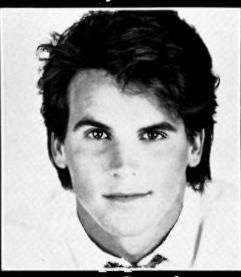
Tony Brafa



Ed Quinlan



Harry Woolf



David Brooks



Johnny Silver

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CBS Undisputed Champ In Prime-Time Ratings, Scoring 23 To 10 For NBC And 5 For ABC Over 38 Seasons

There have been 38 primetime network tv seasons, not counting 1987-88, during which programs have been rated. CBS dominates this history as sweepingly as the New York Yankees had in baseball. During one stretch, from the early 1950s into the next decade, the top rated program was on CBS for 10 seasons consecutively and 12 out of 13. Only "Wagon Train" on NBC broke this string.

During the 38 seasons of measured programs, the number-one show has been a sitcom 17 times. Surprisingly, westerns have made it to the top eight seasons, but not since "Bonanza" on NBC during the 1966-67 season.

There was a time, between the late 1950s and mid-1960s when westerns, led by "Gunsmoke," "Wagon Train" and "Bonanza" were easily among the most popular television programs in primetime. Another all but vanished program form in primetime, variety, was number one five seasons.

Soaps have made it to the top four times, and newsmagazines twice (both via "60 Minutes").

There has been one gameshow as number one, "The \$64,000 Question," and only one drama, "Marcus Welby, M.D."

(At top right is a list of top-rated programs, their network, and the season during which they were number one.)

Ella Taylor, who teaches at the University of Washington School of Communications, thinks that television, more than any other form of popular entertainment, "is relentlessly domestic." In her teachings she stresses that television "exudes the imagery of family," not only in the sitcom, but through family drama. She believes "the vast majority" of television shows are really about families, much more than they are about work or anything else.

CBS Out Front

During the 38 primetime seasons of rated programs (individual shows began to be rated by the 1949-50 season, although national ratings for all three webs didn't begin until 1956-57), be it western, sitcom, soap, newsmagazine, CBS had the top-ranked program 23 times as compared to 10 number-one shows on NBC and five on ABC.

CBS had programs in the top 10 rankings 54 times in the period 1949-50 through 1959-60, 67 times in the 1960s, 54 times in the decade of the '70s, and 38 times so far in the current decade. In every one of these periods that's far more than the other two webs.

The comparable number of top 10 programs for NBC are 47 in the '50s, 21 in the '60s, 16 in the '70s, and 16 in the '80s.

ABC had only a total of eight programs in the top 10 from 1949-50 through 1959-60, 12 in the

By MORRIE GELMAN

'60s, 31 in the '70s, and 15 to date in the 1980s.

If the analysis is extended to the top 20 programs each primetime season and the focus is on shows ranked 11 through 20, CBS still, by far, had most of the leading programs. Only in the '70s, ABC's most successful era, did CBS not have the most ranked programs in the category.

In the 1950s, CBS had 52 shows ranked 11-20 as compared to 37 for NBC and 11 for ABC.

In the 1960s, the count was 61 for CBS, 24 for NBC and 17 for ABC.

In the 1970s, ABC brought in more shows, 39, ranked in the 11-20 bracket than CBS with 37. A total of 26 shows on NBC during that decade made it to that still-successful span outside the top 10 but inside the top 20.

Even in the 1980s, with CBS supposedly in the decline, the numbers (admittedly heavily skewed by the results of the early years of the decade) seem to tell a different story.

Consistency

CBS has had programs from 1980-81 through 1986-87 that have finished in the top 20 a total of 70 times (32 of them winding up 11-20 in the rankings) as compared to ABC with 47 top 20 finishers (22 of them 11-20), and NBC with 32 shows in the top 20 (16 in the top 10 and 16 in the next 10 rankings).

(In all cases where there appear to be more shows than 20 in the rankings it's because of ties for certain positions.)

Of shows that were in the top 10 rankings the most years, all of the leaders were on CBS.

"Gunsmoke" and "60 Minutes" were the champs. They were in the top 10 among all ranked shows 10 seasons each. "MASH" was second with nine season finishes in the top 10.

Lucille Ball, identified with CBS through most of her long career, had three shows on that network that finished in the top 10 an aggregate of 11 times. They were "I Love Lucy" six times, "The Lucy Show" four times, and "Here's Lucy" once.

The only NBC program to come close to matching such long reigns at the top was "Bonanza," in the top 10 in primetime for eight seasons. But even that record was matched by still another CBS program, "The Andy Griffith Show," also top-10 ranked eight seasons. "The Red Skelton Show" and "Dallas" each were in the top 10 seven seasons. "All In The Family" was six times among the 10 leaders of the pack. "Skelton," "Dallas" and "All In The Family" were all on CBS.

NBC started off winning the rating races in the early years. Led by Milton Berle and the

"Texaco Star Theater," the top 10 rated programs in the early 1950s were mostly NBC shows (although CBS, as early as 1951-52, took the number-one ranking).

In 1950-51, for example, the top six rated programs were all on NBC and eight out of the top 10. In 1952-53, CBS, on the strength of Lucille Ball and Arthur Godfrey, had the top three rated programs, but the remaining seven in the top 10 were NBC shows. But by 1956-57, led by "I Love Lu-

(Continued on Page 74, Column 1)

Nets Prime-Time Scoreboard

	COLLINIO			COI COO	alu
Season	Program N	etwork	Season	Program	Network
	Texaco Star Theater		1968-69	Rowan & Martin's	
	Texaco Star Theater	NBC		Laugh-In	NBC
1951-52	Arthur Godfrey's		1969-70	Rowan & Martin's	
	Talent Scouts			Laugh-In	NBC
	I Love Lucy		1970-71	Marcus Welby, M.D.	ABC
1953-54	Love Lucy	CBS		All In The Family	
1954-55	Love Lucy	CBS		All In The Family	
1900-00	The \$64,000 Question	CBC		All In The Family	
1056-57	Love Lucy			All In The Family	
	Gunsmoke			All In The Family	
	Gunsmoke			Happy Days	
	Gunsmoke		1977-78	Laverne & Shirley	ABC
	Gunsmoke			Three's Company	
	Wagon Train		1979-80	60 Minutes	CBS
1962-63	The Beverly Hillbillies.	CBS		Dallas	
	The Beverly Hillbillies.			Dallas	
	Bonanza			60 Minutes	
	Bonanza			Dallas	
1966-67	Bonanza	NBC		Dynasty	
1967-68	The Andy Griffith Show	000		The Bill Cosby Show	
	Snow	CBS	1986-87	The Bill Cosby Show	NBC

Mini-Series Unique, But Overworked?

Since Webster's doesn't do it, I'll try:

Mini-Series, miniseries (Min e-sir ez); noun, compound term for type of television in multiple parts, usually broadcast on successive nights. A multi-part movie for television with a distinct beginning, middle and end. Length variable, from four to 18 hours, but finite. Subject matter usually taken from history, best-selling novel, or current true-life story. First introduced in the mid 1970s, with great success. Present status in question. Award-winning examples include "Roots," "Holocaust," "Jesus Of Nazareth," "The Thorn Birds," "Peter The "Wallenberg," Great."

We've been reading a lot lately about the death of the miniseries. The days of blockbuster ratings are over and there are no longer any guarantees that long, lavish productions will automatically attract audience interest. Rising production costs threaten to eliminate this longform unique to television. And it is unique. In no other area of the

visual arts is there the luxury of flexible length.

If a novel or

story needs four,

six or eight hours

to translate to the

screen, the mini-



series affords that possibility. And yes, we have

abused that luxury a few times, stretching where we should have condensed, probably to amortize some of those astronomically-rising costs — usually at the expense of the story. A little leeway is a dangerous thing.

Competition, also unique to television, has threatened extinction of the miniseries. The first multipart programs ran practically unopposed, airing against regular series, sometimes in reruns. Impressive tune-in encouraged us to use these special event programs during the more competitive sweeps months, since they seemed to be ratings-getters. Soon, there was a proliferation of miniseries, and they started running against one another, in the never-

By SUSAN BAERWALD Vice president miniseries and novels for television, NBC

ending quest to attract large audiences. But this backfired, diluting the numbers for minseries going head-to-head, regardless of individual quality.

"Peter The Great," and "Sins," with Joan Collins, were broadcast at the same time. "Sins" edged out with higher numbers, and "Peter The Great" got the demographically-appealing audience. Who won? They both lost.

This direct competition for an audience is television's own invention. In no other artistic endeavor is it necessary for at least two programs to fail for one to succeed: 10 good feature films can thrive during the same Summer; a dozen plays can open on Broadway the same season and survive (if they are good); one novel's success doesn't preclude publication of simultaneous best-sellers.

TV: One Chance

In television, it's all a one-shot — especially with longform. There's no time for word of mouth, for an audience to "find" a miniseries. It's here today, gone the day after tomorrow. Millions of viewers missed the first part of "Kennedy," starring Blair Brown and Martin Sheen, because it was counter-programmed by the highly-promoted three-hour movie, "The Day After."

And, of course, it isn't only competition that has killed the goose with the golden Nielsens. It is greed. Success has spawned overproduction of "special" product to the point that it isn't special anymore. Because of overexposure to "special" product, the audience is increasingly discriminating.

Ideas get worn out — generational sagas, true-life crime stories, society scandals and historical biographies come and go. Actors who at one time guaranteed a following are overused and sometimes miscast, just to ensure tune-in. There are no more guarantees.

All of this can be interpreted in a very challenging light for those of us making decisions about what to make in the miniseries area. The unique nature of miniseries demands

that what we choose to dramatize must be unusual. It should take a viewer out of his armchair into a new, unexplored territory.

If it isn't unique, we shouldn't be doing it in the miniseries area. We should be developing stimulating subject matter that can't be seen elsewhere on television, and yet it can't be so unfamiliar that it is alienating to the audience. Above all, it must entertain. Hopefully, it will also educate and enlighten.

Given the audience demand for stimulation, we can't rely on formula to guide our choices. "This worked so that should work," "fact-based stories are big sellers," "Hollywood sagas don't sell," "historical sagas are out" and "popular novels have run their course."

There should be no selection by genre. What we've found is that sometimes all of the above work in the miniseries area. Sometimes none work.

This is pretty scary. If we can't rely upon past performance because our mandate is to be different, and we have no formulas to follow because they have proven unreliable, what can we use as criteria for successful miniseries? How do we choose?

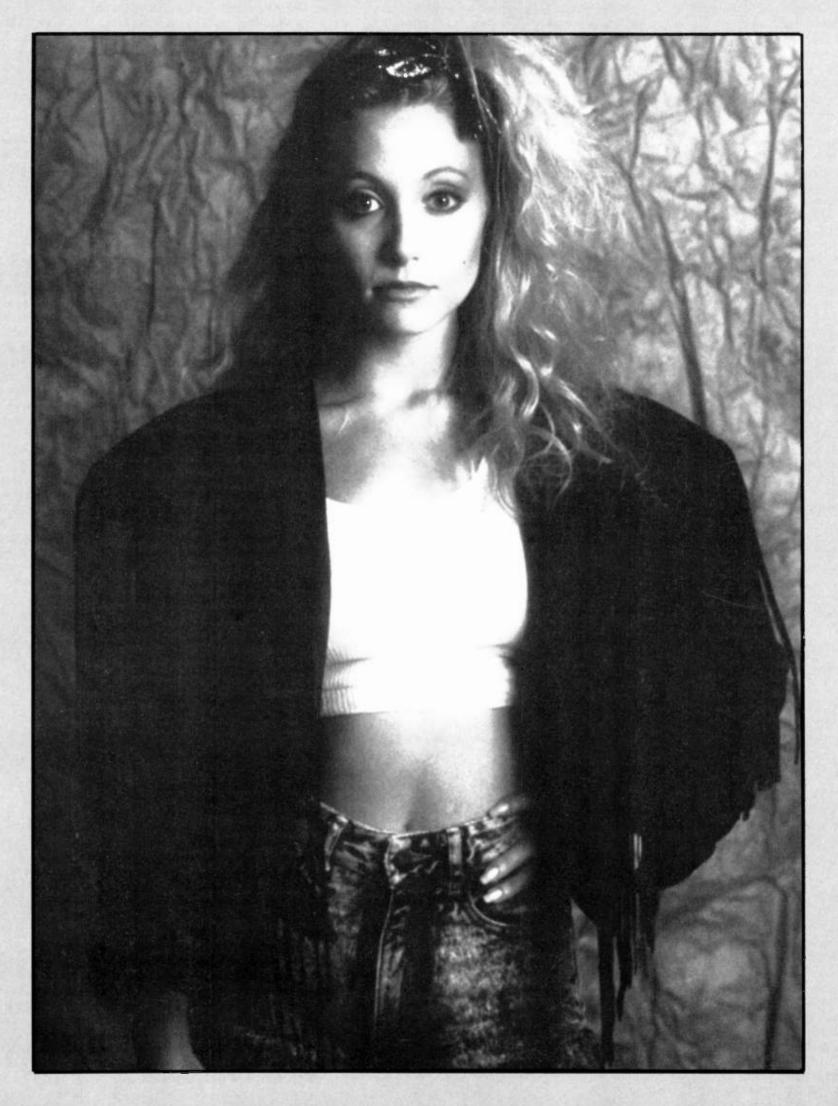
It is actually quite liberating to believe that we have no formulas to follow that guarantee success. The glut of material and talent has permitted us to rely on instinct for a good story above all, rather than on one more constricting criteria. The field is wide open.

Take the range of miniseries product this season; there is room for James Clavell's "Noble House" and Mario Puzo's "The Fortunate Pilgrim." We have scheduled one true story that took place in Atlanta in 1913 "The Ballad of Mary Phagan" and another that hit the headlines this past May, "Billionaire Boys Club." Heiress Barbara Hutton, "Poor Little Rich Girl," is the subject of one two-parter, and Abraham Lincoln is the topic of another.

With this variety evident at just one network, it is surprising to find self-censorship on the part of the producer who comes to pitch what

(Continued on Page 80, Column 5)

BRIDGET MICHELE



"RAGS TO RICHES"

PERSONAL MANAGEMENT, MAXINE & RON MARSHALL GLAZER (213) 201-0800

ed from Page 72, Column 3) cy," CBS had nine of the top 10, with only "The Perry Como Show" helping NBC from avoiding a shutout.

Though staying highly competitive into the 1960s, until "The Bill Cosby Show" went to the top of the heap in 1985-86, NBC went 15 seasons without a number-one show, the last being "Rowan & Martin's Laugh-in.

ABC didn't get a show in the top 10 until "Disneyland" during the 1954-55 season (it was sixth ranked). The first of various primetime Disney programs under several different titles on all three webs, it had a 29-season run and is credited with being the longest-running primetime series.

The first ABC show to make it to the top rung of the primetime ratings was "Marcus Welby, M.D." 15 seasons later. No other drama (if soaps with a continuing storyline, such as "Dallas" and "Dynasty," are not considered) has made it to the top in prime-

The best run ABC had at the top spot in ratings was from the midto-late 1970s. For three consecutive seasons, ABC had the toprated program, oddly, with three different sitcoms. "Happy Days" was number one during 1976-77, "Laverne & Shirley" in 1977-78 and "Three's Company" in 1978-79

Immediately prior to that ABC winning streak, "All In The Family" on CBS was first five successive seasons. That's better than

CBS Undisputed Champ In Prime-Time

'Gunsmoke's' four in a row, "Lucy's" and "Bonanza's"

The "Cavalcade Of Stars" was the only series ever to make the top 10, or even top 20, list of primetime programs that wasn't on ABC or CBS or NBC. Hosted by Jack Carter, Jackie Gleason and Larry Storch, the variety program was on the Dumont network from January 1950 until September 1952.

Decade-by-decade, in terms of the leading program, the 1950s were dominated by "Texaco Star Theater," "I Love Lucy" and "Gunsmoke." The longest-running primetime series with continuing characters, "Gunsmoke" stretched over three decades, starting in 1955-56 and completing its run in 1974-75.

The leaders during the 1960s were "The Beverly Hillbillies," "Bonanza" and "Laugh-in."

It was no contest in the '70s. "All In The Family" probably had more impact on that decade of American television than any program on any other decade. The ABC sitcoms, at the end of the 70s, also were influential.

In the 1970s as well, "MASH," which ran from 1972 until September 1983, was easily one of television's most popular programs of all time. But "MASH" never made it to the top. It was close, third in 1979-80 and tied for third in 1982-83, but no cigar. Similarily, "The Mary Tyler Moore Show" in the '70s is wellremembered and revered, but the show's highest ranking was a number seven in the 1972-73 sea-

In the 1980s, so far, soaps, namely "Dallas" and "Dy-' took the number-one position four out of the first five years, with only "60 Minutes" breaking that pattern.

But now there's the "Cosby Show" as number one for the last two seasons, giving promise of the longest run yet.

Washington U.'s Taylor has spent several years watching tv, particularly tv shows from the 1950s, 1960s, 1970s, and now, of course, the 1980s. Her speciality is the interpretation of the different ways in which television has addressed itself to family life.

In a brilliant presentation earlier this year in Ojai, Calif., at a "Television, Familes And Work" three-day conference conducted by the National Council for Families & Television, Taylor made the point that primetime television never has been realistic in its sitcom portravals.

She said there were never families in real life like the Cleavers in "Leave It To Beaver" or the Nelsons in "Ozzie & Harriet" or the Andersons in "Father Knows Best" or certainly not like the Clampetts in "The Beverly Hill-

She includes as being nonrealistic the Bunkers in "All In The Family" and the Romanos in "One Day At A Time" of the '70s and the Huxtables in "The Bill Cosby Show" and the Keatons in "Family Ties" in the current decade.

'Like all forms of storytelling," she pointed out, "television completes what is incomplete in our lives. That's what storytelling is there for, and that's why people go to storytellers."

What Taylor emphasized is that viewers don't go to the tv set the storyteller — to gain an image of real life.

"That's why we don't see too many tv shows called "Assembly Line" or "Middle Manager" or 'Keypunch,' a miniseries, she explained. Her analysis of each decade in primetime television begins with the 1950s and with shows such as "Ozzie & Harriet," "Leave It To Beaver" and "Father Knows Best."

Such shows, in her opinion, didn't reflect the reality of the time which was a period when the divorce rates began to rise sharply. If Martians came to America at that time and watched tv, Taylor conjectured, they would have thought of America as a society consisting of a huge affluent white middle class.

This was in dramatic contrast, she pointed out, to the earliest primetime tv shows such as "The Goldbergs," "Lugi" and "Amos

& Andy," as a few examples.

What the later '50s shows represented, Taylor said, is not so much the reality of the typical American family at that time but "a postwar ideology of optimism.

The shows symbolized the American dream. She said "they enveloped a vast middle class white America with a family conceived very benignly as the essential building block between the individual and the relatively benign society.

She contended that there was no sense of conflict between the individual, the family and the society, but, instead, "they were all meshed together," with corporate America getting a very good im-

Taylor argues that one of the key reasons viewers saw benign white middle class families is that television programmers were going after a mass audience, looking to attract as many eyeballs as possible.

The trend in family sitcoms continued into the 1960s, according to the Taylor study, encompassing such programs as "The Donna Reed Show," "The Beverly Hillbillies" and finally "The Dick Van Dyke Show.'

The big break, in her view, came with "All In The Family," which she cites as setting forth "a much more fractious, conflictridden, confrontative family

"All In The Family," she be-(Continued on Page 80, Column 4)



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Tell someone you're a struggling actor and they'll probably smile and act impressed on the outside and chuckle on the inside. Isn't everyone in Los Angeles trying to make it into showbiz?

Telling someone you're a struggling writer is another matter.

Glamor is not something that's associated with being a writer. Consider the thousands of anonymous scripters who face blank space and fill it with what they believe are creative words and images that speak commerciality and audience appeal.

Writers sit alone a lot, enfused with the hope that at the end of their project, someone — not just a friend — will read it and, more importantly, buy it.

Hollywood needs writers, it's a plea heard all over town — from studios, indie prods, agents and even from other writers.

Who hasn't heard there's a dearth of fresh material — it's what inspires hundreds of people to give screenwriting a whirl. And almost every one of them will tell you that the elation of being able to register a first script at the

There's A Writer Inside Wanting Out

Writers' Guild is rarely equalled.

But as most writers only too soon find out, writing the Great American Screen Story is arduous. Chances of selling it — or more impossibly, having it produced — is about on par with winning the California lottery.

Perhaps more so than with actors, who can make a name for themselves on stage first, screenwriters who are not published in another medium almost certainly must have connections somewhere in the industry to get their material read.

It appears that contacts make all the difference. Writers just have to have a relative in the business, or know someone who works somewhere and has some influence with either a producer, a studio exec or an agent. The guy in the mailroom — forget the folklore — is just not going to be much help.

But countless writers can't even get beyond this first hurdle. There have been enough suits filed over stolen story ideas that most proBy JANE GALBRAITH

ducers, and certainly all the major studio story departments, won't even touch unrepresented manuscripts.

So what does a writer do who is out there in the hinterland (which could include pounding the keys in Hollywood) if you're a nobody screenwriter.

There are always agents listed with the Writers Guild who will agree to open that envelope that's been sealed lovingly by a budding talent. No risk to them and, unfortunately, diminished hopes for the writer.

"Let's face it, most of it's awful," said one such agent.

Put It On Paper

But it is that script which is the screenwriter's calling card and there's no way around it. Any writer who thinks he's a writer has to have a writing sample.

"It has to be the riskiest, most personal script that shows (the writer's talent) in the best light," said UCLA screenwriting professor Richard Walter. "Without one, you're nowhere. With one, you may ... get somewhere."

Walter represents one avenue for budding writers to get their stuff read — as the academic Hollywood broker.

UCLA, where he's been for 10 years, and many other schools with ties to the industry — including closest rival, the University of Southern California, as well as New York University, Columbia University and to a lesser degree, Stanford University — are current favorites for filmmakers to turn to for fresh, well-conceived and thought-out scripts.

Walter boasts that students in his program are sought after by power agencies such as International Creative Management, Creative Artists Agency and William Morris and, in fact, two-thirds of UCLA's graduate screenwriting students have been signed by these and other Hollywood talent agencies.

Getting into a program like UCLA's is another matter. Walter said 19 out of 20 applicants are turned down each year for 15 available spots. The deciding factor, a "great" writing sample, not necessarily a screenplay, is crucial for getting into the program.

"We can really hone a writer's skill here, but it doesn't mean a damn if the material is no good," he said. "We know how to encourage them and scold them, but we can't give them talent."

A couple of major factors have led Hollywood to increasingly turn to academia: looking to students for material that appeals to the crucial youth market — who comprise the majority of ticket buyers — and the lower cost of buying material and ideas from the neophythe scripter not yet spoiled by his or her own success.

First scripts can be optioned for anywhere from \$10,000, while selling a screenplay can bring a writer six figures.

Walter is quick to point out some of his more successful graduates, such as Gregory Widen, who wrote and got an "A" on his script "Shadow Clan," can score unbelievably well. Widen's first effort sold to Twentieth Century Fox for \$300,000 and was released under the title, "Highlander."

Without mentioning names, he'll also tell you that scripters who made it big too fast find themselves with a swollen head and no work. "You can tell them and they still don't get it, until reality sets in. Standing around and waiting for the telephone to ring is not what's happening. Writers have to write."

Other Ways To Go

While Walter claims he can call anyone who's anyone in town (mentioning Walt Disney Studios chairman Jeffrey Katzenberg by name) and get them to read an unrepresented script he thinks is fantastic, he is only one teacher representing a small number of writers.

Other writers, including other students, find their route to success a lot more circuitous.

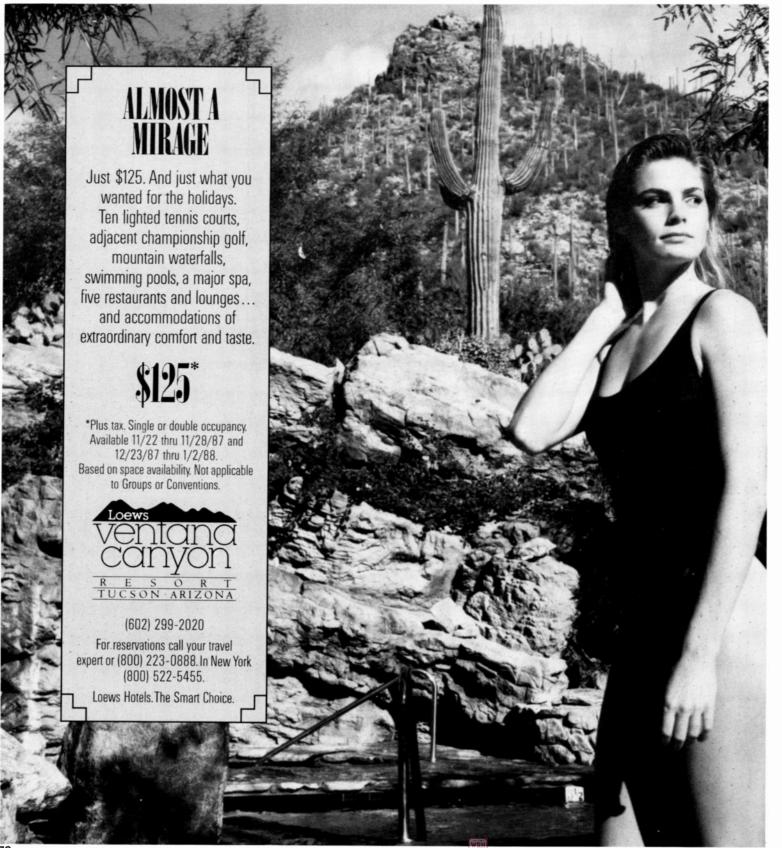
Jeb Stuart left North Carolina for Stanford's screenwriting program with a masters degree in mass media. He had an idea for a screenplay, a dark drama where a serial killer is the central figure — hardly the upbeat, comedic stuff that comprises much of what producers are looking for today.

With financial support courtesy of a Nicholl Fellowship in Screenwriting, which is administered by the Academy Foundation of the Academy of Motion Picture Arts & Sciences, Stuart took a year and finished "Going West."

Although he and fellow Stanford classmates were admonished at the beginning of their program never to pitch any of the visiting lecturers from Hollywood, Stuart's script found its way into the hands of one of the industry's most powerful and venerated agents, ICM's Ben Benjamin.

It turned out that Stanford's screenwriting director, Julian Blaustein, a former 20th Fox and MGM producer, had forwarded the script to Benjamin to read.

(Continued on Page 78, Column 1)





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WRITERS IN LIMBO

(Continued from Page 76, Column 5)
Both are involved in the Nicholl Fellowship program.

It was a good enough writing talent for Benjamin to call Katzenberg and ask him to read the script which was not, as he'll tell you, his practice for novice screenwriters. "I've been around so long, I seem to have read it all before. Besides, almost anything dealing with violence, drugs, sex turns me off, and that's what's selling today.

"But I'm not so set in my ideas that I won't read something, or be crazy about the writer, if the script I'm asked to read holds my attention ... and I hadn't read a first-time draft in a very long time by a student whose talent approximated Stuart's."

Benjamin not only signed Stuart, he got him a job with "Going West." Katzenberg didn't buy the script, but bought the writer and Stuart soon found himself transplanted to Southern California with a two-year writing agreement at Disney.

Yes And No

"Going West" was optioned, and later dropped, at Columbia. He's now at Fox doing two screen adaptations of published novels and has a second ICM agent, Jeremy Zimmer, handling his "day-to-day" deals. He's also done rewrites for both Paramount and De Laurentiis.

But as yet, no screen credits.

What allays Stuart's frustration about achieving "that quantum leap" is compensation — getting paid increasingly better the more work he's hired to write, adapt, or rewrite. "I get off on writing, not making deals or talking on the phone or having, excuse me, doing lunch," he said. "Not that I don't get off on hearing a project is a 'go.'"

Stuart eschews the Hollywood lifestyle, preferring to live a more genteel writers existence with his Macintosh, wife and two small children in suburban Pasadena.

Jeff and LeAnn Lantos are on the second rung of the screenwriting ladder — the on-theverge-of-making another step. Unlike the most highly-publicized student writers who seemed to gain immediate access to the right people, the Lantos' went to school (AFI) to learn screenwriting and then quickly faded into obscurity from filmdom.

But if there's anything these two will tell you about themselves, it is that they continued to write: satire, magazine pieces, newspaper features, and even (for LeAnn) fashion profiles.

For Jeff, who among other jobs worked as an overnight emergency room admissions clerk and wrote during the darkest hours, it was the beginning of a long, heart-wrenching road to getting on some producer's payroll.

Not that he'll tell you it's been all that bad. "I didn't want to have a (flunky) day job in the industry and write at night. I have always felt that having these life experiences is the best source for gathering material for story ideas."

It was one such piece that ran in the L.A. Weekly that brought an agent to call Jeff. The piece was a spoof about how a desperate screenwriter got a script to a producer — by laying it on the producer's dead father's chest at the poor man's funeral.

It so impressed the agent, he asked to sign Jeff for representation. (He agreed.)

Although his first script, "Burgers" — a send-up of Mc-Donald's founder Ray Kroc a la "Citizen Kane" — was read "everywhere" but never went beyond the option phase, Lantos, now with LeAnn and writing partner Jeff Levin, are in three development deals where they are writing at least three more scripts.

The Pay Counts

And, for the first time in several years, they have gotten to the point where they will actually be paid before they finish writing a script.

"You're not at someone's else mercy, but you get well paid," LeAnn said.

There is a great chasm between the Stuarts and Lantoses of the writing world and the truly isolated scripter, the chasm being the black hole that separates Mr. or Ms. Novice screenwriter who has no, as in zero, connections anywhere in town.

Agents like the Lantos' Jeff White represent only skilled writers, most of whom have other experience as journalists or fiction writers or playwrights. White is the kind to read a short story in The New Yorker or Paris Review and call the writer, or their literary agent, to see if Hollywood has any appeal for them.

"I won't take any new writers' work," he said. "If you take cold submissions, you'd mostly be reading poor material. My feeling is, I'll take a polished writer from another medium any day."

White's no fan of film students' work, either.

"A lot of them who come out of

film school, whose only experience is academic training with a background in tv watching. They write formula stuff that's not from experience. Some can make it as tv writers, but there's a real leap to feature writing," he said. "But I'll grant you, there's a lot more work (for writers) in tv."

One of 15 writers on White's roster is former Christian Science Monitor journeyman Fred Hunter whose "The Hemingway Play" was produced on PBS in the late 1970s and who had a teleplay, "Nazi Hunter: The Beate Klarsfeld Story," produced for ABC-TV last year.

White also represents a Harvard MBA and several writers who've been writing fiction for 20 years.

So where does that leave the

would-be screenwriter with no previous writing experience and no friends in the "the biz?"

In addition to certain agents listed with the WGA, the AFI Alumni Writers Workshop program will for \$150 analyze a scripter's work for possible development and recommendation to a Hollywood agent.

In the three years of its existence, the workshop has received about 1200 scripts from nearly every state in the union. Out of that, two have been made into features and 35 have been optioned.

Workshop director Willard Rogers doesn't believe in discouraging writers. "There are many great stories out there and Hollywood is always in need of new ones," he believes.

THE PHONES

The phones, the phones, They've turned us into drones; The ringing and the buzzing Is embedded in our bones.

We find ourselves ambivalent,
The quivering equivalent
Of schizophrenic zombies
When we contemplate the phones.
We hate them when they're ringing,
Hate the turn-downs they keep bringing
And the constant interruptions
From a score or more unknowns.

Yet the instant there's defection
In the Hollywood connection
And the system is announced as being down,
We assault the panic button
Like a bankrupt E.F. Hutton;
Hit the sauce,
For we have lost
The whole damn town.

You would think our lives depended On our reaching Universal, Or catching Sly or Julio At some out-of-town rehearsal. But what do we wind up with? The ever dulcet tones of Stonewall Secretary, The Guardian of The Phones. "With what is it regarding?" "Will he know what it's about?" "Perhaps I might be helpful." "I'm sorry but he's out." JUST PUT ME THROUGH, DAMMIT! Is what you'd like to shout; It's so damnably demeaning, It reduces all your clout To the low of Warren Harding. (You've heard of him, no doubt? The only U.S. President To have his manly way With a female of the species In a phone booth 'cross the way.)

And then, of course, there's still the pain, The saddest tale yet told; You know the one, the voice that's trained In one repulsive mold, The one that knows but two curt words: "Please hold — Please hold — Please hold!" Please hold for Mr. Ego Trip; You wait and sulk and mutter, Defeated by the bitter fact That he's your bread and butter; And best you keep your temper down Lest she should hear you splutter.

But stay, still more is yet to come, Eight words to leave us all struck dumb: "Could I have you spell your name again?" "R - E - A - G - A - N!"

Dan Jenkins



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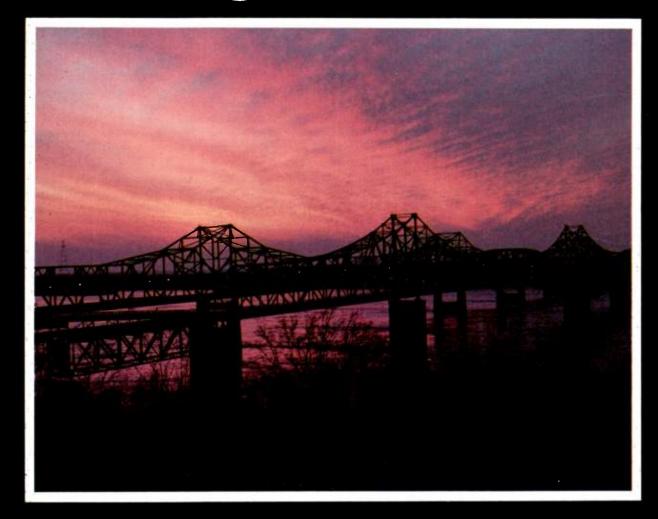
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(Continued from Page 68, Column 5)

car, or with the beautiful woman moving swiftly up Fifth Avenue. If the sales job works between the acts why should it stop when the show resumes?

There is the mistaken belief, although it is not openly defended, that meaningful material doesn't sell. The tendency is, when the ratings get thin, out of cynicism and contempt for the viewer, to reach for lethal weapons. Unfortunately, it is not always true that quality sells - but it can. It can garner numbers as well as give audiences something to chew on. Stories of substance are victims of discrimination when rejected for more obvious stuff.

Granted, we are not in the business of delivering intellectual concepts. We deal in emotional experiences. Our stories must be moving and we must touch the viewer not just argue a case. Our

HUMANITAS AWARDS: More To Life Than Numbers

plays must be sensual as well as rational.

Humanitas does not advocate the abandonment of tension, confrontation, jeopardy, or rising conflict. In addition to these elements that make a story cook, Humanitas looks for some insight into the complexity, ambiguity, and wonder of the human personality.

I have always loved the movies of Jean Renoir. Like few other directors, the character of the man is expressed on the screen. You can see his hand in the way his actors relate to one another, the small moments of observing, connecting, communicating. There was always time in his films for an experience, an experience that lasted in the heart of the viewer forever.

I think it's fitting that the direc-

tors who did such good work in fulfilling the scripts are here today, and that we recognize the producers who collaborated with the writers in developing these unusual themes. And we can thank the actors for insightful performances that have helped realize the values of these plays.

The nominees have found the moments. They have taken their chances and used them to express something unique and personal. It's the way they have dealt with behavior, the sensitivity they have applied to delicate issues that has moved us.

So much of television literature denies emotion, disguises human need beneath cool indifference and exaggerated masculinity instead of peeling away, revealing uncertainty, vulnerability, giving us a chance to dramatize mature courage.

We recognize we are in a field of popular programming. For the most part, the literature is not serious but its far-reaching impact is serious. So, we argue each point, negotiate every line with an eve to consistency and reality.

And we are not alone. We have allies on the other side of the table interested in enriching the product. Our employers are obsessed

with the numbers, but they, too, are in attendance today, aware of the goals of Humanitas, seeking to find a way to accommodate commerce and art. We are all trying

The nominees have done it. They have given us shows that gained immediate attention and also made a lasting impression. Their stories give us hope for a rational world ... stories that not only show man in conflict with bad guys and bad fortune but reveal a faith in his dignity and his perfectability.

CBS Ratings Champ

(Continued from Page 74, Column 5) lieves, together with its spinoffs and clones, were mostly questioning what it means to be family, in response to what Taylor still thinks is "the enormous amount of anxiety among families today."

Domestic life shows in the 1970s, she said, were about families that were fractured or broken up altogether, or reconstituted or deeply in trouble. The only exceptions she could find were "The Waltons" and "Little House On The Prairie," both of which, in her opinion, were "highly nostalgic throwbacks to an era which never happened."

Taylor also noted the number of shows in the '70s that were set in the workplace, citing "The Mary Tyler Moore Show," "Lou Grant,' ' "Taxi" and "Barney Miller.' However, such shows weren't primarily about work at all, Taylor said, but about relationships which strongly resembled the kinds of family life viewers wished they had and were missing.

She described such relationships as being solidarity, loyal, with people who never let you down. Most of the emotional satisfactions for Mary, Lou Grant, the detective squad in "Barney Miller" and Judd Hirsch as Alex Reiger in "Taxi" came from within their work families.

In the '80s, Taylor sees a return to "a highly structured, intact family," as personified by "Cosby," "Family Ties" and "Growing Pains." She argues forcibly that there's "a real disjuncture" between what tv viewers are experiencing in real life and what tv programs about family life are offering

Cosby Reality

She especially finds the "Cosby Show" troubling because it presents a reality "where it's very easy to tell the difference between right or wrong." She described "Cosby" as "a kind of 'Father Knows Best'-or else mentality.'

In general, with the exception of a few current shows, Taylor thinks much of what was fresh and innovative and lively about television in the past, particularly the '70s, "is being killed off by a rather bellowing fundamental-

The exceptions she cited were "The Days And Nights Of Molly Dodd," "Max Headroom," "Hill Street Blues" and "Cagney & Lacey.'

Mini-Series

(Continued from Page 72, Column 5)

he or she thinks "the network" wants to hear.

I am constantly surprised that the creative community assumes that the network executive in longform has a pre-ordained pattern of desirable product and that the magic formula will be revealed at a get-toknow-you lunch where the question is inevitably asked: "What are you looking for?"

I am equally amazed when I hear stories about overall assumptions made by studio and production company executives about "what the network is looking for," or conversely, "the network isn't interested in that ..."

What the absence of guarantees has given us is freedom. Let's not make assumptions about what works and what doesn't. Let's mutually seek out good stories and see if we share enthusiasm about a project. What we should be developing in the miniseries area are good stories, regardless of time and setting. Fas-

(Continued on Page 88, Column 4)

Independents Still Leading The Way

(Continued from Page 68, Column 5)

but on the whole the series output has been dismal in quality. When about 50 series are canceled each season, one doesn't need to be an expert to sense there is understandable insecurity among many

Ironically, all this is coming about at a time when networks are renewing series which by normal standards would never get another chance. Networkers are shy about the reasons for such actions, but the main motive could be a dearth of good pilots. When some of those unsold pilots are seen on the air during the Summer months, it bears out such suspicions. Most are terrible.

But in tv there are beneficiaries of mediocrity. When a network's

development is subpar, series ranked low in the Nielsens survive. It's a somewhat discouraging set-your-sights-lower practice, hardly conducive to better programming.

Taking the seasonal numbers, here are some examples of the series which died in the Nielsens, but won renewals:

'MacGyver'' (ABC) 50th; "Max Headroom" (ABC) 65th; "St. Elsewhere" (NBC) 67th; "Crime Story" (NBC) 69th; "Our House" (NBC) 71st; "Disney Sunday Movie" (ABC) 74th; "Spenser: For Hire" (ABC) 81st; "Ohara" (ABC) 82d; "The Charmings" (ABC) 85th; 'Sledge Hammer'' (ABC) 87th.

In normal times, producers of such series would consider their

shows doomed, lost in the annual battle for the Nielsens. But the quirks of network tv are such these days that losers are winners. True, they do not command large audiences, but somehow that has become a mere technicality

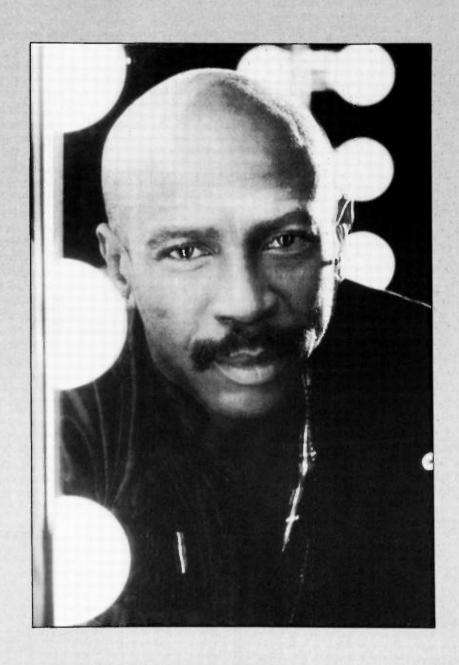
And so it is that the suppliers, particularly the tv majors, have an ample supply of alibis for the rough, tough times, ranging from 'conspiracy' to market conditions. But all that really matters is that they come up with quality series. When that occurs, which is seldom, it's the answer to all these problems. However, far more attention is paid these days to cost-cutting, to shooting in Canada or wherever it's cheaper, than to concentrate on creative elements which spell quality and hits.

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On a sparse stage five women drew on their well of selfcontrol in an effort to keep from bursting into tears of anticipation. Suddenly a mustachioed man with gleaming eyes pointed at one of them and cried out: "I now pronounce you queen for a day!"

The stage erupted into a frenzy of tears. The chosen housewife was crowned with a rhinestone tiara and draped in an ermine-edged robe. A dozen long-stemmed roses were stuffed into her astonished arms. Household appliances were laid at her feet, their chrome facings shining in supplication.

Hot Ticket

By now a good portion of American tv viewers were awash in salt water as well. In an era where television voyeurism was still in its infancy, "Queen For A Day" was the hottest ticket in town.

Now, 24 years after its original run, the team of Barry and Enright are tackling the problem of bringing back the venerable "Queen" and sprucing her up to appeal to today's home audience.

This is, after all, the 1980s and women are no longer likely to burst into tears at the thought of a washer and dryer. Also gone are the days when America would be glued to the tube while sob sisters poured out horrifying tales of woe. Now if the public wants a vicarious heartache, all they have to do is turn on the evening news.

And although m.c. Jack Baily was a veritable heartthrob of the

New Life For 'Queen For A Day'?

1950s, his carnival barker style has been replaced by the more subtle style of Pat Sajak and John Davidson.

Needless to say, its going to be a tough go.

But Dan Enright has a new angle for the old royal. The show, instead of focusing on the sob stories of housewives, is going to take a more philanthropic turn and seek out those with more contemporary focus.

Instead of overwrought housewives the new half-hour version of the show will feature foster parents, AIDS workers, or even AIDS victims, Enright said. "We're not going to emotionally manipulate the audience," he added. "We're going to show people and situations that the audience can relate to and feel empathy for."

Royalty Restored

Working with Harry Mynatt, veepee of Queen for a Day Inc. and a former producer of the show, and Raymond Morgan Jr., president of Queen for a Day Inc. and son of the program's creator, Enright thinks the new formula will bring back tv's royalty in style.

"Harry and I met and we agreed we would avoid the sob story angle," said Enright. "We also agreed that the show should not be

By KIM MITCHELL

a Los Angeles show, that it should be representative of the entire nation "

But, as Mynatt points out, that is not an entirely new idea. The original "Queen" was frequently on the road — traveling to military bases, cities and even Naval vessels on occasion. It was one of the first shows to originate from cities throughout the country for a week at a time.

"It's not easy to take a project like this on," Enright said. "There is a lot of history behind this show."

Those Were The Days

While many people today know "Queen" primarily as a target of comics and college lampoons, it should be pointed out that at one time it was the most popular show on daytime television.

"Queen" began in radio in 1945. It made the move to television in 1955 when NBC carried it. By April it was daytime tv's biggest hit and by July NBC did the unheard of, it expanded the show to a 45-minute format.

Only about 15 minutes of the 45 minutes were left for the actual show. Nearly a half hour of the show consisted of plugs and commercials.

In 1959 "Queen" made the

jump from NBC to ABC, where it ran until 1964.

"And just because of its phenomenal commercial and popular success, a close look at this program, I am convinced, reveals with shining clarity the essential sobering truth about radio and tv in these United States," Howard Blake, the show's producer, wrote in 1966.

Blake's memories of the show

are less than flattering. "The most needy and deserving usually had to be dumped," Blake is quoted as saying in "TV Turkeys." "A candidate had to want something we could plug. A stove, a carpet an airplane trip, an artificial leg, a detective agency, a year's supply of baby food and the

provide the best entertainment."

But Mynatt remembers a different "Queen," one that helped people who truly were in need and provided entertainment for an entire nation

reason she needed whatever it was

Fun Time

"It was a wonderful time and we had so much fun doing the show," he recalls. "It was a Cinderella story every day." Frequently, he said, celebrities and the wealthy would call the show's producers with offers of financial help to one of the runners up. It spawned a lot of good feelings for many people," he said. "It was

one of the most wonderful experiences of my life."

In its 20 years the show crowned more than 5000 and granted wishes totaling more than \$21,000,000. The show was so popular that an Australian version was telecast daily for more than four hours, while the television program pulled solid ratings perennially in Mexico and Puerto Rico.

Host Sought

Currently the team is looking for someone to host the show, which will be offered for network or firstrun syndication.

Enright said it is difficult to search for a host whose profile would rival that of former host Jack Baily — a former department store salesman and carnival barker. Baily's style was alternately forceful and sympathetic. He certainly knew how to get his would-be royals, as well as the audience, into an emotional state. He never, however, lost control of either.

"Without a doubt the toughest thing we face at this juncture is finding a host," Enright said. "Jack Baily cannot be replaced. You need someone who is empathetic and who can invoke laughter as well as poignancy."

The producers have been interviewing numerous candidates for the job and hope that they will have a host — and a cohostess — named in the next month or so, Mynatt said.

Meanwhile, those who would (Continued on Page 90, Column 4)

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MANN THEATRES CORPORATION
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SCOREBOARD: Telefare Vs. Theatricals

This chart pits the three networks head-to-head in ratings results for their theatrical pix, telefilm and multiparter presentations during the '86-87 season.

Note in particular the success of each network in winning half-hours with these types of programs. The "Percentage Of Half Hours In First Place," a figure calculated by *Daily Variety*, demonstrates exactly how effectively each program is doing what it's supposed to do — attracting a larger audience than the competing programming in its timeslot.

Also note the comparison between that percentage and the comparable figure for '85-86, showing how much progress has been made, or ground lost, since last year.

	Average	No. Of		No. Of Half Hours	% Of Half Hours In 1st Place	Rating Change From
Network	Rating/Share	Titles	Half Hours	In 1st Place	This Season/('85-86)	'85-86
TELEFILMS						
ABC	13.2/21	24	98	12	.122(.181)	-13%
CBS	14.5/24	59	242	57	.236(.361)	-10%
NBC	19.1/29	33	136	63	.463(.254)	+ 4%
Three-Network Totals	15.5/25	116	476	132	.277(.294)	- 8%
THEATRICAL	FILMS					
ABC	14.4/23	20	89	6	.067(.106)	- 1%
CBS	12.8/21	14	63	10	.159(.080)	+ 2%
NBC	16.6/27	13	57	7	.123(.148)	- 4%
Three-Network Totals	14.5/23	47	209	23	.110(.106)	even
MULTIPARTE	RS					
ABC	17.8/27	9	39	16	.410(.500)	-18%
CBS	18.1/28	19	68	27	.397(.768)	-14%
NBC	17.0/27	16	64	24	.375(.333)	- 6%
Three-Network Totals	17.6/27	44	171	678	.392(.572)	-14%

Nielsen Telefilm Ratings

These are Nielsen ratings for the telefilms aired by the three networks during the 1986-87 season. (Note that all two-parter vidpix are not included here, but are listed as multiparters.)

Tialo	Dotin-/Chassa	Total	Half Hours	Doto Aire
Title ABC	Rating/Share	Hair Hours	In 1st Place	Date Aired
1. "Dolly Parton:				
A Smoky Mountain Christmas''	23.2/35	4	4	12/14
2. "Easy Prey"	18.5/29	4	2	10/26
3. "Daddy"	17.1/25	4	0	4/4
4. "Infidelity"	16.8/27	4	3	4/13
5. "Fight For Life"	16.2/26	4	1	3/23
6. "Sworn To Silence"	16.1/24	4	0	4/6
7. "The Last Fling"	15.9/23	4	0	2/9
8. "The Betty Ford Story"	13.9/20	4	0	3/2
9. "Her Secret Life"	13.7/21	4	0	4/12
"Nazi Hunter:	1011121	·	· ·	
The Beate Klarsfeld Story''	13.7/21	4	0	11/23
11. "Love Among Thieves"	13.2/21	4	ő	2/23
"Love Thy Neighbor"(R)	13.2/21	4	2	12/29
13. "On Fire"	12.8/20	4	0	1/5
14. "There Must Be A Pony"	12.6/19	4	ő	10/5
15. "Wet Gold"(R)	12.5/20	4	0	12/21
	12.4/19	4	0	1/12
16. "Night Of Courage"		4	0	2/2
17. "Tonight's The Night"	11.9/19	4	U	212
18. "The Night They Saved	10.7/25	4	0	12/24
Christmas''(R)	10.7/25	4	0	
19. "Casanova"	10.3/15	6	0	3/1
20. "Through Naked Eyes"	9.3/15	4	0	3/20
21. "We Are The Children"	9.1/14	4	0	3/16
22. "Destination America"	8.8/15	4	0	4/3
23. "Dark Mirror"(R)	8.6/15	4	0	4/10
24. "Waco & Rhinehart"	7.4/13	4	0	3/27
CBS				
1. "Escape From Sobibor"	21.4/34	6	6	4/12
2. "Still Crazy Like A Fox"	21.2/31	4	4	4/5
3. "A Stranger Waits"	20.9/33	4	4	3/29
4. "The Christmas Gift"	20.2/33	4	3	12/21
5. "Of Pure Blood"	20.0/30	4	0	10/19
6. "High Mountain Ranger"	19.6/32	4	4	4/19
"Women Of Valor"	19.6/32	4	2	11/23
8. "The Promise"	19.5/29	4	Õ	12/14
9. "Deadly Deception"	19.2/30	4	0	3/8
10. "Deadly Care"	18.6/31	4	4	3/22
11. "Who Is Julia?"	18.4/29	4	3	10/26
12. "Something In Common"	18.2/29	4	4	11/2
12. 'Murders In The Due Mercus'	17.7/27	4	1	12/7
13. "Murders In The Rue Morgue"		4	0	10/14
14. "Miles To Go"	16.5/26			1/14
15. "American Harvest"	16.4/27	4	2 2	11/25
16. "That Secret Sunday"	16.1/26 tinued on Page 84, Colu	•	2	11/23

RATINGS GAME:

Telefilms, Theatrical Pix Strong Factors In Putting NBC Atop The Nielsens

By TOM BIERBAUM

It takes more than series programming to win a ratings season, as NBC-TV has proven for a second year in a row.

While it's true that NBC's series programmers have outperformed their counterparts at the competing networks over those two seasons, the Peacock web's telefilm and theatrical pic staffs deserve much of the credit for the network's first-place standing, as, for the second year in a row, NBC has dominated both of those categories as well.

And NBC's rising dominance in the telefilm category may rank as the single most overlooked ingredient in its rise to primetime leadership. NBC has now led the vidpic category for the third straight year, and this time with the best rating and best percentage of first-place half-hours since ABC's phenomenal '83-84 season (which included ''The Day After'' and ''Something About Amelia'').

NBC's ability to outgun the competition in the telefilm area has been especially important in recent seasons, since the number of vidpix aired is climbing upward, while the number of theatrical pix on the schedule is rapidly eroding.

Narrow Margin

Back in '83-84, vidpix only narrowly outnumbered theatricals — 87 to 75. But by '86-87, the comparison has taken on lopsided proportion — 116 telefilms versus 47 motion pictures.

If NBC has an Achilles heel, it's multipart programming. The network has now been last in that category three of the last four years, and this past season reported the worst average multiparter rating for any network in at least four seasons.

But ABC and CBS failed to capitalize on NBC's weakness in the multiparter category, suffering considerably larger drops, compared to a year ago, than did NBC.

That made it a disastrous year for multiparters — the average rating for all three webs dropped by 14%, and the percentage of half-hours won by multipart programming was sliced by nearly one third, from .572 to .392.

On the series side, an analysis of how often each series wins its timeslot, how often it places second, and how often it finishes last, points out the critical importance of building powerful schedules. This analysis makes use of an "average score" — 3.00 for a show that never lost its slot, 2.00 for a show that, on the average, finished second, and 1.00 for a show that always finished last.

And every series that finished the regular season among the top 15 on the "average score" list comes from either the NBC Thursday lineup, the NBC Saturday team, the CBS Sunday schedule or the ABC Tuesday lineup. The top show not from one of those schedules was CBS' "Kate & Allie."

Likewise, many of the programs that moved dramatically up or down the list did so largely because of schedule changes.

For example, "Gimme A Break" got cut off from the powerful NBC Saturday lineup, and saw its average score plummet from a 2.88 to 1.33. But "Hunter" was added to that strong Saturday schedule, so its score shot up from a 2.48 to a 2.96

"Miami Vice" was shifted from the 10 p.m. slot opposite "Falcon Crest" to the 9 p.m. slot opposite "Dallas," so "Vice's" score dipped from a 2.89 to a 2.14, while "Crest" pasted its new competition and rose from a 2.02 to a 2.96.

But more importantly, some series showed significant gains or losses with less dramatic schedule changes. CBS' "The Equalizer" rose from a seeming failure to a solid competitor from '85-86 to '86-87, as its score rose from a 1.20 to a 2.30. "Growing Pains" established itself as a legitimate hit in its own right during the past season, as its score grew from a 2.61 to 2.92.

And on the negative side, "Dynasty" was unable to stand its ground against new competition from "Magnum, P.I." The "Dynasty" score skidded from a 2.96 to a 2.68. Its schedule mate, "Hotel" (2.88 to 2.30) suffered similar erosion.

ABC Erosion

Another case of ABC erosion occurred with "Disney Sunday Movie" (1.83 to 1.36), which felt the effects of more competitive NBC programming, particularly "Our House." Also at ABC, "Webster" (2.79 to 2.27) and "Mr. Belvedere" (2.41 to 1.86) wilted despite the lack of strong competing programming from the other webs.

With key lineups growing virtually unstoppable in '86-87, an impressive nine series finished the season undefeated. It's the first time since at least '82-83 that more than four skeins made it through a season unbeaten. As recently as '83-84, there was only one undefeated show.

But despite the crowd at the top, the clear primetime champion of last season was "The Cosby Show," which has yet to lose its slot in three full seasons, giving it 88 regular-season telecasts without a loss.

While CBS and ABC have lots of work to do on their regular series programming if they're (Continued on Page 84, Column 4)

Nielsen Telefilm Ratings

	(Contin	nued from Page 83, Column 3)		3-	
17	"Penalty Phase"	15.8/26	4	2	11/18
	"Circle Of Violence:	13.0/20	•	-	
	A Family Drama''	15.7/25	4	0	10/12
	"Guilty Of Innocence"	15.7/25	4	2	2/3
	"The George McKenna Story" "A Place To Call Home"	15.5/24 15.4/26	4 4	2 2	11/11 2/7
21.	"Murder In Three Acts"	15.4/25	4	0	9/30
	"Under The Influence"	15.4/24	4	0	9/28
	"Warm Hearts, Cold Feet"	15.1/22	4	0	1/18
	"Kiss Me Goodbye"	14.8/24	4 4	0	1/3 2/10
	"Stillwatch" "Seduced"(R)	14.7/23 14.6/23	4	0	4/14
	"Manhunt For Claude Dallas"	14.4/24	4	3	10/28
	"The Return Of Sherlock Holmes"	14.4/24	4	0	1/10
	"Obsessive Love"(R)	14.2/22	4	2	4/7
31.	"Barnum"	14.1/25	4 4	0 2	11/30 1/31
	"The Room Upstairs" "Broken Vows"	14.1/24 14.1/22	4	0	1/28
34.	"A Christmas Carol"(R)	14.0/24	4	2	12/23
	"A Special Friendship"	13.7/22	4	0	3/31
	"Johnnie Mae Gibson: FBI"	13.3/20	4	0	10/21
	"Stagecoach"(R)	13.0/23	4 4	0 1	4/11 3/10
	"Timestalkers" "Firefighter"	12.8/21 12.6/20	4	0	9/23
	"Courage"	12.5/20	4	Ö	9/24
	"One Police Plaza"	12.3/22	4	0	11/29
	"Izzy & Moe"(R)	12.2/19	4	0	12/16
	"Kojak: The Price Of Justice"	12.0/21	4	0	2/21
44.	"Vengeance: The Story Of Tony Cimo"	11.8/21	4	0	11/1
45.	"Prison For Children"	11.5/20	4	0	3/14
	"Sister Margaret And				
	The Saturday Night Ladies'	11.5/19	4	0	1/17
47.	"A Gift Of Love"(R)	11.3/21	4	0	12/25
	"Dreams Of Gold: The Mel Fisher Story"	11.3/20	4	0	11/15
49.	"Oliver Twist" (R)	11.2/19	4	0	12/30
50.	"Pals"	11.1/19	4	0	2/28
51.	"A Different Affair"	10.8/18	4	0	3/24
52	"Houston: The Legend Of Texas"	10.8/18	6 4	0	11/22 12/27
	"Wild Horses"(R) "Passions"(R)	10.7/20 10.2/18	4	0	3/7
	"China Rose"(R)	9.9/18	4	0	3/28
	"Winter Of Our Discontent"(R)	9.8/17	4	0	4/4
	"Murder By The Book"	9.4/15	4	0	3/17
58.	"A Good Sport"(R) "Wild Wild West Revisited"(R)	8.6/15 8.6/15	4 4	0	12/21 12/13
	who who west Revisited (R)	6.0/13	7	O	12/13
	_				
NB		25 2/26	4	4	3/9
	"Rags To Riches" "Stranded"	25.3/36 24.9/38	4 4	4 4	3/9 9/22
	"Blood Vows:	24.7/30	•	·	,, <u></u>
	The Story Of A Mafia Wife"	24.8/37	4	4	1/18
	"Kate's Secret"	24.1/36	4	4	11/17
	"Mercy Or Murder?"	23.8/35	4	3	1/11
0.	"Perry Mason: The Case Of The Shooting Star"	23.6/37	4	4	11/9
7.	"When The Bough Breaks"	22.3/36	4	4	10/12
	"Facts Of Life Down Under"	21.4/32	4	0	2/9
	"The Abduction Of	01.4/00			2.10
10	Kari Swenson'' ''Christmas Eve''	21.4/33 21.3/33	4 4	4 4	3/8 12/22
10.	"Perry Mason:	21.3/33	7	7	12/22
	The Case Of The Lost Love'	21.3/33	4	4	2/23
	"A Fight For Jenny"	20.0/31	4	4	10/6
	"Unnatural Causes"	19.3/31	4	2	11/10
	"The Stepford Children" "Can You Feel Ma Danaing?"	19.2/29 19.1/30	4 4	2 2	3/15
	"Can You Feel Me Dancing?" "The High Price Of Passion"	18.9/30	4	2	10/13 11/30
10.	"Combat High"	18.9/29	4	2	11/23
18.	"Stranger In My Bed"	18.8/29	4	3	11/12
19.	"The Dirty Dozen:			_	
20	The Deadly Mission'	18.5/28	4	0	3/1
	"LBJ: The Early Years" "Convicted: A Mother's Story"	18.4/27 17.4/27	6 4	2 3	2/1 2/2
	"Doing Life"	16.8/27	4	2	9/23
	"The Ted Kennedy Jr. Story"	16.8/26	4	0	11/24
	"In Love And War"	16.7/27	4	0	3/16
25.	"Adam: His Song Continues"	15.9/25	4	0	9/29
27.	"Stone Fox" "The Alamo: 13 Days To Glory"	15.9/22 15.7/22	4 6	0	3/30 1/26
	"Return To Mayberry" (R)	15.2/23	4	0	1/25
	"Independence"	14.5/23	4	0	3/29
	(Conti	inued on Page 86, Column 1)			

10 Years Later That Little Home Vid Market Is Booming

(President, World Video Inc., Los Angeles)

he year 1977 officially marked the birth of homevideo. It was then that Andre Blay and 20th Century Fox first offered 50 general release video features to a constituency of fewer than 200,000 VCR owners. Today, 10 years and nearly 50 million VCR households later, thousands of programs are available through approximately 100,000 video specialty

and non-specialty outlets.

I'm proud to say that I had the opportunity to be there when homevideo was sliding down its birth canal. Looking back, home-



video's origins George Atkinson were tenuous at best. The business was so esoteric in 1977 that many laymen spelled video "v-i-d-i-o," which promptly tempted me to add a "t" for "vidiot." In retrospect, I probably should not have been so haughty; not knowing how to spell "video" simply reflected the newness of the industry.

A footnote to history should add, perhaps, that, even prior to Andre Blay's introduction of general product, entrepreneurs of another cloth had introduced video software; namely, adult films. This fact temporarily blemished the birth of homevideo by anointing it with original sin. Shortly, however, another studio — Allied Artists — introduced 100 more features, while Blay kept adding to his intitial menu of 50. By the Fall of 1978, with two studios now having the vision for homevideo's potential, some of the jokes and cynicism about the

genesis of this industry were being mitigated.

Marketing video software, however, was still a profound challenge. The question was, what type of current retail establishments would embrace this new product? The suppliers thought in terms of department and record stores, mass merchants, etc. The plethora of video specialty outlets that we have today was foreseen by few.

To the best of my knowledge, I opened the first video specialty store of its kind. That was in 1977. And from the inception of the store, I carried most of the available titles of the day — an anorexic amount by current stan-

However, the nagging question I had was, would VCR consumers indeed purchase this product? On a hunch, and partly to protect my investment, I came upon the idea of optioning cassettes for rent should customers not wish to buy them. The idea worked. The vast majority preferred to rent.

From there we began cloning our modest establishment, which served as the only model there was, by advertising it nationwide as a business opportunity. By the end of 1978, we had an affiliated network of 22 video software specialists operating in nine states. Hundreds more were to follow throughout the U.S. Soon, other entrepreneurs began emulating our idea and video store openings accelerated geometrically. A new form of boxoffice was created. Further, the video rental store also caught on overseas, and today the concept has been institutionalized worldwide.

(Continued on Page 86, Column 4)

RATINGS GAME

to have any hope of catching NBC, those programming staffs must also bear down in the nonseries areas if they're to challenge the first-place network.

ABC's vidpic performance in '86-87 was especially disappointing because the web programmed just 23 telefilms and still was unable to approach the performance of the competing webs.

Part of that trouble can be attributed to scheduling difficulties unique to ABC — the football preemption of ABC's Monday film for half the tv season, and the network's lack of well-rated nights heading into the Sunday and Monday film nights, rendering ABC's on-air promotion for the films rather punchless.

Yet the network fared somewhat better with theatrical product, despite the same promotion handicaps when it televised feature films on those nights.

In fact, ABC's the only network to score higher ratings with its theatrical films than with its telefilms. Much of the credit must

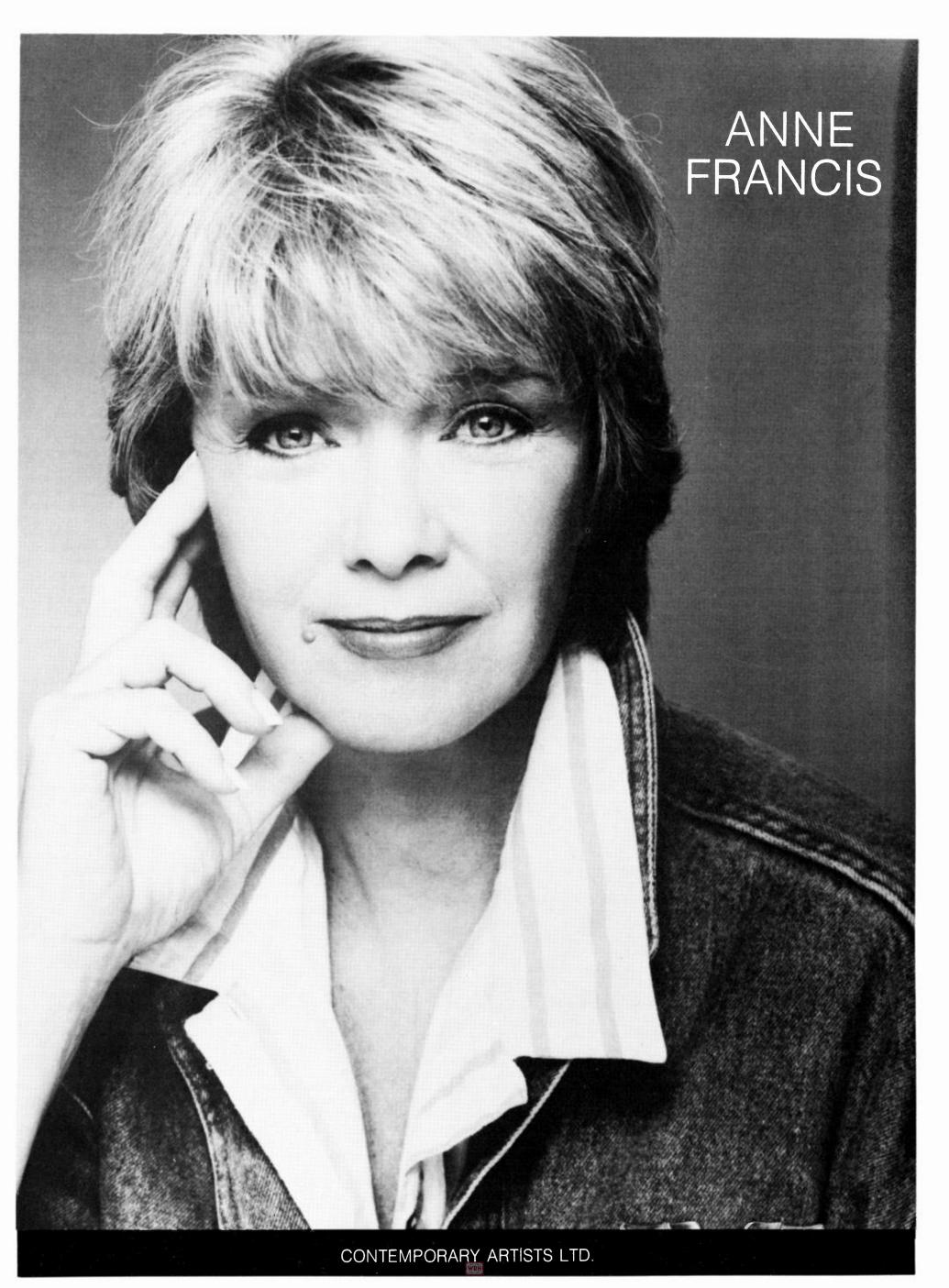
go to super-spy James Bond, who accounted for fully one-fourth of ABC's theatricals last season.

CBS managed a fair performance out of its vidpix, especially considering it aired more than ABC and NBC combined.

But its theatrical performance was a disaster. Part of the problem might be in CBS' licensing pattern. The more successful programmers at ABC and NBC have been able to concentrate on more "evergreen" films that generally rate better in rerun than CBS' pix fare in firstrun.

Of ABC's 20 theatricals, for example, nine were reruns. Of NBC's 13, seven were reruns. But for CBS, just four of 14 pix were reruns, and the seven lowest rated CBS films were all firstrun titles.

The accompanying charts and analyses are based only on programming aired during the Sept. 22-April 19 regular season. Unlike most Nielsen tallies, two-part telefilms are not considered regular vidpix, but are instead grouped with miniseries under the "multiparter" category.



Nielsen Telefilm Ratings

(Continued from Page 84, Column 3)

30. "Intimate Encounters"	14.2/23	4	0	9/28
31. "Love Is Never Silent" (R)	13.7/21	4	0	12/1
32. "Babes In Toyland"	13.4/22	6	0	12/19
"Rlue Deville"	13.4/22	4	0	12/29

Nielsen Theatrical Pic Ratings

Nielsen ratings for theatrical films broadcast by the three webs during the 1986-87 season:

Total Half Hours

Title	Rating/Share	Total Half Hours	Half Hours In 1st Place	Date Aired
ABC	reacting, on an e			
1. "Raiders Of The Lost Ark"	22.7/37	4	4	9/28
2. "Romancing The Stone"	20.5/31	4	0	2/8
3. "Sudden Impact"	19.6/30	4	2	11/16
4. "Splash"	16.8/26	4	0	11/9
5. "Cannonball Run II"	16.2/24	4	0	3/15
6. "Uncommon Valor"	15.7/23	4	0	1/11
7. "Never Say Never Again"	15.3/23	6	0	11/2
8. "Man With The Golden Gun"(R)	14.9/24	4	0	2/1
9. "All Of Me"	14.4/21	4	0	1/4
10. "Star Trek —				
The Motion Picture''(R)	14.3/22	6	0	3/9
11. "The Dead Zone"	14.2/21	4	0	1/25
12. "Rough Cut"(R)	13.9/23	4	0	3/22
13. "Escape From Alcatraz"(R)	13.1/21	4	0	11/30
14. "Doctor No"(R)	13.0/21	4	0	3/29
15. "Ordinary Heroes"	12.4/18	4	0	10/19
16. "For Your Eyes Only"(R)	12.3/20	4	0	12/28
17. "Moonraker"(R)	11.7/19	4	0	3/8
17. Modifiaker (R) 18. "Jaws 2"(R)	11.2/20	5	0	4/17
19. "The Ten Commandments" (R)	10.9/20	8	Ö	4/19
	8.6/15	4	0	2/28
20. "Supergirl"	0.0/15	•	Ū	
CBS				
1. "Footloose"	19.7/31	4	2	1/5
2. "Gone With The Wind,"	17.7701	·	_	
Parts 1,2(R)	17.6/26	10	2	1/11,1/13
3. "The Wizard Of Oz"(R)	16.9/28	4	4	3/6
4. "Star Wars" (R)	14.1/24	5	1	2/14
5. "Table For Five"	12.7/22	4	i	4/17
6. "Christine"	11.8/23	4	Ô	4/18
	11.6/18	4	Ö	12/2
7. "Risky Business"(R) 8. "Man With Two Brains"	11.1/17	4	ő	1/20
9. "Smokey And The Bandit III"	10.7/19	4	ŏ	11/27
10. "Against All Odds"	10.5/19	4	ŏ	12/6
	10.2/17	4	ŏ	10/25
11. "Psycho II" 12. "Lassiter"	9.6/17	4	ő	11/8
	8.6/16	4	ő	3/21
13. "Swing Shift"14. "The Muppets Take Manhattan"	6.8/11	4	Ő	1/24
14. The Muppers Take Maimattan	0.0/11	4	Ū	1/24
NBC				
1. "The Karate Kid"	22.6/32	5	4	3/2
2. "Trading Places"	22.5/34	4	i	10/5
3. "Places In The Heart"	19.9/30	4	2	2/24
4. "Trading Places"(R)	18.3/28	4	ō	4/5
5. "Police Academy"	18.2/27	4	Ö	2/16
6. "Flashdance"(R)	17.0/26	4	Ö	2/22
7. "The Sound Of Music" (R)	16.7/26	6	ő	12/28
8. "First Blood"(R)	16.4/25	4	ő	1/4
9. "48 Hrs."(R)	16.3/25	4	0	12/14
10. "Terms Of Endearment"	15.9/28	4	0	11/16
11. "An Officer And A Gentleman" (R)		4	0	10/20
12. "The Natural"	15.2/26	6	0	10/26
13. "Annie" (R)	11.5/18	4	0	12/21
13. Airile (K)	11.5/16	4	U	14/41

Nielsen Multi-Part Ratings

Following are ratings earned by individual episodes of multiparters aired by networks during the 1986-87 season. (Such multiparters as "Hands Of A Stranger," NBC; "Murder Ordained" and "Roses Are For The Rich," CBS; "Queenie," ABC, aired after the end of the regular season and are not included on the list. However, both episodes of "George Washington II" and the rerun of "Doubletake," which aired one episode during the regular season and one outside the regular season programs are included.)

Title	Rating/Share	Half Hours	In 1st Place	Date Aired
ABC	-			
1. "Amerika, Pt. 1"	24.7/38	4	4	2/15
2. "Amerika, Pt. 2"	20.9/31	4	4	2/16
3. "Amerika, Pt. 7"	19.6/30	4	3	2/22
4. "Amerika, Pt. 4"	17.8/28	4	3	2/18
5. "Amerika, Pt. 3"	17.7/26	5	0	2/17
6. "Out On A Limb, Pt. 2"	16.8/25	4	2	1/19
	(Continued on Page 88, Co	lumn 1)		

10 Years Later That Little Home Vid Market Is Booming

(Continued from Page 84, Column 5)

The first two studios with product in the marketplace, Fox and Allied, were caught somewhat surprised that this rental phenomenon was catching fire. Their knee jerk reactions were aimed at stopping rentals, because their participation in this new income was nil. However, the third studio to participate - Paramount - appeared to be more openminded. Although not yet acknowledging the fledgling video software specialist, Paramount, in early '79, experimented in renting as well as selling its films with Fotomat. By year's end, the studio was ready for wider distribution.

Adopting as its theme, "Paramount is going home," it would now be making its product available universally. Columbia also debuted at about this time, and before long Warner, MCA, Disney, and MGM and several independent suppliers were putting product into a marketplace with a universe of nearly 2,000,000 VCR homes. The homevideo revolution was on. Throughout the next seven years, 50,000,000 more American households would add VCRs.

While suppliers manufactured programs for homevideo, distribution pipelines had to be established to deliver the goods. The first major video software wholesaler was Noel Gimbel of Sound Unlimited; many others promptly followed. Many of them, like Gimbel, had their roots in wholesaling audio software. Video seemed like a natural sister product. Hence, a two-tier distribution system was established and exists to this day.

Indies Wade In

Along with the studios, other forerunners began publishing video titles to satisfy the voracious consumer appetite for software. These independent suppliers were most significant: They were

the precursors who would end the elitism of the studios.

What heretofore had been regarded as Hollywood's eminent domain was now opened to such "poachers" as Gimbel, VCL, Media, Nostalgia Merchant, Video Concepts, Stuart Karl, Arthur Morowitz, myself and others. Even stronger companies, such as Thorn/EMI and Vestron, would follow shortly.

Not all the independents survived the first decade, but the "videobituary" column is short in comparison to the list of those that still exist today. Hollywood would never be the same. Homevideo would increase the majors' profits but diminish their powers.

Hollywood was further challenged. The growing rental phenomenon, at first perceived as an aberration or fad, was showing no signs of atrophy. Ironically, traditional as it had been for the studios to rent movies to theaters, they did not envision that the same concept would apply vis-a-vis consumers.

Videocassettes were perceived

as being more like records, which consumers would purchase and collect. But the analogy to records was misguided because the economics were significantly different. The first videos were priced in the range of \$50 to \$100. This was hardly the price of an LP or audiocassette. Moreover, records and audiocasettes almost always justified repeated and even frequent listening; video movies did not. We had apples and oranges.

It was quite natural for many of the early video executives to think the way they did. Many of them, like Cy Leslie of Pickwick had very successful backgrounds in audio. An anecdote of the time was, ask 10 video executives a question, and you'll get 15 different answers. After all, what true compass point was there? A learning curve was being established.

Rental Bids

So, as video "rentertainment" became more and more popular, the studios were virtually forced to experiment with rental plans. They hoped they could somehow partner with retailers and get in on greater revenues. By 1981, four studios — Disney, Warner, Fox and MGM — had come up with four different formulas.

However, it was all pie in the sky. By and large, the majority of retailers fought against every plan, and by the Summer of 1982, the newly formed Video Software Dealers Association had come along to galvanize and organize the retailers into a more harmonious and powerful lot. This balance of power came about largely through the initial vision of Joe Cohen and Mickey Granberg, whose roots were in the music business and NARM. Hence, the attempted Hollywoodization of homevideo crystallized into the videoization of Hollywood - just another "videosyncrasy" of this new industry.

Another short chapter of homevideo history also was being written at about this time — that of the video disk. Two versions were at hand: Laser and CED. Laser still survives, primarily for buffs. But CED, despite RCA's muscular effort to support it with top notch movies, was practically stillborn. Fundamentally, disks couldn't record and consumers much preferred the dual capabilities of the VCR. CED was a mistimed product.

On final analysis, it didn't spin because it was analagous to introducing the LP after audio cassettes had arrived. It was an expensive, \$600,000,000 lesson for RCA, and probably helped abort the introduction of yet another promised disk format, JVC's VHD system.

It took half a decade for homevideo to find its intrinsic identity. But, beginning in 1982, the industry came into its own. Movies emerged as the greatly preferred home viewing fare. True, there was the legendary Jane Fonda ex-

(Continued on Page 88, Column 4)

MONEY: Here Today And Gone Tomorrow short, medium and long-term varied Same of the Company of th

(President, The Krasna Financial Group)

ow many people in this coun-How many people ...
try have been on a diet? How many times have they gone off their diets? Most Americans seem to have the same dilemma with budgets and budgeting. With all good intentions, we try to live within our means, but sooner or later we return to our old habits

and attitudes and, like the diet, the budget is blown.

We know how to make money and spend money, but have never learned how to save it. Savings tend to



be money here Suzanne Krasna today and gone tomorrow. For some entertainment industry professionals, it seems, income is here today and gone almost before tomorrow. This is due, in part, to unique income patterns and spend-

Money management, like life, is a matter of trade-offs, and give and take. It is not mysterious - in fact, it's a very pragmatic concept. It is satisfying to know where you stand. But, isn't that true with most things?

My purpose here is to review with you some general areas of concern and to cover some specifics for you as entertainment business professionals. When people have erratic income (such as fees paid on a per project/job basis, or during periods of strikes or hiatus), these problems compound an already perplexing issue. Personal financial planning is the appropriate step toward discovering many successful solutions.

When clients ask what is financial planning, my answer is financial planning is a two-fold pro-

(1) It helps to preserve your income and assets from three realities: taxes, inflation and personal confusion; (2) it provides the needed continuity of your income if you're temporarily out of work, or if you live too long, or die too soon, or even become disabled.

The first step in the process could mean implementing tax strategies (long before Dec. 31) so that you pay fewer tax dollars. You can also preserve long-term savings/investments from inflation by having a savings vehicle that gives you high tax-deferred interest (far above the rate of inflation). Planning also alleviates personal confusion by providing greater clarity to your goals, i.e., what, where, when and how to invest/save for your desired out-

The second process of planning deals with the most important asset you have or ever will have in your lifetime: Your ability to create income. It is most important, because without this asset, generally, you cannot purchase other real assets, such as real estate, autos or stocks. Comprehensive planning can provide income for you even if you're not working, or if you're unable to work due to an accident or illness. Solid planning will guarantee the continuation of your income to your family if you die.

Retirement

Lastly, if you retire you can ensure the receipt of a handsome, possibly tax-free, income no matter whether you choose to work or not. You may also wish to ensure your estate's liquidity and have taxes and probate fees prepaid.

One aspect of financial planning can include: Cash Flow Plan-

It's a way to discover your actual past, present or future income. It also assists in determining your various bills/expenses. The balance between income and expenses is commonly called "Discretionary Income." The more you have left after expenses, the more you can deposit toward

A cash flow plan can help you better plan for expenditures and change old, ineffective money habits or attitudes. Greater knowledge of income assists you in gaining greater control over expenses. This can mean less stress and more fun. A budget is not created, but permanent workable solutions are.

After completing the cash flow process, it becomes obvious to some why they never seem to have money left after paying bills. Others gain a clear understanding of expenses they need to eliminate, or lower, in order to live within their means. Still others discover that greater income increases means larger quarterly tax payments must be made, but they can defer more income this year for greater bottom line tax sav-

Two steps are essential:

(1) Determine your annual income and divide it into a monthly sum; (2) determine your monthly expenses and bills.

The entertainment industry profesional's income is unique and terns can include:

- Per Project Fees: Fees may be received once or twice a year for a given project. The remaining balances of fees for a given project may be paid over 18 or even 24 months. The pitfall of spending it all in one place, as in paying off all the bills, leaves one essentially broke until the next fee is received.
- Project To Project: The more work, the more consistent the income. Income is difficult to depend upon as payment is purely on a job-to-job basis. Feeling out of control is understandable but curable
- Others: Some professionals receive salaries, though hiatus and strikes can even affect this income. Positions with a network, studio, theater company exist so long as they're working. When they're not - you're not. Can't forget the Nielsens!

Calculating your income can be based on criteria such as: past income experience from prior year(s); this year's income performance thus far; expected or anticnation of the above.

There are two types of approximate projected annual scenarios you need to make: realistic and conservative. Both are based on your personal feelings and projections. Avoid considering the best scenario as "I hope to sell the script - or make that deal." The final step: Take both your annual sums and divide them individually by 12. You have arrived at two Average Monthly Income Sums.

Level Income

Now, view your monthly averages as your actual monthly salary. Even though income may vary month to month, you can create a sense of "level income." All your bills/expenses can be matched up with your approximate average monthly income. When you receive income during one month that is greater than your monthly salary, you deposit only the "salary" portion to checking and the balance to your Emergency Income Savings Account for future use.

(Emergency Income Savings can be a regular savings at a bank

(Continued on Page 154, Column 5)

EASING THAT INCOME TAX BITE

By BRUCE GIVNER

(Tax Partner in Law Firm Of Sanger, Grayson, Givner & Brooke) popular tv star has three corporations and three pension

One of America's favorite songwriters gave property worth \$1,000,000 to a trust in exchange for all the trust's income and a \$600,000 income tax deduction.

A major screen star has provided his family \$4,000,000 free of taxes after his death through a

These entertainers have used some of the powerful tax planning techniques available to high income and high asset individuals. Let's examine each one in more

Multiple Corporations: The advantage of being hot in this business is that the income flows quickly and in large quantities. But how do you shelter a large income from taxes when Congress has abolished most tax shelters?

Pension plans are still the safest tax shelter. However, Congress limits how much you can shelter in any one pension plan.

Simply setting up multiple corporations with multiple pension plans is not enough. If you own all of the stock of each corporation, Congress limits you the same as if there were only one pension plan.

Therefore, to get the advantage of multiple pension plans you may use multiple corporations as long as you do not completely control each corporation.

Example: Corporation #1 is owned by Star and has the exclusive contract for his personal services in front of the camera. The production company pays it \$40,000 per show for Star's services for 22 shows. Corporation #1 establishes a pension plan to cover its one and only employe -

Corporation #1 has \$880,000 of gross revenue, \$180,000 of miscellaneous expenses and a \$100,-000 pension obligation. After retaining \$50,000 in the corporation for the future it pays the rest of the money — \$550,000 — to Star as salary.

Corporation #2 is owned by Star's manager. It has the exclusive contract for Star's personal services as a director, for which it receives \$100,000 per year. Star's salary is \$50,000, Corporation #2 retains \$20,000 for expenses, and it contributes the other \$30,000 to a pension plan to cover all, its only employe - Star.

Corporation #3 is owned by Star's sister. It has the exclusive right to Star's personal appearance income. It is paid \$10,000 each time Star appears at a shopping center or at a parade. Its gross income is \$200,000. It retains \$60,000 for expenses, pays Star a salary of \$100,000, and contributes \$40,000 to a pension plan to cover its only employe -

The end result? Star has divided his income into three separate streams permitting each to generate a pension contribution.

Wealth Accumulation Trusts: Pension plans are not the only vehicle for tax-free accumulations. A Wealth Accumulation Trust provides that same benefit without some of the costs.

Example: Songwriter owned a highly appreciated property with a tax basis of \$100,000 and a fair market value of

\$1,000,000. The property vields only \$40,000 per year. If Songwriter sold the property, taxes would consume almost \$300,000.

No Tax On Sale: Instead, Songwriter transferred the property to the Wealth Accumulation

Trust. There was no tax on the trust's sale of the property.

To Right Current Income: The trust now holds \$1,-000,000 in liquid assets. In exchange for re-



ceiving the prop- Bruce Givner erty the Trust must pay Songwriter 5%, or \$50,000 per year.

Option To Accumulate Income Tax Free: But Songwriter does not need the income — at this time. He would rather have the assets accumulate income-tax-free until his retirement. Therefore, the trustee invests the money in stock or property that has a high appreciation, low current income, potential. This way in 15 years, the property will hopefully be worth \$4,000,000. If Songwriter then wants the income, he will receive 5% of \$4,000,000 - or \$200,000 per year.

Current Income Tax Deduction: There are two other advantages of the Wealth Accumulation Trust. First, based upon his age and the 5% payout he selected, he received an instantaneous income tax deduction of approximately \$600,000. That deduction may offset his current income, not just income from the trust. Also this deduction is good against investment and passive income, a real

benefit in today's tax environ-

No Legal Fees: Second, the Songwriter named a specific charity to receive the trust's principal after his death. That charity not only acts as trustee for free, it also paid the legal fees incurred to establish the trust.

Wealth Replacement Trusts: Many think insurance is not taxable. Nothing could be further from the truth. If you have a \$1,000,000 life insurance policy your children may end up getting as little as \$450,000 after taxes.

Own vs. Control: That is because anything you "own" at your death is included in your taxable estate. Therefore, the challenge is to set up assets that you 'control'' but do not "own.'

Insurance: The Wealth Replacement Trust is a catchy name for an irrevocable insurance trust. It provides that the insurance proceeds after your death are distributed in the same way as is provided in your will or living trust. Every year you gift to the trust an amount equal to the insurance premiums. The Trustee, whom you select, pays the insurance premiums from the trust. Therefore, you do not own the insurance policy — and your family receives it free of taxes after you

Save 55 Cents On Every \$: Since the maximum death tax rates are currently 55%, that is a savings of as much as \$550,000 in taxes for each \$1,000,000 policy.

Conclusion: When you finally make it, retain the best and most imaginative advisors available. This way you too can benefit from the tax planning techniques of the rich and famous.

(Continued from Page 86, Column 3)						
7. "Amerika, Pt. 5"	15.6/23	4	0	2/19		
8. "Amerika, Pt. 6"	15.4/24	4	0	2/20		
9. "Out On A Limb, Pt. 1"	13.8/20	6	0	1/18		
y, out on 11 2mile, 1 to 1						
CBS						
1. "I'll Take Manhattan, Pt. 1"	26.4/40	4	4	3/1		
2. "The Last Frontier, Pt. 2"	25.0/39	4	4	10/7		
3. "The Last Frontier, Pt. 1"	23.8/36	4	4	10/5		
4. "At Mother's Request, Pt. 1"	23.3/35	4	4	1/4		
5. "At Mother's Request, Pt. 2"	22.7/35	4	3	1/6		
6. "I'll Take Manhattan, Pt. 4"	22.5/36	4	4	3/4		
7. "I'll Take Manhattan, Pt. 3"	21.4/33	4	2	3/3		
8. "I'll Take Manhattan, Pt. 2"	21.3/31	4	0	3/2		
9. "Fresno, Pt. 1"	19.7/30	4	2	11/16		
10. "Fresno, Pt. 2"	15.2/22	2	0	11/17		
11. "Monte Carlo, Pt. 1"	14.6/23	4	0	10/9		
12. "George Washington II:						
The Forging Of A Nation"	13.3/20	4	0	9/21		
13. "Doubletake, Pt. 2"(R)	12.9/22	4	0	4/23		
14. "Fresno, Pt. 3"	12.8/19	2	0	11/18		
15. "Fresno, Pt. 5"	12.7/18	2 2	0	11/20		
16. "Fresno, Pt. 4"	12.5/24	2	0	11/19		
"Double Take, Pt. 1"(R)	12.5/21	4	0	4/16		
18. "Monte Carlo, Pt. 2"	12.2/19	4	0	10/10		
19. "George Washington II:						
The Forging Of A Nation"	9.8/15	4	0	9/22		
NBC						
1. "The Two Mrs. Grenvilles,						
Pt. 2''(R)	24.0/36	4	4	2/9		
2. "The Two Mrs. Grenvilles,						
Pt. 1''	23.4/36	4	4	2/8		
3. "Anastasia: The Story Of Anna,						
Pt. 2''	20.9/32	4	4	12/8		
4. "Anastasia: The Story Of Anna,						
Pt. 1''	20.7/32	4	3	12/7		
5. "A Year In The Life, Pt. 3"	17.1/27	4	2	12/17		
6. "A Year In The Life, Pt. 2"	17.0/27	4	2 2	12/16		
7. "Jesus Of Nazareth, Pt. 4"(R)	16.7/27	4	2	4/15		
8. "A Year In The Life, Pt. 1"	16.6/26	4	0	12/15		
9. "Rage Of Angels II, Pt. 2"	16.5/25	4	0	11/3		
10. "Rage Of Angels II, Pt. 1"	15.9/25	4	0	11/2		
11. "Jesus Of Nazareth, Pt. 3"(R)	15.8/25	4	2	4/14		
12. "Jesus Of Nazareth, Pt. 2"(R)	15.6/25	4	0	4/13		
13. "Jesus Of Nazareth, Pt. 1"(R)	14.0/22	4	0	4/12		
14. "Nutcracker: Money, Madness						
And Murder, Pt. 3"	13.5/22	4	1	3/24		
15. "Nutcracker: Money, Madness						
And Murder, Pt. 1"	12.2/20	4	0	3/22		
16. "Nutcracker: Money, Madness						
And Murder, Pt. 2"	11.5/19	4	0	3/23		

Series Ratings

Television series are often ranked according to their ratings averages, but when programs are measured by how often they win their timeslots, finish second, and end up in last place, a different order emerges.

The Daily Variety analysis of the 1986-87 season ranks all network series according to those timeslot finishes by determining an "average score" — calculated by awarding three points to a series for every timeslot win, two points for each second-place finish and one point for every last-place finish. The season total is then divided by the number of episodes aired by each series.

So a program that wins its timeslot every time finishes with a 3.00 score. A series that wins its slot half the time and finishes second the other half would finish with a 2.50. And a program that finishes in last place with every airing ends up with a 1.0 score.

		No. Of Episodes:			Avei	Season			
		1st	2d	3d	Average	Sco	ore	Rating/	
	Title & Network	In Slot	In Slot	In Slot	Score	'85-86	'84-85	Share	
1.	"The Cosby Show" NBC	29	0	0	3.00	3.00	3.00	34.9/53	
	"60 Minutes" CBS	29	0	0	3.00	2.97	2.93	23.3/37	
	"Golden Girls" NBC	28	0	0	3.00	2.90	_	24.5/41	
	"Cheers" NBC	27	0	0	3.00	2.93	2.26	27.2/41	
	"Family Ties" NBC	27	0	0	3.00	3.00	2.62	32.7/49	
	"Murder, She Wrote" CBS	27	0	0	3.00	2.91	2.76	25.4/37	
	"Amen" NBC	25	0	0	3.00	-		19.4/33	
	"227" NBC	23	0	0	3.00	2.88	_	18.9/32	
9.	"Who's The Boss?" ABC	27	1	0	2.96	3.00	1.88	22.0/33	
10.	"Facts Of Life" NBC	26	1	0	2.96	2.89	2.00	16.3/29	
11.	"Dallas" CBS	24	1	0	2.96	3.00	3.00	21.3/34	
12.	"Hunter" NBC	23	1	0	2.96	2.48	1.65	16.5/30	
13.	"Falcon Crest" CBS	23	2	0	2.92	2.08	2.96	17.3/30	
	"Growing Pains" CBS	23	2	0	2.92	2.61	_	22.7/33	
15.	"Night Court" NBC	20	3	0	2.87	2.84	1.93	23.2/35	
	(Continued on Page 90, Column 1)								

10 Years Later That Little Home Vid Market Is Booming

(Continued from Page 86, Column 5) ercise videocassette success, and Michael Jackson's "Thriller" portended great promise for music video. Nonetheless, to this day, nine out of 10 pre-recorded cassettes rented or purchased are still feature films. Movies have become the primary reason for purchasing a VCR.

Time-shifting, Sony's original raison d'etre for the VCR, has become secondary. Little did Akio Morita realize that when his offspring reached adolescence, it would turn out to be mostly a movie machine. Two years ago, the introduction of Korean videocassette players (VCP) underscored this point all the more.

By 1983, much of the Us vs. Them attitude between retailers and major suppliers had subsided. Although Hollywood made an effort to lobby Congress for the repeal of the First Sale Doctrine, rental stores were no longer in the studios' line of ire. A greater symbiotic relationship was acknowledged and respected by both factions. Homevideo continued to grow and mature, and video outlets were destined to become as commonplace as fire hydrants.

Consolidating

Lately, we've witnessed several consolidations among the wholesalers and retail franchisors, and the serious entry of mass merchants, record chains, convenience stores, book stores, etc., into the video software market. There's even talk today about suppliers themselves controlling their own retail stores, i.e., Paramount and Vestron. This all points out that homevideo is becoming big league. Although the retail foundation was laid by small mom and pop entrepreneurs, those retailers that expect to thrive tomorrow have to survive a current shakeout. Every new industry inevitably undergoes this stage. Darwin's principle will apply. The number of video superstores will increase.

The early video boom compensated for a lot of people's mistakes. Earlier, even a "vidiot" could succeed. However, the second decade promises to be all hard ball. Pay-per-view, cable, network and syndicated television will continue to compete aggressively with homevideo.

In my opinion, however, homevideo will ultimately become superior to all other tv delivery systems, because it inherently manifests the narrow-casting ideal. Moreover, it feeds the public's current penchant for "coccooning," or staying home with friends and family. A \$5 billion domestic business today, it has already surpassed cable's revenues, as well as theatrical's. In a few short years, it will be greater in dollars than both cable and boxoffice combined.

For many producers, theatrical revenues will soon become ancillary; homevideo will be the dominant motive for making movies. The numbers can't be disputed. This year alone, nearly three billion cassettes will be rented by the U.S. public. Another 90,000,000 will be purchased. All this activity is occurring with just 50% VCR penetration in the U.S., and much of the rest of the world is behaving in similar fashion.

The second generation of television has unquestionably arrived. Andre Blay told me recently that what most surprised him about homevideo's first decade was the prodigious impact it has had on cable, not to mention network. Pioneer Arthur Morowitz commented, "It's been everything we could have imagined, plus!"

Ernie Kovacs once stated, "Television is called a medium because it's neither rare nor well done."

I believe the homevideo revolution has changed all that. A cornucopia of cassettes is available at practically every corner "videoteria" today, serving a delicious smorgasbord of tube food. Homevideo has transformed tv's "wasteland" into a lush botanical garden. Ernie would have loved it, I'm sure.

Lastly, it appears ironic that with all the cassette rentals going on at this time, Hollywood this year may nonetheless be enjoying its best theatrical receipts ever — \$4 billion. On the surface, a contradiction appears. However, my belief is that movie watching at home has whetted a greater appetite for in-theater viewing of films. The Bard said it best: "The appetite grows by what it feeds on."

Happy 10th Birthday, Homevideo! Thanks for the reveries!

MINI-SERIES

(Continued from Page 80, Column 5) cinating characters in good stories have always been irresistible.

A miniseries idea rarely has to be "sold." Either it excites the producer and the executive mutually, or it doesn't. All we are ever "looking for" is to share the passion of a producer and writer for a good story.

All of you out there who come to "pitch" are collectively known as the creative community. Don't let your creativity be stifled by a preselection of what you think the network does or doesn't want. The fu-

ture of miniseries depends upon the creative collaboration of all of us. We musn't allow the demand for product to alter our standards for quality. There is always an audience for a good story, well told. It is up to us to find those stories and mount them well.

Don't forget that the critics were predicting the end of sitcoms a few short years ago. Then a guy named Cosby came along and re-invigorated the whole form. The miniseries is threatened, but we're far from extinct. We have to be creative, both in choice of material and in management of costs, because the miniseries is worth keeping.

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Series Ratings

(Continued	from	Page	88.	Column .	3)

(Continued from Page 88, Column 3)							
16. "Kate & Allie" CBS	23	4	0	2.85	2.54	2.30	18.3/27
17. "Moonlighting" ABC	23	2	1	2.85	2.59	1.50	22.4/34
18. "Dynasty" ABC	16	8	1	2.68	2.96	2.95	17.2/26
19. "Highway To Heaven" NBC	17	9	1	2.67	2.80	2.65	17.2/27
20. "My Sister Sam" CBS	16 15	4 9	3 1	2.57 2.56	_	_	17.4/25 17.4/29
21. "L.A. Law" NBC 22. "Newhart" CBS	14	10	2	2.46	2.40	2.27	19.5/28
23. "Scarecrow/Mrs. King" CBS	8	11	Õ	2.42	2.56	2.38	14.6/24
24. "Houston Knights" CBS	3	2	1	2.33	_	_	15.1/26
"Perfect Strangers" ABC	9	18	0	2.33	3.00	_	15.7/25
26. "The Equalizer" CBS	.8	10	2	2.30	1.20	_	15.4/26
"Hotel" ABC	8	10	2	2.30	2.88	2.85	14.9/26
28. "Monday Night Football" ABC	5 13	8 7	1 6	2.29 2.27	2.29 2.79	1.92 2.82	18.4/30 13.8/23
29. "Webster" ABC 30. "Knots Landing" CBS	6	19	0	2.24	2.93	2.26	16.8/27
31. "ALF" NBC	5	19	ő	2.21	_	_	16.5/24
"Head Of The Class" ABC	5	19	0	2.21	_	-	16.4/26
33. "Magnum, P.I." CBS	9	13	5	2.15	1.93	2.32	16.1/25
34. "Miami Vice" NBC	4	25	0	2.14	2.89	2.00	16.8/27
35. "Matlock" NBC	3	25	0	2.11	_	_	18.6/28
36. "Hill Street Blues" NBC	6	9	6	2.00 2.00	1.67	1.86	14.6/24
"Shell Game" CBS 37. "Jack & Mike" ABC	0 5	6 12	0 7	1.92	_	_	9.1/13 12.8/22
37. "Jack & Mike" ABC 38. "Mr. Belvedere" ABC	5	8	8	1.86	2.41	2.67	13.7/22
40. "Rags To Riches" NBC	ő	5	1	1.83		_	15.0/23
41. "Crime Story" NBC	2	10	5	1.82	_	_	13.1/22
42. "Simon & Simon" CBS	0	22	5	1.81	1.74	2.92	13.3/20
43. "Valerie" NBC	3	11	8	1.77	2.71	_	14.8/22
44. "Cavanaughs" CBS	2	6	5	1.77		_	16.2/24
45. "Outlaws" CBS	1	6 3	4 5	1.73 1.70	2.00	2.93	13.4/23 12.8/21
46. "The A-Team" NBC 47. "Stingray" NBC	2 3	3	<i>3</i>	1.69	1.80		13.5/23
48. "Designing Women" CBS	3	7	ý	1.68		_	16.1/24
49. "Ohara" ABC	0	8	5	1.62	_	_	10.9/18
50. "Our House" NBC	0	17	11	1.61	_	_	12.9/20
51. "Downtown" CBS	0	7	5	1.58		_	10.3/18
52. "Cagney & Lacey" CBS	2	8	12	1.55	1.65	2.04	15.1/24
53. "Spenser: For Hire" ABC 54. "20/20" ABC	2	9 7	15 17	1.50 1.48	1.69 1.48	1.21	11.0/20 14.1/24
54. "20/20" ABC 55. "The Wizard" CBS	0	10	12	1.45	1. 4 6	1.21	10.4/16
"Amazing Stories" NBC	2	6	14	1.45	1.63	_	13.5/21
57. "Twilight Zone" CBS	ō	3	5	1.38	1.89	_	9.7/17
58. "Disney Sunday Movie" ABC	0	10	18	1.36	1.83	_	12.8/19
59. "Easy Street" NBC	0	7	13	1.35	_		14.1/21
60. "Gimme A Break" NBC	0	7	14	1.33	2.88	2.19	14.3/22
"New Mike Hammer" CBS	2 0	3 7	16	1.33	_	1.76	11.8/19 10.2/17
62. "Sidekicks" ABC 63. "St. Elsewhere" NBC	1	4	16 17	1.30 1.27	1.58	1.65	13.4/23
64. "MacGyver" ABC	0	7	19	1.27	1.82	-	14.6/22
65. "Dynasty II: Colbys" ABC	ŏ	5	18	1.22	1.37	_	11.9/18
66. "1986" NBC	0	2	8	1.20	_	_	10.5/18
67. "Life With Lucy" ABC	0	1	6	1.14	_	_	9.0/16
68. "Sledge Hammer!" ABC	0	3	20	1.13	_	_	10.5/17
69. "Tortellis" NBC	0	1	7 7	1.13 1.13	-	_	14.6/22 12.7/22
"Kay O'Brien" CBS 70. "Heart Of The City" ABC	0 0	1 1	11	1.13	_	_	7.2/12
71. "Starman" ABC	ő	1	24	1.04	_	_	10.0/18
72. "Nothing Is Easy" NBC	ŏ	Ô	6	1.00	_		9.9/17
"Spies" CBS	0	0	6	1.00	_	_	7.9/12
"Ellen Burstyn Show" ABC	0	0	7	1.00	_	_	7.6/13
"Dads" ABC	0	0	9	1.00	_	_	8.7/14
"Gung Ho" ABC	0	0	9 12	1.00 1.00	2.71	_	8.5/13 13.1/21
"You Again?" NBC Our World ABC	0	0	24	1.00	2.71 —	_	6.5/10
Out World ADC	Ū	Ū	24	1.00			0.5/10
Series That Aired Five Or Fewer Episodes							

1. "Nothing In Common" NBC	3	0	0	3.00	_	_	19.6/31
"Roomies" NBC	3	0	0	3.00	_	_	16.9/28
3. "Me And Mrs. C" NBC	2	0	0	3.00	_	_	16.8/30
4. "Sweet Surrender" NBC	1	0	0	3.00		_	14.1/29
5. "The Bronx Zoo" NBC	1	2	0	2.33	_	_	14.4/25
6. "The Charmings" ABC	0	5	0	2.00	_	_	10.7/19
"Harry" ABC	1	2	1	2.00	_		14.1/22
8. "Max Headroom" ABC	1	0	2	1.67	_	_	13.4/23
9. "Hard Copy" CBS	1	0	4	1.40	_	_	13.6/22
10. "The Popcorn Kid" CBS	0	1	3	1.25	_	_	11.0/19
11. "Love Boat" ABC	0	0	3	1.00	1.72	2.76	10.1/17
"Mariah" ABC	0	0	3	1.00		_	11.0/19
"Remington Steele" NBC	0	0	3	1.00	2.16	2.48	13.7/22
"Roxie" CBS	0	0	2	1.00			8.5/15
"Take Five" CBS	0	0	2	1.00	_		7.9/13
"West 57th" CBS	0	0	2	1.00	_	_	10.9/18
"Better Days" CBS	0	0	4	1.00	_	_	10.9/17

Video Ads: Will Auds Watch?

(Continued from Page 68, Column 3)

looked back on as a pivotal year in the development of sponsored videocassettes. It may even be hailed by viewers as a year in which the proper precedents were set. If advertising ends up being a boon to the video customer, not an unwelcome intrusion, the industry may identify 1987 as the year when viewer preferences, not revenues, were established as the key consideration.

The year has seen the first major new-release film in U.S. vid history to carry a commercial—the record-breaking Paramount Home Video release of "Top Gun," complete with a Diet Pepsi ad.

On the multiple sponsor "video publishing" front, the industry's first two important projects in that possible genre of the future hit the store shelves in 1987.

And the year has also seen the first sponsorship projects from such industry majors as HBO Video and Vestron Video.

Runaway Hit

The video industry's one breakaway success with sponsorship so far is Paramount's March 1987 release of "Top Gun." The tape starts with a 30-second "Top Gun"-themed Diet Pepsi commercial. And in exchange for that choice placement, Pepsi gave Paramount promo support worth roughly \$6,000,000, according to PHV.

The sales results sent a sonic boom of excitement through the industry. "Gun" shot down all industry records by seling about 2,800,000 units, roughly twice the total of previous industry record holder "Indiana Jones And The Temple Of Doom."

Wholesale level sales have hit about \$45,300,000, which also shattered the previous industry mark of roughly \$36,000,000 for "Jane Fonda's Workout."

And that "Gun" sales figure topped the total U.S. theatrical rentals earned by all but three films in calendar 1986 — "Karate Kid Part II," "Crocodile Dundee" and "Top Gun" itself.

QUEEN

(Continued from Page 82, Column 5)

air the show say it would be difficult to predict the show's chances of success. "Why can't people do something new," lamented a manager of one Southern California independent tv station. "I'm sick of it, and I think the public is sick to death of it too." Would he be interested in airing the show? "No. Well, maybe. I'd have to see what they do with it first."

Enright sees the "Queen" back in its rightful place, next to other shows that have been successfully resurrected — such as "Jeopardy."

So if Enright, Barry, Mynatt and others get their way, it won't be long before a handsome tv host leans toward a camera and says, "How would you like to be Queen for a Day."

The record-shattering "Gun" vid release also generated for Par vid revenues that were about 55% of the theatrical rentals accumulated by the pic, an unheard-of theatrical-to-video ratio for a blockbuster such as "Gun."

No doubt some of the key factors to the success had nothing to do with the Diet Pepsi teamup, especially "Top Gun's" broadaudience appeal and high entertainment value for general audiences.

But the sponsorship is credited with enhancing those plusses and jetting the film's sales into the stratosphere.

PHV senior v.p.-g.m. Tim Clott says the biggest impact from the sponsorship comes with the mentionings of the vidcassette on numerous Diet Pepsi tv commercials, which accounted for the bulk of the estimated \$6,000,000 of promo value from Pepsi's involvement.

The next biggest impact, one that no other film is likely to enjoy, was the tremendous media attention the "Gun" cassette attracted because it was the first U.S. film to premiere in video with sponsorship, Clott said.

The sponsorship also helped by cutting the price of the tape from Par's usual new-blockbuster \$29.95 tag down to \$26.95.

When the magnitude of the "Top Gun" success became apparent, it was assumed imitators would quickly follow, or at the very least, Paramount would apply a similar strategy to one of its subsequent blockbuster releases.

But by late in the year, no other sponsored films have been announced, although HBOV's \$99.95 release of "Platoon" contained a 45-second "tribute" to Vietnam vets from the Jeep-Eagle division of Chrysler Motors.

Clott notes that PHV did not gc the sponsored route on its lowpriced "Crocodile Dundee" and "Star Trek IV: The Voyage Home' because it discovered how truly serendipitous its teamup with Pepsi was. It just so happened the soft-drink giant had already produced a "Top Gun"themed commercial — a compatible spot that would entertain "Gun" fans, rather than interfere with their enjoyment of the pic. And the existence of that spot meant Pepsi had mapped out a major campaign onto which the vidcassette tags could easily be grafted.

But without that kind of good fortune, it was impossible for PHV to equal the "Gun"-Pepsi combo, Clott said. And the company is determined to live up to that first performance when it brings out a second sponsored program, he added.

What Paramount learned is that, unless you get lucky, you've got to start planning a sponsorship campaign of "Top Gun" proportions while the theatrical film is still in the production or planning stages. That gives the far-sighted ad industry time to plan the spot

(Continued on Page 118, Column 3)

"Together We Stand" CBS

1.00

13.5/21

STILL THE TOPS.



FIVE OF THE TOP TEN

Animated Series in Syndication (Source: NSI Cassandra, May 1987)

- 1. The Jetsons
- 2. Smurfs** Adventures*
- 6. Scooby-Doo (tie)
- 6. The Flintstones (tie)
- 9. The Funtastic World of Hanna-Barbera

"A Sepp / Hanna Barbera co Smurts" created by Peyo

Hanna-Barbera Productions

Oct. 1 — Vestron Pictures and N.Y.-based Integrated Resources Inc. form \$100,000,000 joint venture to underwrite production and distribution of 15 Vestron in-house theatrical features in 1987-89 ... NBC off to strong ratings start; the only real race may be for second-place slot ... Twentieth Century Fox Film Corp. closed out fiscal 1986 with \$30,397,000 net earnings compared to red ink of \$79,095,000 in 1985 ... CBS Inc. founder and acting chairman William S. Paley expressed confidence that company will regain respect it once held, a reference to the internal struggles which racked CBS to the extent that Paley came out of retirement to resolve the situation in tandem with Laurence Tisch.

Oct. 2 — Gov. George Deukmejian vetoed two antirunaway-production bills and another measure that would have modified current law on personal service contracts of recording artists ... Adding its organizational voice to the mounting chorus of opposition to the computer coloring of vintage black-and-white films, the AFI announced its stand against the process at a spirited, emotional press conference on its campus in Holywood ... CBS Inc. offered the FCC what it considered to be "emphatic assurance" that no transfer of control occurred when Laurence Tisch was named acting president.

Oct. 3 — Feature film production ran an astounding 52% ahead of last year's comparable pace during the first nine months of 1986 . . . Videocassette recorder penetration of U.S. tv households has reached the 38% level, according to Arbitron . . . Cheryl Boone Isaacs upped to publicity v.p. for the Motion Picture Group of Paramount Pictures: Oct. 6 — Diversification is the name of the game at MGM/UA TV Prods., which now has 125 hours of film and tape production commitments, having expanded from primetime network projects to pay-tv, cable, firstrun syndication and public tv ... Swamped by such high-rated soap imports as "Dallas" and "Dynasty," European broadcaster are being urged to strike back. A British politician, Arts Minister Richard Luce, wants them to reassert a European cultural identity by collaborating on a soap that would give those two hot Yank shows a run for their money ... Aretha Franklin's version of the title cut of "Jumpin' Jack Flash" soundtrack will not be a upcoming Polygram Records release, because Franklin is under exclusive contract to Artista Records, which would not ok her contribution to the LP.

Oct. 7 — The CBS Broadcast Group has fired Neil Derrough as president of the CBS-owned tv stations and Frank Gardner as v.p. and g.m. of KCBS-TV, the CBS o&o in Los Angeles . . . The Rev. Jesse Jackson is on the warpath against the record industry for alleged discriminatory practices in its treatment of black employes, black-music marketing departments, and black-owned music retailers and record labels, and has singled out the record companies owned by Warner Communications. Inc. as targets for his first attack . . . Solar Records has filed a \$200,000,000-plus breach of contract-discrimination suit against longtime distributor Elektra/Asylum Records and its parent company, Warner Communications Inc.

Oct. 8 — September domestic film boxoffice jumped nearly 11% from last year's depressed level, climaxed by "Crocodile Dundee," with \$8,000,000-plus weekend bow, second-highest ever for the Fall season ... Hal Wallis, 88, one of Hollywood's most active and powerful studio executives and producers for more than 50 years, died Sunday in his sleep at his home in Rancho Mirage ... NBC continues to stand as the clear leader in primetime Nielsens after two weeks of the new season ... The Cannon Group hit with a stockholders class-action suit for allegedly misrepresenting its financial status and accounting procedures in public documents.

Oct. 9 — Kerry McCluggage has been named president of Universal Television, succeeding Robert A. Harris, who has been upped to prexy of MCA Television Group. Harris steps into the spot being vacated by Al Rush, who becomes chairman of MCA TV Group . . . Legislation that would encourage the tv networks to reduce violence on the airwaves has been approved by the Senate, but final action will have to await next term . . . Fox Broadcasting Co. won't be offering its full five-hour-long, two-night primetime programming slate when the indie station program service enters the evening arena in March, 1987. Instead, the fledgling web is opting for a gradual build instead of a big splash, debuting with just Sunday nights.

Oct. 10 — With a minimum of fanfare, Century City-based Telstar Corp., best known in the past for the Satel-lite delivery of television programming to the lodging industry, is in the midst of diversifying into becoming a major player in the communications/entertainment software business . . . Richard C. Gallop is giving up his dual top executive posts with Columbia Pictures Industries and the Entertainment Business Sector of parent company Coca-Cola to become a senior member in the Wall St. investment banking firm of Allen & Co. . . . Holiday homevid sales may be hurt by shortage of cassettes . . . Lynette Prucha upped to v.p., homevideo and pay-tv sales (U.S. and Canada) at Crown International Pictures.

Oct. 13 — The Screen Production Association of Australia released a survey that claims Australian Actors Equity has blocked almost one in four attempts by Aussie producers to bring in overseas actors since 1980 ... DeLaurentiis Entertainment Ltd., Australian offshoot of the U.S. entertainment company, has confirmed the Queensland site for its proposed \$A10,000,000 film studio complex ... Newscasters, networks, okay tentative pact ... Construction on four cottages has begun at the Motion Pictures & Television Country House campus in Woodland Hills.

Oct. 14 — MTM launches domestic syndication arm ... Oklahoma traditionalists Reba McEntire took top honors as entertainer of the year, as well as her third consecutive title as female vocalist at the 20th annual Country Music Association Awards show ... Walt Disney Pictures will team for the first time with Steven Spielberg's Amblin Entertainment to make "Who Framed Roger Rabbit?"

Oct. 15 — While the new television season is only a few weeks old, the three nets have a minimum of 21 new prime series set for debuts at midseason - a concrete if unspoken acknowledgement that considereable fallout is expected in the months ahead . . . The Directors Guild of America, in a brief to be filed today with the Copyright Office, contends that computer coloring of vintage blackand-white films "puts at risk a unique American cultural heritage" and asserts that copyright claims on colorized films "should not be validated" ... Neil R. Austrian is stepping down as chairman-chief exec officer of Showtime/The Movie Channel Inc. . . . Keenan Wynn, 70, one of Hollywood's most versatile and prolific supporting actors during a career that spanned six decades, died yesterday at his home in Brentwood of cancer. He was the son of comic and actor Ed Wynn, and actress Hilda Keenan. Oct. 16 — Columbia Pictures flexes international muscle, planning to hire Australian distributor-exhibitor-producer Greg Coote ... Malcolm C. Green, a dark horse wearing

tional Association Of Theater Owners.

Oct. 17 — Domestic film boxoffice for the week just ended will hit an alltime seasonal high near \$80,000,000 ...

A surge in television revenues from syndication of "Magnum; P.I." offset sharp decline in theatrical revenues as MCA Inc. posted a 10.3% increase in third-quarter net income to a peak \$74,508,000 ... Viacom Enterprises is breaking the rules in preselling "The Cosby Show" in rerun syndication by marketing it the way distributors sell firstrun syndication shows.

the colors of the 111-screen Cinema Centers circuit (now

Hoyts Cinemas) in Boston, has emerged as the frontrun-

ner in the race to succeed Richard Fox as president of Na-

Oct. 20 — With inescapable implications on the eve of the Los Angeles convention of NATO, two more major circuits were gobbled up over the weekend by distribution. Gulf & Western, parent company of Paramount, acquired 360-screen Mann Theaters and Tri-Star, already positioned to buy the United Artists Communications chain, has preempted Paramount with the reported purchase of the 228-screen Loews Theaters chain . . . MGM lot closed by Lorimar-Telepictures; approximately 215 former MGM employes have been pink-slipped . . . Barbara Stanwyck is to become the 15th recipient of the American Life Achievement award.

Oct. 21 — MPAA president Jack Valenti assured exhibition that a return to the monopoly abuses that led to the consent decrees on divorcement in 1948 is inconceivable as major studios continue to take over big theater chains ... Tri-Star Pictures confirms deal to acquire Loews Theater Management Corp., which encompasses 228 screens ... Warner Communications Inc. posts 47% hike in nine-month income to \$123,773,000 ... RKO Pictures

has gone to court to stop the colorizing of a series of classic black-and-white films made from 1939-1952 . . . Sam Marx, story editor of MGM during its golden years, has settled his suit against the film company to retain the option to produce a feature based on Graham Greene's "The Tenth Man," a novella that collected dust in the studio's archives for more than 40 years until Marx arranged for its publication last year.

Oct. 22 — MPAA merger is propsoed at the opening of the three-day annual convention of NATO ... The Producers Sales Organization stigma, stemming from company's sudden and unexpected belly-up, appears to have made indie companies suspect in the eyes of their overseas customers as well as producers who supply them with product ... Peak October domestic film boxoffice tally assured ... The Movie Store sets its first two 1987 theatrical releases, highlighted by "Meatballs III," which will mark the largest and most expensive launch in its history ... Tri-Star's boxoffice successes with "About Last Night" and "Nothing In Common" fueled a seven-fold increase in quarterly net income to \$3,582,000.

Oct. 23 — Lorimar-Telepictures Corp. scrapped plans to purchase Miami's WTVJ-TV from Wometco Broadcasting Co. but will go ahead with acquisiton of six other stations for a pricetag that has been reduced from \$1.85 billion to \$1.415 billion . . . Attorney General Edwin Meese launches a nationwide drive vs. hardcore pornography, creating a task force of prosecutors in the U.S. Dept. of Justice so that the \$8 bil smut industry can be "pursued with a vengeance and prosecuted to the hilt"

... Disney's "Mickey And Donald" half-hour cartoon series will be broadcast over the China Central Television Network (CCTV), beginning Oct. 26. Disney films have not been shown in China for almost four decades ... Leonie de Picciotto has been promoted to national director of publicity for The Samuel Goldwyn Co.

Oct. 24 — Screen Actors Guild residuals continue to grow at a breakneck pace, totaling just over \$123,000,000 for the accounting year ended Sept. 30, 1986 . . . Acting CBS chief exec Laurence A. Tisch has emerged as the leading candidate to become permanent chief exec officer

... Major NATO goal is protection of Independent theater owners and operators of small circuits and a more decisive role for them in the affairs of exhibition.

Oct. 27 — CBS confirms sales of CBS Songs to a partner-ship consisting of publishing exex Charles Koppelman and Martin Bandier and carpet/furniture magnate Stephen Swid . . . Barry Thurston has been upped to president of sydnciation at Embassy Communications . . . A Federal judge sided last Friday with a group of filmmakers who accused the U.S. Information Agency of denying their documentaries special export status because of the films' liberal viewpoints . . . Dan Slusser, v.p., general manager of Universal City, is the new president of the Los Angeles Film Development Committee.

Oct. 28 — Raffaella De Laurentiis officially named president of production for De Laurentiis Entertainment Group by her father, DEG chairman Dino De Laurentiis. She's hired Alan Riche as senior v.p. of production . . . Zanuck/Brown Company has made its first venture into television, via an exclusive agreement in all areas of tv with New World Television . . . NATPE will move its headquarters from New York to Los Angeles in August . . . Hal Roach Studios acknowledged signing a nonbinding letter of intent to acquire Ray Stark Prods. and its subsidiary, Rastar Prods.

Oct. 29 — Extraordinary pace of domestic film boxoffice this month continues to propel October to record dollar and ticket levels, suggesting that the final 1986 tally might even equal last year's figures ... After four months as head of marketing for De Laurentiis Entetainment Co., Ed Roginski is returing to the marketing department of MCA/Universal Motion Picture: Group — this time as its president. Roginski left U in May, where he was senior v.p. of marketing ... Stephen Dr Silbert, personal attorney to MGM/UA Communications Co. owner Kirk Kerkoiran, has been appointed to the newly created position of president and chief operating officer ... MGM/UA Homevideo and Concorde Pictures signed a \$30,000,000-plus deal for foreign release of upcoming films from the Roger Corman banner.

Oct. 30 — Howard Stringer, exec v.p. of CBS News, who has headed the news division since Van Gordon Sauter was forced to resign on Oct. 11, has been named CBS

WHEN YOU WANT THE BEST



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News president ... The board of directors of the Screen Extras Guild has approved a new contract that calls for dramatic pay cuts for SEG extras ... De Laurentiis Entertainment Group Inc. plans a public offering of 50% of the stock in its Australian subsidiary at a price that would generate \$A27,500,000 ... Nelson Entertainment Inc. has closed its \$85,000,000 deal with Coca-Cola Co. to acquire Coke's Embassy Home Entertainment.

Oct. 31 — The three television nets have rejected a proposal by the Hollywood production community that would have extended the U.S. Dept. of Justice's sunset on the financial interest and syndication rules to 1995 in exchange for an ownership interest in a limited number of primetime tv series . . . International feature film production is running 50% ahead of the pace set through the first 10 months of 1985, with 429 films thus far ... Atlantic Entertainment promotes Kathryn Galan to senior v.p. of production, and added William Tennant as senior v.p. in charge of motion pictures ... Lynda Myks appointed London-based senior v.p. in charge of creative affairs in Europe for Columbia Pictures, and Oscar-winning film editor Jack Clark will join company as a senior production executive, two more executives hand-picked by chairman David Puttnam to establish a global profile for Col and put his own imprint on the company.

NOVEMBER, 1986

Nov. 3 — The Academy Of Television Arts & Sciences' all-day conference on substance abuse produced an unexpectedly lively debate on what Hollywood should do about drugs and on the possible harm that the crusade could do if it goes off in the wrong directions . . . Producer Sandy Howard has made distribution deals, which also include cofinancing, covering three films with Gothambased distributor Spectrafilm via his Howard International Film Group . . . The team that wrote, directed and produced "Ghoulies" for Empire Pictures has filed a breach-of-contract suit against topper Charles Band and his affiliated companies, seeking in excess of \$5,000,000 in damages.

Nov. 4 — Worldwide prerecorded music business had a retail value of approximately \$12 bil in 1984, according to the International Federation of Phonogram & Videogram Producers (IFPI) ... With at least \$A120,000,000 in the tills from U.S. and Australian playoff, and the rest of the world still to be exploited, "Crocodile Dundee" unquestionably has earned the mantle as Australia's biggest boxoffice hit . . . The film industry's latest pursuit, colorizing of black-and-white pix, drew the wrath of the National Council on the Arts at its quarterly meeting in Washington last weekend ... Richard H. Evans will leave his post as chairman, president and chief executive officer of Radio City Music Hall Prods. to become prexy/chief executive officer of Madison Square Garden Corp., starting Jan. 1 ... The Smithsonian Institution is in final stages of nailing down a deal for acquisition of Folkways Records, one of the most extensive collections of international ethnic and folk recordings in the world.

Nov. 5 — Television's most durable soaper, "Search For Tomorrow," which began in 1951 on CBS-TV and moved five years ago to NBC-TV, has been axed, the victim of dwindling ratings ... With baseball disruptions now out of the way, the networks have launched into the November sweeps with NBC running as strong as ever in first, CBS looking like a solid runnerup, and last-place ABC facing some serious problems ... Sylvester Stallone's indie production company, White Eagle Enterprises, has paid in the middle-six figure range to acquire rights to "The Leopard Hunts In Darkness," an international best-seller by South African author Wilbur Smith. Nov. 6 — For broadcasters, the smashing Democratic triumphs have created several potential trouble spots. Come January, Sen. Ernest Hollings (D-S.C.) will likely chair the Senate Commerce Committee, the panel that oversees many broadcast matters. He has been a staunch supporter of the Fairness Doctrine regulation that requires broadcasters to present both sides of a controversial issue ... Proposed merger of two IATSE affiliates, Camera Local 659 and Editors Local 776, is now dead, although the possibility remains that it will be revived at a later date ... Martin Scorsese has signed a two-year, nonexclusive agreement with Walt Disney Pictures following success of their recent collaboration on "The Color Of Money" ... Not to be outdone by primetime network tv, firstrun syndication now has a second season, starting in mid-January, 1987.

Nov. 7 — Independent productions over the past year rose by 20% over the last 12 months and reached the highest total in a decade, with 397 pix getting MPAA tags ... WOR-TV won the New York-area bidding war for Viacom Enterprises' "The Cosby Show" by agreeing to pay \$240,000 a week, or \$43,680,000 over the life of the three-and-a-half year contract, starting in syndication in 1988 ... Two Salt Lake City men have entered guilty pleas after becoming the first plaintiffs prosecuted for unauthorized interception of satellite programming under the antipiracy provisions of the Cable Communications Policy Act of 1984.

Nov. 10 — A company record 110 hours of new tv projects are in development at three-year-old New World TV ... Lucille Ball's tv series comeback has come to an inglorious end. Her "Life With Lucy," along with "The Ellen Burstyn Show," will be removed from the ABC-TV schedule on Saturday ... Leadership of SEG has warned the Guild's 6700 members that rejection of a controversial new contract will "mean the virtual end of SEG." ... Columbia Pictures will not be doing business as usual under the reign of David Puttnam — and the chief casualties will be deal makers and phony producers ... Norman Horowitz named president of MGM/UA Telecommunications.

Nov. 11 — Chinese television, currently the fastest growing market in the world, is attracting major Western advertisers eager to get in on the ground floor of burgeoning consumerism ... MGM/UA Communications, the direct successor of United Artists Corp., which went public last March, shows \$17,861,000 (34¢) profit for first financial year. Company acquired MGM Entertainment Co. from Turner Broadcasting in August and changed its name to MGM/UA Communications Co. on Sept. 2 ... Ann Busby named President of De Laurentiis Entertainment Group's international division.

Nov. 12 — Domestic film boxoffice in October smashed all existing records, with ticket sales the highest in at least a generation. Resurgence in domestic b.o. means that the final 1986 gross figure may exceed last year's \$3.75 bil tally ... ABC Television Network stands to lose upwards of \$60,000,000 annually in 1986 and 1987, indicating the network's financial problems are deeper than previously believed ... Producer David Permut signs two-year United Artists deal ... Samuel Goldwyn Jr. will produce the 59th annual Academy Awards presentation.

Nov. 13 — Lorimar-Telepictures Corp. won't be buying six Storer television stations, as the giant \$1.415-bil deal was publicly aborted yesterday — three weeks after the initial price had been trimmed by \$435,000,000, principally by excluding Wometco's WTVJ-TV in Miami from the package ... The Federal government has been conducting "a formal fact-finding investigation" of the Cannon Group's business activities for nearly the past two months ... The Walt Disney Co. posted a 43% increase in fiscal year net income to \$247,315,000 on a revenue boost of 23% to \$2.47 billion.

Nov. 14 — Sources close to International Brotherhood of Teamsters president Jackie Presser said yesterday that he is agreeable to bringing the Screen Extras Guild into the Teamsters' fold ... Harold Greenbeg, head of Montreal-based Astral Bellevue, confirmed progress in negotiations with Gulf & Western (parent company of Paramount Pictures) to form a joint venture as a Canadian distribution entity ... Director John Huston, lashing out at those responsible for computer-coloring his 1941 black-and-white classic, "The Maltese Falcon," yesterday called on the public to boycott product advertised on tv broadcasts of colorized films.

Nov. 17 — Independent producer Leonard Goldberg named president and chief operating officer of 20th Century Fox Film Corp., filling the post vacated four months ago by Alan Horn ... Barry London, Paramount president of domestic marketing and distribution, confirmed that he and his department will vacate their New York base and move to the Paramount lot ... Heritage Entertainment Inc. plans to acquire the Southbrook Entertainment Corp. and its television susidiary ... In an agreement with the Justice Dept., AMC has pleaded guilty to criminal antitrust product-splitting violations in Deptford, N.J., and Dallas, Tex., and has agreed to pay fines totaling more than \$1,000,000.

Nov. 18 — Columbia Pictures chairman David Puttnam and his hand-picked new president and chief operating officer, David Picker, held a joint press conference at which Puttnam revealed he's taken 57 pictures out of the studio's development backlog and given a conditional reprieve to 64 other projects he has inherited . . . Ted Turner's MGM/UA debt continues to exact a heavy toll on his company's bottom line despite substantial revenue and profit benefits from the massive deal. Turner Broadcasting System Inc. posted a third-quarter loss of \$44,308,000 versus last year's net income of \$2,407,000 ... Michelle D. Reese upped to senior v.p. of marketing for De Laurentiis Entertainment Group . . . Color Systems Technology, clearly irked by the DGA's growing campaign against the colorizing of black-and-white films, has threatened to take legal action against the Guild if it persists in its anticolorizing crusade.

Nov. 19 — New Century Entertainment and The Vista Organization have agreed to supply New Century/Vista Film Co., the separate and autonomous distribution entity in which they are principal partners, with a minimum of 30 features over the next four years . . . MTV Networks launching 24-hour, satellite-carried, European music-video network . . . American Film Marketing Association says 1985 overseas sales increased 9%.

Nov. 20 — In a major reorganization of its tv production and syndication division, Coca-Cola has apparently decided to shift all of its current network production and distribution from Columbia Pictures TV to Embassy Telecommunications . . . MGM christens new headquarters, and announces a slate of 24 new feature films . . . Cannon posts third-quarter losses in excess of \$14,000,000 . . . Lucius Barre named publicity v.p. for Atlantic Entertainment Group . . . Bob Hope has donated \$1,000,000 to the Motion Picture & Television Fund Capital Campaign . . . Eastman Kodak Co. said it plans to withdraw from South Africa.

Nov. 21 — New World Pictures has made dynamic strides into the superhero business by acquiring Marvel Entertainment Group, best known for its Marvel Comics . . . DEG linking with HBO for three years . . . Joel Freeman named senior production v.p. of New Century Entertainment Corp. . . . Burt Metcalfe, involved with the "MASH" series from beginning through its 11th and final season, has joined MTM Enterprises in development as an executive producer-director . . . Marty Pasetta to direct the Academy Awards presentation for the 16th consecutive year.

Nov. 24 — Richard Ingber named president of marketing and Gene Margolis president of distribution of New Century/Vista Film Co. . . . Office workers target SAG for possible strike . . . The Los Angeles local of AFTRA has joined the growing ranks of Hollywood unions and organizations opposed to the colorizing of black-and-white films

Nov. 25 — Coca-Cola Television has been formed as a new unit of Entertainment Business Sector Inc., a subsid of Coca-Cola, to encompass all of Coke's tv operations . . . Ian Jessel named president of Nelson International, Inc., new subsid of Nelson Holdings International Ltd., Canadian firm that acquired Embassy Home Entertainment from Coca-Cola . . . MGM/UA Communications moving to Coast but its top exex apparently won't . . . Cannon Group chairman Menahem Golan says his company is considering seven active bids for the 425-screen Commonwealth circuit acquired by Cannon in June amid great fanfare about establishing a long-sought exhibition foothold in the United States.

Nov. 26 — CBS/Fox Video is increasing wholesale cost of "A" theatricals on videocassette by at least 12% and possibly by as much as 24% ... Association of Program Distributors has decided to go to the FCC looking for an inquiry and eventual rulemaking over the current practice of granting broadcast licenses to home-shopping entities ... IATSE has launched a "recognitional strike" against Cannon Films and five of its ongoing film projects.

DECEMBER, 1986

Dec. 1 — Sparks are expected to fly this week when the leadership of the Screen Actors Guild sits down to debate whether or not to hire a national affirmative-action officer ... The three networks have finished the November sweeps with lowest combined score ever ... FCC okays sale of RKO's WOR-TV, Secaucus, N.J., to MCA Inc.

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for \$387,000,000 . . . Cary Grant, 82, died last Saturday night of a stroke in Davenport, Iowa, where he had been scheduled to appear in his one-man show of film clips and reminiscences. His screen career spanned 50 years.

Dec. 2 — Cannon Films and IATSE have reached agreement on a "breakthrough" contract covering all Cannon films shot in the U.S. budgeted over \$6,000,000. It will run for two years, beginning Jan. 1 ... With a record Thanksgiving week led by Par's "Star Trek IV: The Voyage Home," which enjoyed biggest opening of any "Trek" picture, this year's running b.o. total has finally pushed ahead of last year's comparable gross, passing \$3.28 billion ... Colin Davis named president of MCA TV International, and Shelly Schwab prexy of MCA TV Enterprises.

Dec. 3 — Vestron Pictures is becoming a virtual low-budget studio, with plans to produce 10 features a year coupled with the acquisition of another 10-15 films. It also added a low-budget feature division, which could account for an additional 18 pictures annually . . . Desi Arnaz, 69, Cuban-born bandleader, actor and pioneer tv producer who, along with then-wife Lucille Ball, parlayed the success of "I Love Lucy" into a high-powered Hollywood studio, died of lung cancer yesterday at his Del Mar home in San Diego County . . . Frank McCarthy, 74, producer of the Academy Award-winning "Patton," died Monday of cancer at the Motion Picture & Television Country Hospital in Woodland Hills.

Dec. 4 — SAG's Ways & Means Committee has forecast a staggering \$13,718,000 Guild deficit over the next five years . . . Discussions are in progress for the possible sale of Western Costume, largest costume house in the world and a Hollywood landmark, to a real estate development firm . . . Herb Steinberg retiring as vice president of Universal City Studios after 24 years at MCA Inc.

Dec. 5 — Feature film production through the first 11 months of 1986 still ran 45% ahead of same period in 1985, though the pace of filming slowed in November compared to the previous three months . . . John Tarnoff named production veepee of De Laurentiis Entertainment Group . . . Kathryn Linclau appointed v.p. of marketing for Carolco Pictures . . . Michael Olivieri, who headed sales at Vestron Video for five years before leaving the label in October, has launched Video Marketing Corp. of America, based out of Stamford, Conn.

Dec. 8 — Warner Bros. International sets company record for second straight year in feature films billings from overseas release, with \$146,320,000 in rentals through end of fiscal year ... A motion to censure former SAG president Charlton Heston for outspoken support of right-to-work laws was overwhelmingly approved at SAG's annual membership meeting ... Gulf & Western, parent company of Paramount Pictures, has acquired its third theatrical circuit in seven months — the 101-screen Festival Enterprises chain.

Dec. 9 — MPAA president Jack Valenti has jumped into the fray over proposed Immigration & Naturalization Service visa regulations that would make it more difficult for foreign artists to enter and work in the United States . . . Carolco has closed a homevid rights deal with HBO/Cannon Video, bringing back to Carolco rights to a pair of films, "Extreme Prejudice" and "Angel Heart," and is talking a separate deal with Daniel Melnick's Indeprod Co. . . . Dawn McElwaine is new national publicity boss in MGM pub-promo revamp.

Dec. 10 — Domestic film boxoffice in November set a new all-time dollar record for the period ... MCA reactivates planned Florida studio-park complex with Cineplex Odeon Corp. as partner ... Jerry Weintraub, fired by UA owner Kirk Kerkorian after six months as chairman and chief executive officer, is expected by the end of this month to profit \$11,110,000 from selling back 2,500,000 shares of UA stock to the company and for his interest in certain entertainment properties and other related expenses.

Dec. 11 — A major victory was claimed by the MPAA after a U.S. District Court jury in Memphis, Tenn., acquitted distributors of any complicity with major circuits in product splitting allegedly designed to deny product to Balmoral Cinema, defunct Memphis theater that filed the action 10 years ago . . . Cinetel Films, homevid outfit that moved into production last year, hopes to move out of the rank of "ma-and-pa indies" with plans for as many as eight releases and six in-house productions in 1987 . . .

The antitrust division of the U.S. Dept. of Justice filed suit yesterday in Los Angeles to block Technicolor's acquisition of Metrocolor, a move that would leave Hollywood with only two film processing laboratories . . . Aubrey (Bud) Groskopf has resigned as president of Republic Pictures Corp. . . . Par's "Crocodile Dundee" clears \$100,000,000 domestic b.o. mark, joining studio's "Top Gun" and Col's "The Karate Kid, Part II" in that achievement. . . . Oscar nominations to be announced Feb. 11 at 5:30 a.m., PST.

Dec. 12 — CBS Inc. is in process of a broadcast division reorganization that would include eliminating exec vice president level and reassigning those executives to operating positions ... Negative costs for the average major studio motion picture have escalated to \$18,000,000 and may reach \$20,000,000, AMPTP president J. Nicholas Counter III said ... Carolco Pictures Inc. will have domestic homevideo and all foreign distribution rights to 10 films Sylvester Stallone is producing via his White Eagle Enterprises ... Groundbreaking ceremonies were held yesterday for a \$50,000,000 project to enlarge the medical and housing facilities of the Motion Picture & Television Hospital in Woodland Hills.

Dec. 15 — Justice Department suit puts end to sale of Metrocolor Labs from Lorimar-Telepictures. A limited partnership had been formed in which the owners of Technicolor had an interest ... Cineplex Odeon USA, wholly owned U.S. subsidiary of Toronto-based Cineplex Odeon Corp., will pay \$45,500,000 for the Sterling Recreation Organization, 114-screen Washington State-based circuit headed by Fredric Danz ... Richard Orear has retired as chairman of the Commonwealth Theatre chain based in Kansas City, Mo.

Dec. 16 - Grant R. Tinker, former chairman of NBC, and Gannett Co. Inc., have reached agreement to form a joint venture production company, and Gannett has acquired Laird International Studios for \$24,000,000 ... NAACP report is critical of record industry, alleging it "allows for total control and domination by whites" ... "The Color Purple," "The Cosby Show" and NBC dominated the NAACP's 19th annual Image Awards held Sunday night at the Wiltern Theater . . . SovExport, international film sales arm of the Soviet Union, will be among 35 foreign companies to peddle wares at American Film Market Feb. 26-March 6 . . . Cannon gets a reprieve — at least until Friday - from its debt of some \$75,000,000 that was due to be paid Australian businessman Alan Bond in connection with Cannon's purchase earlier this year of his Screen Entertainment Ltd.

Dec. 17 — Columbia Pictures has formed a new Feature Group to serve film projects from development through release to homevideo and other ancillary markets, under company chairman David Puttnam . . . John Fiedler, a holdover from the Guy McElwaine regime, has stepped down as Columbia production president to enter production for the studio . . . Ave Butensky tagged exec veepee for domestic tv distribution at Fries Entertainment Co.

Dec. 18 — New World Pictures is strengthening production foothold Down Under via newly formed New World Pictures (Australia) Ltd., headed up by Richard St. Johns, who'll base in Sydney . . . Go-Video says it's ready to intro two-deck vidtape machine, and, if need be, tangle with the MPAA . . . Christmas homevid cassette sales likely to double take of 1985 holiday period.

Dec. 19 — AMPTP won't budge on SEG talks, stating that "further bargaining would be futile." ... Alan Levin resigns as exec v.p. and chief operating officer of New Century Prods. ... The National Casting Agency yesterday filed an \$11,800,000 antitrust suit against SEG, two other top casting agencies, and three unlicensed associations of SEG extras, claiming they conspired to monopolize the employment of extras in tv commercials. Dec. 22 — Fox Broadcasting Co. is breaking a few rules in rolling out its primetime slate this April, including a three-hour Sunday night-only affair on April 5, growing to five Saturday-Sunday hours by June 6 ... Murray Schwartz, who left the William Morris Agency in 1971 to become president of Merv Griffin Enterprises and help build the Griffin tv empire, has resigned as prez and chief operating officer of MGE to head his own production entity ... Empire Pictures is gearing up to release seven new films during the first half of 1987.

Dec. 23 — A U.S. District Court jury in Springfield, Ill., accompanied by a blistering censure from the bench, has

handed the U.S. Dept. of Justice a possibly crippling rebuff in the first criminal product-splitting case to go to a trial since the Justice Dept.'s crackdown on splitting as a per se criminal violation of the Sherman antitrust laws . . . Controlling interest in Manson International, the 33-year-old Los Angeles-based foreign sales firm, has been acquired by WinStar, a N.Y. investment firm headed by William J. Rouhana Jr., a lawyer-investor with a background in the entertainment industry . . . Helga Stephenson, interim director of Toronto's Festival of Festivals, has been named executive director.

Dec. 24 — Cash-heavy Warner Communications Inc. gives Cannon an early Yule present in a \$75,000,000 transaction which allows Cannon to satisfy its debt to Alan Bond. WCI gets Cannon preferred stock convertible to 2,000,000 shares of Cannon common stock, notes and a two-year option to purchase 50% interest in Cannon's 525-screen European theater chain for \$50,000,000. Warner Bros. also gets domestic video distribution rights to a reported 23 Cannon Films for \$25,000,000... Janet Jackson drew a pace-setting nine nominations for the 14th annual American Music Awards... NBC tallies its 12th consecutive ratings win.

Dec. 29 — Forty-eight primetime network series were canceled in 1986, a whopping casualty list but not quite up to the record 50 axes in 1984 ... An estimated 35% of people employed in the motion picture and television industries — not excluding executives — have substance abuse problems, according to a report from Tom Kenny, director of MPTF's substance abuse program, and head of MPTF's North Hollywood rehabilitation facility ... Former SAG president John Gavin, as well as Clint Eastwood, James Stewart, Tom Selleck and others have written letters to the SAG board of directors deploring the recent censuring of Charlton Heston.

Dec. 30 — Los Angeles boxoffice took in bundles of Christmas loot and is in position to ring in the New Year with the highest seven-day mark in area history . . . Last weekend's torrid domestic boxoffice will definitely propel final 1986 take to over \$3.6 billion, second highest year, behind \$4.03 billion in 1984 . . . RIAA is hoping to revive personal services bill.

Dec. 31 — A total of 472 new features were released domestically during 1986, more than 4% better than last year's total of 452 and the highest supply since the early 1970s, when more than 500 pictures a year were released ... Coca-Cola Telecommunications and Paramount TV Distribution have entered into negotiations to buy out Grey Advertising's majority interest in LBS Communications ... Marshall Wortman has been elected chairman of the board of trustees of the Directors Guild of America-Producers Pension and Health & Welfare Plans ... Thomas A. Zimmerman, controller of MCA's pictures division, has been elected chairman of the board of trustees of the Screen Actors Guild-Producers Pension & Health Plans.

JANUARY, 1987

Jan. 5 — Modern records for levels of feature film production were set by both majors and indies in 1986, with totals in both categories up by more than 50% over last year's record numbers . . . Growing product stockpile cues reorganization of Twentieth Century Fox's syndie operations . . . Len Levy has exited International Video Entertainment, where he was senior v.p.-g.m. in a move he says reflects the desire of managing partner Carolco to phase in its own senior management . . . In 1986, the year of realignment, the film industry returned to the origins of its pre-television growth and prosperity in the most massive marriage of distribution and exhibition since the 1948 Paramount consent decrees.

Jan. 6 — General Cinema, for many years king of the hill in U.S. exhibition, has relinquished number-one position to United Artists Communications circuit, which now boasts 1595 screens . . . Fred Bernstein succeeds John Fiedler as worldwide production president at Columbia Pictures . . . Cannon Group paring down Hollywood staff, in a move that Yoram Globus said had nothing to do with company's widely publicized financial problems but was a reflection of decreasing production activity.

Jan. 7 — Gulf & Western Inc. announced a 51% rise in fiscal 1986 earnings from continuing operations, citing "sharply higher results" from entertainment activities . . . Orion's "Hannah And Her Sisters" and Warners" "The Mission"

PATRICK REYNOLDS

ELIMINATORS
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XANADU
HAIR
THE DIRECTOR
THE GIFT
THE GREATEST BATTLE
RETURN OF THE GODS
PUMPING IRON
BUFFALO BILL and the INDIANS
NASHVILLE
WHITE NOON

TELEVISION
BOTTICELLI
A ROSE FOR EMILY
CAPRA
OPERATION PETTICOAT
TONY RANDALL SHOW
BERNICE BOBS HER HAIR

THEATRE

YMCA

YMCA

GOODBYE CHARLIE

The IMPORTANCE OF BEING EARNEST

BLOOD, SWEAT and STANLEY POOLE

THE MIKADO

H.M.S. PINAFORE

TRAINING Milton Katselas Peggy Feury Charles Conrad Studio Starring part, "Mandroid"—Science Fiction-Action Feature Film

Paramount

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For Milos Forman

Lead—AFI Film

Lead—Independent

Featured opposite John Huston

Co-starring—Independent

Independent

For Robert Altman

For Robert Altman

Lead in theatrical short

One-Act Play on Videotape—By Terrence McNally
P.B.S. Short Story—Co-starred with John Carradine
Wilmer—NBC
Bowies—ABC
Bullet Head—ABC
Draycott Deyo—F. Scott Fitzgerald—PBS—with
Shelley Duvall. Veronica Cartwright. Dennis Christopher

Off Broadway
Manatee Theatre. Port Salerno. Florida
Topanga Canyon Playhouse
Topanwell Theatre. Lenox. Mass.
Cranwell Theatre Lenox. Lakeville. Conn
Indian Mountain Playhouse. Lakeville. Conn
Indian Mountain Playhouse. Lakeville.

Two years
Nine months
Nine months
With Charles Conrad—One & one half years
The JOSHUA COMPANY
Singing—Three years
THE JOSHUA COMPANY
Singing—Three years
Master Class
WIDEQUEXCERPTS ON REQUEST WEST WIDEQUEST W

each had five feature film nominations as contenders were announced in 13 film and 11 tv classifications for the 44th annual Golden Globe Awards . . . Larry Sugar named president of Granat Releasing Corp.

Jan. 8 — Carolco Pictures Inc. bought out remainder of International Video Entertainment from founder Noel Bloom, so that Carolco and partners it's brought in — Sylvester Stallone and Tony Scotti — how hold all IVE stock, with Carolco controlling 80-95% ... New Jersey sets sights on construction of state's first full-service studio ... Mort Marcus joined Hal Roach Studios as president of a newly formed division, Hal Roach Studios Telecommunications, and as corporate senior vice president.

Jan. 9 — Association of Independent Television Stations president Preston Padden says cable is the main concern of indie tv, benefitting from an array of "government intrusions" ... Rock survivor Steve Winwood, receiving first Grammy nomination of his triple-decade career, topped the field yesterday with five nods ... Jesse Beaton, formerly v.p. of production and development, has returned to Island Pictures to head up new production department as senior veepee.

Jan. 12 — Record \$51,131,509 in residuals has been collected by Writers Guild of America West for 1986, first time Guild has broken the \$50,000,000 mark . . . 1986 L.A. boxoffice rings in \$94,686,528, short of new records, due largely to the calendar quirk in the previous b.o. year that made the peak returns of 1984 tough to beat . . . Congress won't act this year on the cable-tv compulsory license no matter how loudly broadcasters complain. Jan. 13 — Total domestic theatrical film boxoffice in 1986 is estimated by the Variety b.o. sample to have reached \$3.8 billion, second highest ever, exceeded only by \$4.03 billion in 1984 . . . Robert Cheren has resigned as president of Orion Pictures Distribution Corp. after three years in the job and six years with the company.

Jan. 14 — Paramount Pictures was leading North American film distributor in 1986, with 22% of all film rentals, followed by Warner Bros. with 12% and Walt Disney Co.'s Buena Vista distribution arm with 10% ... Filling the vacuum created by the demise of the Los Angeles International Film Exposition, the new American Film Institute Film Festival-Los Angeles has been created and will unspool March 11-26 at the Los Feliz Theater in Hollywood ... Jeff Lipsky joins Skouras Pictures as film president, taking over job vacated last week by Kelly Neal.

Jan. 15 — Laurence A. Tisch, who four months ago emerged as the acting head of CBS Inc. after the ouster of former chairman Thomas H. Wyman, has been named president/chief exec officer ... Vista Organization plans to roll five pictures by the end of May, with 10 possible for the year ... Orion Pictures Distribution Corp. has upped Bernard (Buddy) Golden to exec v.p. of domestic distribution, elevated Charles O. Glenn to exec v.p. of marketing.

Jan. 16 — A wholly-owned subsid, Lorimar Film Entertainment, has been formed by parent Lorimar-Telepictures as a new production and distribution entity under which Lorimar will terminate its releasing arrangement with 20th Century Fox and fulfill long-stated intention of establishing own distribution operation . . . A joint venture has been established between Coca-Cola Telecommunications and the Gulf & Western Entertainment Group, to include sale of advertising time in all of the syndicated product of Paramount Domestic Television, Columbia/Embassy Television and Coca-Cola Telecommunications . . . Ray Bolger, the rubber-legged dancer who etched an indelible image as the Scarecrow in search of a brain in "The Wizard Of Oz," died yesterday of cancer at 83 in a Los Angeles nursing home. He was the last survivor of the foursome that marched down the Yellow Brick Road.

Jan. 19 — New World Pictures' production slate for 1987 is beginning to take shape under new production president, former NBC senior executive Steve White, who announced three greenlighted pictures as well as a host of other deals . . . The tv syndication business was jolted last Friday by the aftershock from the Grant Broadcasting and other recent indie station bankruptcies. MCA made a downward revision in its fourth quarter 1986 income forecast, while Smith Barney brokerage house took Lorimar-Telepictures off its buy list . . . FCC chairman Mark Fowler last week submitted his resignation to President Reagan. Commissioner Dennis Patrick is expected to succeed him . . . General Electric and NBC have reached an

agreement to buy CBS Miami affiliate WTVJ-TV for \$270,000,000.

Jan. 20 — Cinema International Corp., which operates more than 70 screens internationally, intends to close three theaters in the South African capital, Pretoria, because the city has refused its appeal to operate there on a desegregated basis . . . HBO and Anheuser-Busch are discussing a joint venture to acquire tv rights for seven Thursday National Football League games in a three-year deal valued at about \$100,000,000, according to industry sources . . . Sunil Shah ankles as president and head of foreign sales for Trans World Entertainment, to work via his own London-based Video Program Distributors.

Jan. 21 — Lorimar Broadcast Group has been formed by Lorimar-Telepictures Corp. to combine supervision of its tv station operations and consider feasibility of adding stations to the group . . . Kerry Packer's 31-year involvement in Australian tv came to an end when he sold his tv and radio interests to Alan Bond for \$A1.05 billion. Bond will now control the first-ever national tv network in Australia . . . A Stephen Spielberg-directed Amblin production, "Empire Of The Sun," will be shot in Shanghai, starting in March . . . Grant Tinker, who departed as chairman of NBC last September to return to indie production in tv, has made a long-term deal with CBS Entertainment.

Jan. 22 — Musicians' pact is on shaky legs, as L.A. and New York locals urge "no" vote ... The Walt Disney Co. started new fiscal year on the right foot, with first quarter-results more than double prior period and the best quarter in the company's history ... NBC said it will increase annually the amount of compensation it pays affiliates by an average 3% in exchange for recapturing three weekly primetime commercials ... Andre Blay, who founded companies that have grown into CBS/Fox Video and Embassy Home Entertainment, has gotten a start on his third program-supplier company by acquiring North American video rights to the Burt Reynolds-starrer "Heat."

Jan. 23 — A paradox of a 40-50% increase in issuance of feature location permits coincident with a loss in man hours of employment at film studio sound stages and backlots occurred during 1986, preliminary reports show ... Kirk Kerkorian and 14 major cable operators are riding to Ted Turner's financial rescue. They'll be making a massive purchase of Turner Broadcasting System stock that will give Turner's needy media empire a capital infusion of \$550,000,000, and allow it to repurchase some expensive debt in the nick of time ... Gene Walsh, head of NBC's Coast operations since 1977, will join NBC Prods. as v.p. of media relations ... Judi Schwam has been named senior v.p. of worldwide pub-promo for United Artists Pictures. She had been senior v.p. of pub, promo and field operations at Columbia.

Jan. 26 — Local 659 has developed a new contract for use by independent producers shooting in its jurisdiction outside Los Angeles County, in an unprecedented bid to obtain more jobs for its members . . . New World Pictures president and chief operating officer Roger Burlage is ankling company, apparently resulting from failure to reach agreement on renewal of his contract . . . Ed Russell upped to senior v.p. publicicty, promotion and field operations at Columbia Pictures, succeeding Judi Schwam . . . Island Pictures deals seven-pic package to CBS/Fox Video.

Jan. 27 — Sony and another five Japanese electronics companies, including Aiwa and Sharp, have reportedly started production of DAT machines ... Whitney Houston was crowned undisputed queen of the American Music Awards, taking home five trophies ... Writers Guild predicts \$2,000,000 strike fund by start of '88 pact talks.

Jan. 28 — Leaders of six Hollywood locals from IATSE urged IA President Al DiTolla to stop IA Camera Local 659 from implementing controversial new camera contract that it's feared threatens the IA's very existence ... Larry Thompson Organization is developing 16½ hours of programming for network tv, more than doubling action the company had a year ago ... The Academy of Motion Picture Arts & Sciences has struck a special Oscar to be implanted next Sunday in the Hollywood Centennial time capsule — but only on condition that the statuary be returned to the Academy when the capsule is opened a century from now ... Ron Howard and Brain Grazer's Imagine Films Entertainment has six projects in produc-

tion or preproduction at various studios after only six months in operation.

Jan. 29 - Woody Allen ("Hannah And Her Sisters"), Oliver Stone ("Platoon") Randa Haines ("Children Of A Lesser God''), James Ivory ("A Room With A View") and Rob Reiner ("Stand By Me") nominated for DGA's best feature film director nod of 1986 ... First salvo in a legal battle sure to rattle the home-satellite-dish business has been fired by Capital Cities/ABC Inc. in U.S. District Court in New York. It's a battle over interpretation of the copyright law, specifically as it applies to the compulsory license that permits cable systems to retransmit distant broadcast signals to subscribers ... "SCTV" is coming to homevideo, thanks to a deal between syndicator Blair Entertainment and CBS/Fox Video that calls for the creation of four hourlong compilation programs drawn from the series' 156 half-hours, and an option to put together an additional four programs.

Jan. 30 — Gov. George Deukmejian said he does not favor right-to-work legislation as a means of stimulating filming in California, and balked at endorsing a proposal for compensatory film industry tax incentives to offset the estimated \$500,000,000 yearly loss projected because of the repeal of investment credits in the new Federal income tax laws ... MCA Inc. announced higher net income for 1986 despite lower earnings over the final 13 weeks due to losses of more than \$46,000,000 from its filmed entertainment segment ... Bill Shields named president and chief operating officer of New World International. He had been president of worldwide sales and marketing of New World Pictures. Bob Cheren named president of NWP's domestic marketing and distribution.

FEBRUARY, 1987

Feb. 2 — CBS Entertainment locked up more than 95% of its pilot deals for 1987-88 season, firming 13 sitcom pilots and 12 for dramatic series . . . In a possible harbinger of ultimate recognition to come at the Academy Awards, "Platoon" was the big winner at the Golden Globes with three nods . . . Hollywood began a year-long celebration and exploration of its roots yesterday with a whirl of events kicking off the observance of the Hollywood Centennial marathon sponsored by the Hollywood Chamber of Commerce.

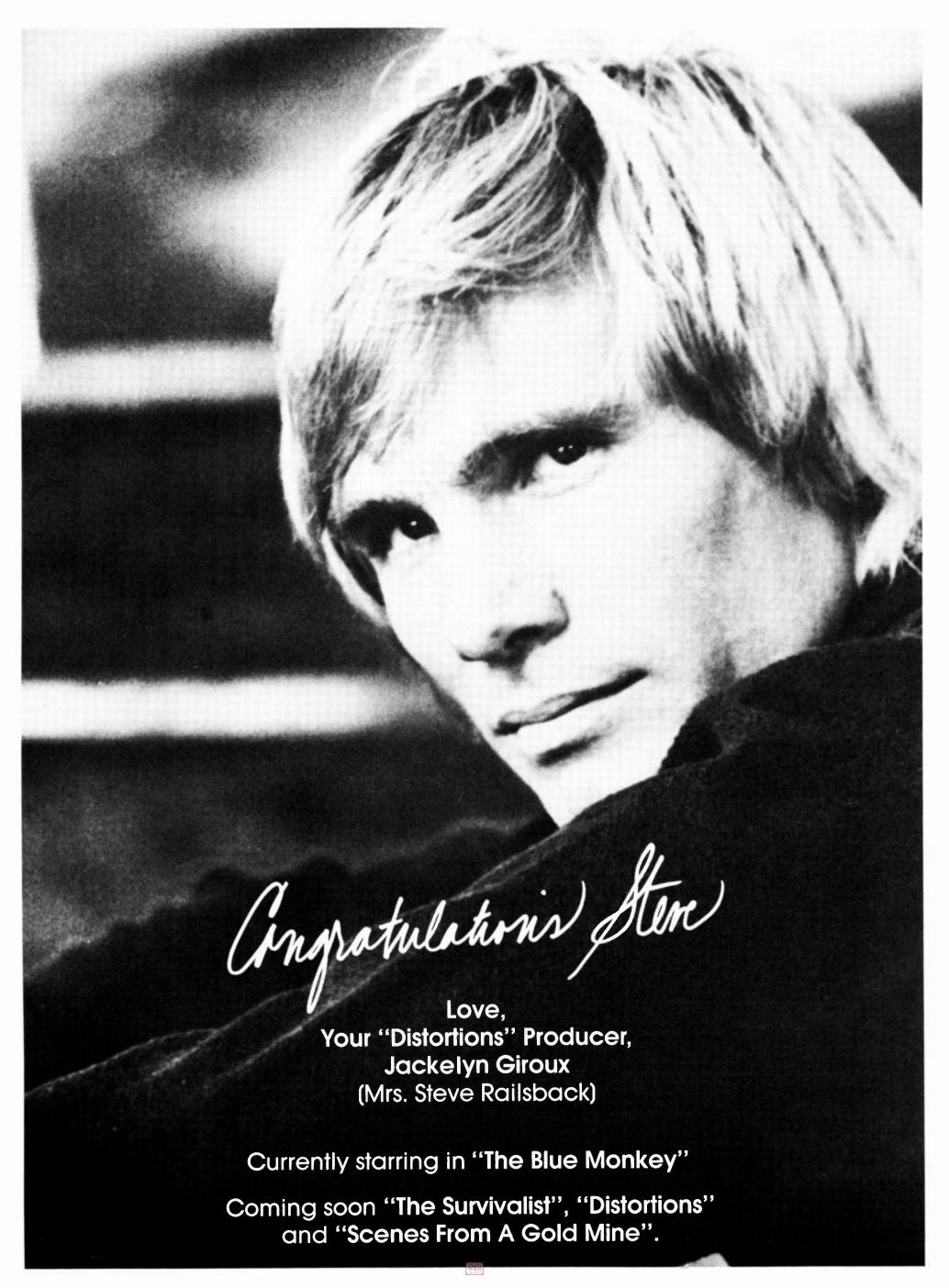
Feb. 3 — Vestron Pictures is moving into high gear with a planned slate of at least 14 titles, including four in-house pictures . . . Silver Screen Partners III and The Walt Disney Co. closed their limited partnership public offering after raising \$300,000,000 . . . Exhibitor Sumner Redstone, a minority shareholder in multimedia company Viacom International, moved to make an end run around a stalled leveraged buyout proposed by Viacom's management last year with a takeover bid of his own valued at \$2.65 billon.

Feb. 4 — A landmark bill mandating sealed bids on firstrun films in the state of Washington was amended in the state Senate with precedential criteria setting forth factors on which distributors may base determination of the best bid . . . Al Ruddy and Andre Morgan, who formed Ruddy-

Morgan Prods. two years ago when they severed association with Golden Harvest, say they have financing in place for three "high visibility" features ... The FCC's goal of mediating a settlement of the RKO-General properties "is clearly not achievable," said a report submitted by James McKinney, director of the agency's Mass Media Bureau

Feb. 5 — Screen Extras Guild, for the first time in its 42-year history, has launched an industry-wide strike against major film and tv producers . . . Thirty-year-old Dick Clark Prods., currently valued at approximately \$60,000,000, is planning a peak year of activity . . . Liberace, the kitschy, outrageously garbed pianist whose shameless showmanship made him one of the highest-paid performers of recent time, died yesterday at his home in Palm Springs. He was 67.

Feb. 6 — The DGA and AMPTP aren't expected to begin negotiations for a new DGA film and tv contract until sometime in May, but the two sides' prebargaining strategies have already prompted industry concerns that film and tv production could be slowed to a standstill prior to the June 30 expiration date of the current contract ... Oliver Stone won a pair of Writers Guild of America nominations for "Platoon" and "Salvador," with Richard Boyle, in the category of screenplay written



directly for the screen ... Dennis Patrick named to succeed outgoing Mark Fowler as FCC chairman.

Feb. 9 — WGAW outlines priorities for next contract, with more creative participation, health care and residuals topping the list for its December talks . . . Established vidcassette supplier Prism Entertainment is going to make a leap into the compact disk market with the introduction of its own line of CD's, to be introed with a release of 23 low-priced titles . . . Odyssey Film Partners Ltd., the Alan King-David Marks-Gabe Sumner company that recently went public, is in the process of acquiring the Hollywood-based United Color Lab. . . . Steven Spielberg will receive the Irving G. Thalberg Memorial Award at the Academy Award ceremonies on March 30, and Ralph Bellamy has been voted an honorary Oscar.

Feb. 10 — Weintraub Entertainment Group's ambitious production plans will be fueled by \$462,000,000 financed privately, according to the company . . . Alfred W. DiTolla shrugged off possible criticism from within his union as he prepared to be the first president of IATSE to address ShoWest, or any other major exhibitor's convention . . . First X rating for a film from a major distributor in many a moon was applied this week to Tri-Star's "Angel Heart." It's currently in the appeals process.

Feb. 11 — SAG's national board of directors proposes a dues hike to members as it grapples with a projected deficit of nearly \$14,000,000 over the next five years ... Surgeon General C. Everett Koop urged hesitant tv network officials to accept condom advertising to help prevent spread of the deadly AIDS virus ... Warner's "The Mission" paced the field with 11 nominations from the British Academy of Film & Television Arts, while "A Room With A View" had 10 and "Hannah And Her Sisters," eight.

Feb. 12 — Small was in with Academy voters this year, as "Platoon" and "A Room With A View," two modestly-budgeted, independently-made productions, led all pix with eight Oscar nominations each. "Aliens," "Hannah And Her Sisters" and "The Mission" had seven apiece ... Michael Goldman, who sold a majority interest in Manson International to WinStar Holdings Corp., a New York investment firm, will step down as president and chief exec officer of the 33-year-old foreign sales firm on April 1 and depart the company founded by his father ... Chairman Michael Eisner said Walt Disney Company may build a second attraction in Southern California and a second studio facility.

Feb. 13 — Interaccess Film Distributors, backed by parent company Vestron Inc., will spend \$100,000,000 over the next 18 months for the acquisition of features from independent producers for licensing in foreign territories ... De Laurentiis Entertainment Group unveils a \$280,000,000 production sked for 28 films ... Seventeen winners of scientific or technical awards have been selected by the board of governors of the Academy of Motion Picture Arts & Sciences.

Feb. 17 — Canada intends legislation to stop the U.S. majors from distributing there any film in theatrical or video to which they do not hold world rights . . . Trans World Entertainment aims high, promises to produce as many as 20 pix over the next year . . . FCC rejects three proposals intended to resolve protracted litigation and find new owners for the RKO-General stations.

Feb. 18 — Empire Entertainment has a massive production surge underway to be funded by a greatly expanded multimillion dollar credit facility from Dutch bank Credit Lyonnais, as well as \$20,000,000 in production financing to be provided by Dove Film, a private consortium of European investors ... Approximately 80 pilots are committed for the 1987-88 season as the three nets head down the home stretch ... ITC Entertainment undertakes its own international sales of both television and theatrical product.

Feb. 19 — ASCAP wrapped 1986 on a sweet note, posting record revenues of \$252,199,000 ... Director John Landis, defending himself yesterday against manslaughter charges, admitted he and other defendants "decided to break the law" by hiring two children to work without permits on "Twilight Zone: The Movie" ... This week's U.S. film boxoffice gross will reach approximately \$88,000,000, the biggest ever for a Washington's Birthday period.

Feb. 20 — Warner Communications, parent company of Warner Bros., and Gulf & Western, parent of Paramount.

disclosed an agreement in principle for Warners to become a 50% partner in Gulf & Western's 472 U.S. screens ... Peter Grad named president of MTM Television ... Network-owned stations have begun to join the growing number of affiliates in accepting condom advertisements directed at reducing the spread of AIDS.

Feb. 23 — Tri-Star Pictures and Cannon Group confirmed they've been unable to reach an agreement on Tri-Star's possible acquisition of Cannon's 425-screen Commonwealth circuit ... Penetration of U.S. tv households by vidcassette recorders is approximately 42%, Arbitron says ... Frank Sinatra to receive 1987 Life Achievement Award from NAACP ... Tri-Star loses second appeal of the X rating for its film "Angel Heart" last Friday, and director Alan Parker is cutting the sex scene in question to accommodate an R rating.

Feb. 24 — Tri-Star Pictures is putting seven features representing an aggregate budget of \$77,000,000 before the cameras between now and April, with five more in the hopper for August ... The U.S. Supreme Court dismissed a challenge to the FCC's broadcast-cable crossownership rules ... Goldcrest Films & Television shareholders, who have unanimously agreed to accept a U.S. offer for the group, are to consider next month new bids for the company.

Feb. 25 — Grammy pie was sliced in small but well-distributed pieces at the Shrine Auditorium, with Paul Simon, Steve Winwood, Barbra Streisand, Dionne Warwick and Anita Baker all taking home major awards ... Gerald Ament, a senior partner with Harry Sloan and Lawrence Kuppin in their entertainment law firm when his partners purchased New World Pictures four years ago, has been named an exec v.p. of the company as well as chief operating officer of its Marvel Prods. subsid ... After 10 seconds are cut from nightmarish lovemaking scene, "Angel Heart" gets an R rating.

Feb. 26 — Warner Bros. TV has maintained its pace as longform leader among Hollywood studios, with 92 hours of minis, vidpix logged ... The process by which foreign-language films are selected for Academy Award consideration is under critical review by the Academy board of governors ... A projection that Tri-Star Pictures' overseas sales would reach \$100,000,000 this year — 150% more than last year's total of \$40,000,000 was made by prez David Matalon.

Feb. 27 — Feature film production which hit modern highs last year, has taken off at an even more furious pace in 1987 as lensing starts through the end of February are up an astounding 113% over the first two months of 1986 ... The Coca-Cola Co.'s Entertainment Business Sector Inc. is joint venturing with London-based World Film Services to create a new entity that will acquire, create, distribute television product strictly for the international marketplace ... WGA said its members voted "overwhelmingly" to authorize Guild negotiators to call a strike against ABC and CBS if their current contract negotiations for news staff personnel fail to reach agreement by midnight March 1.

MARCH, 1987

March 2 — Indie tv producers continue to dominate major studios in the competition for network production, selling 15 midseason series, compared to 11 from the biggies ... CBS leads WGA's list of tv-radio nominations with 19, while ABC lands 13, NBC, 11 ... Tony Ludwig named president of motion pictures for Imagine Films Entertainment ... Film Ventures International signaled what it regards as its return to the mainstream by announcing a three-pic coproduction deal, after emerging from Chapter 11 bankruptcy last March.

March 3 — Mark Damon, former chairman and founder of Producers Sales Organization, has formed Vision Producers & Distribution Group ... A feature film entity separate from Columbia Pictures is being set up by the Entertainment Business Sector of Coca-Cola ... Elem Klimov, first secretary of the Soviet Filmmakers Union, outlined developments in his country's glasnost policies regarding film, explained Russian intentions to acquire foreign productions and disclosed details of his upcoming visit to Los Angeles ... "Nightmare On Elm Street 3: Dream Warriors" enjoys biggest weekend ever for an indie release, with \$8,8000,000 ... Randolph Scott, rugged, stoical Hollywood star from the 1930s-1950s whose

best work was in westerns, died in his sleep yesterday at his Bel-Air home.

March 4 — Domestic film boxoffice continued on a roll in February, when the gross soared more than 16% over last year and ticket sales leaped nearly 11% ... Upbeat sales, high spirits may make the seventh American Film Market the best ever ... Universal Tour undergoing a major overhaul ... Danny Kaye, madcap entertainer whose comedic and musical talents brought him great success in films, television, stage and concert halls, died yesterday morning at Cedars-Sinai Medical Center. He was 74.

March 5 — One month after Sumner Redstone's initial bid for control of multimedia company Viacom Inc., the Viacom board agreed to merge with Arsenal Holdings Inc., a subsid of his Dedham, Mass.-based theatrical exhib, National Amusements Inc. . . . Questions about film industry regulations governing accident preparedness and rescue procedures are being raised as a result of the recent death of top stuntman Dar Robinson . . . Elia Kazan will receive the D.W. Griffith Award for life achievement as a director when the Director's Guild of America holds its 39th annual awards dinner.

March 6 — Jeffrey Lurie's Chestnut Hill Prods. has 17 projects in preproduction and/or active development, including a multi-feature joint venture with Tri-Star . . . CBS-TV will add five minutes' worth of commercials a week to its primetime schedule starting this September . . . Karl/Lorimar Home Video has closed its second biggest licensing deal to date, snagging North American vid rights to seven '87-88 pix from Cinecom Entertainment Group.

March 9 — Oliver Stone, director-writer of the critically acclaimed and boxoffice smash "Platoon," was named best director of 1986 by the DGA ... AFM winds seventh edition on a high note thanks largely to emerging homevideo territories ... Allen Pinsker named interim successor to Salah M. Hassanein as prez of the 1595-screen theater division of United Artists Communications Inc.

March 10 — The Walt Disney Co. has made its anticipated move into tv station ownership via a \$330,000,000 deal for L.A.'s KHJ-TV ... Orbis Communications will sell all the national barter spots in the films and firstrun series distributed to stations by Paramount TV and Coca-Cola Telecommunications ... Except for United International Pictures and Walt Disney, the American major distribs operating in Japan had a dismal start in 1987.

March 11 — Nelson Entertainment and its Embassy Home Entertainment division have landed domestic homevid rights to 10 Hemdale Releasing Corp. pictures over the next two years, a deal described as cofinancing arrangement between Nelson and Hemdale ... RKO Pictures management and two outside investors have reached an agreement to buy RKO Pictures from Gencorp ... Film production and distribution costs outpaced domestic film rentals by a whopping \$1.3 billion last year, according to Nick Counter, president of AMPTP ... Salah Hassanein now to set up shop at Warners, following the recent example of other dissident exhibs.

March 12 — Another \$80,000,000-plus week is occuring now at the nation's b.o. windows, unprecedented for this time of year and marking a run of six consecutive record b.o. weeks ... Former CBS news anchor Walter Cronkite said after a CBS board meeting he was sure the news division would rebound from last week's 215 layoffs, or otherwise he would have tendered his resignation ... Bette Midler to play lead in Lotte Lenya bio ... Dudley S. Taft's \$145-per-share buyout proposal for Taft Broadcasting Co. is rejected by the company's board of directors

March 13 — Weintraub Entertainment Group. Inc. announced it has agreed to buy the Screen Entertainment (formerly Thorn/EMI) film library from The Cannon Group Inc. for between \$125,000,000 and \$175,000,000 ... Cannon also said its special audit for fiscal 1986 will show "substantial losses" in addition to "significant downward adjustments in previously reported stockholders' equity" ... The Carsey-Werner Co. has filed suit to prevent any creditors of Viacom Enterprises from slapping a lien on the \$450,000,000 expected to be generated by the domestic syndication of "The Cosby Show." March 16 — Hemdale Film Corp., riding high on success of "Platoon," has completed a "backdoor merger" with

Warner Bros. Television... We've got what You're looking for.

SERIES

Night Court, NBC

Growing Pains, ABC

Spenser: For Hire, ABC

Head of the Class, ABC

My Sister Sam, CBS

Ohara, ABC

MID-SEASON REPLACEMENT

Just in Time, ABC

MOVIES AND MINISERIES

Napoleon and Josephine: A Love Story, ^{ABC}

Hail Alma Mater, ABC

The Bourne Identity, ABC





Computer Memories Inc. that will pump some \$29,000,000 in assets into Hemdale and at the same time establish it as a public company . . . A Federal Court Judge last Friday cleared cut-out record distributor Scorpio Music of record piracy charges filed by MCA Records, and blasted MCA for its "very weak" handling of the case . . . Peter McAlevey named production veepee for Walt Disney Pictures . . . Fred Silverman's indie telefilmery is posting a record \$60,000,000 in production of product for the 1987-88 season . . . Glenn Padnick will resign from his post as Embassy Communications president at the end of the current production season.

March 17— Business agents of Hollywood IATSE locals have proposed a much narrower definition of the term "low-budget" than was originally proposed by the IA when negotiations began in January . . . The National Football League added cable to its television lineup in a new three-year, \$1.428 billion deal . . . Barbara Corday, president of Columbia Pictures Television, will step up to assume post of president and chief operating officer of Columbia/Embassy Television.

March 18 — Dudley S. Taft and Narragansett Capital Inc., via the Theta Corp. investment group, have raised the ante to \$155 per share in their bid to acquire the Taft Broadcasting Co. . . . While filming declined elsewhere in the state, New York City set a new record of \$2.2 billion in film and video production expenditures in 1986 . . . Stephen R. Greenwald named chief operating officer for DEG . . . Frank Sinatra has been denied permission to hold a concert in Oslo, Norway, because he has performed in South Africa, promoters of the concert said in Oslo.

March 19 — Imports of theatrical motion pricture prints made outside the U.S. nearly doubled from 1981-84, and more than doubled again from 1984-86 ... MGM/UA Communications has joined ranks with Paramount Pictures and Universal Studios in a distribution entity through which their feature films and tv product will be distributed in the People's Republic of China ... A Harris poll commissioned by the Planned Parenthood Federation of America shows that a substantial majority of Americans are in favor of contraceptive advertising on television.

March 20 — Lorimar Domestic Television Distribution Group has been consolidated under Jim McGillen as president, a decisive step in ending the tug-of-war that apparently has existed between exex from Lorimar and exex from Telepictures since the merger of the two companies last January ... Screen Gems Classicolor has been officially dubbed — the joint venture between Coca-Cola Telecommunications and Color Systems Technology ... "Top Gun" has attracted homevid reorders totalling 600,000 units one week after hitting retail shelves, pushing total vidsales to 2,500,000 units.

March 23 — There's a gathering tv syndication storm, as a symposium is warned against the false sense of security regarding block-booking ... Marvin Davis bids to buy out Grey Advertising's interest in LBS Communications ... IA and AMPTP cancel talks but will try again April 6 ... Jeff Schechtman named exec veepee of New Line Prods. ... George Burns will return to the bigscreen in "Eighteen Again," comedy for New World Pictures.

March 24 — The U.S. Supreme Court yesterday upheld Pennsylvania's 1980 antiblind-bidding law, by far the most stringent such legislation in the U.S. ... NAACP report claims U.S. record industry is marked by "rampant discrimination" ... Dean Paul Martin, son of entertainer Dean Martin, who carved out his own identity as an actor, was the pilot of a jet fighter believed to have crashed on a snowy mountain Saturday.

March 25 — The DGA is offering a new contract to indie film and tv producers that will allow them to continue production in the event of a DGA strike . . . Radio ad revenues reached a record \$7.02 billion nationally in 1986 . . . Howard W. Koch Jr. has ankled his perch as president of Rastar Prods. to set up his own production company at DEG . . . Merchant banker Brian Quick named exec chairman of Island International, holding company for the entertainment group including Island Pictures, Island Records, a music publishing company and Island Visual Arts.

March 26 — More than \$80,000,000 is involved in current production being turned out by Stephen J. Cannell Prods The recording industry's bid to temporarily

ban imports of digital audiotape machines got a boost today when the House Energy & Commerce Committee passed the measure 24-18 ... After nine years in the Pasadena Civic Auditorium, Emmy Awards show is moving to the Shrine aud for the annual telecast ... Combined "We Are The World" and Hands Across America charity projects raised \$82,500,000 by the end of 1986, according to an independent audit made public by events' organizer Ken Kragen.

March 27 — The FCC said it erred earlier in requiring cable systems to provide for free a so-called input selector or A/B switch that enables viewers to jump from cable to on-air programming, but declined to alter its plan to scrap the cable-tv must-carry rules after five years ... Woody Allen won Writers Guild of America Award for best screenplay written directly for the screen with "Hannah And Her Sisters." Ruth Prawer Jhabvala won for screenplay based on material from another medium for "A Room With A View" ... Robert Stigwood is returning to Hollywood via an exclusive three-year film production and development deal with the Weintraub Entertainment Group.

March 30 — War of words over the DGA's recently promulgated independent film and tv contract is heating up ... SAG members greenlight dues and initiation fee hikes . . . "Platoon" notched four of the seven trophies at the second annual Independent Spririt Awards of Independent Feature Project/West; film's editor Claire Simpson won the American Cinema Editors nod for best editing of a motion picture at the ACE's 37th annual Eddie Awrds. March 31 — "Platoon" comes home a winner, topping the 59th annual Academy Awards with four Oscars — best picture, director (Oliver Stone), sound and film editing, while "Hannah And Her Sisters" and "A Room With A View" had three apiece. Paul Newman, an also-ran in six previous acting nominations, finally made it for "The Color Of Money," while Marlee Matlin, first deaf actress ever nominated, parlayed her acting debut into best actress Oscar for "Children Of A Lesser God" ... Hemdale Film Corp. and Vestron Inc. doing court battle over "Platoon" video rights ... For the first time, what one station exec described as "the big bogeyman of basiccable" was thrust into the tv syndie marketplace, introduced as a competitor by Michael Lambert, exec veep of domestic syndication for 20th Century Fox TV.

APRIL, 1987

April 1 — Outgoing FCC chairman Mark Fowler punctuated his farewell speech at the National Association of Broadcasters convention in Dallas with espousals of freedom from government regulation and guaranteed First Amendment rights for broadcasters comparable to sister media. Fowler's speech was greeted by rousing approbation from attending broadcasters ... A U.S. District Court Judge in Newark, N.J., ruled that sound recordings cannot be imported into this country without the consent of the publishers and composers holding copyrights on the material ... London-based international public relations firm Shandwick agrees to buy Rogers & Cowan, yet allow it to operate as an autonomous subsid ... Nelson Entertainment plans to offer part of its homevid subsid Embassy Home Entertainment for public investment ... 1987 first-quarter U.S. feature film releases outpaced 1984-86 same-period debuts, 128 to a range of 110-119.

April 2 - NBC Entertainment commits to 92 hours costing an estimated \$120,000,000 for longform programming during the 1987-88 season. Slated are 63 hours of telefilms, 29 hours of miniseries . . . Screen Actors Guild passed the \$1 billion residual mark after 35 years of collection for its members ... NBC Entertainment prez Brandon Tartikoff warned Hollywood studios and producers that priorities regarding production for his network had better be placed over syndicated distribution, lest NBC produce shows itself and take the offset of ownership ... With its NBC contract having expired March 31, NABET instructed its 2800 members employed with the web's o&o stations to continue working on a day-to-day basis until further notice. NABET's negotiating team has presently received strike authorization from the union's NBC employes.

April 3 — Columbia Pictures has assembled a two-year package of upcoming releases, newly activated in-house productions and acquisitions. The 25-feature lineup will bring a \$269,500,000 pricetag — the average budget be-

ing \$10,780,000 per feature ... Hollywood majors and indies stepped up their film production pace 58% over the first three months of 1986 ... Sunset-Gower Studios will spend \$45-50,000,000 for expansion and construction of more office, production and storage facilities ... Barrie Lorie returns to MGM to assume post as senior v.p. of worldwide marketing ... U.K.'s Television South to form Telso Communications in belief that the Euro tv marketplace will soon outscale the U.S. in ad revenues.

April 6 — First-quarter Los Angeles boxoffice returns declined 1.4% below a record take for the same period in 1986. Final 13-week tally was \$23,320,476 at an average of 211 screens . . . China Film will sponsor the first Chinese Film Market in Beijing. Invitations will be sent to film buyers around the world in order to promote the Sept. 16-20 program consisting of all Chinese product . . . RKO General completed its sale of WOR-TV, New York, to MCA Broadcasting for \$387,000,000 . . . Andrew D.T. Pfeffer named president and chief operating officer of Empire Entertainment . . . NABET braces for a strike against NBC due to collapse of contract negotiations held the previous week.

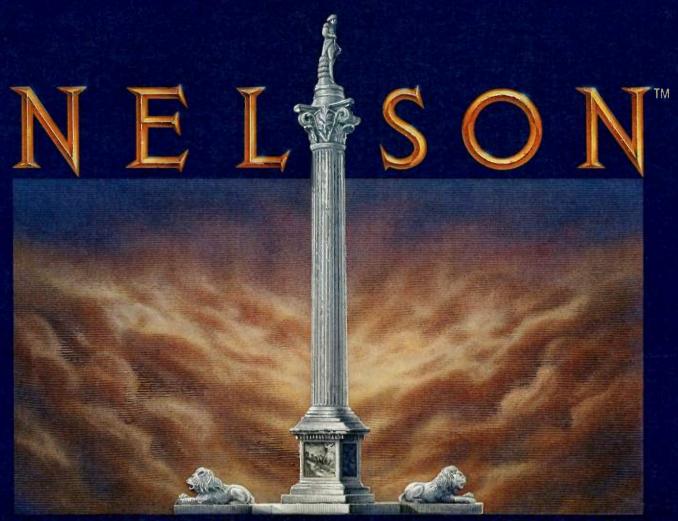
April 7 — Home Box Office will acquire Cannon Group's share of HBO/Cannon Video for roughly \$5,000,000, thus making the pay-cable giant sole owner of the venture ... Laurelwood Productions Inc. plans production of six theatrical films and four two-hour tv specials for 1987-88 ... CBS News warns it won't pay "60 Minutes" correspondent Andy Rooney's salary until he returns to work from his walkout in support of the six-week-old Writers Guild of America strike . . . Twenty independent production companies sign the DGA's new indie film and tv contract, allowing them to continue production in the event of a DGA strike ... Gus Lucas named prez of Viacom's west coast operations, and continues as exec v.p. of Viacom Entertainment Group ... 1987 is off to a sluggish start for the majority of major American film distribs operating in Japan.

April 8 — IATSE and management's AMPTP resume contract negotiations over "low-budget" productions . . . The National Cable Television Association has released a report excoriating the MPAA for its member companies' anticompetitive practices that discriminate against independent theaters and indie filmmakers . . . Lorimar Telepictures has consummated a pact with China Amusement & Leisure to air more than 45 of its television and theatrical films on the People's Republic of China national tv network . . . The Directors Guild of America and the Directors Guild of Canada agree in principle to support each other in their respective contract negotiations with motion picture and tv producrs.

April 9 — Canada's Alliance Entertainment Corp. will merge with L.A.-based Robert Cooper Prods. and will consequently absorb 28 hours of tv programming in development . . . Despite a 5% decline in unit shipments of prerecorded disks and tapes, the Recording Industry Association of America reports a 6% increase in dollar volume for 1986 . . . International Creative Exchange forms joint venture with Espaces Audiovisuel to distribute tv programming to France and other European markets Singer Elton John returns to MCA Records, signing a multi-record deal.

April 10 - A California state bill which would prevent record companies from suing artists for failure to deliver albums never ordered was removed from the agenda for further consideration due to the Recording Industry Association of America's strong resistance to the gaining popularity of an amendment proposed by a Hollywood coalition of artists, agents and managers ... Projected cumulative domestic boxoffice will pass the \$1 billion mark earlier in calendar 1987 than in any other year in history ... SCI Holdings Inc. is negotiating with Gillett Group to transfer six tv stations (owned by an SCI subsidiary) to a new company to be jointly operated by SCI and Gillett. April 13 - CBS Entertainment has committed to a minimum of 25 telefilm projects at an approximate aggregate budget of \$60,000,000 and expects to have all but one of the longforms completed by July 1987 ... Bud O'Shea ankling as senior v.p. at CBS/Fox Video to become executive v.p. and CEO of MGM/UA Home Video.

April 14 — Television advertising outlays by film distrib companies increased by 16% in 1986 to \$278,459,000 ... Japanese film distributors agreed to withhold liveaction firstrun pix from homevideo until at least six



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months after theatrical release in a move to protect national exhibitors and to crack down on video piracy ... Paulist Pictures will lense "Romero," its first theatrical venture ... Calling the tv networks "our enemies," Tom Kennedy, chief NABET negotiator, expressed the hope that all broadcast industry unions will be merged in the future.

April 15 — Writers Guild of America and CBS reach tentative accord on new contract for newswriters after sixweek strike . . . Taft Broadcasting Co.'s three largest stockholders joined forces through a limited partnership to tender a buyout of all outstanding shares . . . Gary Lucchesi exits senior production v.p. post at Tri-Star Pictures for exec v.p. pastures at Paramount Pictures . . . HBO and ITC Entertainment enter \$55,000,000 five-year coproduction and financing deal for the production of 12 made-for-cable films . . . There's the possibility of a strike by cartoon voiceover members of the Screen Actors Guild unless the union and producers can reach an animation pact by May 13.

April 16 — Conservative media watchdog group, Accuracy In Media, gives Public Broadcasting Service thumbs up for general programming despite criticism over PBS' alleged "pro-leftist bias" ... Former Circle Films exec Chris Zarpas tapped to fill newly-created post of v.p. production and acquisitions at Walt Disney Co., reflecting the role acquisitions will play in the company's future ... Recorded Releasing, a fledgling British distrib company, will distribute at least 12 De Laurentiis Entertainment Group titles in U.K. during upcoming year ... L.A. County Board of Supervisors is expected to confirm Gene Webster as director of the newly created Office of Motion Picture & Television Development . . . FCC agrees to allow Capital Cities/ABC to delay selling seven radio stations while it ponders whether to alter ownership rules. April 20 — Former 20th Century Fox tv production prez Joe Wizan establishes financing base in Canada for future projects ... Renee Valente readies 10 telefilms and a miniseries ... Pinewood Studios — the last of the fullservice studio facilities operating in Great Britain blames the British government for its financial woes and resulting need to become a four-wall rental operation . . . WGA membership's ratification of new contract signals formal end to long and bitter strike against CBS. Differences with ABC have yet to be resolved as picketing there continues . . . With an enticement of well over \$1,000,000, the Emmy awards may defect to Fox Broadcasting Co. after airing 34 years on the three major networks.

April 21 — Propelled by a softer U.S. dollar and tv admissions upturn in key territories, United International Pictures could be headed towards \$280,000,000 in rentals for the year ending June 30 . . . French homevid revenues fell 15% in 1986 . . . Arista Films enters into nine-pic package with AFC Pictures of Dallas, representing \$26,000,000 in product. Arista will handle all foreign sales plus domestic video and cable . . . BBC subsid Lionheart Television will distribute six documentary specials by Post-Newsweek Stations, the first such association with an American broadcasting company . . . Jack Petrick appointed chairman of Turner Program Services.

April 22 — Samuel Z. Arkoff has formed a new company, Arkoff International Services, to act as the U.S. arm of Canadian-based joint venture, Grosvenor Park Equities, which he says is putting up \$100,000,000 a year for the total financing of theatrical features, tv and cable programming ... NBC wraps '86-87 season with resounding Nielsen ratings victory over CBS and ABC ... "Star Trek" producer Harve Bennett re-enlists at Paramount Pictures with fattened three-year agreement ... The National Association of Video Distributors may merge with the Video Software Dealers Association.

April 23 — Producer Aaron Russo has established a self-financing entertainment company with a financing base of \$86,000,000 to produce film, tv and music projects in and around New York . . . Fox Broadcasting Co. has obtained rights to air Emmy Awards in September . . . Paramount Pictures promotes Michael O'Sullivan to international director . . . Robert F. Hyland III replaces Tom Van Amburg as v.p.-g.m. of KCBS-TV . . . Tom Zimmerman named to new post of v.p. of finance, MCA motion picture group.

April 24 — Management's Alliance of Motion Picture & Television Producers is seeking to eliminate all supplemental markets residuals payments from theatrical

films exhibited on pay-tv and videocassettes in proposals exchanged with the Directors Guild of America ... Writers Guild of America yesterday recommended its membership accept a settlement established with Capital Cities/ABC ... A provision in pending trade shield bill to ban imports of digital audiotape recorders without chip to prevent home taping of prerecorded music is dropped by House Speaker Jim Wright (D-Tex.) ... SAG members who voice tv cartoon characters give SAG's board authority to call a strike.

April 27 — City of Los Angeles finds 5-6000 location film permits issued per year an overload that's increasingly difficult to facilitate ... Striking WGA members in Washington, D.C., and New York return to work at Capital Cities/ABC after ratification of earlier settlement ... Carolco Pictures has delayed the start of "Rambo III" until September due to alleged difficulties in establishment of locations ... Screen Extras Guild's proposed merger with the Teamsters is in jeopardy.

April 28 — Resolutions designed to attenuate the American Federation of Musicians president's base of authority will be proffered by L.A. and New York locals at the union's June convention in Las Vegas ... Roger Gimbel departs as prez and CEO of Peregrine Producers Group Inc. for return to independent production under his own banner ... MPAA prez Jack Valenti derides the cable industry's "monopoly" and callous disregard for consumers at Public Broadcasting Service annual meeting held in St. Louis.

April 29 — Domestic boxoffice tallies for the April/Spring-break period are up 26% from comparable period in 1986 ... Economist John Kenneth Galbraith and press critic Ben Bagdikian opened the first day of hearings before the House telecommunications subcommittee with sobering opinions concerning cutbacks in tw network news departments, ascribing same to debt-loads incurred in the midst of corporate takeovers ... Impending strikes said to be primary reason behind de facto 50% decrease in releases from major U.S. distributors ... 20th Century Fox Film Corp. has acquired complete ownership of the 34-story Fox Plaza highrise located in Century City ... Mary M. McCarthy appointed to the newly-created position of senior v.p. of corporate development at MGM/UA Communications Co.

April 30 — ABC's Roone Arledge and CBS' Howard Stringer assured members of the House Telecommunications Committee that the runaway costs of an evolving news business was the culprit in network news cutbacks — not corporate takeovers ... What is believed to be a record for midseason series — a total of 28 — were aired by the three tv networks in the semester just ended ... Homeshopping race escalates with another entry from MCA-TV Enterprises and Home Shoping Network Inc. ... Teddy Zee upped to production v.p. at Paramount Pictures from director of production.

MAY, 1987

May 1 — Three entertainment industry pros and a prominent financier have joined forces to form Casablanca IV, a production and distribution, firstrun syndie operation with initial capital base of \$50,000,000 ... Columbia Pictures International and Warner Bros. International disband 16-year overseas distribution alliance, Columbia-Warners Distribution Ltd. — save for five subsidiaries in Norway, Portugal, Chile, New Zealand and Thailand ... Capital Cities/ABC Inc. and RJR Nabisco Inc. have turned down a \$600,000,000 offer (of undetermined origin) to sell their jointly owned ESPN cable network ... Low-budget contract negotiations between AMPTP and the International Alliance of Theatrical Stage Employes have collapsed — main bone of contention being an inability to define low-budget production.

May 4 — Carolco Pictures Inc. raising up to \$34,000,000 from Canadian financial and filmmaking resources for the production of five feature films . . . Warner Bros. agrees to distribute Disney and Touchstone feature product internationally . . . Under considerable pressure from creditors to reduce its debt load, The Cannon Group agrees to sell the Screen Entertainment film library to Weintraub Entertainment Group . . . Nancy Goliger upped to v.p., marketing/creative affairs at Paramount Pictures . . . Agent Martin Hurwitz joins Zanuck/Brown Co.

May 5 — Capitol Records and independent promoter Joe Isgro settle his \$25,000,000 antitrust suit . . . The Nation-

al Association of Theater Owners has no problem with Tri-Star Pictures' petition for New York Federal Court countenance over exhibition of its films in theaters operated by Loews — a Tri-Star subsid . . . In ruling 6-3 that it is possible for obscene material to have redeeming social value, the U.S. Supreme Court still failed to clarify what criteria is to be used in determining obscene material . . . Longtime management negotiator, Ed Prelock, defects from ranks to become director of legal and contract affairs for Hollywood Teamsters Local 399 . . . Charles Schreger, former LBS Communications v.p. of film acquisitions, named programming and acquisitions v.p. of Hal Roach Studios.

May 6 — First-ever qualifications system for stunt performers and coordinators is to be established by the Screen Actors Guild . . . Stanley Kramer is setting up shop at Columbia Pictures under a new multi-feature agreement calling for him to produce and/or direct for as long as Columbia chairman David Puttnam remains . . . Japanese film rentals recorded by top five American concerns drop more than 10% in first quarter versus one year ago.

May 7 — Feature film starts in California in the first quarter shot up 38% over the same period last year . . . Sony joins Action International Pictures/A.I.P. Distribution Inc. in pick-up of four titles for theatrical distribution . . . Third-quarter earnings at 20th Century Fox Film Corp. soar to \$20,052,000.

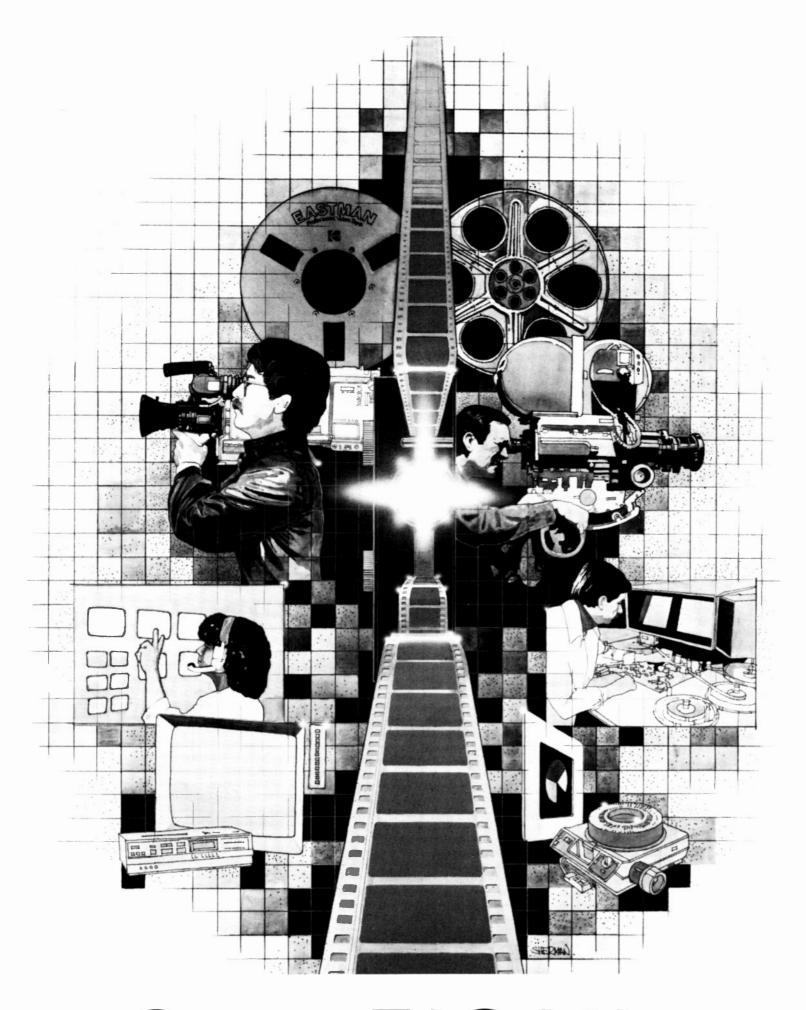
May 8 — Vestron Inc. confirms that it has laid off 25 employes in the wake of a \$22,040,000 loss posted in the first quarter . . . Norman Jewison signs an agreement to develop, produce and direct motion pictures for MGM via his Yorktown Prods. . . . Writers Guild resids are \$12,275,159 for 1987 to date, up 5% from same period a year ago.

May 11 — Leading exhibition circuits continue to augment screens despite continuing tough competition from homevideo rentals ... Efforts are underway to get the FCC to repeal the Prime Time Access Rule's "off network" restrictions so network affiliates can air "Who's The Boss?" and "The Cosby Show" during the access period ... Spectrafilm takes American Distribution Group under its wing ... New owners who acquired 90% of sole owner Michael Goldman's Manson International holdings have organized MCE Entertainment Group Inc., a production, distribution and service company, with MCE Prods. as its filmmaking arm.

May 12 — According to an unofficial network blueprint being circulated on Madison Avenue, NBC-TV is axing 11 shows in its primetime sked for 1987-88 season while adding four hours of new programming ... During the Cannes Film Festival, Hemdale Film Corp. announces an \$80,000,000 commitment to new slate of feature films for release over the next 15 months, including eight in-house productions . . . The new Immigration Reform & Control Act takes effect June 1, 1987, requiring every new employe hired in the entertainment industry to provide documented proof of citizenship or legal work authorization for foreign nationals ... Prognostications are in: Cincinnati financier Carl H. Lindler will most likely wind up in control of Taft Broadcasting ... Tony Awards nominations put "Me And My Girl" at the top of the musical category with 13 appointments and "Les Liaisons Dangereuses" leads the drama pack with seven.

May 13 — Woody Allen, Sydney Pollack and Milos Forman represent the Directors Guild viewpoint of computer coloring of black-and-white films in a classic confrontation between art and technology before a Senate subcommittee . . . Cannes Film Festival market is off to a slow start with video suppliers busiest . . . WCI board approves acquisition of Chappell & Co., one of the world's largest music publishing houses, for an estimated \$200,000,000 — believed by industry sources to be a record sum for a music pubbery . . . New Line Cinema adds two feature films to its 1987 production stable.

May 14 — Legislation that gives screenwriters and directors the right to forbid computerized coloring of their films is introduced by Rep. Richard Gephardt (D-Mo.) ... NBC announces plans for three backup shows to be aired monthly in the Fall until the programs find their way into the regular lineup come January, 1988 ... Ted Dodd exits T. H. Prods. to join Martin Ransohoff Prods. as director of creative affairs ... The American Film Marketing Association rejects offer to take part of Cinetex



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film and tv expo, scheduled for March 1988 in Las Vegas ... NBC confirms five new series are scheduled for Fall lineup.

May 15 — CBS cancels 16 series and adds nine in drastic revision of primetime lineup. ... WEG chairman Jerry Weintraub elaborates upon film and tv production plans at Cannes Film Festival, most notable being a 20-pic homevid deal with RCA/Columbia that could be good for as much as \$220,000,000 ... MPAA intensifies its assault on suspected video pirates . . . Fox Broadcasting Co. has renewed four out of five of its primetime Sunday series for next Fall.

May 18 - ABC-TV announces its Fall 1987-88 primetime schedule, which includes four new sitcoms, three fresh dramatic series, a variety hour and the surprising preservation of six ratings losers . . . Local o&o's KNBC-TV and KCBS-TV tie in the 39th annual Los Angeles Emmy Awards, with 12 apiece ... Home Box Office adds family-oriented feevee service, Festival ... Marvin Davis has dropped his bid to acquire hotel pay-per-view operation Spectradyne Inc. ... With seven-and-one-half weekly primetime hours on the networks' Fall skeds, Lorimar Telepictures aces out Universal TV as the tv production king for 1987-88.

May 19 - European tv sales of Western feature films is picking up the slack for the decline in European film production financing . . . The 37th annual NCTA convention opened with plaudits for the current state of the cable tv industry while at the same time becoming an open forum for cable exex' vituperation of Hollywood and the networks ... Three U.S. Senators issue a stern warning to cablers: don't bother us with your worries about syndicated exclusivity ... Alfred Schlesinger replaces Mike Greene as prez and CEO of the National Academy of Recording Arts & Sciences ... MGM/UA Home Entertainment prez and CEO Cy Leslie resigns.

May 20 — For the first time in more than 20 years, a French film, "Under The Sun Of Satan," won the Grand Prix at Cannes Film Festival, much to the chagrin of a majority of attendees . . . Aaron Spelling Prods. adds four new motion pictures to \$90,000,000 production slate set for release during 1987-88 schedule ... The Carsey-Werner Co. filed a motion in N.Y. Federal Court to stop the leveraged buyout of Viacom International and protect its \$330,000,000 in projected revenues from domestic syndication of "The Cosby Show." ... Although major film production sources were in full force at the Cannes Film Festival, there was a conspicuous absence of big pictures due to the distribs' reluctance to risk international critical scrutiny for their most expensive and ambitious projects . . . The operator of an independent Texas circuit and Theater Owners of Indiana take issue with NATO's decision not to oppose Tri-Star's petition for permission to play its product on the 300 Loews screens it acquired last year.

May 21 — Attempting to justify its plea for contractual roll-backs, management's AMPTP tells DGA negotiators that domestic boxoffice revenues have declined precipitously since 1980 . . . Four-year-old Interscope Communications reveals an output of \$102,000,000 in feature film and tv projects over past 13 months and announces four more projects budgeted at \$41,000,000 added to the slate . . . Cineplex Odeon outbids major exhibitors for expired lease on Egyptian-Westwood Theater in Los Angeles, gaining prime firstrun territory ... Sumner Redstone's National Amusements — ninth largest theater circuit in North America - plans to take a stab at the U.K. exhibition market with the construction of an 11-

screen complex in Nottingham, England.

May 22 — The Cannon Group posts a \$60,000,000 fiscal loss for 1986 . . . Warner Communications Inc. supremo Steven J. Ross and Chris-Craft Inc. topper Herbert J. Siegel heat up dogfight over WCI's buyout of Siegel's 20% stake in the entertainment conglomerate ... Hollywood's indie producers increase dominance over major studios in network series production, with 30½ hours for the new season, compared to majors' 201/2 hours ... The amended California personal services bill for recording artists (SB 1049) fails to get the five votes necessary to clear the Industrial Relations Committee ... Lorimar Motion Pictures prez Craig Baumgarten officially resigns.

May 26 — In the first of 20 "creative rights" proposals presented to management's AMPTP, DGA negotiators call for the prohibition of colorization of new films shot in b&w ... Rep. Ed Markey (D-Mass.) told members of the MPAA that Congress intends to maintain "the public interest" by tackling deregulatory issues such as: the Prime Time Access Rule, 1984 Cable Act, must-carry, syndicated exclusivity, the 1982 repeal of anti-trafficking rules and colorizing . . . The U.S. record industry is split on the question of copy-coding CDs to prevent them from being recorded on digital audiotape machines with copy-code chips ... DGA rounding up support from affiliations in the event of a strike.

May 27 — Paramount's "Beverly Hills Cop II" breaks several boxoffice records in bow ... IATSE prez Al DiTolla urges fractured membership to rally behind the concept of a low-budget contract . . . The Cannon Group says it expects a settlement of the company's Securities & Exchange Commission inquiry by mid-June ... Newly formed Fries Home Video fills exec slots with appointment of Jay (B.J.) Markel as acquisitions director and Keith Wood as director of operations and administration ... MGM/UA Home Video has doled v.p. stripes to

David Bishop in sales, Ardis Rubenstein in creative services and Stefanie Shulman in marketing services ... Helayne Antler, co-exec secretary of the New York AFTRA local, will assume the local's top post as of May

May 28 — The proliferation of international feature coproduction is being matched by a tightening of the national tax regimes that until now have stimulated much filmmaking activity . . . Gino Campagnola upped to prez of Paramount Prods. Inc. in Canada . . . Taft Broadcasting posts net loss of \$53,100,000 for fiscal year . . . May Arbitron sweeps are the worst yet for the three webs.

May 29 — Although Federal Judge Edward Palmieri was presiding over a hearing in the New York U.S. District Court to address a Tri-Star Pictures' petition, he had ordered the U.S. Justice Dept. to investigate anticompetitive allegations against Paramount Pictures — not Tri-Star (as reported May 28) ... Writers Guild of America claims Hollywood management woes to be specious in nature ... Former Four Star International chairman and CEO Joseph Fischer appointed senior veepee, MCA motion pictures group . . . The California State Senate votes 37-0 to approve SB 146, thereby creating the California Film Commission.

JUNE, 1987

June 1 — Weintraub Entertainment Group won't exercise option to buy Cannon's U.K. Elstree Studios for \$25,-000,000 ... Director John Landis and four codefendants found innocent of involuntary manslaughter in the "Twilight Zone" filming deaths of actor Vic Morrow and two children in 1982; the jury deliberated nine days ... LBS Communications cofounder Roger Lefkon ankles to be prez of new DIC Enterprises entertainment arm Gov. Deukmejian signs bill merging Calif. Motion Picture Council and Calif. Film Office into newly-formed California Film Commission ... After months of feuding, MPAA chief Jack Valenti and NCTA prez Jim Mooney will meet this week for a powwow. **June 2** — HBO and Coca-Cola Telecommunications ink a

longterm deal to coproduce and distribute 15 made-forpay pix, which Coke will license to offshore theaters. Pricetag for the 10 HBO-made pix and five from Coke could hit \$70,000,000, with all production costs shared ... Multinational ads and tie-ins will be piggy-backed onto film and tv product released in the People's Republic of China by MGM/UA, Par and Universal ... NBC's affils are told the web has "basically sold out" its inventory through the end of the '86-'87 broadcast year ... U.S. Dept. of Justice's antitrust division is probing Cineplex Odeon's recent screen buyouts in Chicago . . . Jerry Gottlieb firmed as Lorimar Home Video chief exec ... Digital Audio Tape format may sweep Europe faster than expected ... Commission of the European Economic Community says it will investigate charges that music piracy in Indonesia is condoned by the Jakarta government.

June 3 — May domestic film b.o. jumped 9% over last year to \$298,000,000, while ticket sales rose nearly 5% ... Virgin Vision is planning to launch U.S. homevid distribution this Fall, livening up the bidding for indie film rights ... FCC clears way for Hallmark Cards and First Capital to buy tv stations of Spanish International Communications Corp. . . . Carsey-Werner Co.'s court motion to block the Viacom merger with National Amusements is denied in Federal District Court in Manhattan . . . Larry Sugar makes surprise, fast exit from Granat Entertainment presidency . . . Carolco subsid IVE is negotiating to buy rackjobber/viddistrib Lieberman Enterprises ... Broadway grosses and attendance figures up slightly last season, reversing respective slides of three and five years. June 4 — After a seven-minute meeting, Viacom International shareholders approve \$3.4 billion acquisition of the cable, broadcast and programming company by Sumner Redstone's National Amusements ... Following the Senate's lead, the U.S. House passed a bill codifying the FCC's Fairness Doctrine, 302-102, though it faces potential veto by President Reagan ... Carolco Pictures may buy back 250,000 shares of common stock ... NABET's chief negotiator threatened to call a strike unless NBC agrees to resume talks by July 1 ... A.C. Nielsen removes the 11-11:30 p.m. period from the May sweeps results for the eight days KABC aired a news series about the tv ratings service ... Moves are afoot to oust AFM prez Victor Fuentealba at the union's upcoming conven-

June 5 — U.S. Dept. of Justice says there's no moratorium, nor a letdown on enforcement of the Paramount consent decrees, notwithstanding distribution's recent reentry into theater ownership ... Feature production continued its hot pace in May ... Michael London upped to senior production v.p. at Simpson-Bruckheimer Prods. ... NBC will meet with NABET, but not to resume negotiations ... Taft Broadcasting's board signs definitive merger agreement with the Carl Lindner-led TFBA Limited Partnership, which includes the Robert M. Bass group and Taft vice chairman Dudley Taft ... Florida's new advertising tax cues NATPE to pull its 1990 and 1991 confabs out of the state . . . Sunset-Gower Studios plans four new sound stages costing some \$40,000,000.

June 8 — "Les Miserables" tops Tony Awards with eight statuettes, including best musical; August Wilson's "Fences" was runner-up with four ... Cannon Group toppers Menahem Golan and Yoram Globus, along with Europe's Interpar S.A., have formed a new holding company billed Intercorporation to loan the troubled film company \$10,000,000, and plans call for a financial restructuring as well ... AFM election battle heats up ... Cannon's Aussie homevid arm is saved from folding thanks to a buyout by top exec Ross Martin and an outside publisher ... De Laurentiis Entertainment Group ended the fiscal year posting a \$7,434,000 loss, but red ink was offset by sale of stock in its Australian subsid DEL ... Universal Pay TV will rep 11 New Line Cinema pix to feevee licensees . . . U.S. Senate okays four appointees to the Corp. for Public Broadcasting board, but Harry O'Connor's renomination is consipicuously on hold . . . Embassy Home Entertainment acquires U..S. homevid rights to 12 upcoming Miramax features.

June 9 — Paramount's "Beverly Hills Cop II" and "Untouchables" combined for a \$22,000,000 punch at the b.o. last weekend . . . Harmony Gold and Italy's Berlusconi Group have formed a 50-50 partnership, America 5 Entertainment, to turn out 100 hours of tv programming pegged at \$150,000,000 . . . Tv production is off to a fast start with 20 skeins already shooting, but picture is darkened by potential director's strike ... Inter-office memo confirms that Capital Industries-EMI is mulling a restructuring of the record company ... NAB prez Eddie Fritts' letter about a "Hollywood master strategy" against the cable industry stirs a hornet's nest of protests ... NATO issues new policy allowing distribs to attach two trailers per feature, limited to 90 seconds total ... Hawaiian legislature appropriates \$10,000,000 for construction of a 60-acre, state-owned film and tv studio in

June 10 — Four MPAA members with ties to the American Film Marketing Association protest AFMA prexy Jonas Rosenfeld's letter to Canadian officials saying AFMA was not unsympathetic to Canadain efforts to protect film distribution north of the border ... Parents Music Resource Center claims RIAA companies are "abrogating" deal to place warning stickers on product with explicit lyrics . . . Federal Grand Jury is probing Screen Extras Guild records amid misappropriation of funds allegations . . . AMPTP prez Nick Counter accuses DGA of stonewalling its proposals for a new tape tv pact ... Former Thorn EMI Screen Entertainment topper Gary Dartnall resurfaces as prez of U.K.-based Madison Lei-



sure, which is taking over Southbrook International Television for \$34,000,000 ... Vet unit publicist Al Ebner named v.p. worldwide publicity at UA ... "Runaway" film processing issue will be raised during "free trade" talks between the U.S. and Canada.

June 11 — L.A. Superior Court Judge denies injunction sought by CapCities/ABC to prevent A.C. Nielsen from delisting the 11-11:30 p.m. ratings for eight May sweeps days, during which KABC-TV aired a news series about the ratings system ... Midwood Prods. inks 10-pic, fiveyear coproduction deal with All Union Corp. Sovinfilm of Russia ... Peter Sealey trades post as Colpix marketing and distribution prez for slot as prez/chief operating officer of Coca-Cola Telecommunications ... IVE inks deal to add 43% of Lieberman Enterprises stock to its current 8% holdings for about \$40,000,000 ... Martin Rabinovitch joins Atlantic Entertainment Group as senior v.p. marketing ... Federal government's bid to take over the Teamsters, due to its alleged organized crime connections, sends shudder through SEG, which has been eyeing Teamsters affiliation ... DGA national exec director Michael Franklin counters Nick Counter, saying management has been "diddling" the Guild via roll-back de-

June 12 — KCET this year will be a major supplier to PBS stations, cranking out 46½ hours of programming ... King World Prods. plans to repurchase 25% of its outstanding stock for about \$213,000,000 ... Secondever Aussie-originated title sold to a U.S. network is "The Fatal Shore," six-hour De Laurentiis Entertainment Ltd. mini sold to ABC-TV ... Writers Guild residuals are up 7.8% over last year, with nearly \$16,000,000 to date ... DGA warns prospective members they'll be barred "forever" from the union if they accept directing jobs during a strike ... CBS research chief David Poltrack charges Nielsen's people meter ratings sample is biased against the web ... Apollo Pictures' "Can't Buy Me Love" is Touchstone Pictures' first pickup.

June 15 — Paced by "Crocodile Dundee" returns, 20th Fox posts record \$174,792,000 in foreign film rentals for the fiscal year ... FCC Commissioner James Quello tells BPME gathering that broadcast deregulation "has gone too far"under Mark Fowler's chairmanship ... Justice Dept. memo favors Tri-Star's bid to play its pictures on its 300 Loews screens ... Colpix chairman David Puttnam is reorganizing domestic marketing and distribution arm to operate on a worldwide basis ... Tribune Entertainment launches barter distribution company, Teletrib ... For the first time in its history, SAG has launched a strike targeting the major producers of animated tv programs ... Heated talks between the DGA and webs on network staff contracts are marred by name-calling and walkouts. June 16 — Summer boxoffice continues to boil with debuts of "Predator" and "Witches Of Eastwick" ... IATSE claims it has signed Atlantic Prods. to the union's basic contract; parent Atlantic Entertainment Group had no comment . . . VSDA survey of its membership shows the homevid retail trade had an upbeat year . . . Martin T. Sosnoff withdraws his three-month bid for control of Caesars World Inc. . . . CBS News nixes its producer pool system after just three months ... AMPTP counters DGA's assertion that it would ban any "scabs" from the Guild, management saying DGA membership "is not and cannot be a prerequisite to employment" . . . AWAG won't field a candidate to oppose SAG prez Patty Duke's bid for a second term . . . First pickets in SAG's strike against animation houses are posted at Disney ... AFM prez Victor Fuentealba kicks off tuners' convention by defending the recently inked, much-criticized national diskery contract.

June 17 — Worldwide theatrical film rentals to the U.S. major distribs jumped 14% in 1986. Domestic returns were up 5% to \$1.17 billion, while foreign film rentals jumped 29% to nearly \$800,000,000; Japan was again the leading export market ... Hollywood Writers' Report shows white male scripters dominate every sector of the industry in terms of employment ... Fur flies at AFM confab when L.A. local prez Bernie Fleischer delivers a scathing rebuttal of AFM prexy Victor Fuentealba's opening address ... Davis/Panzer Prods.' next nine pix will be released via New Century/Vista ... Upturn in productin at rejuvenated ITC Entertainment will see at least 11 pix offered offshore annually ... Berlin Film Fest moves '88 dates one week ahead to avoid conflict with the

American Film Market ... Nonprofit org American-Soviet Film Initiative is formed, out-growth of last March's Entertainment Summit ... Arista Records prez Clive Davis to try to film production via two-year development deal with Tri-Star.

June 18 — House subcommittee kicks off hearing of a bill to halt quick trafficking of broadcast stations ... ATA exec director Chester Migden predicts DGA-AMPTP talks will set the stage for industry bargaining for the next decade ... VSDA stiffens sanctions against any of its homevid retailing members convicted of video piracy ... JWT Group sues U.K.'s WPP Group to prevent a tender offer, and charges former J. Walter Thompson exec John E. Peters with breaching fiduciary duty ... U.S. Customs Service ready to implement regulations allowing it to notify U.S. copyright holders to parallel imports of records, tapes and CDs ... P.J. Leone named senior v.p. of MGM/UA Home Video International ... "Last chance" talks between NBC and NABET fizzle; a strike appears inevitable . . . No progress is made in SAG's four-day-old walkout against tv cartoon producers.

June 19 — N.Y. Federal Court Judge Edmund Palmieri grants Tri-Star and its Loews Theaters relief from the Paramount consent decrees, but suggests the Justic Dept. keep a sharp vigil against potential anti-trust violations ... Marty Emerson unseats AFM prez Victor Fuentealba, first time in union's 91 years that an incumbent has lost reelection ... Capitol Industries-EMI is combining the EMI America and Manhattan labels into one record company headed by Sal Licata ... Top RKO exex are unable to raise the coin for buyout of the company from GenCorp; RKO Pix halts all production ... Robert M. Kreek boosted to exec v.p. of Fox Inc. ... "ValueTelevision" ("VTV"), talk/home shopping show, is axed by Lorimar due to low ratings ... ABC News correspondent Charles Glass is kidnapped in Beirut while on leave from the web.

June 22 — President Reagan vetoes a bill to make the 40year-old Fairness Doctrine permanent, citing the First Amendment rights of broadcasters; a Congressional override is expected . . . In a major victory for colorizing firms, the Copyright Office is proposing that colorized black and white films are "derivative works" eligible for copyright protection . . . Viacom Prods. has a record \$100,000,000 in production on the webs next season . . . MPAA topper Jack Valenti boasts of the millions being poured into Canadian coffers by U.S. films shooting north of the border ... Randy Reiss ankling as prez/chief exec of Norman Lear's ACT III Communications . . . California Film Commission's first act is to endorse a bill to grant a 10% tax credit to all productions lensed in California . . . Calif. Senate approves an RIAA-backed bill giving record labels the right to sue artists for nondelivery of optional albums; next hurdle is the State Assembly ... Robert J. Humak named western division manager for Orion Pictures Distribution.

June 23 — Lorimar Telepictures is planning a restructuring and possible spinoff of some divisions, as well as hefty writedowns in its Karl-Lorimar homevideo division ... Compact Discs have eclipsed LPs as a source of revenue for retail record stores, but cassette tapes still account for more than half the take ... WEA International chariman and cochief exec Nesuhi Ertegun will step down from the post, to be replaced by Ramon Lopez, current numbertwo exec ... Saatchi & Saatchi is merging its two U.S. advertising entities into one unit, Saatchi & Saatchi Dancer Fitzgerald Compton Inc. . . . Peter Fannon steps down as prexy, National Association of Public Television Stations ... Fred Astaire, world's leading popular music dancer, dies of pneumonia at 88 ... TV Academy grants Grant Tinker its Governors Award ... Celebrity Home Entertainment withdraws offer to acquire the Video Gems

June 24 — A WGAW report charges that widespread bias against female, minority and over-40 writers exists in the film and tv industries . . . Due to NFL "home" and "away" restrictions, 17 indie tv stations have been excluded from bidding for ESPN gridcasts . . . Gary Marenzi joins Skouras Pictures as senior v.p., to establish an inhouse pay and tv/syndie arm . . . WEA International chairman Nesuhi Ertegun inks five-year deal to remain with Warner Communciations Record Group as exec in charge of special projects . . . Grant Tinker and Gannett Co. announce plans to launch a daily tv program based on

national newspaper "USA Today"... Billy Frolick named production v.p. at the Larry Thompson Organization... Sean Penn sentenced to two months in jail for violating probation... Dick Weaver steps down after 19 years as secretary-treasurer of the Association of Theatrical Press Agents & Managers... U.S. artists will rock in Moscow July 4 at "Interdependence concert."

June 25 — Lorimar Telepictures said it expects a \$63,000,000 fourth-quarter loss, and is negotiating to spinoff its ad agency, television stations and publishing subsids to those divisions' management ... With a little help from Steven Spielberg, WCI chairman Steven J. Ross maintains a firm grip on the company at the annual shareholders' meeting, while chipping away support from rival and majority shareholder Herbert J. Siegel . . . Some headway is made in DGA network staff talks ... Go-Video is suing the MPAA, its members and some video manufacturers, accusing them of conspiracy to prevent introduction of a dual-tape VCR ... "The Great One," Jackie Gleason, dies of cancer in Florida at 71 ... Jeffrey Coleman upped to exec director of product placement at Paramount ... Century Home Video is launched with a 350-title library aimed at sell-through ... All American Burger steaks its claim in showbiz, adding a production subsidiary, All American Entertainment.

June 26 — AMPTP drops its demands in DGA negotiations that all supplemental market residuals be eliminated ... SAG talks with cartoon producers collapse ... NBC Radio is selling its San Fran, Chi and D.C. stations as part of a restructuring ... Tv networks are seeking big hikes in primetime advertising rates for next season ... FTC issues subpoenas in look-see into whether the tv webs exerted pressure to keep NFL football rights away from Fox Television ... After 19 years at the Dorothy Chandler Pavilion, the Oscar broadcast will originate from the Shrine Auditorium in 1988 . . . CBS/Fox Video is selling its viduplication plant to VCA/Technicolor, a marriage of two of the four largest duplicators . . . New World International prez William Shields elected chairman of the American Film Marketing Association ... Broadway producers have won the right to use synthesizers in tuners, in return for a six-year freeze on minimum number of musicians employed in each theater.

June 29 — NABET puts on its walking shoes, strikes NBC and its o&o tv and radio stations . . . An appellate court tosses out an earlier FCC decision deregulating the amount of commercialization on children's tv ... DGA finalizing strike preparations as talks intensify . . . Five cable multiple system operators have formed a new payper-view service to dish out films and special events ... Exhibitors across the country are on a building spree . . . Most of the record number of films placed in production in April and May should wrap before DGA's contract is due to expire ... Pair of anti-runaway bills pass Calif. Senate ... "Pee-wee's Playhouse" helps CBS lead its competition in the Daytime Emmy Awards ... CBS' primetime soaps, with advance episodes stockpiled, are in good shape to weather a director's strike . . . Lorimar Film Entertainment, not previously-slated 20th Fox, will distribute Bob Dylan starrer "Hearts Of Fire."

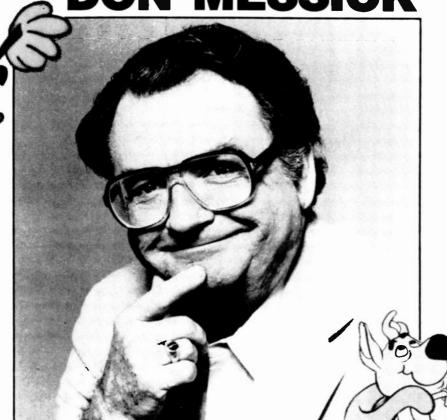
June 30 — AMPTP rejects DGA offer to reshape residuals on films payment as 2% of distributor's gross from all markets . . . Carolco jumps into tv syndication via \$15,-400,000 buyout of Orbis Communications . . . Universal's "Dragnet" and MGM/UA's "Spaceballs" keep Summer b.o. rolling at record pace . . . Technical glitches plague NBC as the web copes with NABET strike ... NBC Prods. creative affairs v.p. Ivan Fecan ankles to become CBC-TV's director of programming ... Terry Walker and Toni Everett named to two top national posts of AFTRA . . . HBO Video agrees to pay Hemdale \$15-16,000,000 for disputed North American homevid rights to "Platoon" and "Hoosiers," roughly double what previous suitor Vestron was to pay ... RCA/Columbia Pictures Home Video is discontinuing Beta format production and distribution on the majority of its titles . . . Interscope Communications accelerates its tv production pace to 13 projects in the next 18 months ... Domestic film b.o. this week will be in excess of \$120,000,000.

JULY, 1987

July 1 — MCA uses opening of Cineplex Odeon Universal City Cinemas as forum to announce plans of \$100,000,000 three-year expansion program at the

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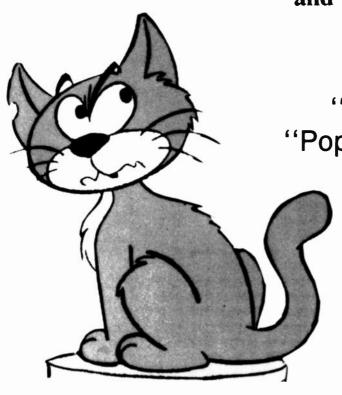
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DAY-BY-DAY NEWS SUMMARY, OCT. '86-SEPT. '87

Universal Studios tour complex ... Management's AMPTP and DGA negotiators fail to break bargaining deadlock as current contract expires ... Tri-Star senior v.p. of production Casey Silver joins Universal pictures as exec v.p. of production ... Columbia Pictures separates its marketing and distribution arms ... 20th Century Fox Film Corp. becomes the first U.S. film distrib to seal deal with People's Republic of China for national broadcasts of American films.

July 2 — U.S. Claims Court in Washington D.C. rules that tv program suppliers are entitled to investment tax credits for their shows appearing on ABC for the past 25 years . . . Negotiators for a new DGA film and tv contract go back to the table July 6 to address stumbling blocks, namely producer demands for rollbacks of residuals from pay-tv and pay-per-view film showings . . . Hanna-Barbera breaks away from the other cartoon producers and enters into an independent deal with SAG on terms for a new contract . . . Chuck Larsen named prez of domestic tv distribution for Republic Pictures . . . June distribution tallies help boost the six-month total for new feature releases to its highest level in more than a decade . . . Kenneth Hyman tapped prez of New Century International.

July 6 — With a threatened strike looming over film producers' heads all year, production starts have accelerated to 38% over same six-month period in 1986 ... Deadline for a new DGA film and tv pact is extended until July 10 ... Negotiations heat up as Home Box Office and Showtime/The Movie Channel bid for exclusive rights to films produced by Paramount Pictures ... Diane Sokolow hired by MGM/UA TV to serve as senior v.p. of longforms ... Turner Broadcasting Sytem is dropping its fight against the FCC's must-carry rule.

July 7 — New World Pictures adds seven pix to its larder, picking up domestic/international theatrical and ancillary rights ... Frank Marino forms his own distribution company, MC Releasing ... CBS-TV terminates contract with A.C. Nielsen effective for the Fall season due to "continued deficiencies in the Nielson People Meter reports" ... Brian McGrath named prexy and CEO-international of the Entertainment Business Sector of the Coca-Cola Co.

July 8 — June domestic boxoffice hits \$503,000,000, third highest level ever ... More than 90% of ESPN's affiliates will carry the cable channel's NFL football package during the next three years ... For the second year in a row, CBS writers for three of its programs received the 1987 Humanitas prizes and cash awards totalling \$45,000 of the \$70,000 pot.

July 9 — The DGA accuses representatives of the three networks of making "fictitious promises" in an attempt to split the Guild's ranks during talks on a new network staff contract . . . Charles Fries takes wraps off ambitious plans for a global tv network . . . New World Pictures and Balcor Film Investors end their three-year-old motion picture investment deal . . . NABET is enjoined from "disrupting or interfering" with NBC's news coverage and NBC was likewise issued a restraining order preventing it from threatening or intimidating lawful strikers, by order of L.A. Superior Court.

July 10 — \$46,976,336 is a record high for the first half of the 1987 boxoffice from a relative sampling of L.A. County theaters ... DGA gives film and tv producers a taste of what to expect if negotiations fail to produce a new contract, by setting up 1000 picketers outside The Burbank Studios ... Meredith Corp. reaches an agreement in principle to acquire tv rep firm MMT Sales Inc. ... Agreement on filming two Columbia features in the Soviet Union has been reached by David Puttnam in meetings with the Soviet minister for films ... Cap Cities/ABC launches drug testing programs for all its o&o radio and tv stations ... Harry L. Usher named prez of Weintraub International Enterprises.

July 13 — AMPTP yesterday threatened to "lock out" all DGA members rather than tolerate a "selective strike" against Columbia Pictures, Warner Bros. and NBC... NBC and NABET agree to return to the bargaining table to settle the union's two-week-old strike... Blank videocassette sales increased 26% in 1986... Cara White will leave Tri-Star Pictures to rejoin indie p.r. firm, to become Seifert & White Public Relations... Gil Cates elected to third term as DGA prez... Los Angeles Archbishop Roger Mahony urges boycott of businesses offering pornography.

July 14 — Negotiations between the DGA and the AMPTP remain at an impasse ... Ed Bader gets veep stripes at Columbia ... CBS Inc. sells its magazine division to a group of its senior exex for a reported \$650,000,000 ... Cannon Group has reportedly acquired the 29-screen CIC circuit in South Africa ... Variety and Daily Variety to be sold to Cahners Publishing Co.

July 15 — DGA and AMPTP reach an 11th-hour agreement on a new three-year film and tv contract ... HBO grabs exclusive film licensing contract with Paramount Pictures from Showtime/The Movie Channel for a reported \$500,000,000 carrot ... RVP Prods. (formerly RCA Video Prods.) to be acquired by a management buyout from Bertelsmann and will be renamed Lightyear Entertainment

July 16 — The DGA and major tv and film production entities engage in an experiment on at least two episodic tv series which will limit the number of working hours on any given day of photography ... A multinational deal between Cannon and Sovexportfilm cues protests from traditional buyers of Soviet pix who feel they are being prevented from acquiring top-grade product ... Group 1 Entertainment Movie Machine has sold its videocassette vending interests to the machine's maker, Diebold.

July 17 — After a recent audit, SAG claims Cannon Films may owe as much as \$2,000,000 in unpaid residuals ... French film admissions hit nadir in first half of 1987 with turnstile dropoff of 15% ... Prospect for 1987 domestic boxoffice to hit all-time high appears likely ... Dentsu Inc., which claims to be the world's largest advertising agency, said it is entering the film, tv, live entertainment, theme park and toy production arenas.

July 20 — The DGA has upped its qualifying limit on "low-budget" films to \$4,000,000 in a move to promote smaller films being made under its aegis . . . SCI Holdings Inc. puts Storer Cable up for sale . . . Robert Sherwood, former v.p. of acquisitions for Universal Pictures, is named veepee of production for Simcom International, the U.S. production and sales arm of Canadian-based Norstar Entertainment . . . SAG's five-week strike against animators continues as negotiations resume for the first time since July 1.

July 21 — De Laurentiis Entertainment Group is contemplating "recapitalization, restructuring or combination (merger) with a third party" to pull itself out of its financial quagmire, exacerbated by a disastrous fiscal first quarter ... Westwood One Inc. has signed a letter of intent to purchase NBC Radio Networks for \$50,000,000 cash ... Chan Wood upped to exec v.p. and head film buyer for L.A.-based Pacific Theaters.

July 22 — In response to the FCC's proposal to reinstate its exclusivity rules, broadcasters and program suppliers were vigorous in their support while the cable industry attacked the proposition as unjustifiable madness . . . Columbia Pictures establishes new worldwide marketing group . . . Capital Cities/ABC posts 1987 second-quarter earnings of \$99,732,000, up 49% from same period last year . . . "The Living Daylights" opens abroad to biggest boxoffice reception in 25-year history of James Bond films . . . MCA Records prevailed in U.S. District Court as defendant in a \$3,000,000 breach-of-contract cut-out records action brought by plaintiff Scorpio Music.

July 23 — Home Box Office chairman and CEO Michael Fuchs has invited Showtime/The Movie Channel to buy into HBO's exclusive \$500,000,000 deal with Paramount Pictures and, at the same time, vituperated its rival for unauthorized use of HBO's moniker in a marketing campaign ... American Multi-Cinema, the second largest theater chain in the country, exits from NATO for philosophical reasons ... Arianne Ulmer Cipes named senior v.p. of the newly-established foreign sales arm of Zupnik Enterprises . . . Prospect for a quick settlement of NABET's 25-day-old strike against NBC remain gloomy. July 24 — The 39-day SAG walkout against four of Hollywood's major tv cartoon studios ended yesterday as both sides reached a tentative agreement on a new threeyear contract ... Summer season boxoffice zeroes in on the \$1 billion mark, a 10% gain over Summer '86 ... While MCA's theatrical revenues declined in its second quarter, hefty increases in tv and music revenues accounted for a 38% net income gain to \$38,845,000 ... Walt Disney Co. posts a 26% increase in fiscal third-quarter revenues and enjoys highest net income in the company's history ... Coca-Cola TV chairman Frank Biondi ankles

to take post as prez, chief exec at Viacom International ... Orion TV Syndication plans "Crimewatch Tonight" strip as its third firstrun show ... John Fairfax Ltd. sells its three Aussie Seven Network stations for \$A800,000,000 to Queensland station owner Christopher Skase ... NABET and NBC talks collapse under a Federal mediator as strike hits its 26th day.

July 27 — Helene Hahn upped to exec v.p. of Walt Disney Studios, third in chain of command ... NBC prez Robert Wright blames NABET ledership for protracted strike against the web ... Act III Broadcasting ups Bert Ellis to prez and CEO ... "Me & My Girl" hits \$4,000,000 Broadway payback after just 11 months ... No reason is given for sudden resignation of Motown Music Group prexy Jay Lasker ... U.S. Dept. of Commerce ups its GNP estimate after discovering video rentals hit \$3 billion a year.

July 28 — Sen. Jesse Helms-helmed Fairness In Media has launched a new attack on CBS with campaign billed "Stop Dan Rather's Attacks On President Reagan" ... NBC-TV is experiencing setbacks in trying to upgrade its affiliate lineup from UHF to VHF outlets ... Dan Rather's "Evening News" cops most Emmy news nominations ... Ralph M. Baruch has resigned as Viacom International chairman ... Location filming blackout will be in effect during the Pope's L.A. visit ... NBC is first web to sign on for A.C. Nielsen's people meter ratings this Fall.

July 29 — Reaching an accord over SAG's claim for unpaid residuals, The Cannon Group will shell out \$400,000 cash and \$100,000 more into an escrow account until the results of a joint audit of Cannon's books determines whether additional monies are owed ... The South Carolina Supreme Court ordered \$650,000 in surtax refunds returned to 12 state exhibitors of X-rated and unrated films, concluding that the state's 20% admissions surtax is unconstitutional ... Imagine Films Entertainment and Tri-Star Pictures terminate a longterm contract that granted Tri-Star first refusal rights to Imagine's film and tv projects ... Terry Christensen is named prexy of Kirk Kerkorian's Tracinda Corp. in relocation of firm from Las Vegas to Los Angeles ... The Coast Guard and FCC seize a pirate radio ship broadcasting off Long Island, N.Y.

July 30 — The FCC strategically places consideration of elimination of the Fairness Doctrine on its agenda just as Congress readies for Summer recess ... 97% of DGA's membership vote to ratify new film and tv contract ... CBS Records Group is in search for a buyer for its records division and has already spurned an offer from Sony ... Eastman Kodak Co. enjoys record 19% increase in sales for fiscal 1987 ... Duncan Clark upped to senior v.p. of international marketing at Columbia Pictures ... Arista Records forms its own homevideo division, 6 West. July 31 — "L.A. Law" leads the list of Emmy nominations with 20; "Golden Girls" and "Moonlighting" each receive 14 ... IATSE, citing a "serious defect" in Camera Local 659's independent film contrct (a.k.a. the 'orange book''), yesterday informed the local that it may "not continue to use the orange book in its present form" ... Unnamed buyer saves Variety Arts Center from bouleversement ... Aussie magnate Kerry Packer's counter-offer for the Fairfax tv stations has failed ... Fries Home Video buys U.S. rights to Cannes critics' winner "Wish You Were Here" ... Hollywood majors' production pace is even with last year's.

AUGUST, 1987

Aug. 3 — Calling NBC's final contract offer "too insulting," and so far refusing to allow its membership to vote, NABET leaders are being urged by locals to present the web's offer before the union's membership for a consensus ... Randy Reiss is appointed exec v.p. of Walt Disney Studios and prexy of network tv for Walt Disney and Touchstone TV ... BBC-TV is stepping up its interest and investment in feature film production ... Joseph E. Levine dies.

Aug. 4 — Winston H. Cox ankles as Time Inc. v.p. to assume long-vacant post of chairman and CEO for Show-time/The Movie Channel ... "The Living Daylights" opens domestically to biggest boxoffice reception in 25-year history of James Bond films ... Larry Sugar will head up a Weintraub Entertainment Group subsid to market its just-acquired Thorn-EMI library worldwide ...





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DAY-BY-DAY NEWS SUMMARY, OCT. '86-SEPT. '87

Raffaella De Laurentiis is reportedly out as production prez for De Laurentiis Entertainment Group.

Aug. 5 — Claiming to be affirming freedom of speech, the FCC has voted unanimously to rescind enforcement of the Fairness Doctrine ... Domestic feature film releases hit all-time monthly peak with 37 bows in July ... Four veepees are let go at Vestron Inc. in restructuring move. Aug. 6-20th Century Fox enjoys fourth-highest earnings in the company's history during fiscal 1986-87 year ... Marcio M. Moreira named coordinator for new worldwide marketing group of Columbia Pictures ... General Cinema announces plans for a 2400-seat sixplex in the heart of Hollywood... NABET's six-member negotiating committee has voted not to put NBC's final contract offer on the ballot for web staff members ... Robert E. Wise is reelected president of the Academy of Motion Picture Arts & Sciences ... CBS research veep David Poltrack warns that network tv and the ratings services will be in deep peril if sample audiences don't start cooperating with new peoplemeter set-up.

Aug. 9 — CBS Inc. topper Laurence Tisch says the three webs' primary concern for the next five years will be finding a way to regain lost audiences . . . Paramount Pictures has acquired worldwide distribution rights to "Crocodile Dundee II," which starts filming at the end of August . . . Colpix' Michael Nathanson upped from exec v.p. of production to exec v.p. and deputy chief of worldwide production . . "Platoon" pops through homevid price ceiling with \$99.95 tag for its scheduled Oct. 14 release from HBO Video . . . Raffaella De Laurentiis resignation is confirmed by DEG . . . NBC will eliminate 50 seconds of flip-card ad spots at the end of its six daytime game shows.

Aug. 10 — Kings Road Entertainment announces plans to establish domestic distribution arm designed to annually release six in-house pix and an equal number of acquisitions ... Fox Broadcasting adds four new shows for its network stable ... Negotiations between the major record companies and AFTRA for a new recording contract are slated to resume Aug. 19 ... NCTA prez James Mooney claims the Association of Independent Television Stations has committed an egregrious act in urging the FCC to repeal the cable-tv compulsory license.

Aug. 11 — The U.S. Dept. of Justice has been handed its second rebuff in its attempts to prosecute product splitting retroactively as a per se antitrust violation . . . Senior exex who were part of the aborted management buyout to take Viacom private are reportedly ready to fly the coop . . . Harry Bernstein leaves Telstar for post as v.p. of film acquisitions at Showtime/The Movie Channel . . . Bertelsmann Music Group and Victor Co. of Japan unveil a restructured joint venture dubbed BMG Victor Inc. to include record label, distribution, music publishing and record club operations . . . David Sifford exits King World prez post . . . CBS launches a civil action against WHTZ-FM, New York, for prematurely airing Michael Jackson's new single.

Aug. 12 — An FCC judge rules that RKO Broadcasting is unfit to be a broadcasting licensee because of KHJ-TV's allegedly fraudulent billing practices ... Rob Reiner, Alan Horn and Glenn Padnick form Castle Rock Productions — to be bankrolled by the Entertainment Business Sector of Coca-Cola in a five-year deal calling for distribution of 15 pix via Columbia Pictures . . . A new threeyear contract covering actors working at cartoon studios has unanimously been approved by SAG's national board, ending a 39-day strike against Disney, DIC, Filmation and Marvel ... Noel Gimbel, one of the video industry's first distributors, is leaving that area to become prez/COO for Lorimar Home Video . . . Jeffrey Rochlis upped to exec v.p. of Walt Disney Studios ... Turner Broadcasting System is continuing development of a fourth cable network that would feature MGM library titles and firstrun programming.

Aug. 13 — Cineplex Odeon Corp. posts net income of \$8,842,000 on revenues of \$137,469,000 for its second quarter — a record pace for the Canadian-based exhibitor ... Sandy Duncan will replace Valerie Harper in "Valerie," half-hour NBC-TV sitcom series ... Barris Industries Inc. locks acquisition deal with National Lampoon Inc. for exclusive rights to all original Lampoon tv and cable projects ... ABC Entertainment and Aaron Spelling Prods. extend production deal for three more years; however, it will no longer be the exclusive pact run since 1969

... Reprise label is reactivated by Warner Bros. Records ... Writers Guild of America residuals for the year to date total \$32,209,742 — up 6.3%.

Aug. 14 — Turner Broadcast System swaps future runs of "The Wizard Of Oz" to CBS for exclusive tv rights to "Gone With The Wind" . . . In a rare deal between an independent producer/distributor and a major, Island Pictures turns over its "Jimmy Reardon" to 20th Fox for a broader release and more extensive marketing . . . John Hughes might not return his productions to Universal Pictures from Paramount as speculated . . . Weintraub Entertainment Group augments tv division with employment of three exex in areas of business affairs, drama and comedy.

Aug. 17 — Virgin Vision and Samuel Goldwyn Co. have reached a three-year, \$40,000,000 output deal giving Virgin domestic homevideo rights to 23 pix produced or acquired by Goldwyn ... The year-old Taft/Barish deal to provide Tri-Star with four to six features has been altered to two to three higher-budgeted pix annually ... NABET wants a new negotiator in NBC talks, to get stalled contract gabs moving again ... Discovering that homeshopping programs are not meant for mass-audience television, MCA TV will cancel "The Home Shopping Game" ... John Symes is upped to senior v.p. of programs at Paramount TV Group ... MPAA triples the reward it offers to video piracy stoolpigeons, to \$15,000.

Aug. 18 — The Mexican government has launched a new program to entice U.S. location filming — and purportedly will use revenues to pay off humongous international debt — most of which is owed to U.S. banks . . . Groundbreaking begins in January for the Academy of TV Arts & Sciences' new home in North Hollywood . . . David Madden defects from Paramount to join Interscope Communications Nov. 1 as a producing partner in IC's theatrical feature arm . . . Universal realigns national field promotional staff . . . NBC rejects NABET's proposal to bring in a prominent outside mediator to settle the seven-weekold strike . . . Gary Kessler moves to Fries Entertainment as v.p., movies for tv and miniseries, from the Cooper Agency.

Aug. 19 — Cumulative results for the first seven months of the b.o. year indicate a record Summer and most likely a new alltime yearly pinnacle ... A dramatic 23% increase in feature film starts in California has been registered for the first six months of 1987, an 80% jump over same period in 1985 ... Empire Entertainment inks an exclusive two-year production deal with Cinema Home Video Prods., whereby CHVP will produce at least 10 films, all to be developed with Empire ... Producer Sandy Howard teams with Australian-based film and video producer Taimac SBS to coproduce four pix for theatrical release in 1988.

Aug. 20 — Doug Duitsman defeats incumbent Richard H. Frank for presidency of the Academy of TV Arts & Sciences ... Tv producer Atlantic/Kushner-Locke and barter sydicator All-American Television have reached an agreement in principle to merge their companies into a single publicly-held production/distribution operation ... Screen Extras Guild goes on record that it would be better off merging with AFTRA than allying with the Teamsters ... Motown Records promotes Lee Young Jr. to prexy, Motown Records Music Group and Alvin (Skip) Miller to Motown Records prez ... The three webs refuse to furnish the TV Academy clips of tv shows for the Emmy Awards; it's conjectured rebuff stems from sour grapes over Emmy telecast going to upstart Fox Broadcasting Co.

Aug. 21 — American Multi-Cinema is planning to add 26 more screens in Detroit, Houston, Denver and St. Louis to the 1429 already in its stable ... Paramount, Universal, MGM and United Artists films, absent from the Mexican market for the last 10 months because of a labor dispute, have returned to the boxoffice wars with a 17-pic lineup ... Viacom Inc. confirms that it is holding confabs with Coca-Cola Co. and at least seven other entertainment-related concerns regarding selling minority equity positions in select Viacom operating segments ... Showscan appoints Edgar Johnson senior v.p. ... N.Y. Archbishop John Cardinal O'Connor intervenes in NBC-NABET dispute in attempt to spur talks.

Aug. 24 — A secret ballot among Screen Extras Guild board reveals the majority oppose prospective alliance with the Teamsters . . . CBS-TV jumps the gun for the

Fall season and will begin airing firstrun programs on Sept. 14, rather than the originally-planned Sept. 23 ... In anticipation of its sale to Westwood One, NBC Radio Networks has laid off close to 10% of its employes ... 11th Montreal World Film Festival is expected to post record attendance ... New World Entertainment is enjoined in court from purchasing any more stock of Kenner Parker Toys.

Aug. 25 — National Commission on Working Women report maligns television's "pervasive bias that keeps women from working at the top jobs" in top-rated tv programs ... Major record companies and AFTRA reach a tentative agreement on a new phonograph recording contract ... Heron Communications bags vid rights to six Trans World Entertainment films in deal reportedly worth \$15,000,000 ... RIAA intends to sponsor massive record biz minority hiring program.

Aug. 26 — In light of several bow-outs by exhibitors,

Cinetex '88 — billed to be the largest and most-inclusive entertainment exposition in history — may not live up to expectations . . . MCA Music Entertainment Group and record producer John Boylan form an autonomous film-tw music supervision company, Great Eastern Soundtracks . . . Screen Extras Guild treasurer Phil Prentice resigns over union's drift from merger with Teamsters . . . Cable tv's audience has grown since the deregulation of the industry in January, according to a CAB analysis of the Nielsen cable status report . . . Kenneth Lemberger appointed exec veepee of the Entertainment Business Sector

of Coca-Cola . . . Tim Flack upped to senior v.p. of talent

and casting at Columbia/Embassy Television ... MTM

Entertainment Inc. is going public with a 22% stock float, said to be valued at \$100-112,000,000.

Aug. 27 — California communities are uniting to lure commercial film production to the West Coast ... While President Reagan delivered a major foreign policy address yesterday at the Century Plaza Hotel, striking NBC employes gathered nearby and sledgehammered parent GE's appliances in a show of anger and frustration ... General Electric's Albert F. Barber is selected to succeed Rober C. Butler as exec v.p. in charge of finance at NBC ... A coalition of media groups urges the FCC to repeal two broadcast rules related to the recently abolished Fairness Doctrine ... Japanese film producers woo domestic distributors at the Montreal World Film Festival.

Aug. 28 — United Artists Communications Inc. and American Multi-Cinema have joined at the hip to build new exhibition empire in the U.K., Western Europe and the Pacific Basin, committing a minimum investment of \$80,000,000 . . . Cannon Group's net worth continues to plummet as it reports a quarterly loss of \$12,000,000 ... ABC-TV follows CBS' lead and moves up its primetime season bow to Sept. 14 . . . Obscenity charges against Dead Kennedys rocker Jello Biafra have been dismissed, avoiding any new precedent-setting censorship decisions. Aug. 31 — MCA Inc. revamps cable-vid wing, upping Sondra Berchin to new post of exec v.p., MCA Home Entertainment and handing out new titles to Ned Nalle, Louis Feola, and Blair Westlake ... Film great John Huston died Friday, at age 81 ... Facing the prospect of numerous resignations, Viacom International loses helmsman Paul M. Hughes in highest-level defection yet since company's acquisition by Sumner Redstone's National Amusements Inc. ... Glen A. Larson is returning to Universal TV in nonexclusive arrangement ... Tough guy actor Lee Marvin died Saturday at the age of 63.

SEPTEMBER, 1987

Sept. 1 — Daniel Melnick swaps assets of his IndieProd Co., and exclusive production commitments, with Carolco Pictures Inc. in exchange for 400,000 shares of newly issued stock . . . "Beverly Hills Cop II" soundtrack is certified platinum . . . HBO inks deal with BBC-TV establishing seed money for the development of indie productions in addition to in-house projects from the U.K. broadcaster . . . CBS stations' director of development and creative affairs, Ray Solley, moves to Samuel Goldwyn Co. as v.p. of tv development . . . Nell Payne, a former chief counsel to the U.S. Senate budget committee, is named director of government affairs for Turner Broadcasting Service . . . New World Entertainment will handle U.S. distribution of newly established Gower Street. I's first feature film, "Freeway."

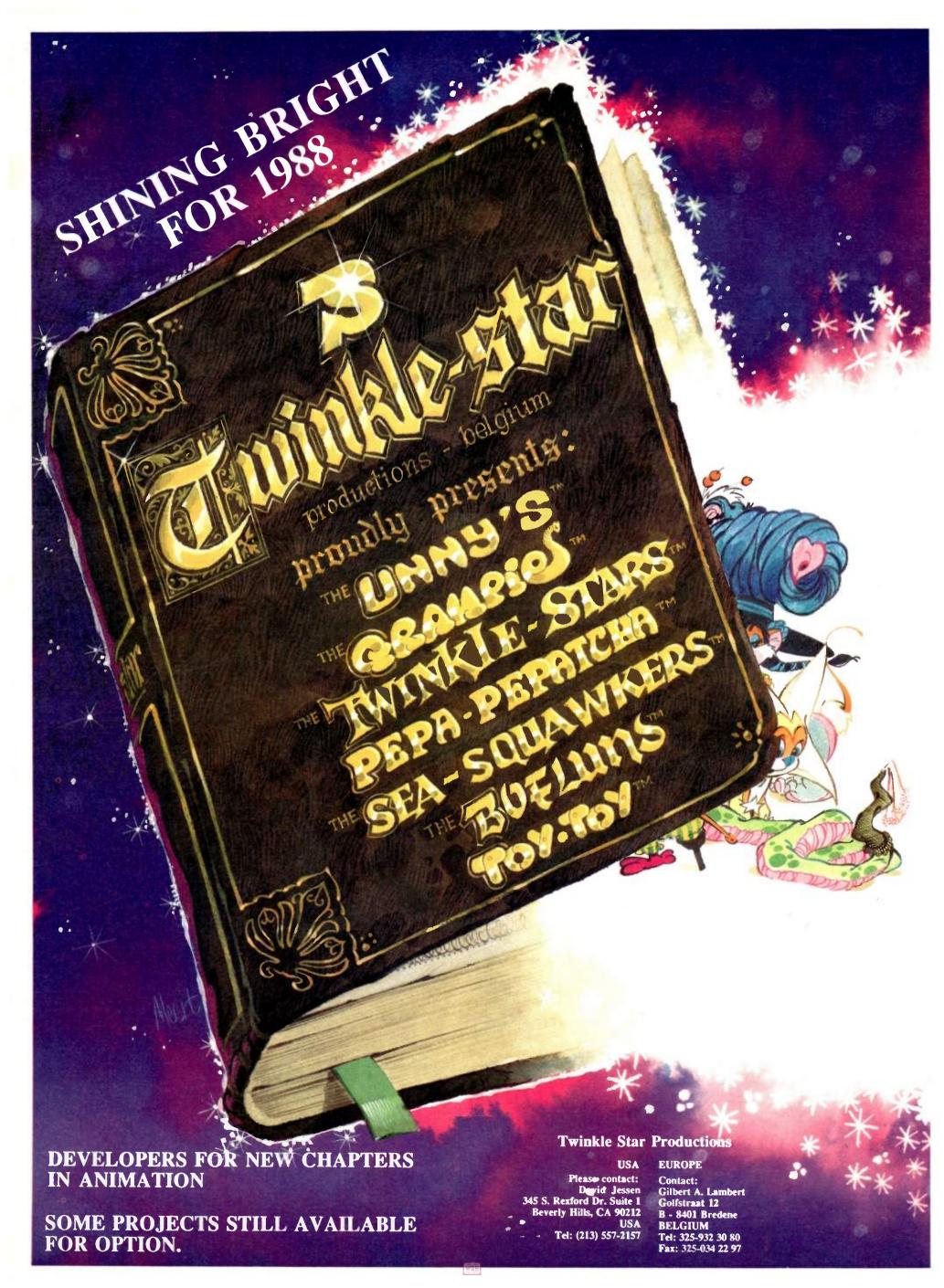
(Continued on Page 120, Column 1)

THE TONIGHT SHOW

THE DAVID LETTERMAN SHOW

AMEN

MR. President







For the 1926 Paramount picture, "Old Ironsides," the "stand-in" was the bark Esther, seen here at dockside and sailing the Pacific off Catalina, before encountering a hurricane.

Few persons remember now, but one night stands out alone and special in the human annals of Hollywood. It was The Night Hollywood Wept!

An entire motion picture company of more than 125 men and women, on location aboard an old sailing vessel miles off the Southern California shore, was reported lost at sea in the worst storm to hit this section of the Pacific in 10 years

It was Easter Sunday, 1926, and the Esther, a three-mast bark as weather-beaten as her seamed Norwegian skipper, was putting out from the Isthmus at Catalina Island for a day's shooting on "Old Ironsides," Paramount Pictures' historic sea epic.

Aboard were James Cruze, the director, and the entire cast and crew of the picture, including Wallace Beery, Charles Farrell and Esther Ralston, the stars. A heavy tug towed the vessel out to sea, and about a mile or so away from the island cast off and chugged out of camera range.

Once the sails were full, the director set about the day's schedule. The first scene demanded a view of Beery, as a heavy-handed bos'n, calling Farrell and George Bancroft from below, and liberally laying on the knot as they shot past him. Beery yelled in his best sea manner — it was the days of silent films — and his two victims replied in kind. Scene and language both were picturesque, and Esther Ralston looked up from a book half-open on her lap and smiled.

"Wally should have been a real, honest-to-goodness bos'n," she observed. He was even more flowery in a retake of the scene.

Late in the morning a stiff breeze blew up, which developed into a real blow, and at noon word went around that the Esther was heading out to sea for storm scenes. Cruze had been trying for three weeks to find weather like this, and considered it perfect for the sequence in which the Esther is caught in the throes of a hurricane and battered unmercifully by the heavy seas.

The Night Hollywood Wept

There would be no lunch hour this day. Cruze and his staff were too busy lensing thrill scenes as the Esther rolled and pitched, and the ship's crew devoted most of their time to taking care of the bulging sails and fastening all loose objects.

It was a colorful sight as sailors scampered up the rigging, working their way out on the arms, and pulled in the canvas. Cruze and his cameramen were quick to seize upon this action.

Farrell and several of the company, including Richard Arlen, who was to become a star, also worked aloft. Farrell seemed perfectly at home in the rigging. As a youngster he was accustomed to sailing off Cape Cod during vacations, so it was nothing new to him. Those were days when actors, even stars, were allowed to take chances.

A storm of no mean proportion was rising rapidly, and by 3 p.m. the Esther was in the midst of a raging sea. Sails were hauled in and lashed for the last time that day. At 3:30, someone spotted a small, dark object making its way toward the ship, battling against mountainous waves.

It was a water taxi, come to take back to the island a young Los Angeles Times reporter (this writer) who had agreed to go aboard the Esther if he could be picked up at noon. The small craft tossed about like a cork, and couldn't even approach the Esther for fear of being dashed to pieces against her hull by the might of the storm.

Above the roar of the wind, the voice of the boatman could be dimly heard, asking that a line be thrown him. His engine was swamped and his only hope of survival lay in remaining near, so he wouldn't be washed further out to sea.

This newspaperman watched through sea-sick eyes. It made no difference to him that, had the taxi By WHITNEY WILLIAMS

arrived earlier, he probably would have been swept out to sea before the tiny boat could have made it back to land. He wanted to die, anyway.

Shooting scenes, of course, was out of the question, so the company indulged in trying to keep out of the rain, which poured down in torrents. Esther Ralston, a hairdresser and Dorothy Arzner, the script girl — later to become the only woman director in Hollywood - were the only women on board, huddled uncomfortably in the captain's cabin, a miniature affair, and nearly suffocated. The remainder of the company squatted miserably under canvas, or lounged drearily in the stuffy forecastle, the cook's galley and a shed that leaked like a sieve.

As the vessel could make no headway without power, the tug, which had followed in the Esther's wake since morning, was signaled to stand by for a line. Immediately after the Esther made fast to the tug, which was to tow her back to Catalina, the tug's steam supply became exhausted. Instead of it pulling the film ship to shore, then, both craft lay wallowing in a hurricane.

One look down the hold and the pumps were started. The Esther was leaking badly, and it was all the pumps could do to stay even with the inrushing water. Men were sent below with pails, and a bucket line was formed.

Wallace Beery, the tough bos'n, wasn't so tough after all. All afternoon until darkness prevented, he had been using a small movie camera to film various members of the company who had succumbed to mal de mer — including this newsman. Now it was Beery's turn. He crawled wearily under the leaking shed, barely managing to pull himself atop some soaking-wet life vests.

It was now 6 p.m. The aroma of pancakes rose from below, directly under where Beery was stretched out. Charley Farrell was whipping up a bit of chow for those who craved nourishment. Beery groaned and rolled out on the rain-soaked deck.

At seven o'clock, Tom White, the Paramount casting director who also operated the housing and restaurant concession at the Catalina Isthmus, where the company had headquartered for three weeks, telephoned the studio in Hollywood.

He wondered if anybody had heard from the troupe, since it was hours past the time the Esther should have returned. Possibly she had put in on the mainland, out of the storm.

The studio operator listened in on the call, and rang up a friend.

The Esther, helpless in that boiling sea, tossed for hours. The tug was of no use whatever to her, her power gone. She couldn't return to Catalina, or to the main-

At about 10 p.m., word passed that the Esther would try to make Santa Barbara, many miles to the north. She was drifting in that direction. A little past midnight, however, it was announced that the captain would head for San Pedro, port of the City of Los Angeles, which lay southeast.

A near-tragedy may have been responsible for this change in plans. Suddenly, terrific shouting broke out on deck and frantic hands tore at life preservers.

Almost above the Esther loomed the huge prow of a large tramp steamer. The stranger missed the Esther by a mere 15 to 20 feet.

The Paramount studio operator, who normally was relieved at midnight, remained at her post the

remainder of the night, along with the relief. Calls from anxious families and friends poured in to swamp the board.

These calls had been coming in since early evening. Somehow, wives and sweethearts and others had heard that the location ship was missing ... ALL HANDS LOST!

Dozens of persons came to the studio, where they remained for hours outside the main gate. "ALL HANDS LOST!"

Nobody slept much.

The wind and rain had abated somewhat, and a few sails were spread as the Esther made for San Pedro. Every few minutes now, the vessel would plunge her bow deeply as though that were to be her last. Every few minutes, too, the rain would start to come down heavily, only to let up for sudden blows.

A few minutes past 4 a.m., during a lull in the storm, a faint puttputt was heard at the stern and the water taxi's engine started. The boatman had tried all night to dry his engine sufficiently to turn it over. Now he shouted a farewell and headed for the distant mainland shore. The lights of a few battleships twinkled dimly through the gloom.

A sigh of relief almost audible went up as the taxi put out for shore. The ship's troubles were over. The taximan would send out tugs. The Esther carried no flares, no rockets, nothing by which to signal distress — and certainly no radio or wireless — so the boatman seemed the ship's only hope.

Gradually, with the harbor now at hand, the Esther made her way slowly forward, but the going was so rough that few were aware they weren't still on the open sea. By this time — dawn was approaching and the utter darkness was diminishing — several destroyers could be distinguished, but the shouting from the Esther could rouse no one aboard. Time after time those on the film ship tried to make themselves heard, but without success.

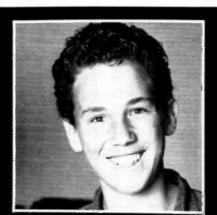
As the sky lightened, and the (Continued on Page 118, Column 5)

MEDIAART

A FRESH APPROACH FOR



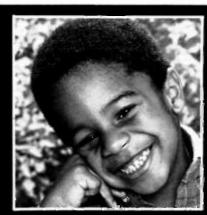
Nancy Carini



Jahmin Assa



Natalie Escovar



Brandon Alexander



Ryan Traina



Vanessa Escovar



Ali Rad



Dianne Bonham



Christopher Asta



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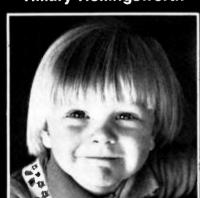
Brookie Blake



Danny Thomason



Tahitia Hicks



Daniel Fekete



Eugene Brusilowsky



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Video Blurbs: Who's Watching?

(Continued from Page 90, Column 5) and pencil in the ad campaign that will serve as the basis for a vid crossover, he said.

That's exactly what PHV is doing. A "Crocodile Dundee II" sponsorship is now in the planning stages, Clott said. It's too early to be working on a "Star Trek V" sponsorship, but Clott agreed the film is a top candidate for another carefully planned sponsorship.

Learning Curve

What has the industry learned from "Top Gun?"

Perhaps the biggest lesson of the release is that when the factors are truly right, homevideo can deliver a huge audience to advertisers.

Darien, Conn.-based The Fair-field Group estimates that 23% of U.S. heads of households viewed the "Top Gun" vidcassette in the first six weeks after it was released. The program netted a gross rating points score of 46, according to Fairfield.

Based on that figure, the research firm estimates Diet Pepsi benefitted from the equivalent of a \$250,000 buy on broadcast tv.

But as the vid industry emphasizes, a vidcassette ad generates excellent recall rates, Fairfield said. Comparing its finding in April to an Adwatch study in February, Fairfield says Diet Pepsi top-of-mind ad awareness rose from 2% in February to 7% in April. Parent brand Pepsi saw its awareness grow from 27% in February to 53% in April.

Fairfield figures that "Top Gun" contributed "siginificantly" to those increases (though Michael J. Fox's ads got higher top-of-mind ratings).

Fairfield Group exec v.p. Gary Gabelhouse says the company feels video is "definitely a quality advertising vehicle." His company anticipates that advertisers and agencies "will be battling it out to reach the (video) customer just as they do now in the mature mediums."

Paramount's Clott added that consumer protests over the inclusion of the commercial were relatively minor, and that most of the complaints involved people not objecting to this particular ad, but to the possibility that the floodgates had been opened and that crasser, more intrusive advertising might follow. Paramount has urged the industry to avoid that path.

He's convinced of the wisdom of hooking up with mass-market consumer-goods advertisers, because they can generate awareness among a vastly larger number of consumers than video can yet afford to address.

It's that reach that's the key to negotiating deals, Clott said. When Paramount and the advertisers negotiate a sponsorship deal, they aren't haggling much over the dollars an advertiser might bring to the table, according to Clott. What Paramount is looking for is lots of homes in which the PHV vidcassettes will get mentioned. Paramount wants gross rating points, Clott said.

Bill Wiener, senior v.p. of vid technologies at the BBDO International ad agency, sees potential right now for advertisers to place their messages on vidcassettes of popular films. Top pix fresh out of the theaters can deliver the kinds of numbers needed to get advertisers excited, he said.

That was surely the case with "Top Gun," and would have been the case with "Crocodile Dundee" and "Star Trek IV: The Voyage Home," had Paramount Home Video been able to work out a sponsorship deal similar to the Diet Pepsi pact for "Gun," according to Wiener.

But not all films provide such ideal ad vehicles as "Gun," "Croc" and "Trek," Wiener noted, saying aggressive attempts to line up a sponsor for HBO Video's planned October release of "Platoon" had, until late Summer, failed to produce a signed deal

Wiener believes those difficulties at HBOV reflect the poor ad environment provided by a film as weighty and intense as "Platoon"

Problem's Time, Not Clime

At HBOV, chief exec officer Frank O'Connell disagrees, saying the company has itself been surprised at how little the intensity of the downbeat film has discouraged advertisers. He says the delays in lining up a deal had to do with the short timeframe within which HBOV was working, not a lack of enthusiasm by advertisers (eventually, Chrysler).

Because an appropriate sponsor's message must already exist, or be produced, and because the advertiser is going to want to combine the vidcassette ad push with its other advertising activities, it can be particularly time-consuming to work out these sorts of deals, O'Connell said.

Young & Rubicam Inc.'s Leo Scullin, senior v.p., director of print and new electronic media in

(Continued on Page 132, Column 1)

NIGHT

(Continued from Page 115, Column 5) first blush of morning tinged the horizon, a new danger suddenly presented itself. There in the distance rose the forbidding Dead Man's Isle, rocks on which many a good ship had been wrecked down through the years.

The tug, seeing the Esther's danger, tossed off her line and set herself adrift. Rather than be drawn with the mother ship onto the rocks, the tug was taking its chances alone. It still was without power.

To The Rescue

Cries from more than 100 husky throats still failed to stir recognition from any of the battleships or other craft anchored in the harbor. It was maddening, and preposterous that so great a clamor remained unheard and unheeded.

The distance between the jagged rocks and the Esther was rapidly closing. One thought dominated all others aboard the vessel ... would they crash before the tugs — now so long overdue — reached them, since a dozen nearby ships refused to respond.

A sailor perched in the rigging suddenly cried out ... "Here come the tugs!"

Racing toward the Esther were three heavy sea-going tugs, men on their decks ready to throw the Esther a cable the instant they were within casting distance.

Not a person aboard the Esther that wasn't convinced those three unpainted, battered bulldogs of the harbor were the most beautiful sight they had ever seen.

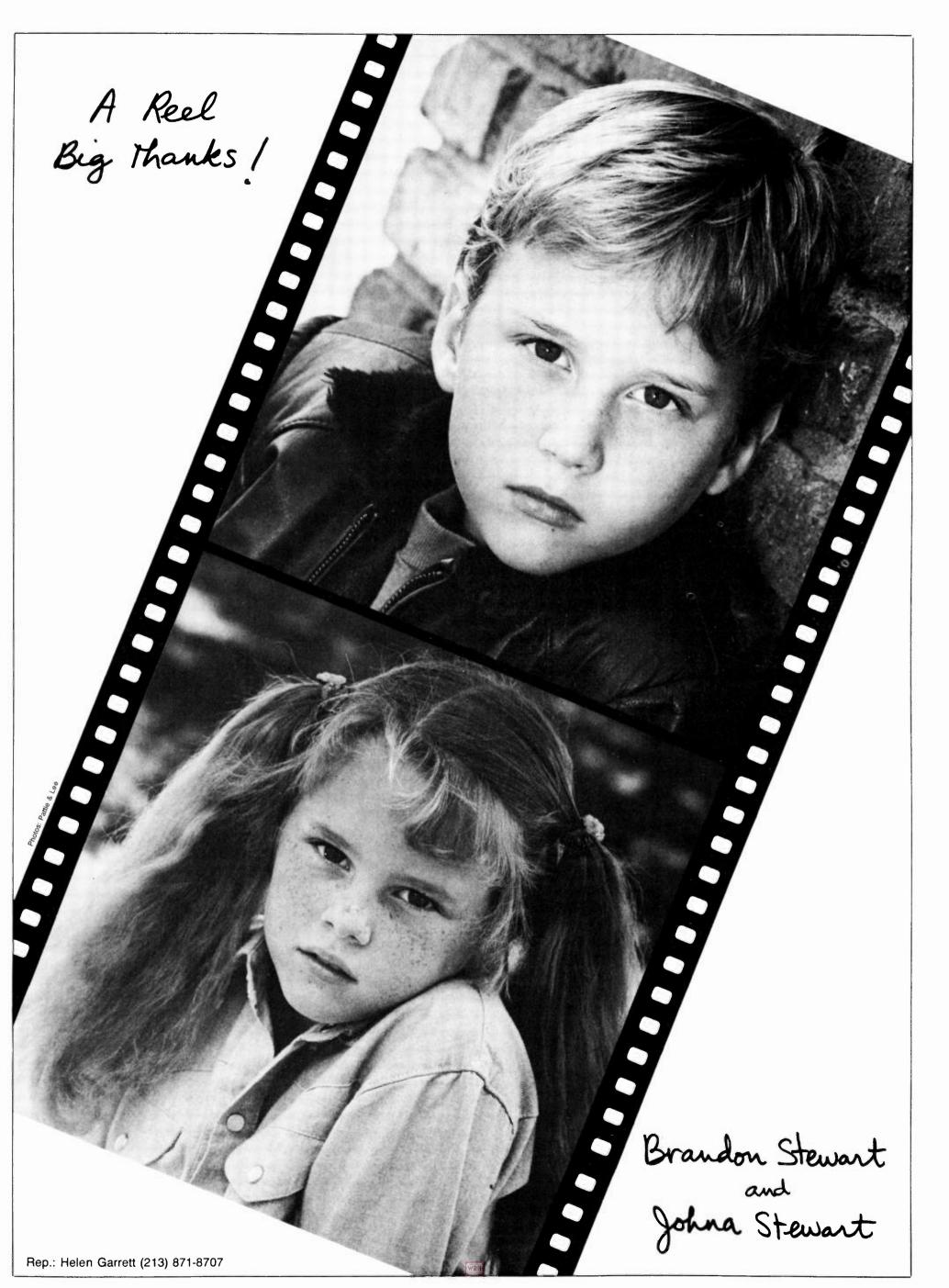
That was The Night Hollywood Wept!

Christina Hutter

In ''Rags To Riches''







DAY-BY-DAY NEWS SUMMARY, OCT. '86-SEPT. '87

(Continued from Page 112, Column 5)

Sept. 2 — Coca-Cola Co. announces plans to segregate soft drink operations from its Entertainment Business Sector (which includes Columbia Pictures) and merge it with Tri-Star Pictures. New entity, Columbia Pictures Entertainment, will be listed on the NYSE, with Tri-Star chairman Victor Kaufman at the helm ... Week-long negotiations between NABET and NBC again collapse as strike hits 10th week . . . After 10 years at Warner Communications Inc., Roger Smith ankles to Carolco subsid International Video Entertainment as senior v.p. and chief financial officer . . . Canadian entry "The Kid Brother," takes Grand Prize at Montreal's 11th World Film Festival ... Rupert Murdoch puts financially-dogged Euro satellite service Sky Channel on the trading block ... Paramount Pictures leads domestic distributors to date at the boxoffice ... Valerie Harper threatens civil action against former employers Lorimar Telepictures, alleging breach of contract on "Valerie."

Sept. 3 — Twenty-six hours of longform tv are being readied for the three webs by Alan Shayne Prods. under its exclusive pact with Warner Bros. TV ... Former Island Pictures prez Cary Brokaw forms \$50,000,000capped production and distribution venture, Avenue Entertainment ... Cable subscribers will be given pay-perview option from The Playboy Channel ... Dispute between American Federation of Musicians Local 47 and KTLA-TV may put kink in independent's plans for 48hour live coverage of the Pope's L.A. visit ... Actress Whoopi Goldberg files suit against New World Pictures and director Rip Torn over final cut of "The Telephone." **Sept. 4** — Residuals for writers are up 24% to date as compared to same period a year ago ... A huge battle is shaping up on Capitol Hill over the issue of U.S. countenance of Berne Treaty on copyright protection . . . Feature film production starts accelerate to 57 during August after June-July lag, attributed to fears of DGA strike that never transpired ... Paramount production vet Edward K. Milkis moves over to Warner Bros. TV . . . In effort to comply with FCC regs, Rupert Murdoch appears to be on the verge of extricating his Australian-based news Corp. Ltd. from its daily New York and Boston newspapers.

Sept. 8 — ITC endeavors to upstep production and distribution activities in the U.S. and abroad ... Carolco Pictures' IVE opens mega-video store in Dallas as initial step to expand into homevid rental and sales market ... Arson is suspected in \$2,500,000 blaze that hit Universal Studios Sept. 4.

Sept. 9 — As forecasted, Summer boxoffice has recently passed the 1984 seasonal record to close just shy of \$1.6 billion ... "Good Morning America" cohost Joan Lunden signs with Paramount Domestic TV to host the pilot of proposed 60-minute syndie talk show ... County fire investigation is close to establishing arson as cause of Universal fire ... Paramount production of "Midnight Rain" shifts to Universal Pictures due to conflicts over casting of Cher.

Sept. 10 — Resurgent advertising market spells black ink this year for otherwise struggling Cap Cities/ABC and CBS ... Gains in Paramount's film and homevid profits help offset losing tv production operations as Gulf & Western Inc. posts record net and revenues for third quarter and nine months ... A.C. Nielsen's newly-applied people-meter ratings system has given ABC an unofficial victory in last week's primetime rating race, the network's first in more than a year ... Insiders contend CBS's awarding its in-house ad-promo chores to outside ad agency will result in the termination of 40-50 employes ... "Platoon" producer Arnold Kopelson sues Hemdale Film Corp. to the tune of \$75,000,000, claiming the company shorted him \$25,000,000 from worldwide grosses of \$250,000,000 pic has generated to date.

Sept. 11 — IRS decision on personal service corporations portends doom for showbusiness loanout companies ... Writers Guild of America West candidates collectively share platform against upcoming management demands for residual rollbacks ... NABET threatens to picket KNBC's coverage of Pope's showbiz address ... NAB prez calls for tough resistance by radio industry pending federal legislation that could threaten radio's profits and restrict freedoms.

Sept. 14 — Vestron Pictures rides success of "Dirty Dancing" by upstepping production and acquisitions to a projected slate of 24 releases for 1988 . . . SAG prez Patty

Duke is a shoo-in for second term since she faces no opposition in upcoming election ... NBC edges out ABC in primetime Emmy race ... Columbia Pictures' chairman and CEO, David Putnam, has yet to decide his future at the studio in the wake of Coca-Cola's recent restructuring of Colpix ... U.K.'s Virgin Group forms \$50,000,000 holding company, Virgin Broadcasting Ltd. ... Director Mervyn LeRoy dies at 86.

Sept. 15 — Vestron establishes Vestron Television International to tap burgeoning overseas market . . . California Gov. George Deukmejian signs compromise bill giving record labels the right to claim damages under the state's seven-year personal services contract for recording artists, ending three-year battle waged by the RIAA . . . NBC remains adamant over fairness of its proposal to expand the use of "daily hires" . . . William Saunders upped to exec veepee of 20th Century Fox TV International . . . Paul Wang promoted to v.p., program and media planning for NBC-TV.

Sept. 16 — Weintraub Entertainment Group slates \$260,000,000 outlay on 21 pix in various stages of preproduction and development — an average of \$14,500,000 per film ... Pope John Paul II yesterday addressed showbiz and communications leaders in Hollywood, reminding them of their pervasive global influence and admonishing them to be concerned with "values, morality and conscience" ... "Stakeout" is domestic boxoffice victor during final week of Summer ... Animated kidvid series, "The Garbage Pail Kids," is removed from CBS-TV Saturday sked, reportedly in response to pressure from sundry special interest groups ... Homevid distributor Vidmark Entertainment is forming a theatrical foreign sales arm for acquisitions and in-house productions ... Showeast '87 enjoys 30% attendance increase over 1986 event.

Sept. 17 — Columbia Pictures chairman and CEO David Puttnam announces his resignation effective upon the consummation of its merger with Tri-Star Pictures . . . CBS Inc. says it has received a "further expression of interest" from Sony Corp. about a sale of the CBS Records Group . . . Pope's Hollywood speech receives mixed reviews from industry leaders, many taking umbrage at the pontiff's admonishments.

Sept. 18 — As MCA Inc. prepares a proposal with partner Spectacor of Philadelphia for management of the L.A. Coliseum and Sports Arena, Weintraub Entertainment Group is now mulling a management proposal of its own ... Fox Broadcasting adds 46 sign-ons to 115 affils to carry Emmy broadcast ... GenCorp sells RKO Pictures to a joint group of RKO senior management and Wesray Capital Corp. ... Despite David Puttnam's impending departure, members of his Colpix executive team have been assured their positions are secure for the time being.

Sept. 21 — NBC-TV reaps the golden goose at 39th Emmy awards, garnering 32 eggs — including five apiece for "L.A. Law" and telefilm "Promise" . . . California Film Commission public hearing broaches proposal that state laws should require licensing of stunt and special effects coordinators, and that filmmakers should be prohibited from using footage in which a stunt performer is injured . . . DGA prez Gil Cates, stepping down after four years, is succeeded by former Guild first v.p. Franklin Schaffner . . . George Kirgo is new prexy of Writers Guild of America West . . . ABC-TV's last-minute, three-year subscription to A.C. Nielsen's peoplemeter service spurs speculation that web may not have confidence in system.

Sept. 22 — Gordon Weaver is released from his contract as prez of Young & Rubicam Entertainment to join De Laurentiis Entertainment Group's "office of the president" with current head Fredric Sidewater ... ABC Entertainment and Italy's RAI-TV announce a cofinancing production agreement that will bring ABC three pix budgeted at as much as \$10-12,000,000 each ... Preliminary Nielsen ratings indicate Fox Broadcasting's Emmy telecast may be lowest-rated ever.

Sept. 23 — CBS-TV throws \$50,000,000 in the production pool for 11 two-hour vidpix and two miniseries for 1988-89 season ... MCA and Cineplex Odeon exex outline design plans for Universal Studios Florida facility ... Aaron Spelling Prods. signs non-exclusive production deal with CBS-TV after 18 years of fidelity to ABC ... New immigration laws are considered the culprit behind staggering decline of revenues from foreign production in

the U.S. ... NFL players' strike is causing migraine for network schedulers ... Television straight-man Dan Rowan dies of cancer at age 65.

Sept. 24 — NTIA warns that industry inaction to establish separate high-resolution tv standards will allow the U.S. to lag into a "technology colony" ... Bright times ahead for CBS, according to CEO Laurence Tisch ... The three networks finish the latest 52-week "season," losing 4% of their ratings and 2 share points inprimetime ... Jaffe/Lansing Prods. signs to extend first-look arrangment with Paramount Pictures for another two years.

Sept. 25 — MPAA and INS open talks aimed at relaxing the new immigration laws for foreign film crews on location in the U.S. . . . "CBS Morning News" coanchor Forrest Sawyer ankles web to pursue "other interests" . . . United Artists will introduce the two-minute ad in a network tv campaign to bark new pic, "Baby Boom" . . . "The Boys Next Door" will be Norman Jewison's next project under his three-year deal with MGM . . . Director-choreographer Bob Fosse has died at 60.

Sept. 28 — Overseas admissions are on the rebound, says United International Pictures topper Michael Williams-Jones . . . In an "unprecedented" deregulatory move, the Australian Broadcasting Tribunal has dropped rules governing time restrictions for Aussie tv ads . . . Former director of the American National Theater, Peter Sellars, is named new exec director of the 1988 Los Angeles Festival . . . Actress Mary Astor has died at 81 . . . After two years rebuilding, Film Ventures International acquires rights to two feature films — components of a 10-pic acquisition and production blueprint for the next 12 months.

Sept. 29 — Howard W. Koch Jr. is appointed production prez for De Laurentiis Entertainment Group ... CBS will revamp its faltering "Morning Program," exhaling anchors Mariette Hartley and Rolland Smith and exec producer Bob Shanks ... CBS-TV and ABC-TV commit to air NFL scab games during ongoing strike ... Columbia Pictures has hired Bingham Ray as a domestic distribution v.p. for specialized firstrun product ... Tv station reps and ASCAP call off year-long talks much to the licensing org's chagrin.

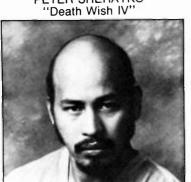
Sept. 30 — More new feature films were released domestically this month than any September in decades past, with 61 pix bowing in national or regional release ... NBC-TV maintains top rank in season's Nielsen bow; bad news is an overall ratings drop from the new peoplemeter samplings ... Commercialization of tv is blamed on projected closure of 10% of France's movie houses by the end of 1987 ... The \$7,000,000 Edward R. Pressman feature, "Martians Go Home," is among 20 new films acquired for overseas sales representation by the Image Organization ... Valerie Harper and Lorimar Prods. are scheduled to duke it out on Friday at the Santa Monica Superior Court, hoping to settle dispute over her dismissal from the "Valerie" sitcom.

Your Remembrance now will enable the Motion Picture & Television Fund to provide TLC for your friends in the business over the holidays.

Woodland Hills, CA 91364 (818) 347-1591



PETER SHERAYKO "Death Wish IV"



JESSE BORJA "Santa Barbara"



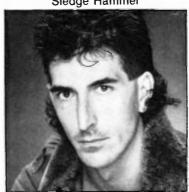
CURT AYERS
"Superior Court"



TERI LANDRUM "The Judge"



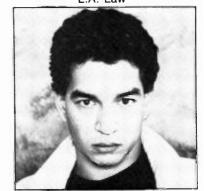
RUBY HANDLER "Sledge Hammer"



TOM FLYNN "Beauty & The Beast"



ROD BRITT "L.A. Law"



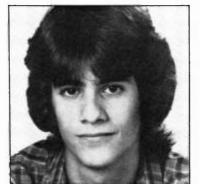
CLAUDIO MARTINEZ "Jake & The Fat Man"



ALMA WASHINGTON "Knots Landing"



GARY SPATZ "Platinum Blonde"

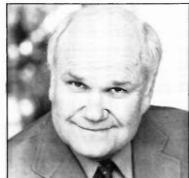


JOHN FEMIA

Ann Waugh Talent Agency (818) 980-0141



PATI DURAN "General Hospital"



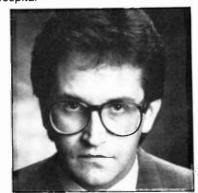
JOHN WHEELER "Cold Steel"



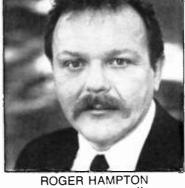
MICHAEL K. WOODS "L.A. Law"



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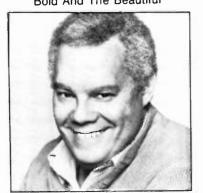
JOHN A. DRAGON "Santa Barbara"



"Max Headroom"



TANNA HERR "Divorce Court"



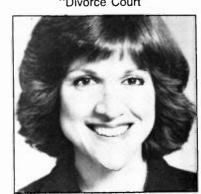
ERIC HIMES "Hunter"



KARL ANTHONY SMITH "L.A. Law"



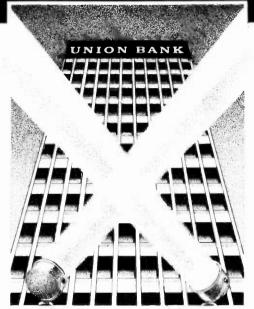
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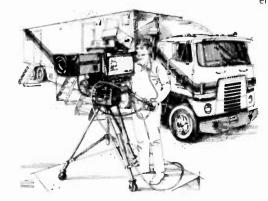
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Dream Come True

(Continued from Page 4, Column 5)

to London tomorrow. She made all of us end sentences up rather than down and to breathe on the cue, to start the line on the beat.

Then, we picked strawberries at the fields of the cottage owners, "The Medley Farms." Fresh, sugary and huge.

Tonight we had Simon Callow, Tony Robertson and Benedict Nightingale speak on the "Brits Do It Better." It was interesting, and all felt that the controversy over feelings vs. technique is overstated. We do have training but fewer places to work to develop the craft; and it seems, in England, places to work are now diminishing. Now I must reread "Hamlet" for tomorrow.

/14/87

Working on three scenes for "Heartbreak House" with three different ladies and feeling good about it. (Did I forget to say that yesterday's lunch was pizza and potatoes?) The courses and people grow and interest is keener and heightening. It is still a delight to be here. On to memorizing.

7/15/87

Today we had Chekhov with Earl Gister. He set out not to direct us but to work on technique. He cares and is alive and, in brief, we will improve. Shaw readings went well, and Rosemary Harris actually asked me if I studied Shaw and would I like to do David in "Hay Fever," by Noel Coward. Thought I would be good. Now, that is hot. Maybe it's my pre-birthday gift. Tomorrow, 55.

Master Class today taught by Max Stafford Clark from the Royal Court Theater. Max is a fine director, and seven were selected earlier to work with him in front of the class. I got picked.

7/16/87

My birthday. What fun — the joy of being with the kids here has freed my energy and has me so high. As soon as the first class started, the group broke out into a loud Happy Birthday song, and so the day began. We blocked and did the second act of "Heartbreak House" and then to Movement for exercise in drunken brawling. Back to the cottage to change. Dinner with Joanne and Rosemary Harris. How warm and fine and soft the ladies are. Good, good dinner. What a wonderful day today was.

7/17/87

Last day of the first week. Everything works today. Voice. Shaw with Rosemary. Chekhov with Earl. Shakespeare with Peter. I did "Richard II." Tried to get it in before we saw Jeremy Irons do it. I tried to use the new stuff and was a little poignant, and I humiliated myself. People were hard yet generous critics, but I knew. I went into the toilet. Dinner, despair. What the hell. I'm

(Continued on Page 124, Column 1)

A DECADE OF SERVICE



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(Continued from Page 122, Column 5). not a great actor. I can improve. 7/19/87

2:30 p.m. Mime Class. Rosemary asks would I like to do it again. Boy, would I! I must be hot. Class leaves just Margaret and me. Rosemary says, "Now, you did that well, but do it as Gil." What? Well, we worked on a 10-minute scene for an hour and I grew. I made me the character ing. Broadly in "Hamlet" setting.

REAM COME TRUE

could fit and make fit. Finished ... and, as we left, Rosemary said now she had to do her own rehearsal and if she could only practice what she preached. What

7/20/87

Movement - Ben has us movand tried to touch the pieces that I Bend, move. Be the King. Kiss the Queen. Sleep. Poisoned. Romance Queen. Relax. Stretch. Move tension. Get a partner. Ape each other. Jump. Duck. Worn

7/23/87

It was Wednesday again. Earl on Chekhov. The work was really profound, and I found myself that whole night dreaming of "What

was my objective" and what was the action on it. Changed my interpretation at least three times. I think I have it now so maybe I can

7/24/87

Full day. Went home at 10 p.m. Talked to my son in Australia. Video was great and doing four Nissan commercials now in Outback. It is embarrassing, but I am proud of my kids.

7/25/87

Up at 7:00. First class — voice. My voice is fuller. How did that happen? On to Chekhov after fish for lunch. Big dinner party for BADA. Gala to welcome Berlin Ensemble Director and Russians from Moscow Conservatory. Balliol Hall all aglow in lamplight and all my classmates decked out and beautiful. John Schlesinger greets all, and John and the Russians give toasts, and the evening was elegant and lovely.

Off to Stratford. Rent a car. Drive on the other side. Shift with

left hand. Take Wendy, Steve and Tim and off we go. We saw "Titus Andronicus," the heaviest of tragedies. Dinner at Shakespeare Hotel and then to "Julius Caesar." As outstanding as "Titus" was, so bad was "Julius Caesar." Mark Anthony lost it all. The production stank and all the actors were bad. It was wonderful seeing an English cast blow the play. Great day. Drive back and late to

7/26/87

Off to rehearse a new Chekhov scene. Brian Cox. Master Class. (Need to tell him how great he was in "Titus.")

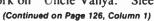
The Moscow Art Theater and Conservatory with three actors and the director - and we discuss his style and effect on arts. I am tired, and I must sleep.

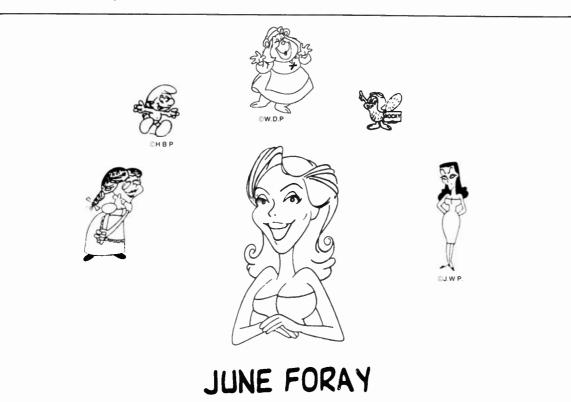
7/27/87

Up early. Memorize. Coffee and toast. And bike to class.

7/28/87

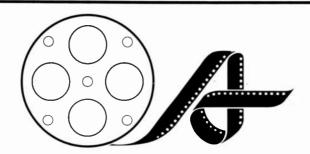
Up early again. Work on Shaw. Shakespeare coming up. More work on "Uncle Vanya." Sleep.





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(Continued from Page 124, Column 5)

7/29/87

Much work. Interesting exercise. Shakespeare with Peter was great. I did the Duke and Cassius and Richard II.

7/30/87

We're up early. Memorize more. Full classes. Glad I'm here and I think I belong.

7/31/87

End of month. Finish of Week 3. Full day today. Did "Heartbreak House" off book. OK.

DREAM COME TRUE

us. I am learning. Jeremy Irons came for Master Class, and he was open and genuine and really discussed his feelings and the good and the bad. It was fun hearing him.

Took wife, Joanne, to Elizabeth Restaurant for romantic dinner, candlelight, but my focus was still with "Uncle Vanya." Three weeks has flown by. Must work "Old Times," "Hay Fever," two more Chekhov, new Shakespeare Shoot! They must be kidding. 8/1/87

Saturday. Little rest. Study lines and read but first go to Balliol, as Moscow Art Theatre is doing scenes from "Vanya." Yepremov told Chekhov stories and led into the scenes. He had a Master Class last night, and the stories going around are that, as he worked his cast through the emotions, he wept. This is probably true, as he is powerful and so are

Up early. Too tired to get up, so back to bed. It seems, on Sunday, exhaustion sets in. It's not only age, it does for everyone. Sleep for two more hours. Up and out to Balliol. Two Master Classes today. Marianne Akins and Brian Cox. ... Well, it's 1 a.m. and, having biked home, I need to sleep.

8/3/87

The day begins and I feel the last week settle in. Am I any

good? Evening. Give me a break. For a change, I take Tony to dinner. He wants to discuss BADA, its goals and plans and finances. I feel the surge of my business energy take over. I ask him about his objectives. He wants my advice and I can feel my business juices flow. I am really cooking. To help BADA succeed in its goals is very exciting. I now know as maybe I always knew perhaps this is where I am best.

Perhaps my lot is to help BADA reach its goals, help 1000 people, 10 of whom get there because of my help, rather than for me to become an actor. Maybe it's really more fun for me than trying to memorize lines, huh? Have I been kidding myself?

I love you, Rosemary, and I thank you for your help in trying to bring my talent into focus. But I also loved talking to Tony tonight about what he does, to help out. Maybe I should just learn what he has to teach me about the business of theater. I really don't need my ego massaged if it turns out that I make a better businessman than a Hamlet ... I sound convinced, but I hurt tonight. To bed.

8/4/87

No first class today, so rehearse Chekhov. Maybe it's coming. Is my object clearer and the action better defined? The scene seems to have more juice? More feeling, less acting, but I am not sure. Tomorrow must memorize Shakespeare, "Make room and let him stand before our face ..."

8/7/87

Last day before performances. 8/8/87

Final day. Gielgud came to lunch, and wave of energy went through the room and the wave was for intense appreciation. We finish with performances, and I never centered, never focused, never sourced and, knowing better, with anxiety, performed badly. I am now so uncomfortable because, while being disappointed, I have this feeling of letting everyone down, and I'm glad I'm gone from the last dinner and party because, at this moment, it feels like the last supper.

Postscript

(From the "London Illustrated News," Sept. 1987, interview with Rosemary Harris by Brian Appleyard) ...

'She told me the story of her biggest teaching coup this year. One student was a 55-year-old lawyer and accountant from Los Angeles called Gil Segel. He had been working on a speech from Shaw by a father about his daughter Ellie and persistently failing to get it quite right. Then she had suggested substituting the name of his own daughter — Jaime — and for one brief speech Gil was up there with the best of them. I always tell them to go for the goose bumps and we all got goose bumps when he did that speech'.'

PPS

Gil Segel is back. Last week, he landed his first part in a movie-ofthe-week. His line was to be "No." The day before the shoot, he was called. His line had been changed to "Yes."



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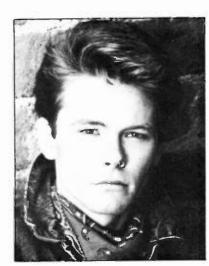
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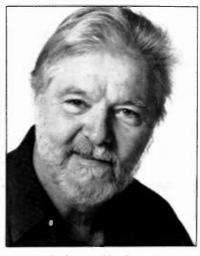
Damon Hartley



Ryan Bohannon



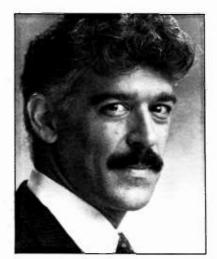
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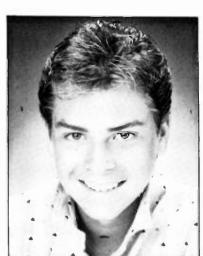
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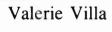












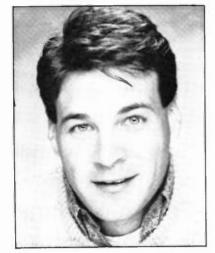
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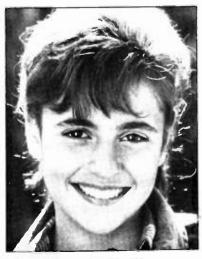
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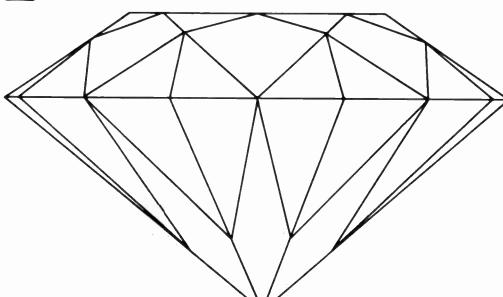
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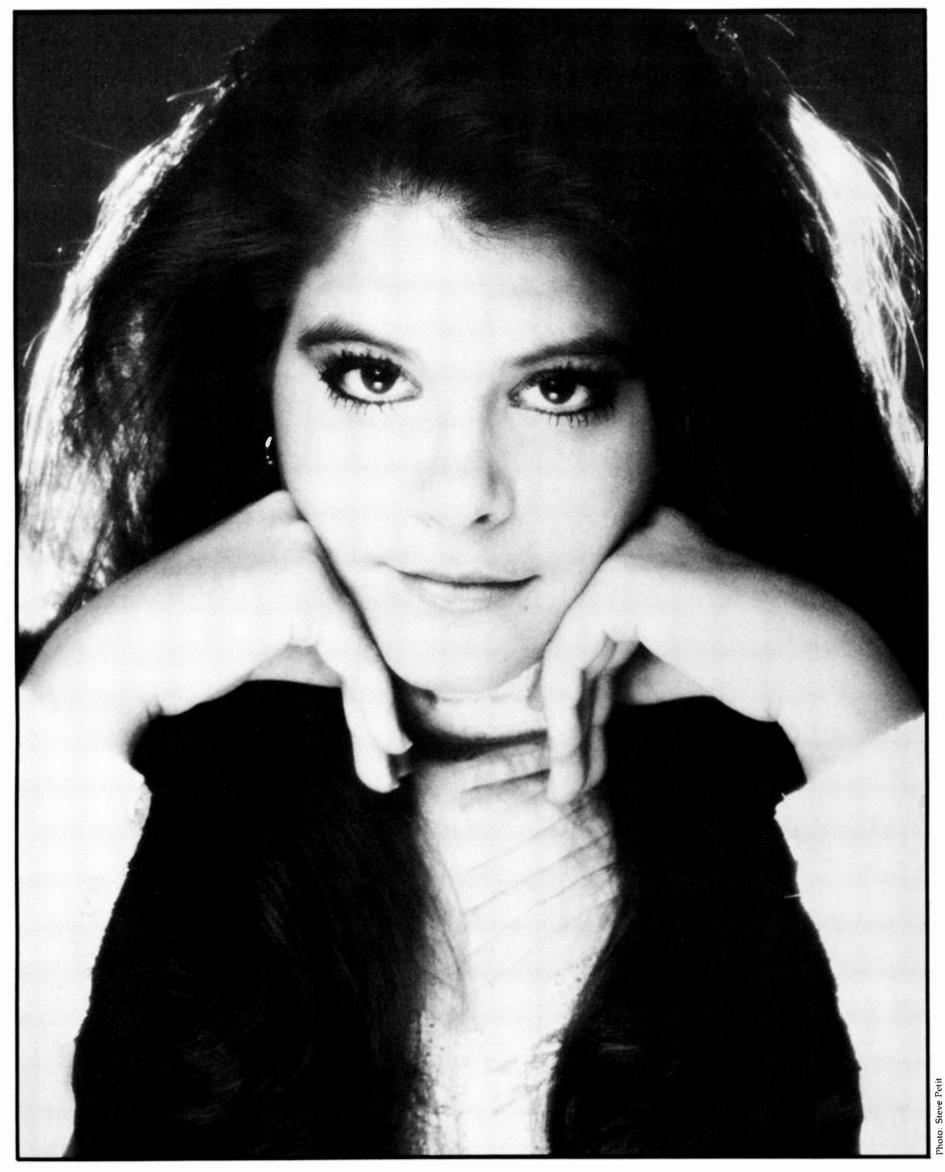
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Video Blurbs Zapped

(Continued from Page 118, Column 5) that agency's communication services dept., says if the video industry carefully manages to get consumers to accept ongoing advertising on feature-film vidcassettes, "the advertising possibilities are enormous."

But he cautions, "It's not going

to happen because of Hollywood's intention to sell advertising. The consumer has to be receptive to it. The consumer here is not like the consumer in Europe, where they're used to seeing commercials in the theaters. It will only happen here if the consumer says, 'Hey, you're doing something right. But put-

ting that commercial on the videocassette, you're giving me something'."

And if consumer demands are kept in mind, he sees potential for multi-commercial, extremely low-price vidcassettes of catalog films, and possibly current theatrical releases. "There's no reason why a consumer wouldn't accept it," Scullin said. "I'd love to pay \$9.95 for a copy of 'Rox-

anne' with some commercials on the videocassette. Better yet, give me a reward for watching the spot. Tie it in to some other marketing activity you're doing elsewhere that I'll be excited to learn about."

But one of the industry's leading innovators in both low pricing and sponsorships, Paramount Home Video, doesn't think much of the plan. Though some industry forecasters see possibilities for such "paperback" copies of films, PHV senior v.p.-g.m. Tim Clott doesn't think the idea will fly at Paramount.

"You never say never, but in this case I'm tempted to say never," Clott commented. "I don't think we ever want to do intrusive advertising. That would be no different than time shifting what you can get on television, and we want to provide something more than that."

There are many films advertisers would love to get a shot at that may never be open to sponsorship arrangements. For example, one could scarecely imagine a better place for a family-oriented

product to be advertised than on a Disney classic such as "Lady And The Tramp" or "Sleeping Beauty."

But it's not likely to ever happen, according to Bill Mechanic, senior v.p. of video at Walt Disney Pictures. "We don't want commercials on those cassettes," Mechanic said. "We think that's an intrusion for the family and the children."

With the timeless value of those Disney animation films and the warm family experience Disney Home Video hopes to bring to purchasers of the videassettes, a commercial doesn't seem appropriate, he explained.

On the other hand, Disney does a lot of its business selling copies of Touchstone Films on cassette, and Mechanic is open-minded about the chances for an appropriate sponsorship situation there.

"If it allows us to build a bigger business, and helps us cover our marketing expenses, we would look at it," he said. "The commercial better fit that movie we're not prepared to trash out

(Continued on Page 134, Column 5)

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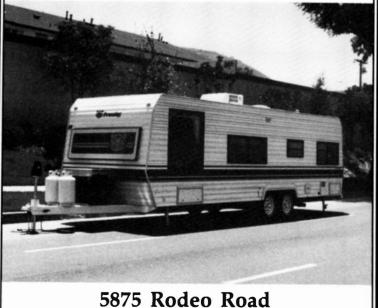
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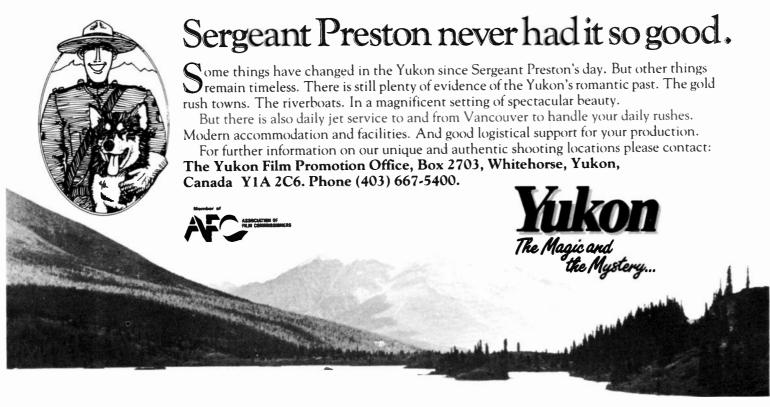
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our pictures. We'd be looking for something that's compatible and additive to what we're doing.'

He notes that the special kinds of commercials that can be done for video (such as what's seen in European theaters) can be viewed by the public as an entertaining bonus, not necessarily as an intru-

BBDO's Wiener sees video as having a long way to go before it proves itself as a true adsupported media vehicle.

Yes, there will be occasions, such as with "Top Gun," when the match will be right, and large numbers of viewers can be delivered to advertisers.

But for sponsored made-forvideo programming, Wiener doesn't see it, at least for the next several years.

"The words I want to emphasize are 'Media Vehicle','' Wiener said. "Look at the media options. A made-for-video program is considered a real hit if it sells 40-50,000 units. Then they ask the advertiser to pay some of the production costs, some of the duplication costs and some of the promotional costs. It gets to be very expensive.'

For about what it costs some sponsors to back a tape -\$110,000-115,000 — they could buy a 30-second network primetime commercial, Wiener observes. That would probably deliver 25-30,000,000 viewers. Such numbers make the 40-50,-000 homes being reached by a sponsored vidcassette seem completely inadequate, Wiener thinks.

HBOV's O'Connell disagrees that audience numbers now being delivered to advertisers by video aren't competitive. Though he wouldn't go into detail, he said HBOV can demonstate to advertisers that their cost-per-thousand (CPM) in sponsored video is actually better than what they receive in primetime tv.

The key to justifying this sur-prising claim is "day-after recall," O'Connell said. It's true that primetime commercials are watched by many times the viewers than most vidcassettes typically reach, he acknowledged. But in the case of a primetime network blurb advertisers are placing a single commercial before a viewer who's likely to see 20 or 25 of them before he's through watching two hours of programming. Compare that, O'Connell says, to the impact of the single spot on a vidcassette during an otherwise uninterrupted two hours of programming that the viewer has specifically chosen to watch.

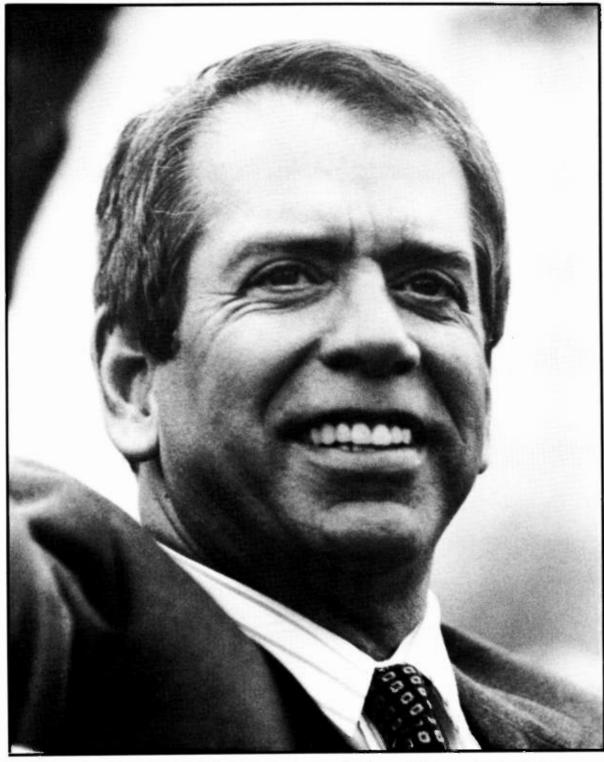
Given that advantage, recall of the ad on vidcassette will be far higher than recall of the network primetime blurb, he said.

Though BBDO's Wiener is down on original video as a "media vehicle," he acknowledged that a number of vid-advertising strategies can improve the arithmetic for made-for-vid produc-

(Continued on Page 138, Column 1)

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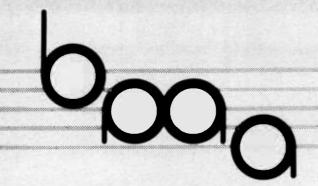
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Video Blurbs Zapped

(Continued from Page 134, Column 5)

One is for the sponsor to use the tape as a special promo vehicle and as a premium for its consumers — as was done with Lorimar Home Video's aerobics championship tape sponsored by Crystal Light drink mix.

Another would be to design the program so that subsequent cable or broadcast playings would deliver the much larger audiences needed to justify the expense involved, Wiener said.

Some agencies are far more upbeat about the value of adsponsored made-for-vid programming. For instance, Y&R's Scullin thinks the future is now.

The unique thing about sponsoring a video — and the important thing to emphasize if an advertiser is going to succeed with it, Scullin says — is that a good arrangement feeds into and feeds off of virtually every area of the sponsor's marketing activities.

He agrees that spending the

\$50-250,000 usually required on such projects, on a pure CPM basis, is foolish. "It's dead. It's a non-entity," he said. But with all the ways a sponsored video can be put to use, Scullin thinks the benefits definitely outweigh the risk.

Cross-Pollination

He urges advertisers to first select a video project that will tie in with its other marketing activities. Then the sponsor can use the tape not only as a money-maker in its own right, and as support to those other marketing activities, but also to build up a list of target customers' names; to team up with outside celebrities who'll promote your product as they promote themselves; and to enhance the sponsor's distribution, adpublicity efforts and consumer and trade relations.

An example at Y&R of such activity is "Stepping Out: The Video Magazine Of Fitness Walking," a program owned and distributed by Sanka. That decaffeinated coffee is attempting to build its image as a natural beverage after switching from chemical filtering to water filtering, Scullin explained. To enhance that image,

it's stepped forward as a key supporter of walking-for-fitness activities.

And he figures this tape will greatly aid that effort, as a product Sanka can bring to the walking organizations already being backed by the beverage company. The tape serves as a tangible result of Sanka's support, and also as a vehicle to help those organizations further promote their cause, Scullin explained.

Production cost on the tape landed in the \$100-150,000 range, and the pricing will probably be \$24.95, with reductions to \$19.95 foreseen. Sanka's hopeful of sales in the range of 25,000 units, and 50,000 would be "terrific," Scullin said. But he stressed that the many by-product benefits of the tape would probably make it a success even with somewhat fewer units sold.

This is the sort of product whose impact is measured in "nuances" that "accumulated together can really start to make a difference," Scullin said. "It's an impact that money spent in other media may not have accomplished."

While Paramount Home Video has made headlines with its "Top Gun" sponsorship, senior v.p.-g.m. Tim Clott says the company is spending a lot of its sponsorship energy on the possibilities with made-for-vid programming.

Difference

Advertisers can make a big difference there because it's a part of the business that is struggling to come up with more than a handful of hits, Clott observed.

And with vidstores under increasing pressure to spend their available dollars on "A" films particularly with the price jump at most companies from \$79.95 to \$89.95 — the chances of made-for product squeezing onto crowded vidstore shelves become slimmer and slimmer, he believes. It's critical, Clott thinks, that vidstores continue to offer the two things choice and convenience - upon which the video boom has been based. And sponsorships can help solidify the choice available with their support of the struggling made-for segment of the business.

Research Crucial

The key factor that's needed to convince more advertisers to take video seriously is good, solid research, says BBDO's Wiener. The sponsors want to know how effective the video programs are, what forms of sponsorship and product mentionings have the most impact, what level of pricing works best, what the most effective cross-promotional strategies are, and dozens of other answers that apparently have not yet been addressed by serious research, he said.

Wiener agreed that one way video can prove it's a serious ad medium is to generate this kind of research. If the companies that say they believe in it are willing to invest the big dollars needed to produce the detailed research, Madison Avenue will truly have

(Continued on Page 168, Column 1)

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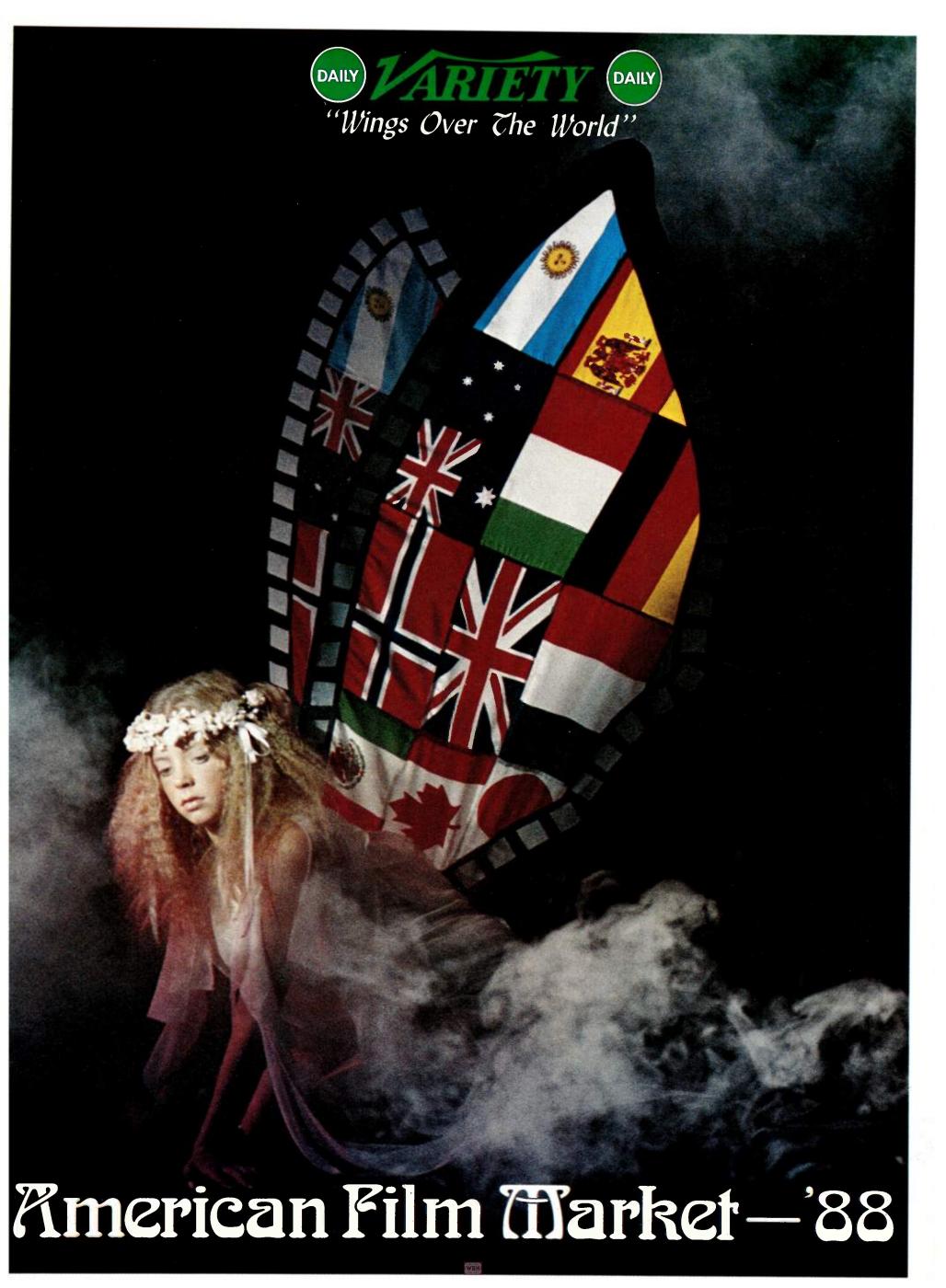
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Catholic/Jesuit Influences On Hitchcock'

By FR. NEIL HURLEY, S.J.

(This article is excerpted from the book in progress, "Soul In Suspense: Catholic/Jesuit Influences On Hitchcock," to be published by the Scarecrow Press, Metuchen, N.J. The author is the director-founder of Inscape, a non-profit New York institute, fostering "reflection and deeper appreciation of entertainment.")

The theme most frequently associated with the work of Sir Alfred Hitchcock is that of "the wrong man." Although the most studied of all directors, scant is the attention paid to the cryptoreligious influences that lie behind this leitmotif that marks the signature of "The Master Of Suspense."

Fundamentally, the theme has to do with an undeserved destiny which befalls the protagonist, who does not shirk the challenge but courageously confronts the task of proving his innocence. In so doing, a romantic liaison ensues and a happy resolution which involves personal betterment and social redemption.

We see growth in all directions—the hero (occasionally heroine) is morally stronger, cements a love relationship and helps the community or country. We have, I submit, a "triple ripple": personal, romantic and social redemption.

Study a Hitchcock film carefully and one will see that, like the kite which soars into the contrary wind, so too the hero/heroine "takes off morally" by being taxed with a false accusation, a life-threat and/or loss of reputation.

Before looking at the early influences that shaped "Hitch's" way of looking at life and of leaning toward "the wrong man" theme, the reader should be aware that there exist 18 films with this identifiable motif — i.e., more than one-third of the 53 motion pictures that he directed in his career.

Variations In Themes

These "wrong person" themes fall, basically, into five categories, with variations and twists of plot that form Hitchcock's signature. First, we have the case of someone tried and unjustly sentenced to prison or killed for a crime or action committed by another. This version can be seen in an early sound film, "Blackmail" (1929), in "Murder" (1930) and again in "Secret Agent" (1936), and in one of Hitchcock's last films, "Frenzy" (1972).

The second variation includes those plots where the audience suspects someone of being the culprit, but finds out later that it was wrong ("The Lodger," "Stage Fright," "Spellbound," "To Catch A Thief").

In the third variation, the audience knows that the lead character is innocent, and awaits the outcome of the plot ("The Thirty-Nine Steps," "Young And Innocent," "Saboteur," "Strangers On A Train," "I Confess," "The Wrong Man," "Frenzy").

The fourth variation deals with two films about women who have personal problems and are dan-

gerous to society or national security but are healed through love and begin life anew, with a second chance

In short, we, the audience, condemn them hastily without understanding their potential for good following a conversion through love. In "Notorious," Ingrid Bergman played a loose alcoholic woman who is regenerated by Cary Grant, a Federal agent. In "Marnie" Tippi Hedren enacted a kleptomaniac, who is redeemed romantically by Sean Connery.

The fifth category contains "Suspicion," a unique film with a disturbing ambiguous final scene. As we shall see, the audience is not completely satisfied that Cary Grant did not intend to kill his wife (Joan Fontaine).

A survey of "Hitch's" classic "wrong man" themes reveals that beneath the suspense surface of thrills and mystery is a religious subtext. After 10 years of research in Hollywood and England, I learned a great deal about the early formative years of "Hitch."

Childhood Trauma

It is well known, of course, that his father had him put in jail as a youngster for 15 minutes as a prank and that, in the Jesuit school of St. Ignatius near London, punishment was meted out to disciplinary cases by blows of a leather strap on the open palm of the misbehaving pupil. These experiences imprinted on the impressionable lad the notion of an undeserved fate.

Moreover, throughout later life, the director keenly felt that the injustice of being very stout in face and figure was a kind of arbitrary cosmic sentence. In short, "Hitch" personally experienced what it meant to be the "wrong man." Making films was his way of coping with his "body image" as he once told a London reporter who asked why he made films. He replied that what else could a person do who was "imprisoned in an armor of flesh."

Hitchcock's years with the Jesuits were filled with religious influences — prayers, Masses, meditations, spiritual iconography and the constant presence of black-robed priests and seminarians steeped in the ascetical method of the Spiritual Exercises of St. Ignatius of Loyola, founder of the Society of Jesus.

In 1979 I corresponded with a (then) 91-year-old Jesuit priest. Fr. Alfred Ellis, S.J., who was a contemporary of Hitchcock. (Some believe he was nicknamed "Cocky.") Fr. Ellis gave me a highly detailed description of the daily order at St. Ignatius and the spiritual duties and curriculum. One retreat master stressed the inevitability of death, encouraging the

boys to picture themselves on their death-bed looking at their feet as "up front."

In "The Trouble With Harry," the dead body (Edmund Gwenn) turns up three times — always seen "feet first." (The number three — "trinity" is a recurring numerical motif in the Spiritual Exercises of St. Ignatius.)

Though "Hitch" never made the Exercises as a mature adult, the school was filled with echoes and inspirational overtones of that method for attaining peace through discerning God's will for vocational commitment (in whatever walk of life) for "the Greater Glory of God."

There are two "wrong man" pictures which, more than the other 16, refer to early Catholic/Jesuit influences, "I Confess" and "The Wrong Man." In the former, Montgomery Clift plays a taciturn Canadian priest who gave up a former sweetheart (Anne Baxter), when his brother, an aspiring priest, dies in World War II. Clift, bound by the seal of confession, cannot reveal the true killer who has confessed to him and, through an interesting while implausible premise is accused of the murder.

"Hitch" shows us the saintly priest walking near the outdoor stations (the "Way Of The Cross") in Montreal. In court he is framed



Alfred Hitchcock receives honorary Ph.D. in 1963 from Santa Clara University president, Rev. Patrick A. Donohue, S.J.

Photo: William E. Eymann Collection, Santa Clara University Archive

by the camera with a large crucifix on the wall. Anyone familiar with Jesuit spirituality would have recalled the references to Christ as "the wrong man," that Christ died in our place, that he was a surrogate victim, that he was unjustly tried, convicted and cruelly executed.

James Joyce has described vividly the type of retreat he made at Clongowes Wood in "The Portrait Of The Artist As A Young Man." Hitchcock does the same with "I Confess" in stressing how unpredictable life is, singling out some to suffer for others. Clift's unjustly aggrieved priest is

saved by the outburst of the sympathetic wife of the real killer, a church sacristan, who, shot by the police, dies after confessing again to the curse.

In "The Wrong Man" we have the true story of Manny Balestrero (Henry Fonda), a bassist at the Stork Club (where "Hitch" liked to go to dine when in New York). Manny is falsely arrested for a theft, after being identified by a teller. His wife (Vera Miles) becomes mentally ill. The mother encourages Manny to pray. In one critical scene between husband and wife, we see a picture of the

(Continued on Page 144, Column 1)

Independents: 7th Inning Review

pportunities for independent producers/distributors in all sectors of the entertainment industry have never been more attractive. At a recent breakfast, a representative of a major European publishing conglomerate asked me whether the recent problems at Cannon and De Laurentiis did not signal the last inning for the motion picture independents, proof that, in fact, over time only the long-established major studios are viable players.

The facts prove just the contrary; in spite of individual situations, independent producers and distributors continue to take mar-

Author's Pedigree

Before joining the Rothschild organization in 1977, Joel H. Reader was controller (1976-77) of Studio Film & Tape Exchange Inc., a privately owned distributor of motion picture film stock and videotape. Earlier he served as controller of Cirsa Productions Inc., producer of tv commercials. He is an Associate of the Martha Graham School and owns an extensive collection of original recordings of jazz and popular music, known as the "Newark Collection 1910-1940''; he is a member of the board of directors of New World Pictures Ltd. and also of Fries Entertainment Inc.

By JOEL H. READER (Managing Director, L.F. Rothschild & Co. Inc.

ket share. This year, Orion Pictures proved its viability by providing a variety of creatively exciting and successful boxoffice attractions; this Fall, the top five network television suppliers include Lorimar and New World Television; independent television remains wide open, led by King World; the most exciting new recording artists continue to come from companies such as Island, Virgin and other independents, not out of the artist rosters of the major record distributors.

The 1980s are witnessing perhaps the most profound structural changes in the entertainment industry since the 1940s. Rapid technological changes, deregulation, international economics and the availability of new funding are among the factors conspiring to radically change the market for entertainment product. Corporate changes are merely symptomatic of these main currents.

During the 1980s, the rapid development of new delivery systems has been met by their equally rapid acceptance by the consumer — from cable to video and audio cassette systems, from digital and stereo television to compact disk. Add to this technological turbulence, a political environment favorable to global free market economics and competitive change; then add an equally aggressive in-

vestment environment, and the mixture becomes explosive.

Rapid change rang the fina death knell to "brand names" in the entertainment industry — for both the three television networks and for the major motion picture studios. There was a time wher families were ABC, NBC or CBS families; when an MGM motion picture signified a known entertainment commodity. The brands represented not only a type or product but control of the various distribution systems by the program suppliers.

Freewheeling

Today, however, a television viewer is indifferent to whether a program is available on Channel 2 or Channel 20, and product is no longer identified with its distributor.

(Curiously enough, the branded did nothing to stem the loss of their identity; throughout the '70s, the major motion picture studios did everything they could to suggest they were out of the motion picture business; today in their promotional campaigns, the three networks seem to ignore the importance of their news departments in forging their individual identities.)

With the loss of brand recognition, the field was opened wide to new, dynamic and aggressive companies.

Looking back over the last 10 years:

(Continued on Page 156, Column 1)

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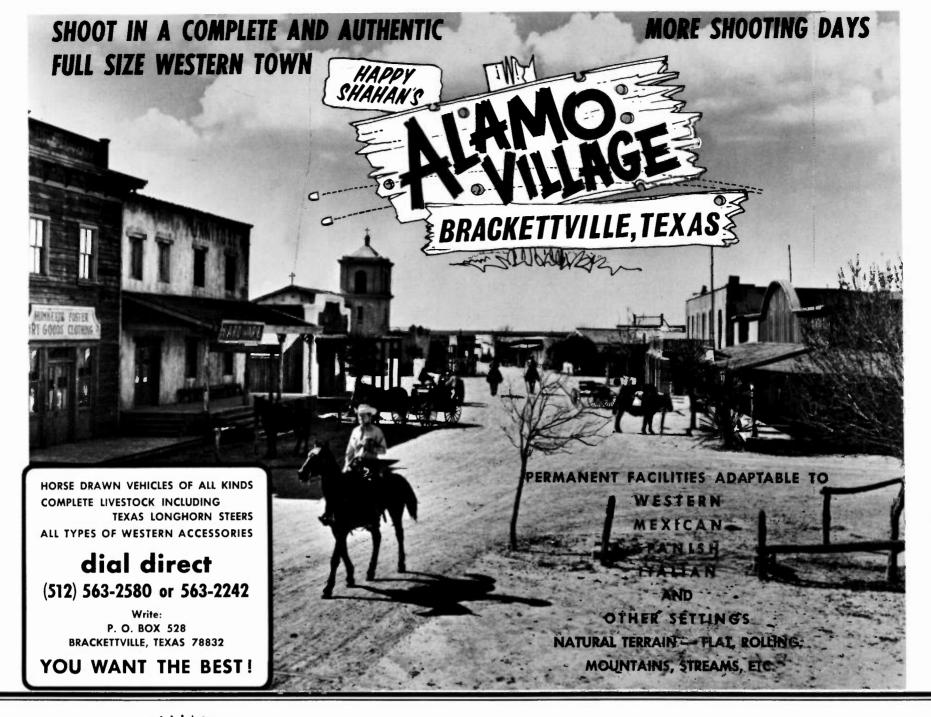
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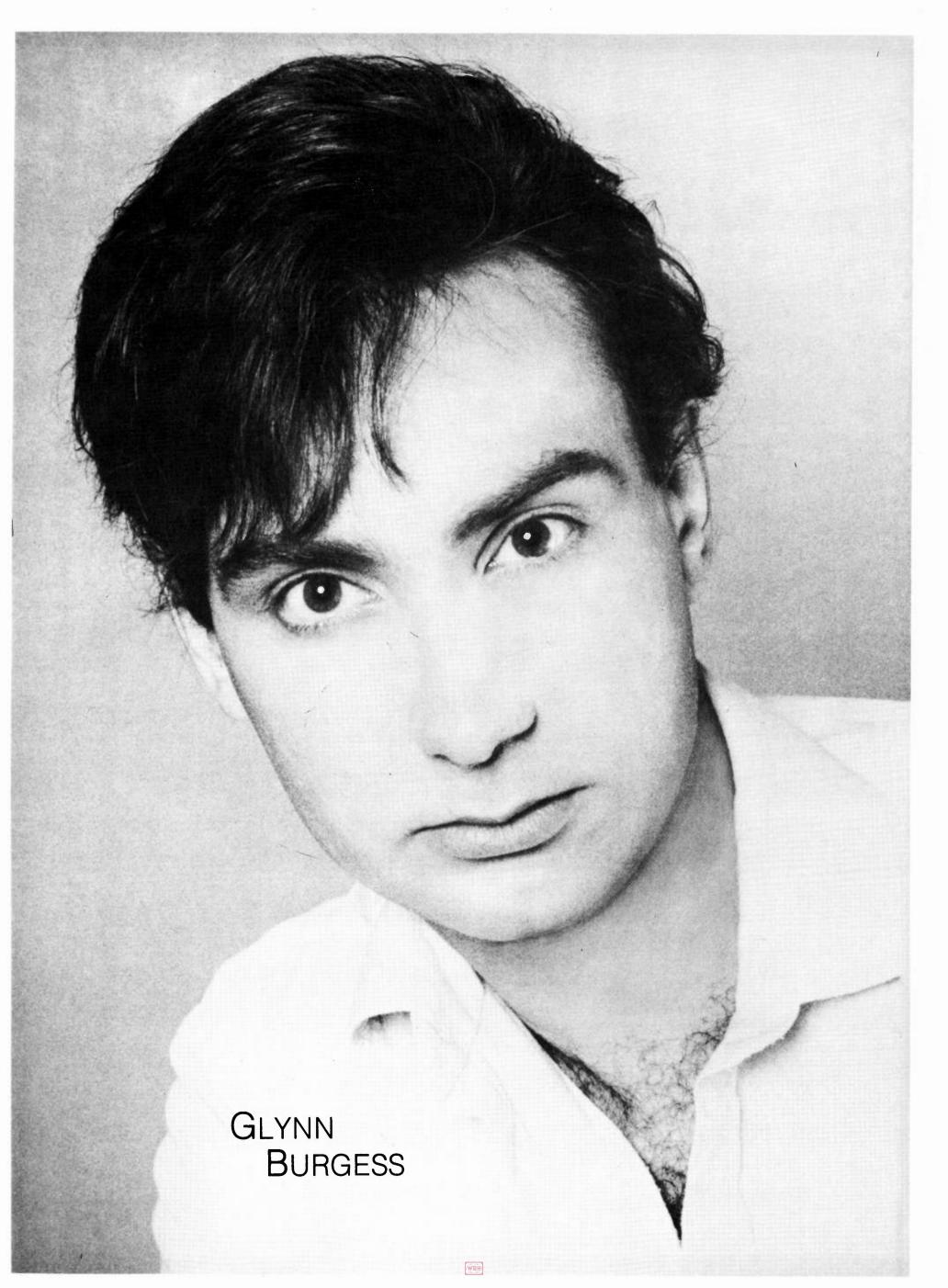
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HITCHCOCK

Sacred Heart of Jesus on the wall. The camera pans in for a tight shot of the picture, then in a dissolve reveals the real thief embarking on another "hold-up" but is subdued and arrested. Manny is exonerated but must visit his distraught wife in an asylum in Florida. She has now become "the wrong person."

At the heart of the Ignatian Exercises and Jesuit spirituality is the principle of "correctional opposition" (in Latin "agere contra''). When we are tired we sleep, when hungry we eat. So, too, when faced with a spiritual or moral crisis we must not so much ask if we are to be blamed but rather try to correct the fault (called amartia in the discussion of Greek and Elizabethan tragedy).

Study the Hitchcock films to see how this principle of reversing disorder, whether internal or external, operates. "Hitch" is a moral ironist; he recognizes that the audience is an accomplice in the evil portrayed on the screen.

When the villain (Robert Walk-

er) tries to retrieve the tell-tale cigarette lighter from the sewer, we the audience root for him, forgetting his malicious intentions ("Strangers On A Train"). When James Stewart as the invalid photographer turns voyeur by looking in at other people in their apartments with his telescopic lens ("Rear Window"), we do not leave the theater in moral protest but remain to join this exemplary American type from the old Capra movies. When Norman Bates (Anthony Perkins) nervously watches the car of Marion Crane (Janet Leigh) sink in the quagmire

after the famous shower murder, we become anxious with him when the car suddenly stops sinking for a moment and we, like he, are relieved when it disappears out of sight in the swamp ("Psycho").

Relating To Protagonists

As St. Ignatius induced in those undergoing his spiritual program of the Exercises "the shock of recognition," so too Hitchcock draws his audiences into the screen plot, getting them to identify with characters, then to "unidentify" and, finally, to "reidentify." Meanwhile, these characters have undergone changes from "good" to "bad" and from "bad" to "good." The great spiritual masters knew what was in human nature and its mutability of motivation, thought and deed.1

What is important to keep in mind in order to grasp the religiomoral undercurrent in vintage Hitchcock films is the distinction made in Catholic moral theology between conscience (called "the internal forum'') and the legal domain of evidentiary behavior (provable, even photographable) that makes up "the external forum."

Hitchcock said his motion pictures deserved to be seen three times (notice the mystical number which plays a role in the Ignatian Exercises in terms of three steps to insure a good meditation). For "Hitch" planted thought seeds, oblique references and innuendoes, often of a sexual nature.

"Rope" insinuated a homosexual relationship between Farley Granger and John Dall. "Rear Window'' was a savage, when subtle, critique of matrimony. "Vertigo" was, virtually, an underground film about necrophilia with levels of meaning decipherable only by repeated viewings and sustained reflection. "Things are not what they seem to be!" This motto sums up Hitchcock's viewpoint. Intention for him was equal to the deed - a Catholic convic-

Ambiguity

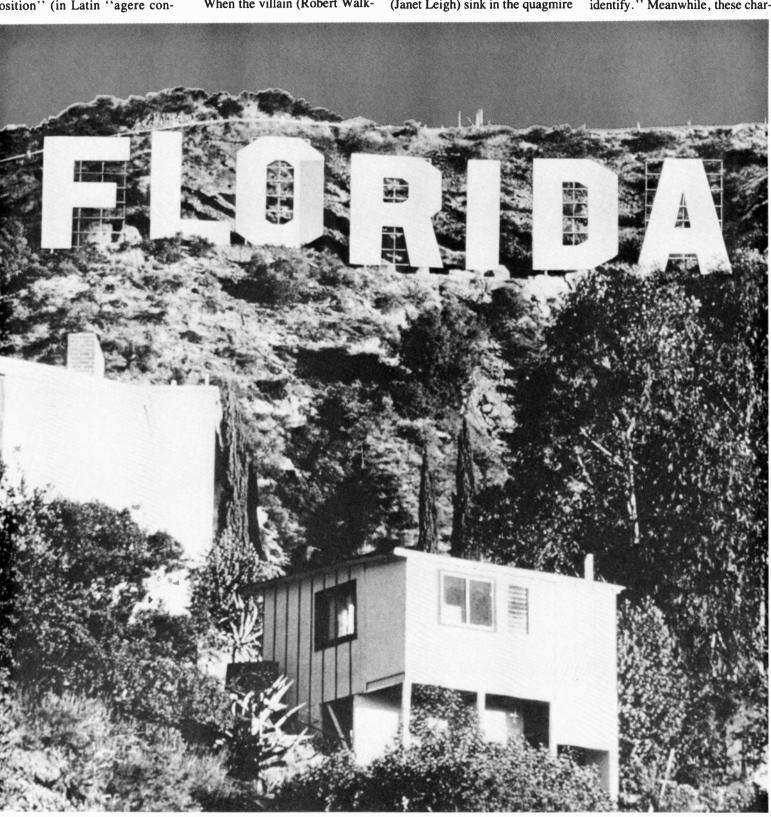
Take his 1927 film, "The Lodger." Hitchcock used "the wrong man" plot device, but with startling moral ambiguity. A mysterious foreign-looking lodger is attracted to a lady in the boarding house where they live. She has a fiancé who is a detective. He finds a map in the lodger's room with markings that were unmistakably linked to the scenes of the murders.

Subsequently, the audience discovers that the lodger was analyzing the case as an amateur sleuth in order to find ways to entrap the notorious killer. Though innocent, he escapes arrest and is pursued by an angry mob, eager to give him quick vigilante justice. The alleged killer narrowly escapes death and is exonerated, but only after the crowd harasses him unmercifully. (The perceptive viewer will recognize the young cherubic-faced Hitchcock as one of the many extras in his first cameo role.)

Irony

We have a clear case study of "the wrong man;" the lodger, though innocent, was apparently willing to take the law into his own hands. Ironically, therefore, his life becomes endangered by the actions of a mob bent on private justice without any due process under law. Hitchcock's films bear re-seeing in order to benefit from his multi-levelled meanings and inferences.

A parallel can be seen between "The Lodger" and "Suspicion," in which Hitchcock used a happy ending uncalled for in the novel upon which the film was based. The reason? Hitchcock claimed (Continued on Page 148, Column 5)



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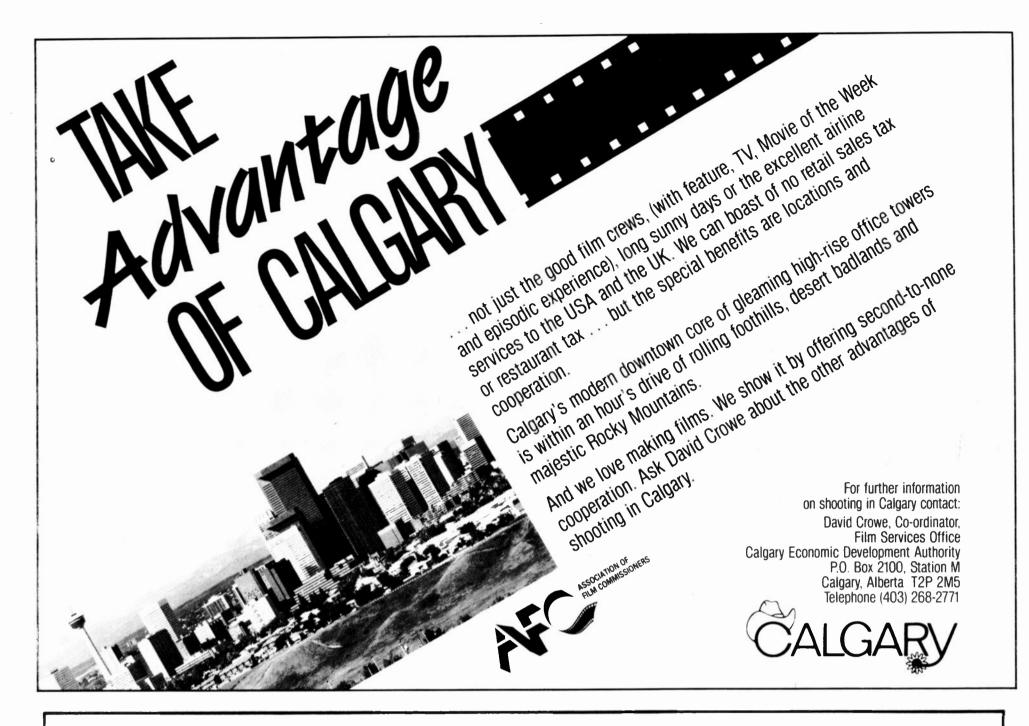
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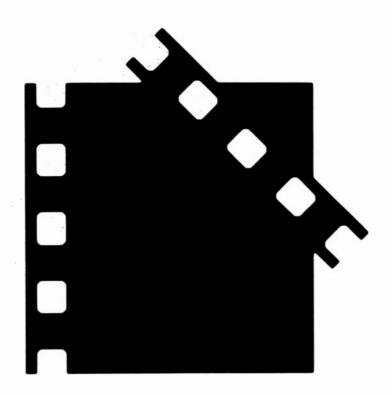
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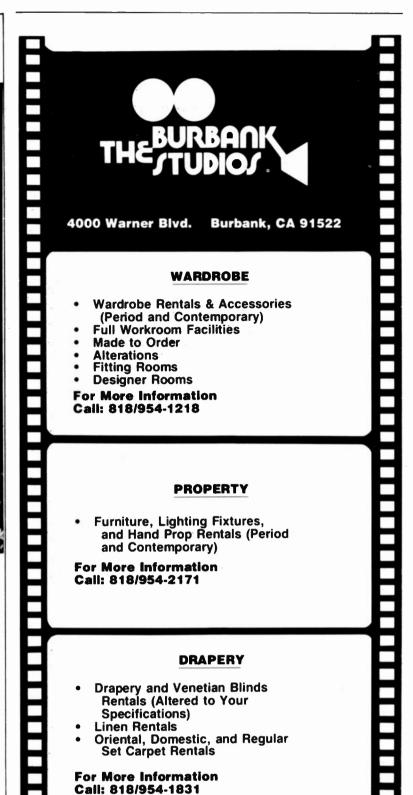


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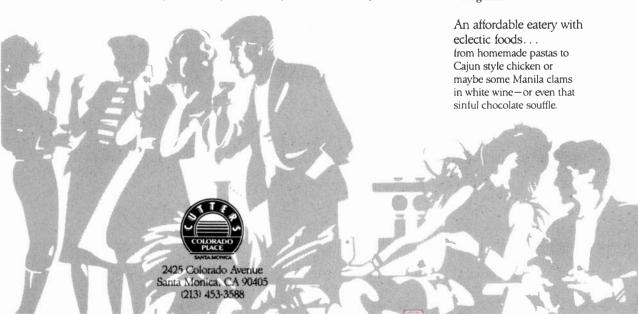
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HITCHCOCK

that the audience would never ac cept Cary Grant as a murderer Thus the revised screenplay mad the wife, Lina MacKinlaw (Joan Fontaine) seem paranoid, a crea ture of exaggerated fears, leaving Grant's Johnnie Aysgarth as sympathetic type of "the wrong man.'

Hitchcock would have pre ferred to have used the novel' ending in which Johnnie kills Lin by bringing her a glass of poi soned milk. In the book, Lina ask Johnnie to post a letter in whic she states her suspicions, thus ir criminating her husband shoul she die by murder. Unknowing Johnnie is described in the boo as grinning smugly as he deposit the letter in the mailbox — a ironic ending.

Audience: Led Astray?

"Hitch" revised the story t give Grant's character the appear ance of a playboy, irresponsibl and untrustworthy. Circumstance lead Lina to suspect that her hus band is a murderer and that he i even plotting to murder her. Th suspense is Hitchcock at his best In the final scene, we see the cou ple riding in a car on a windin road atop a perilous promontory Suddenly her door, facing the clif side, swings open. She panics a he reaches out. At first she i horror-stricken. Suddenly he husband stops the car. The prev ous clues point to Johnnie as "bad guy," a villain. The au dience is left wondering if he fright may not have led him t look for a less cruel way to dis patch her.

The lobby posters publicizin the film read: "Each time the kissed, there was the thrill o love, the threat of murder!" Mor than one woman in the audienc has felt that she would not retur home with him.

Upon re-seeing this film, I fee that the ending is discomforting One has an eerie sense that, well there could be a next time, that Johnnie is looking for the opor tune time to commit murder Hitchcock uses images, sound and music to undermine the litera meaning of the scene. On the sur face, the character Grant plays i a type of "innocent" victim. But is he really?

Thought Vs. Deed

As Hitchcock has suggested, have seen this film three times and more. I agree with those percep tive women viewers who, afte only one viewing, would be reluc tant to return home with Johnnie after the scary incident in the moving car.

Thus, Hitchcock suggests two levels — a physical one of conduc and a more hidden one of motive and desire. The latter is equivo cal, the former is unequivocal. If Lina sees him as an intentional wife killer "to be," then Johnnie Ays garth could qualify as a "wronged man."

This brings us to the distinction mentioned above, the one taker from Catholic moral theology, or

(Continued on Page 150, Column 1)



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575 Fifth Ave., Suite 24C, New York, NY 10017 Telephone: (212) 983-5799 - Telecopier: (212) 867-1565 (Continued from Page 148, Column 5)

ethics, between evil committed in the mind (evil intention) and evil actually carried out (evil deed). "Suspicion" builds its plot on this key distinction.

In "Strangers On A Train," Bruno Anthony (Robert Walker) is a playboy with psychic conflicts and obvious homosexual leanings. On a train, he approaches a tennis celebrity, Guy Haines (Farley Granger), and suggests a murderexchange plan. Bruno offers to murder Guy's wife, if Guy agrees to murder Bruno's father. Although Guy refuses to take Bruno

Hitchcock: 'Wrong Man' Theme Is Pervasive

seriously, Bruno thinks he has a bargain and strangles Miriam Haines at an amusement park. He brings her shattered glasses to Guy as proof and insists that the companion murder be executed.

It is clear that Guy Haines (Farley Ganger) would be happy if his wife were out of the way. Anthony murders her and expects (futilely, we should add) that Guy reciprocate by killing his father. Although the pact is never sealed, the fruits of the deed are enjoyed.

'Hitch's'' Jesuit training in Latin very likely acquainted him with the expression "Cui bono?" in whose interest is an action? Hitchcock suggests that Haines was culpable, thanks to the "Cui bono?" principle. Anthony's murder of his wife frees Guy to marry the senator's daughter. Willy-nilly, he is unjustly enriched.

Using the moral distinction between evil intention and evil deed, Hitchcock often probes beneath the surface of actions and studies a person's motivation and feelings. The moral irony of his films depends on an awareness of that distinction.

Thus, "Hitch" often flawed his leading men's characters, providing no small clue to his own sensitivity to the principle that "things are not what they seem." Thus, Cary Grant looks different in "Suspicion," "Notorious" and "North By Northwest" than in Howard Hawks' "Only Angels

Have Wings" and "Bringing Up Baby," and Jimmy Stewart looks much different from the "gollygee-whiz" characters he played in Frank Capra's classics, "Mr. Smith Goes To Washington" and "It's A Wonderful Life." People who look threatening are not necessarily so, "Hitch" seems to say. Conversely, he depicts handsome, debonair types (e.g. Joseph Cotten's bluebeard killer in "Shadow Of A Doubt'') as public

Out of the Jesuit years at St. Ignatius in London came the religious meditation on Christ's suffering and death as undeserved and, thus, on Christ as "wronged." "Things are not as they seem to be!" As a sensitive, overweight schoolboy, Hitchcock identified with "the wrong man": having been traumatically put in jail for less than an hour by his father as a jesting lesson to teach him to behave, or when punished with the leather thong by the Jesuit Prefect of Discipline. Yes, "the wrong man" theme is one deeply imprinted in the frames of Hitchcock's films and, consequently, in his own psyche.

Hitchcock, in his final years, had an ambivalent relationship to the Catholic Church. An alumnus of St. Ignatius College had a trans-oceanic phone interview with him in the late 1970s. "Hitch" said:

"I was born a Catholic. I went to Catholic school, and now I have a conscience with lots of trials over beliefs."

Donald Spoto in "The Dark Side Of Genius" writes that the director told his staff:

"Don't let any priests on the lot. They're all after me; they all hate me.

Priestly Pals?

Although I, a Jesuit priest and film scholar, could not obtain an interview, I know that Fr. Thomas Sullivan, S.J. (Loyola-Marymount University, Los Angeles) remained close to Hitchcock and gave a brief eulogy - one of many — at his funeral in 1980. Fr. Sullivan personally assured me that 'Hitch'' had relations of a cordial nature with priests.

In 1963 he received an honorary Ph.D. from Santa Clara University. In later years priests tried to see him to do research. That "spooked" him; I know because Leonard South, the cameraman on his last film, "Family Plot," tried through the secretary, Peggy Robertson, and his chauffeur, Anthony Emerzian, to obtain an interview.

I had published articles on the director which "Lenny" South liked and thought would interest "Hitch." Priests such as myself did appear to him as intruders on his privacy but, in general, he had priest friends.

Without his Catholic/Jesuit upbringing, his work would have been very different for "the wrong man" theme in 18 films and the many religious illusions (e.g. the nun in the last scene of "Vertigo," the bishop in "Family Plot'') would have been either absent or treated in a less distinctive cinematic way.



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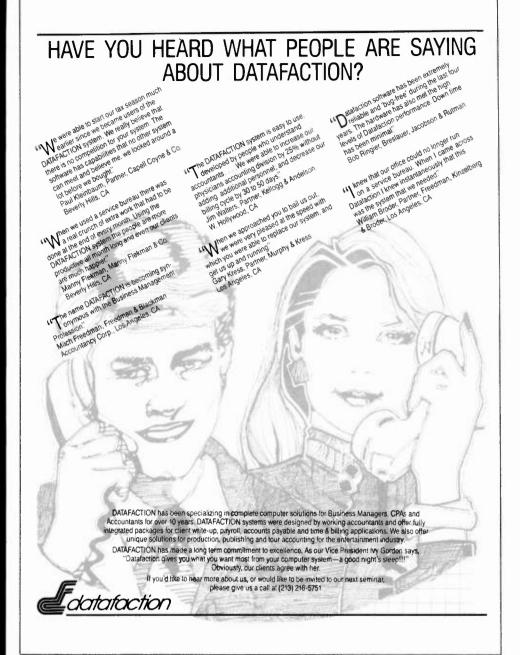
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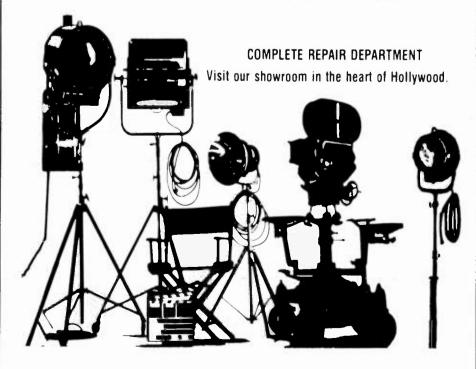
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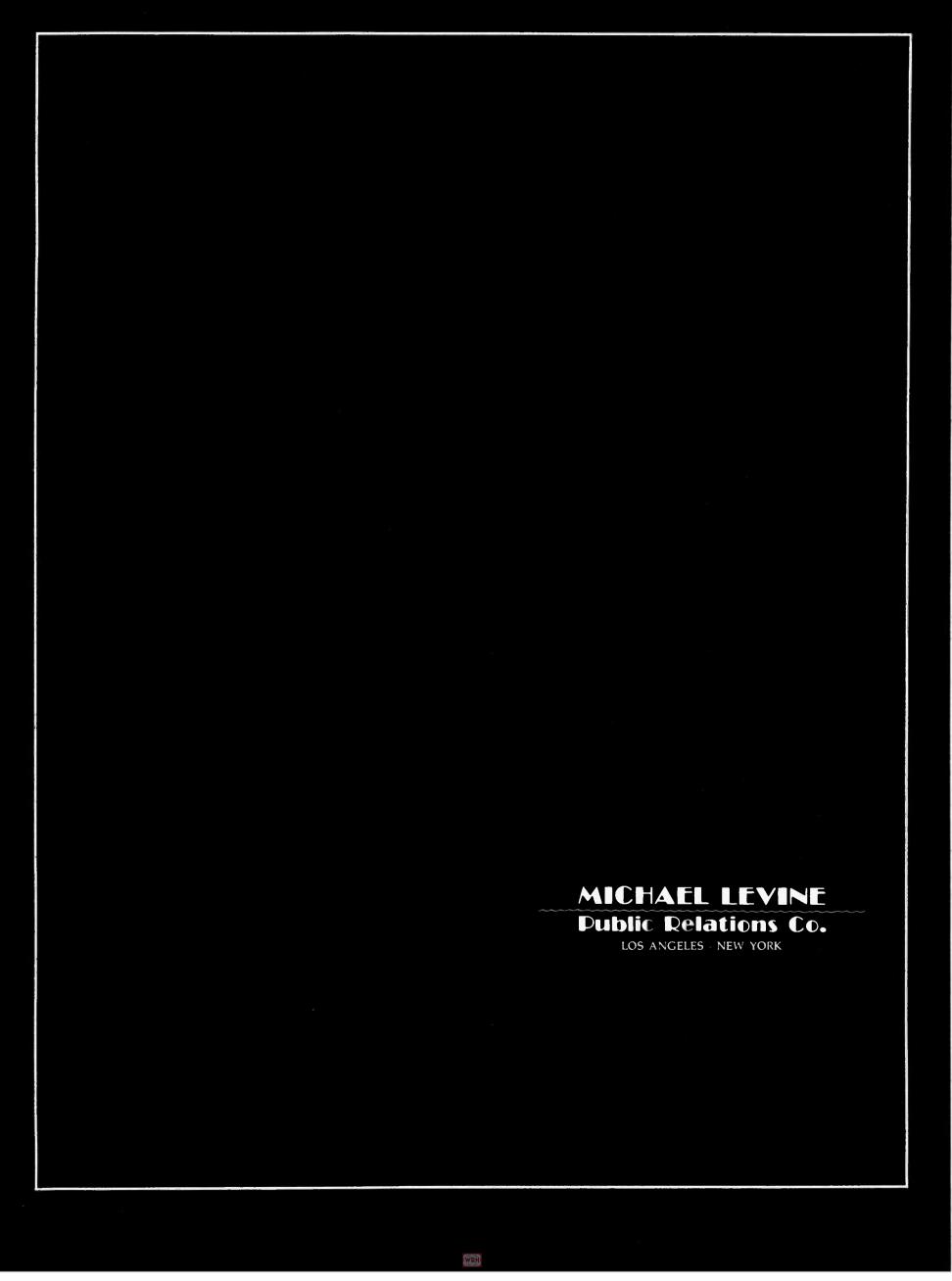
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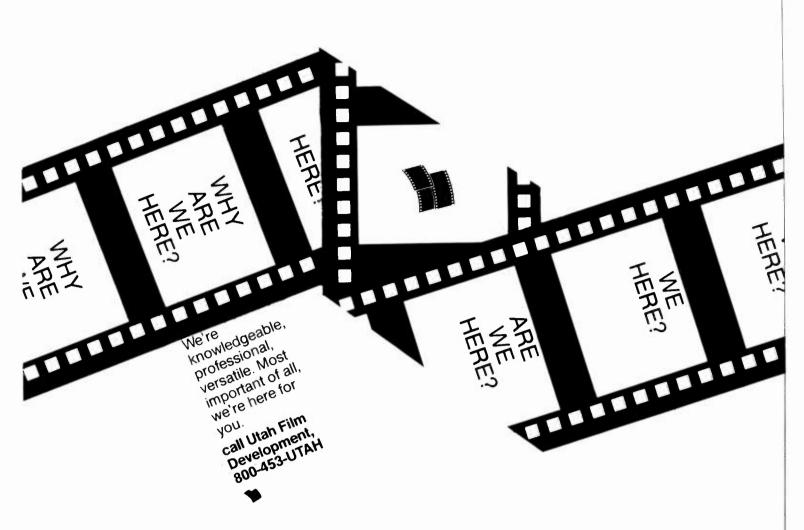
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Here Today Gone Tomorrow

(Continued from Page 87, Column 5) in which you have saved either six to 12 months' "salary" or six to 12 months' worth of expenses.)

Of course, when income received is *less* than the *salary*, you'll withdraw the exact amount required from your Emergency Income Savings Account earmarked for this very purpose. Simple.

Determining monthly expenses is the second step to Cash Flow Planning. Merely review your checkbook for the last 12 months and itemize each category for payments made by check. Some of the many categories can include: mortgage/rent, utilities, groceries, household services, publications, education, medical, dental, vacations, entertainment, gifts, clothes, auto/home insurance, other insurances.

After each category is totalled, divide by the number of months used in your sampling. Add any amounts that were paid by cash as in parking costs, fees, etc.

Don't Fudge

Avoid creating a category called miscellaneous. It can hide real expenses. A client recently listed \$22,000 under this magical heading. After discussion, we determined that \$7000 was for clothes and the balance for vacations, gifts and entertainment.

We have seen an overview of financial planning and how it can benefit everyone who has an income. One of the many segments of financial planning is Cash Flow Planning. We have discussed the first two steps of the cash flow planning process and some of its benefits as well.

Wouldn't you agree that we all want to enjoy life having fun, doing our best, making a living and somehow keeping our income safe from taxes, inflation and confusion? We want money to buy our *freedom* (as in not having to work for an income), rather than build our *prisons* (such as credit card indebtedness).

Live Within Means

Many industry professionals live on credit during times of strikes, hiatus or between jobs. However, when monies are finally received, some unfortunately rush to pay off all the bills. Then, no money is left and they are back to square one: Living on credit until the next check comes in—

The solution, in part, is the knowledge of your MONTHLY SALARY and MONTHLY EXPENSES. Live within your average monthly income projections and monthly bills, cut back on certain expense categories, do not rush to pay off all the cards (however, do make reasonable and regular monthly payments to all creditors), and curb or eliminate use of credit wherever possible.

When you have six to 12 months' income (or six to 12 months' bills/expenses) saved in

(Continued on Page 158, Column 5)

What is a cynic?

A man who knows the price of everything and the value of nothing.

-Oscar Wilde

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7th Inning

(Continued from Page 140, Column 5)

- All three networks are under different control;
- Four of the seven major motion picture studios have undergone changes in ownership;
- Cable television is available in 50% of U.S. households;
- The number of independent television stations is up 145%;
- Nonexistent 10 years ago, videocassette recorders are projected to be in 60% of U.S. tv homes by 1990 and the video industry already represents a \$6 billion business;
- The music business, like the motion picture business in the early '80s, has undergone a radical consolidation, yet appears to be about to enter a period of unprecedented growth spurred by new technologies and the conver-

gence of audio and video media.

The proliferation of new delivery systems has dramatically expanded the demand for entertainment programming and as a result overall entertainment industry revenues and profits. Suppliers, both old and new, have rapidly geared up to meet this new market demand, leading to a massive increase in the availability of entertainment product. Ironically, new delivery systems also served to

fragment the audience and on a net basis, today we are witnessing the erosion of the profitability of each individual venue. In this environment, hits are mega-hits, successful product recoups its cost over a reasonable period of time and everything else loses money.

For example, in motion pictures, while increasing production budgets are well advertised, increases in the expense of releasing a feature film are perhaps more significant. Today, theatrical promotion drives multiple markets, serving not only to stimulate the boxoffice, but supporting sales to the homevideo, cable and free television markets.

More Screens, Less Time

Now as a rule, almost every motion picture opens intially or within a very short time in wide release — in about 1000 theaters and accompanied by a national campaign — regardless of its perceived boxoffice viability, and in spite of the normal hit or miss dynamics of the theatrical venue.

Yet with the increased amount of entertainment product availa-

ble, the theatrical life of a motion picture has been radically shortened as exhibitors quickly replace nonperforming releases. A hit has the structure in place to rapidly become a blockbuster; other product, regardless of its qualities, is moved more and more rapidly through the various windows in an attempt to recoup the greater overall investment.

TV: Bottom Line Rules

In television, the networks today command less than 75% of the viewing audience, and are witnessing continuing erosion of their market share by new programming alternatives. In this environment and responsible to new owners, network managements are cost and quality rather than relationship conscious. As a result, budgets are tighter and either a show works or doesn't. Venues that previously would have provided early profits, such as foreign tv syndication or even homevideo, today provide a necessary hedge against the upfront investment represented by

(Continued on Page 158, Column 5)





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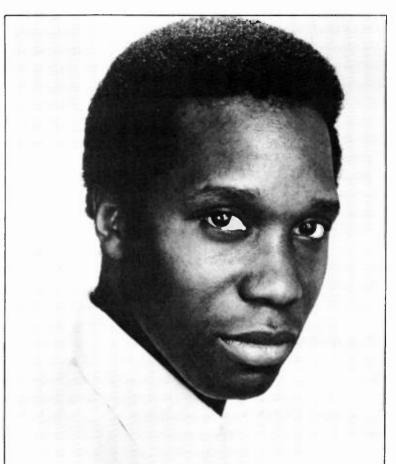
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Here Today Gone Tomorrow

(Continued from Page 154, Column 5) an Emergency Income Account, you can then pay off all the creditors. The most important part of dealing with sporadic income is that you need to hedge your income and your bills against the possibility of little or no future income.

By implementing these concepts, you will have more funds to achieve all your desired goals. Remember, no matter how well or, possibly, not so well, you do financially during your professional career, you can still have a great retirement income. I am always hesitant to use the word "retirement," as some contend they won't ever retire. But wouldn't you like the *freedom* to choose to do so if you wish?

Attention to these practical solutions will produce a sense of greater success and creativity in your lifetime's wealth and enjoyment.

7th Inning

(Continued from Page 156, Column 5) deficits over the network fee. And with ever greater competition for the viewing audience, independent television is even more subject to the ups and downs of the economic (advertising) cycle.

A rapidly changing environment is obviously dangerous and unforgiving. Clearly, business strategies built on the fractionalization of rights and exposure to only one or two market windows are particularly dangerous; the problems of a Cannon or a De Laurentiis or a Vestron have been created in large part by fundamentally flawed business plans.

New, aggressive independent producers/distributors — capable of rapid response to changing markets, carry lower overheads allowing them to operate in a lower margin environment and accepted by a marketplace indifferent to the name of the company providing the entertainment product — have proved their ability to quickly gain significant market share. Their on-going viability will reflect the quality of their product. As always, good creative product will succeed, and today the next hit can come from any one of many program suppliers.

NEA: \$1.5 Mil To Radio

WASHINGTON, D.C.

With the aim of bringing "radio days" back again, the National Endowment for the Arts is giving \$1,500,000 in its latest round of grants to support creative radio programs at the national level.

Bulk of the money (\$760,000) will go to support eight major radio series under the Programming in the Arts category. Projects range from "Crossroads," a weekly radio magazine, to "American Radio Showcase," a series showcasing the art of the audio docu; and there's also "Radio Movies," a drama series.

"Cop-killer bullets, machine guns, mail-order bandguns - -

Has the N.R.A. gone off the deep end?"



It's my job to enforce the laws and keep the peace.

And like many of my colleagues, I used to think the National Rifle Association was on my side. After all, they supported firearm safety among hunters, targetshooters and other law-abiding gun owners.

But lately, the N.R.A.'s leaders seem to have lost any sense of responsibility.

A few years ago, for example, they

lobbied Congress to allow the sale of armorpiercing bullets.

This special ammunition isn't used for hunting game. It's for blasting through "bullet-proof" vests and killing the man or woman inside—most likely a police officer.

The N.R.A. wanted to keep these cop-killer bullets legal. And that's not all. Their high-powered lobbyists also tried to make it legal to sell handguns through the mail.

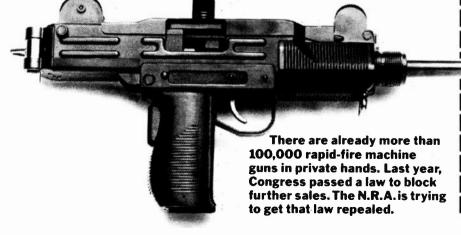
I think you'll agree the last thing we need is a flood of cheap, largely untraceable handguns on the streets. But that's exactly what mail-order sales would encourage.

It took the united voice of professional law enforcement to stop the N.R.A.'s push for cop-killer bullets and mail-order handguns.

The N.R.A.'s leadership, however, seems beyond reason. Now they want to permit the sale of new machine guns nationwide. Machine guns! What's next-flamethrowers? Bazookas? It's enough to give a police officer nightmares.

The N.R.A. is also busy trying to gut state laws against carrying concealed weapons. They're fighting common-sense proposals for a waiting period on handgun sales—a basic safeguard giving law enforcement time to check for a criminal record.

They've even come out against legislation to prevent extremist hate groups from running para-military "boot



camps" in our peaceful countryside.

In recent years, the N.R.A's leadership has repeatedly ignored the objections of professional law enforcement. Their actions make our jobs more difficult—and more dangerous. And they've poured millions of dollars into local elections, seeking to intimidate public officials who dare to speak out.

If you're an N.R.A. member, start questioning your leadership. If you're a citizen concerned about vio-

Sale of cop-killer ammo would be legal if the N.R.A. had its way.

lence in America, please start getting involved.

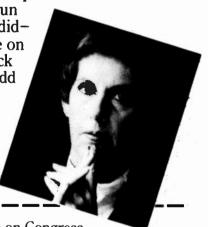
The N.R.A. has become one of the most powerful special interests in Washington. Like a loaded gun, that power must be handled with care. And should never be pointed in the wrong direction.

Help me fight the N.R.A.!

John Hinckley pulled a \$29 revolver from his pocket and shot the President, a secret service man, a

police officer, and my husband. I'm not asking for sympathy, I'm asking for your help. Tens of thousands of

Americans have joined Handgun Control, Inc., for the reason I didbecause, together, we can take on the N.R.A. and win. Please pick up a pen, fill out the coupon, add a check to aid our work, and mail it to me today. Thank you.



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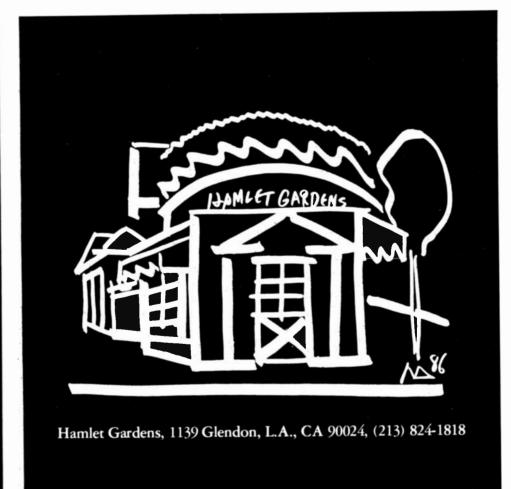
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ACADEMY

(Continued from Page 66, Column 5)

"With Hitchcock, there are wonderful tape recording conversations of his productions. Meetings. Conversations with Truffaut that resulted in that famous book of Truffaut and Hitchcock."

Archivist-historian Sam Gill speaks philosophically about the status of Hollywood personalities vis-a-vis the Academy. "I have a feeling that, as in all disciplines, certain people have established careers, historically speaking. The popularity of their films may

wax and wane, and we want to be there for whenever they're waxing and waning.

"That way, we're helping those people who are always going to be interested in a certain person. When researchers can't get a fix on a subject, sometimes I suggest certain areas, especially to those in a graduate program looking for a dissertation topic. Sometimes I can say something to involve them in a collection they might never have dreamed of as being interested in; that way, they're onto real research with all its rewards."

When a student or researcher

picks up on a subject, Gill has thousands of pieces of material—letters, memos, scripts, press releases, designs, scrapbooks, private collections, cross-references—to fall back on.

Art direction, set design and costume design are popular subjects right now. Richard Day's collection of set stills with the clapper identifying each film fills two shelves with Goldwyn taste and style — "Arrowsmith," "Goldwyn Follies," all the way back to "Affairs Of Cellini" and "Beloved Enemy," "Best Years Of Our Lives," "Trade Winds."

Jean Hersholt donated his boxed memorabilia involving 'The Country Doctor'' - a booklet on the Dionne quintuplets, a filmbook based on the photoplay, the final shooting script (with Hersholt's comment, "First complete script given to me Dec. 20, 193(5), changed as we went along shooting picture"), letters, photographs. This unusually personal view of a film is encased in a red box with gold lettering "The Country Doctor: First Quintuplet Film - Manuscript and photographs, 1936."

Hersholt donated all his scrap-

books, photo albums and clippings from his lengthy career dating back to the earliest silent era. As with such literary and painting equivalents, the Hersholt assemblage is a first-hand contact with historical continuity.

A splendid example of how the Library can be used for comparative research.

The Hal Wallis collection has been kept intact rather than parcelled out among the many people with whom the producer worked. That goes for employment agreements with Wallis — the personalities' record is kept in the Wallis collection.

Notes Gill, "For instance, you can see Anna Magnani's employment record, and that's interesting. You can literally see how they developed that, since she already had a reputation before she came here.

"We don't have Elvis Presley's contracts, but we do have Col. Tom Parker's records, his correspondence with Hal Wallis. Parker really was the go-between, not Presley, so Parker and Wallis shared a wonderful relationship and admiration and respect for each other, and of like horse swappers.

"It's shown that always Parker is pushing, pushing, pushing just for the extra thing for his client, and Wallis obviously really respected that but was always saying, 'We'll have to talk about that!' or 'Maybe we can do this!' Obviously they both loved doing

The George Stevens collection, a comprehensive record of the director's career, brings up some things even from the '20s when he was a cameraman. His correspondence files, script files, all his production memos and large photograph collection to go with it are all kept as a single unit because it is so voluminous.

"With so many of these collections there is material that could be tapped," points out Gill. "Forever, I think. In the Stevens collection, the appraiser estimated there were over 1,500,000 documents. We may be talking special collections in the neighborhood of 10-12,000,000 documents. Or more. I have a feeling these collections will be used over and over again by serious researchers because there's always a different angle you can look at."

Anyone working with several museums, or archives, may find the Academy's collection complements the holdings of those other places. Students seeking the work of one director may find another p.o.v. in other repositories, whether in Wisconsin or New York or the Library of Congress, and there might be things that fit in with the Academy's collection.

There have been some misses. Important collections go off to unexpected places, and many valuable resources for students turn out, for a variety of reasons, to be flung around the globe — Chaplin's archives, for instance, are in Vevey, Switzerland.

"When you think you have an (Continued on Page 194, Column 1)

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There's Nothing Like A Sequel — Or Is There?

There's an old saying in Hollywood that if this town lacks for one thing, it's good material.

In the last decade or so, this has become especially apparent as filmgoers have been deluged with sequel fever — a clever trick to forestall the inevitable death by reeling out further adventures of a Beverly Hills cop, the man of steel, the steel-fingered Freddy, an Italian heavyweight boxer, and an acid-spewing creature who incubates her young inside human

The question is, how often does this movie-making machine look in its own backyard of theater for ideas? In Los Angeles, where film and a growing community of theater live in close quarters, how often have filmmakers taken a legit piece (that got its start in L.A.) and made it into a film?

There are those very recent examples that could be pointed to. such as playwright Darrah Cloud, who signed a production deal with Jessica Lange two months after the world premiere of her play, "The Stick Wife," at the Los Angeles Theater Center.

Slow Growth

But over the last 10 years, there has not been much movement in that direction. In fact, there has only been a handful of films that originally preemed on an L.A.

Among some of those are Neil Simon's "I Ought To Be In Pictures," Luis Valdez' "Zoot Suit" (both of which opened at the Mark Taper Forum), Donald Freed's "Secret Honor" and Mark Medoff's "Children Of A Lesser

Whatever made these stage pieces viable (if not always financially successful) screen properties is difficult to pin down. Each was a commercial success as a play, which may be their only common denominator.

Director Robert Altman, who only worked with one L.A. preemed stage play, "Secret Honor," but has transferred his share of legit work to film ("Come Back To The Five And Dime, Jimmy Dean, Jimmy Dean,' "Streamers") is of the opinion that theater is not used much for films anymore because people under the age of 40 basically don't know what theater is about. "They don't have any interest in it because they were educated with television.

Altman's View

Moreover, Altman is quick to note that most playwrights he knows are often unhappy with the final film results, "As long as they take the money, though, it's none of their business how it turns out," he added.

In the plays that he developed into films, Altman said he chose to work on those projects only because they interested him. "I do whatever occurs to me at the time," he said. "There are no rules.'

While Rabe's "Streamers," a

As The Saying Goes: Hollywood Looks Everywhere For Film Ideas, Except In Its Own Backyard Legit Repository

drama about racial and sexual tensions in a domestic Army barracks during the early days of the Vietnam War, was originally staged in New York under Mike Nichols' direction, the play came out to Los Angeles a year later in 1977 for a successful run at the Westwood Playhouse. Altman, in fact, never saw the play but decided to make the film after reading

Fast Shoot

The movie was filmed in 24 days on a sound stage in Dallas, stayed close to the original play with Altman coproducing and directing, but was never a boxoffice hit despite noteworthy

In Donald Freed and Arnold M. Stone's psychological drama, 'Secret Honor,'' Altman coproduced the play in New York and then collaborated with the University of Michigan to film it for a cable venture.

That film did not receive much notice here, but it paved the way for one of its authors, Freed, to launch other plays.

"What happened was that Harold Pinter saw it and was so enthusiastic that it caused him to read 'Circe And Bravo'," Freed

Freed, who has preemed several of his plays at the Los Angeles Theater Center including "Secret Honor," later saw his "Circe" open to a successful run in London with Faye Dunaway starring. Since that time, ABC has picked up the rights and recently finished a television movie with Dunaway based on the play.

Effort Worthwhile

"For me, it was worth the struggle to see these plays put on film because the audience is so much bigger," Freed said. "Especially on national television."

Most playwrights will agree, though, that struggle is a key word in the long process of seeing a work transferred to film. For Luis Valdez, the process was long and tedious but ultimately satisfy-

"I was happy with the way the film turned out and I'm glad I hung tough," Valdez said, talking from the Salinas office of his El Teatro Campesino. "I wanted to not only write the script for the film, but I also wanted to direct

When "Suit" first opened as part of the Taper's "New Theater For Now" program in the Summer of 1978, Valdez said the show ran for 10 days before the production took a break.

It subsequently came back as the Fall opener on the Taper's main stage, but not until Valdez had substantially altered certain

By KATHLEEN O'STEEN

aspects of the play, "theatricalized it" to make it more abstract.

"The funny thing is, I think the first version would have been more filmic," Valdez said. "But Gordon (Davidson) wanted it changed to the more abstract, with all the backdrops taken away except for bundles of newspaper."

The show went on to become a major success, running eight weeks at the Taper, and then moving on to a nine-month run at the Aquarius Theater.

During that time, the play also moved (in a separate production) to New York, closed there after a decent run, but continued to remain quite popular in Los Ange-

"We were still doing tremendous business in Los Angeles when we finally closed here," he

character of El Pachuco, a symbolic characer, that forestalled Valdez from creating a realistic film (and probably caused its downfall at the boxoffice). Instead, he opted to film it as a play at the Aquarius Theater.

'The added surprise for me was working with the cameras," he said. "We shot it in 35m on a 60-foot turntable in 14 days. It came together hot and fast.'

The film, while never reaching the popularity that the play did, nonetheless was well received by critics and has since launched Valdez's career as a film director. His most recent work is the film "La Bamba," which opened at the Seattle Film Festival last May.

'Yes, it opened new doors for me and it was absolutely a positive experience," Valdez said. "Who knows? Maybe 10 years down the road I'll make another

the film rights had already been sold to Burt Sugarman.

"Actually, there had been talk from ABC of making it into a television movie while it was still playing in Los Angeles," Davidson said. "But the Shuberts were involved in bringing it to New York. Mark decided against selling the rights at that time."

Jeanne Hernandez, Medoff's right hand at his home base at the New Mexico State University, said that the professor-cum-playwright was then hired to write the script, but later removed after he had written several drafts.

Compromise

"Before he had sold the rights, he had tried to make it mandatory for the studio to use a deaf actress in the lead role, but they simply would not agree to it," Hernandez said. "So he surrendered that and then they took him off the project.'

Hernandez said that, while Medoff was still involved, several directors were considered for the project, including Robert Redford, but it was Randa Haines whom Paramount finally decided

'Randa wanted to take a lot of the political implications out of the story and just deal with the love story," Hernandez said, "and Mark felt that would take away the story's guts."

After Medoff was replaced, he then had to fight with the studio to retain partial screenplay credit, having to prove that a certain percentage of the movie was his, Hernandez said.

"To put it mildly, yes he was disappointed," Hernandez said.

This was Medoff's second adventure in film, having first written the play, "When You Comin" Back, Red Ryder?" which was bought by and later starred Marjoe Gortner in the 1979 film.

"That wasn't a good experience, either," Hernandez said "Mark had written the story where the antagonist leaves at the end. In the movie, they chase him down and kill him."

Medoff also believed the film wasn't well made, Hernande;

Punch Missing

"There's no question that 'Children' was a much better made movie," Hernandez said "It just definitely lacked the

And while these artistic com promises have made Medoff': film career somewhat choppy Hernandez agreed that it has opened numerous doors in area of film, cable and television.

Medoff, in fact, will soon step down from being the head and ar tistic director of New Mexico State's theater department, opting for just professor status in the face of upcoming projects.

"I think, though, if anyone wants to make a movie from any more of his plays, Mark wil definitely have more artistic con trol," Hernandez concluded.

"Who Knows? Maybe 10

Years Down The Road I'll Make Another Movie Of 'Zoot Suit' In A More Realistic Style."

said. "We could have kept it going, but the plans were at the time to reopen it on a national tour."

Valdez said he had planned on touring the show through the southwest and midwestern states, but encountered a good deal of trouble in booking theaters. When the Texas commitment fell through, Valdez said the remainder of the tour became jeopardized.

"It was about then that people were talking to me about making it into a film, which I became more interested in," he said.

An independent producer did keep Valdez and the Taper's artistic director, Gordon Davidson (who was executive producing) in talks for six months, only to fail to come up with the financial backing, Valdez said.

There had also been interest expressed from Peter Guber in New York to produce it as a major film, but Valdez could not convince Guber to let him direct, so that too, fell through.

In 1980, barely two years after the play had first opened, Ned Tanen, then president of Universal, acquired the rights and agreed to let Valdez write and direct.

Yet it was the surreal nature of the play, especially with the main movie of 'Zoot Suit' in a more realistic style.'

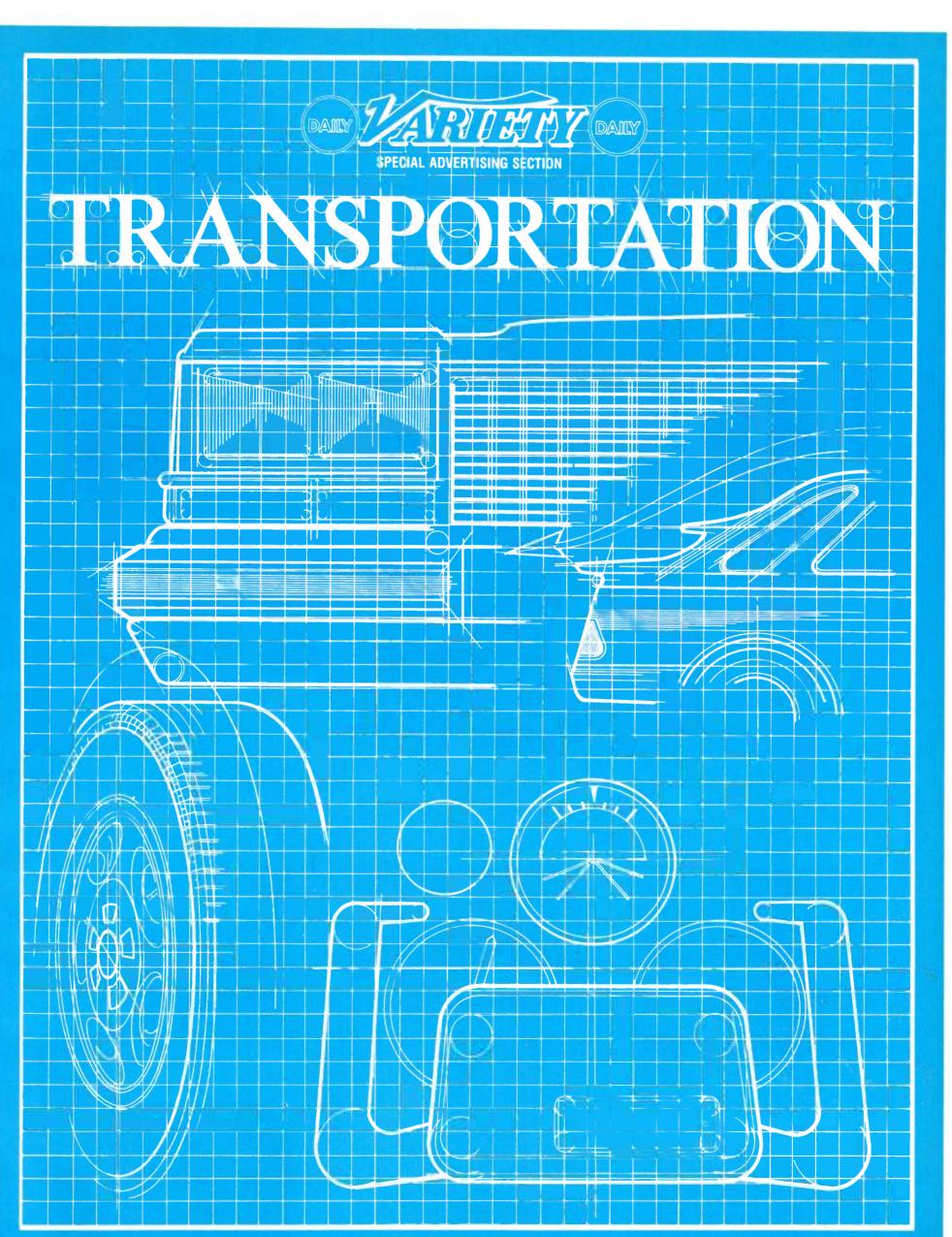
A more widely recognized film that started as a play was Mark Medoff's "Children Of A Lesser God" - but this (despite the film's success) apparently is the more negative example of transference, with both Medoff and the Taper's Davidson voicing doubts about the compromises that took

"This was a picture that I wanted to make," Davidson said.
"But it didn't work out and, unfortunately, the movie worked to emphasize the love story and totally stripped it of its intentions to show how the deaf are per-

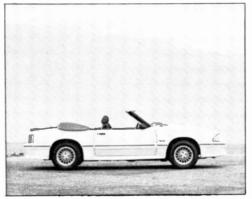
Davidson said when he first was given the play by Medoff, he agreed to do a workshop presentation and then later a full production on the mainstage. The show opened in the middle of the 1979-80 season and subsequently moved to Broadway in the Spring

"I didn't know how the signing would work with one character constantly interpreting for the other, but word of mouth travelled fast," Davidson said.

By the time the play picked up three Tonys at the 1980 awards,



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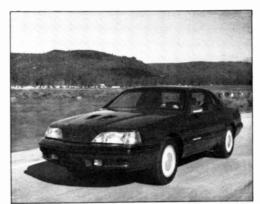
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Video Blurbs: Who's Watching

(Continued from Page 138, Column 5)

reason to take the new medium seriously, he believes.

'The normal year-in and yearout business is pretty reluctant to look at new forms of advertising like this," commented PHV's Clott. "They'd rather let other people experiment and see what happens.'

He's hoping the research done on "Top Gun" by the Fairfield Group might be worked into a presentation that can be taken

around to other advertisers, to demonstrate that at least some of the research that advertisers want to see is now being done.

Leon Luxenberg, v.p. of western media sales at Lorimar Syndication, believes that advertisers are excited about video as an ad medium, but he agrees they don't yet know how to use it, and want lots more answers than are currently available.

The critical question to most advertisers is whether or not the in-

vestment in a sponsored video program is money that might not be better spent simply buying more conventional forms of advertising, according to Luxenbeg. "It's still extremely difficult to determine the effectiveness of a tape," he observed.

BBDO's Wiener isn't too enthused about the concept of multicommercial periodical vidcassettes, pointing out that there will likely be lots of competing vehicles trying to deliver advertisers to an audience that will still be small by mass-media standards.

And he's bothered by the likelihood that many of those commercials will be zipped over by uninterested VCR viewers.

HBO Video's O'Connell says research on the performance of earlier sponsored tapes suggests that few people zip over the ads, and the even the ones who do receive a deeper impression from the vid ad than they would with a traditional primetime commercial.

At Y&R, Scullin says there's 'no reason'' why the "Overview Magazine" project at Pacific Arts can't be done on a broader basis as a meaningful national ad vehicle. As long as such a project attracts the audience and the vid companies find a way to audit and verify that circulation, there's "major medium" potential in such projects, he said.

As to why "Overview" hasn't yet found the combination, Scullin theorized that Nesmith has come up with an idea that's wellsuited to tv but a bit too ambitious for video, given the current state of that market.

"Maybe it was a little too much Hollywood and not enough video," Scullin said. "This is a very different channel from network tv or the theaters. High concept, plus high quality, plus high cost isn't going to work here.'

But Nesmith feels the "Overview" plan was on target - research showed it performing significantly beyond expectations, he said. The missing ingredient appears to be simply putting together effective, appropriate distribution, he believes.

'Previews' Launched

There's already an example of a similar vid "publication" that, though less ambitious, looks like it has a strong shot at success.

It's "Avenue Previews," the planned monthly preview tape being distributed by New Yorkbased Avenue Magazine.

The 20-25-minute vidcassette is free to vidstores, free to customers (who must return it) and free to the program suppliers whose titles are previewed on it. All costs are covered by its advertisers.

In a test release earlier this year in New York's RKO Warner/Video Shack stores, "Previews" advertisers included L'Oreal, E. F. Hutton and Time Magazine. Avenue Magazine chairman Peter Price says that with the rollout of the regular monthly editions, which started this month, the tapes will carry 30-second spots from up to six advertisers.

According to Price, Avenue is having no trouble finding sponsors. For one thing, the starting point of the whole project was finding a way to deliver to advertisers the upscale viewers that are deserting all other forms of sponsored tv. Price believes those viewers are spending their limited viewing time watching rented films, so Avenue guessed that an ad-supported tape that costs the viewers nothing, and gives them something valuable that they wouldn't get otherwise - a preview of what's coming in video was the right vehicle to bring this audience back to advertisers.

And though the "Avenue Previews" sponsors are expected to foot the entire bill for the tapes their production, distribution and merchandising costs — Price says the test phase demonstrated they're getting lots of viewership for their money.

Research indicates each "Previews" cassette was, on the average, taken home to 23 households, and then watched by an average of 3.3 persons in each home, according to Price. With 10,000 tapes in

(Continued on Page 170, Column 5)





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Video Blurbs

(Continued from Page 168, Column 5)

the test, that translates to an audience of 750,000 for the spots, which cost the advertisers \$12-15,000, he said.

"That's comparable to what you'd pay for a 30-second spot on local tv, or a four-page color ad in a city magazine," Price said.

He thinks the research indicates Avenue is delivering on its promise to give advertisers the impact of a tv spot and the upscale market available through magazines. The average viewer of the "Previews" tape is 35, with a household income of \$59,500.

Viewers Remember, Too

The research also indicates that recall of the ads by the Previews audience is 95%, an "extraordinary" level, Price said.

Avenue is gearing up for the October startup of regular monthly releases in about 100 New York-area vidstores. Then the company plans to expand to the L.A. and San Francisco markets in early '88.

The shows are produced by Reeves Communications, and feature a host who comments on and shows clips of 20-25 titles. The big "A" films are discussed, but the tape tries to feature the less well-known pix that a higher-brow audience would particularly appreciate.

The "Avenue Previews" formula can't be easily translated to other sponsored projects. The tape succeeds largely because it fills a very specific niche, according to Price. But the one lesson he thinks the industry can learn from the Avenue performance so far is that it benefitted because its starting point was the market, not the producer's or advertiser's programming preferences. Avenue found the market opening and figured out how to fill it, rather than coming up with a program or a sponsor's vehicle, and then trying to figure out how to create the demand for it.

A key to the success of spon-(Continued on Page 172, Column 1)

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Video Blurbs: Who's Watching

(Continued from Page 170, Column 5)

sored videos is going to be the advertisers' "respect" for the consumer, Y&R's Scullin believes.

"The consumer is smarter, more decisive and more powerful than ever before," he said. The advent of cable finally pulled the consumer out of the era of "least objectional programming," and gave him choice, Scullin said. Now video has taken the consumer a step further and given him control, and that means it's

time to deal with him in "the most respectful way possible," he said.

"Recognize that you're dealing with a commodity. When the consumer picks up your tape, he should know there's a commercial on it," Scullin explained. "Don't slam them over the head with your message. Sometimes the best way to do it is to just have your celebrity work it in almost informally. And you can include printed materials with the cassette.

"Don't suprise them. You're

an invited guest into their home. In that way, you're like a magazine, but with the impact of television."

Nesmith says he can't take seriously consumers who are afriad that the sort of sponsored video periodicals he's working on will threaten to "contaminate" the video business.

"That's like saying 'Don't put out The New Yorker magazine because it will ruin David Halberstam's new book 'The Reckoning'," Nesmith said. In the video business of the future, there will be lots of room for "hardback" and "paperback" programs that are commercial free (just as those kinds of books today are ad-free), as well as the ad-supported vid periodicals.

The first major homevid sponsorship came in the Spring of 1985, and it was Karl/Lorimar Home Video that took the bold step.

KLHV brought out "Eat To Win," a nutritional program sponsored by Red Lobster restaurants. The \$39.95 programs fell a bit short of expectations,

selling about 23,000 units after KLHV had projected an initial shipment of 25,000.

But the company quickly followed that project with several others and today the Lorimar Home Video list of sponsored programs includes the "Crystal Light National Aerobic Championship Workout," sponsored by the General Foods drink mix; "Behind The Wheel With Jackie Stewart," sponsored by The Ford Motor Company; "The Mr. Boston Official Bartender's Guide," backed by Glenmore Distilleries; and "How To Golf," sponsored by Dunlop.

It's worth noting that KLHV sustained a huge \$31,000,000 writedown during its fiscal quarter ending last March 30. One of the contributors to that loss was reportedly the decision by parent Lorimar to write down all the programs from the previous Karl/ Lorimar management that now appear destined not to make back their initial investments. Industry observers believe the dozens of innovative alternative programs, possibly including some of the sponsored projects, contributed significantly to those writedowns.

Polaris: Lifestyle

Another early pioneer in the sponsored vidcassette business is Polaris Communications Group (formerly Esquire Video). The numerous sponsored made-forvid programs from Polaris have included the J.C. Penney-backed "Esquire Style: Building A Great Wardrobe"; "Cheers! Entertaining With Esquire," supported by W.A. Taylor & Co., importer of Tia Maria, Drambuie and Courvoisier; "Professional Style," partially sponsored by Vidal Sassoon; and the "Esquire Success" line, sponsored by Kodak vidtape.

Vestron Video's first big plunge into sponsored tapes comes this Fall with the release of a pair of "Learning Football The NFL Way" tapes underwritten by Wheaties cereal.

The tapes have a pair of 30second Wheaties commercials on them, and Wheaties is using the tape in a promotion that gives consumers a price break in exchange for proof of purchase.

Included in what Vestron gets out of the deal will be mentions of the tapes on 10,000,000 Wheaties boxes.

HBO Video's sponsorship activities to date (besides Jeep/Chrysler in "Platoon") have included lining up Dodge as sponsor of the first "Sports Illustrated" tape, "Get The Feeling Of Speed," and the planned first issue of the Time Magazine vid adaptation.

More To Come

O'Connell said HBOV is anticipating an increase in sponsorship activity in '88, including "an innovative new approach to putting commercials on tape," but he declined to elaborate, except to say the next 12 months will involve "real experimentation and research" by HBOV and "very aggressive" use of sponsors.

It will be important, O'Connell (Continued on Page 180, Column 1)





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The Orange County Perform-I ing Arts Center has clocked away its first year and there's no doubt about it, it's been a good year. Not only has attendance been up there in the 90-95% range, but the year was capped off this month with the Center in the

Who said folks down south would not support such a huge arts complex (\$70,000,000 in private donations to build)?

OCPAC In The Money In First Year

"Actually I think most performing arts centers get off to a good start at first," said Center president Thomas R. Kendricks. 'Whether or not that success holds on in future years, though, is the real issue.'

Looking at this last year, Kendricks is happy to report that the

By KATHLEEN O'STEEN

Center, for the most part, met and surpassed many of its goals. For instance, officials had expected to put 150 presentations on the Segerstrom Hall stage, but actually topped that number by at least

Secondly, the plan to offer a mixed bill of events, evenly dispensing major attractions such as musical theater, jazz, opera and ballet, was also met.

"Not only did we want to present a balance between the different artistic disciplines, but also a balance between regional and international attractions," Ken-

That, too, was met with 40% of the Center's calendar being reserved for Center-sponsored events, 45% booked by regional groups (i.e.: Orange Country Philharmonic Society, Opera Pacific, Master Chorale of Orange County, Pacific Symphony) and the remaining 15% of calendar time given to civic organizations.

This kind of scheduling is a manager's nightmare, though, considering that the Center had little advance work. Usually theaters and major arts facilities book up to two years in advance.

"Mixing single dates with extended runs has been a juggling act," Kendricks admitted. "We had very little time to do it for the first year.'

(NOTE: That is already changing with the 1988 season booked and scheduling currently happening for 1989.)

When the Center opened its door Oct. 3, 1986, Kendricks said

it had been expected that audiences would represent a good mix of both Orange County and Los Angeles patrons. They were proven wrong.

The draw from Los Angeles and even San Diego turned out to be minimal, as often the Orange County locals would pack the

"Ninety percent of our audiences were local," he said. "And because many of our shows sold out locally, we never even reached other audiences. We simply did not have the tickets availa-

There could be worse things in life, but the drawback to this whole issue has been that lack of establishing an identity in those neighboring cities. "We never got around to advertising in either area," Kendricks noted.

While Orange County-ites showed so much enthusiasm during the Center's first year, even to the point of breaking the national touring record for one week's attendance for the musical "Cabaret," that could wane in coming months and years.

"We're pretty optimistic about our second year, but by no means are we going to suggest that we'll reach 95% capacity again," he

But in order to assure a more substantial identity all around, the Center will begin moving into a more aggressive advertising

(Continued on Page 182, Column 4)

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OFF-BROADWAY JACKPOT

By ALVIN B. LEBAR

ood grief''! Profits from the off-Broadway "Peanuts" musical, "You're A Good Man, Charlie Brown," have topped \$1,000,000. This figures to a dizzying 6500% return on an original investment of under

Opening Feb. 14, 1967, the spare show concluded its New York run four years later. Now, 20 years after its debut, the musical still abounds with lively subsidiary activity in colleges, high schools and community theaters. It is reputed to be the most-produced play in history.

Profits for 1986 continued at about 150% per year. Low Cost, High Return

There's a ready explanation for the extraordinary profit margin. Although "Fantastics" is "Peanuts' ', only mega-percentaged competitor, some Broadway shows, opening between the late '50s and early '70s may also reflect unusually high profit percentages.

The "Peanuts" production was the last successful off-Broadway venture to cost less than \$16,000. (It came in at the trifling sum of \$15,600.) Soon after the 1967 opening, during the initial fouryear run and especially in the years following, the little show, as a frail autumn leaf, was thrust headlong into a whirlwind of inflation, now reflected in total receipts.

In the past decade alone, royalty income has increased several fold. Everything, in fact, has gone

up, up, up - excepting the original investment. That remains fixed. So, while profits in dollars have soared, the original cost, the base figure used to compute profit percentage, remained unchanged, accounting for the huge return of 6500%. To a lesser degree, that is also the case with other successful ventures opening during that period. Many will reveal returns far greater than ever recorded in theater history.

As for "Peanuts," should the happy course continue, it's not unlikely that rising profit percentages may one day send theater accountants scurrying about to reprogram their computers.

Of the \$1,000,000 paid by the Charles Schulz tuner, half has gone to producers, Arthur Whitelaw and Gene Persson; \$250,000 to major backer, MGM, and the balance apportioned among nine private backers who risked from \$320 to \$2000 in

While none of the latter may have become rich from "You're A Good Man, Charlie Brown," neither are they strangers at the bank. And, after 20 years, the future remains bright. The musical's fiscal saga might aptly be summed up by the irrepressible Snoopy, lazily unfurling atop his doghouse: "Not bad. Not bad at

The Writer was an original investor in "You're A Good Man, Charlie Brown.'

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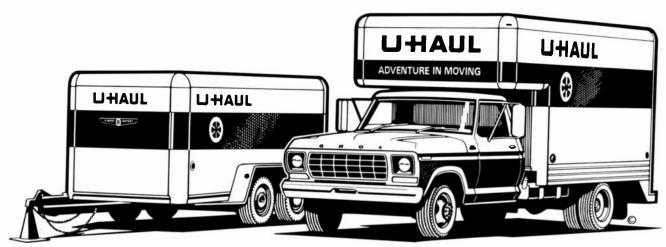




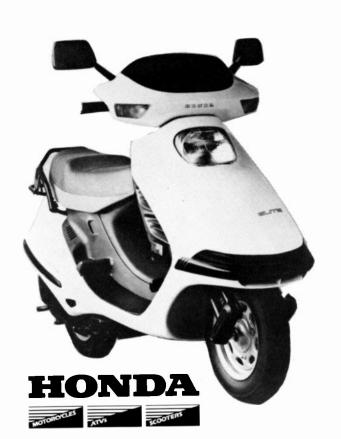
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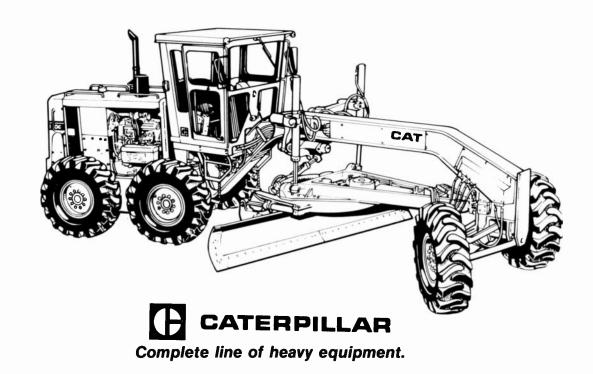


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Lanother football team, but the city, if it's any consolation to a community long derided for its cultural deficiency, appears to have gained a major league resident opera company after a 50-year quest.

The second full season of the L.A. Music Center Opera is underway at a time when the L.A. Raiders are preparing to move to

L.A. Grows Up To Resident Opera Co.

Irwindale, a tiny town about 20 miles southeast of L.A. The Raiders, it will be recalled, replaced the Rams on the L.A. Coliseum turf when the Rams heard the sweet siren of Anaheim, the home of Disneyland.

As "The culture shock continues," to borrow a phrase from

By HY HOLLINGER

the kultur-backed Los Angeles Festival, the emergence of the Los Angeles Music Center Opera during L.A.'s cultural outburst marks the culmination of a 20-year-effort by the Music Center Opera Association.

Over the years, to be sure, impresarios and resident music buffs have tried to bring opera here, but these sporadic efforts — the organization of a local opera company and the presentation of imports from the U.S. and abroad — failed to establish what Eric Wilson (in Performing Arts magazine) calls "a viable, indigenous opera company."

Reputation Improving

L.A.'s inability to do so may have contributed to the cultural downgrading of the city. The stigma, however, appears to be lifting thanks, in part, to Peter Hemmings, an Englishman charged with the task of setting up a world-class resident producing opera company.

Hemmings, whose background includes administrative posts with the New Opera Co. at the Sadler's Wells Theater in London, the Scottish Opera in Glasgow, the Australian Opera in Sydney, and the London Symphony Orchestra, took the job (with a five-year contract) with the understanding his obligation was to build a local company. He told the Music Center Opera Association he wasn't interested in bringing in companies from the outside.

When the first full season opened in 1986 with Placido Domingo singing "Otello," it appeared that Hemmings had reason to proclaim in a program greeting:

"It used to be said that Los Angeles was the only city of its size in the Western World that did not have a major resident opera company. This is no longer true."

Not one to seek all the laurels, Hemmings credits the accomplishment to the involvement of Domingo, who serves as the company's artistic consultant, and to the support and imprimature of the Music Center. Domingo, who opened the current season in "La Boheme," will also conduct various LAMCO productions, help recruit young talent and lure international stars to appear in L.A. offerings.

Solid Base

The association with the Music Center, Hemmings says unequivocally, provides the necessary coin and the security. "People are more likely to contribute if it's based at the Music Center. That was obvious even before I came to work here," he has stated.

Despite the hoopla and the hype, the black tie coin-raising galas, Domingo as an audience attraction, the pats on the back, and media acceptance for putting on a world-class show, Hemmings does not take it for granted that the L.A. Music Center Opera is here to stay.

He feels there's still a huge pioneering task. "We have an enormous educational job to build a constituency for the future," he says.

Working on a budget of \$10,-000,000 this year, Hemmings is presenting seven operas. For five operas during the 1986-87 season, the budget was \$6,000,000. At-

tendance for the kick-off season is said have averaged 98%, with ticket revenues hitting \$2,000,000, topping the budget projection by \$362,000. Top ticket price for current season has hit \$70.

According to Hemmings, the breakdown of the \$10,000,000 budget sees 40% or \$4,000,000 coming from the boxoffice, the Music Center contributes \$1,750,000, \$600,000 is raised from the galas (three were held this year for the opening of each new presentation), a government arts grant brings in about \$200,000, and the rest (over \$3,000,000) comes from fund-raising efforts (individuals, corporations, and foundations).

"In Los Angeles we are indeed fortunate to be blessed with a select handful of such patrons, of which Tara Colburn is a shining example," Hemmings said when he announced a \$500,000 gift from music enthusiast and bigtime arts supporter Colburn.

Los Angeles' present standing in the national opera scene perhaps can be compared with the long-established companies in San Francisco and Chicago. The 65-year-old S.F. Opera has a 1987-88 operating budget of almost \$22,000,000 for the presentation of 10 operas for 67 performances, while the Lyric Opera of Chicago, now in its 33d season, is operating on a budget of over \$17,000,000 for nine operas and 69 performances.

The New York Metropolitan Opera, founded in 1883, stands alone with an annual budget of \$85,000,000 for 22 operas for a total of 210 performances.

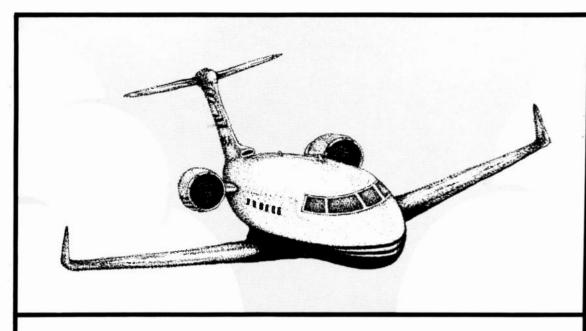
More Dates

By the 1988-89 season, Hemmings is gearing up to offer eight operas for 66 performances. This season's seven operas will play a total of 42 performances, including 18 on "tour," with engagements set for Rossini's "La Cenerentola" (an English-language version to be called "Cinderella"). The production, scheduled to play the Shrine Auditorium, Santa Monica, and Pasadena, is aimed at fifth and sixth graders of the Los Angeles Unified School District as part of "the development of comprehensive education programs that will create wider interest and awareness of opera"

From a practical showbiz point of view, L.A.'s entry into the opera fold suggests a boon for performers. With the international stars contracted on a per opera basis, a resident company, made of singers in "medium-sized roles," has been established. This year 15 are on salary for 35 weeks and next year Hemmings plans to have 20 on the payroll for 52 weeks.

LAMCO is not completely selfsufficient. It uses resources of the Music Center, and has made deals with the L.A. Chamber Orchestra and the L.A. Music Chorale to perform regularly as the company's orchestra and chorus. In addition, new productions of "Tristan And Isolde" in 1987-88 and "Woozeck" in 1988-89 will

(Continued on Page 182, Column 5)



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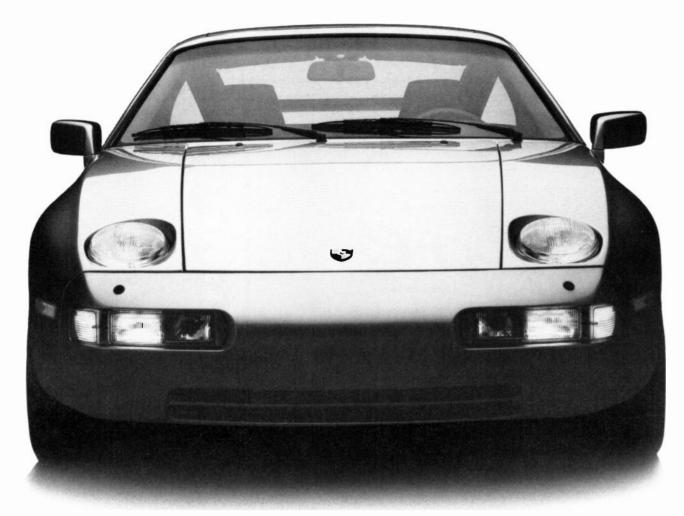
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Video Blurbs: Who's Watching

(Continued from Page 172, Column 5)

observed, to be "extremely cautious not to do anything that would violate the viewing and entertainment value of the tape. We will maintain very close control over the tape, and won't allow a situation in which we would lose control over the product. Any advantage we would gain from the sponsorship wouldn't be worth

HBOV is planning an entire line of original programs adapting parent Time Inc.'s publications to vid formats. And all those programs are being planned with sponsorships in mind.

Each title is expected to be budgeted at about \$500,000. The

sponsors will typically cover all production costs and help with the promotion of the tape by featuring it in their advertising.

HBOV is hoping the Time Inc. adaptations will serve as breakthrough programs, with the low price of \$14.95 and a sale target of more than 100,000 units per

The first "Sports Illustrated" tape was skedded to hit the stores this month, and production is underway on the first "Time" program, pencilled in for relase in the first quarter of '88.

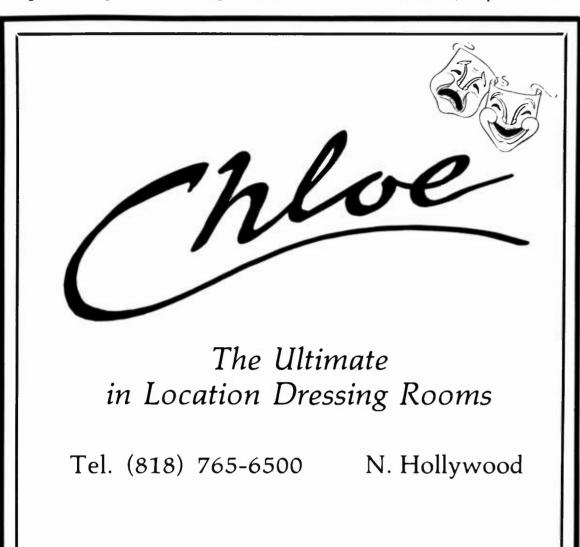
HBOV has also teamed the Visa credit card company with its line of Fodor Travel Guide vidcassettes in an earlier sponsorship deal.

O'Connell's company ranks as one of the most aggressive of the large program suppliers when it comes to experimenting with tape sponsorships, and that largely reflects the background of many of

goods leaning starts at the top with CEO O'Connell, whose career includes work in the computer software, video game, toy and food industries.

O'Connell comments, "Maybe we understand it (advertising) better because we've spent a good deal of our lives on the other side of the fence. What we're now offering to advertisers is what we were always looking for when we were on the other side of the fence."

(Continued on Page 186, Column 1)

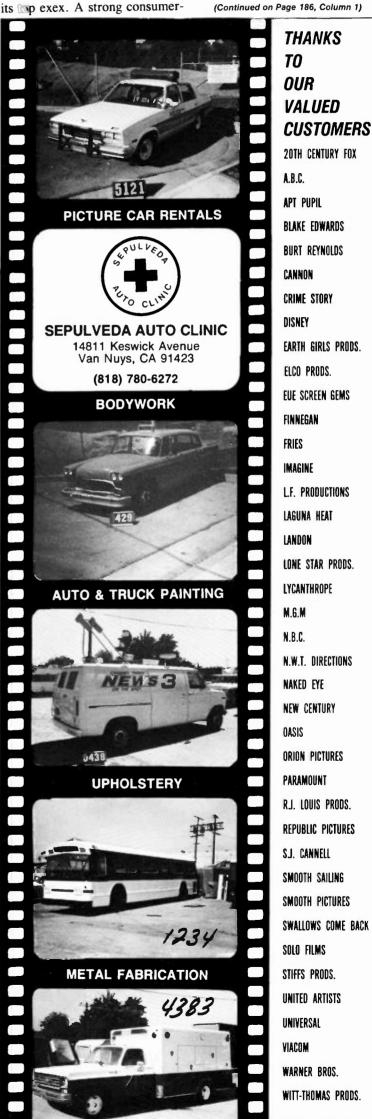




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PPV AND HOMEVIDEO: PLEA FOR **SOME PEACEFUL CO-EXISTENCE**

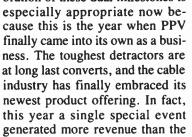
By SCOTT KURNIT

(President, Viewer's Choice pay-per-view service)

riletones such as birthdays Mand anniversaries usually provide the opportunity for celebration. And this year provides two such milestones for pay-per-view and for our network, Viewer's Choice. Dec. 1, 1987 is the 10th anniversary of QUBE, Warner Communication's extraordinary two-way electronic cable tv experiment as well as the second anniversary of Viewer's Choice

The two events are directly related because pay-per-view really began at QUBE. The cele-

bration of these dual milestones is cause this is the year when PPV ness. The toughest detractors are at long last converts, and the cable newest product offering. In fact, whole PPV industry grossed just a few years ago.



This was the year (and it's (Continued on Page 188, Column 5)



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stance, first off to promote its 1987-88 year. Kendricks said all mediums will be used, including print, radio and television spots.

There also will be a move toward stronger marketing of subscriptions with the use of telemarketing and direct mail, "We're moving from an order-taking mode to actively pursuing the sales," Kendricks said. Incidentally, the Center sold 15,000 subscriptions in its first year, but will likely top that number this year.

In wooing those potential audience members, the Center will be able to point to some coups such as the Coast premiere of the Paris Opera Ballet and the recently staged production of the Tony award-winning tuner "Big Riv-

Friendly Rivals

"It's not that we're in competition with the Los Angeles Music Center," Kendricks said. "In fact, there has been cooperation on both sides to avoid direct conflicts. Fortunately, there is enough product out there to fill both places."

And there are those rare instances, such as "Cabaret," where the show may play both places, despite the relatively short distance (about 50 miles) between

In this upcoming season, the Center is gambling on that philosophy by bringing the Los Angeles Joffrey Ballet down. "It's a big challenge," he admitted, "but we do have a solid local base.

In addition to such scheduling and subscription sales hassles, the Center (like any nonprofit center — is in the midst of a fundraising drive to raise a yearly stipend augementing those productions that do not pay for themselves for instance, the ballet and opera are often too expensive to pay off, even if every ticket is sold.

This year, the Center needs to raise \$4,100,000 in subsidizing funds. "The sooner we get those funds raised, the sooner we can go

to a forward funding basis," Kendricks said.

Forward funding basically means they would have the cash upfront to entice opera companies and the like for bookings a year to two years down the road. "You have to have advance funding to get these companies to come here," he said. "That's just the way it works.'

Subsequently, since the Center is only in its second year with no forward funds yet available, there will be no opera offered during the season.

Once those funds are raised, (the drive ends at the end of December), Center officials will begin moving on plans to build a second theater adjacent to Segerstrom Hall.

Already the Center's board has approved a plan to contract feasibility studies for the second theater. At this point, there is no target date for completion of the arena, though.

"First we have to see if we can raise the subsidiary funds," he noted.

Goals for 1987-88? To start out. Kendricks said the major drive will be to reach a broader audience through more aggressive advertising and marketing - put themselves on the map, so to speak.

"I'm afraid there's a false impression out there that the Center is always sold out and doesn't need audiences from outside," he said. "It isn't true."

There will also be the move toward future booking practices, allowing for a broader range of performance groups to come visit. Perhaps there may even be some ground broken on the second thea-

"If anything, we're going to become more aggressive now,' he declared.

.A. OPERA

(Continued from Page 178, Column 5)

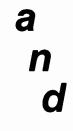
be presented in association with the L.A. Philharmonic, which will perform for these operas.

As part of its effort to provide topnotch new productions "while maintaining fiscal responsibility," the L.A. Opera has made coproduction arrangements with the Houston Grand Opera, Canadian Opera, English National Opera, and Geneva Opera.

This year's well-received new production of Prokofiev's "The Fiery Angel" was produced in conjunction with the English National Opera and Geneva Opera and had the support of the Los Angeles Festival. Also set for this season is a coproduction with the English National Opera of Tine Mikado," directed by Jonathan Miller and starring Dudley Moore, and Benjamin Britten's "A Midsummer Night's Dream," to be directed by the Mark Taper Forum's artistic director Gordon Davidson. Both offerings will be part of the "UK/LA '88: A Celebration of British Arts," which takes place from February through April, 1988.







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Video Blurbs: Who's Watching

(Continued from Page 180, Column 5)

But there's a significantly more important reason why HBO Video is so interested in sponsored tapes. "We're clearly working on how we can continue to get the industry to grow; how we can reach more consumers; how we can seed their viewing habit, so we don't see their activity falling off

after a certain length of time."

It's a critical question that confronts everyone in the video business. More and more suppliers are hitting barriers that hold down the once surging number of copies that can be sold of the big hit titles. And with the industry's catalog and B-title business getting sicklier with each passing

month, video companies are going to find the secrets of continued revenue growth increasingly elusive.

O'Connell sees advertising as a key means to sustain the sales growth for hit titles, and he cites two major forces that help. First, the advertising provides a new revenue stream, meaning more money will be generated by a film, even if more units aren't sold. Second, the advertising allows for marketing and publicity crossovers and boosted promo spending that can break the barriers and increase the sales totals by generating greater consumer demand for the title.

New Directions

He also notes that for original vid programming, backing by a sponsor means bigger budgets and better, more innovative programs. He cites HBOV's first "Sports Illustrated" tape as an example of an innovative sports program that, thanks to its sponsorship, is able to deliver to VCR owners a type of program they won't see elsewhere.

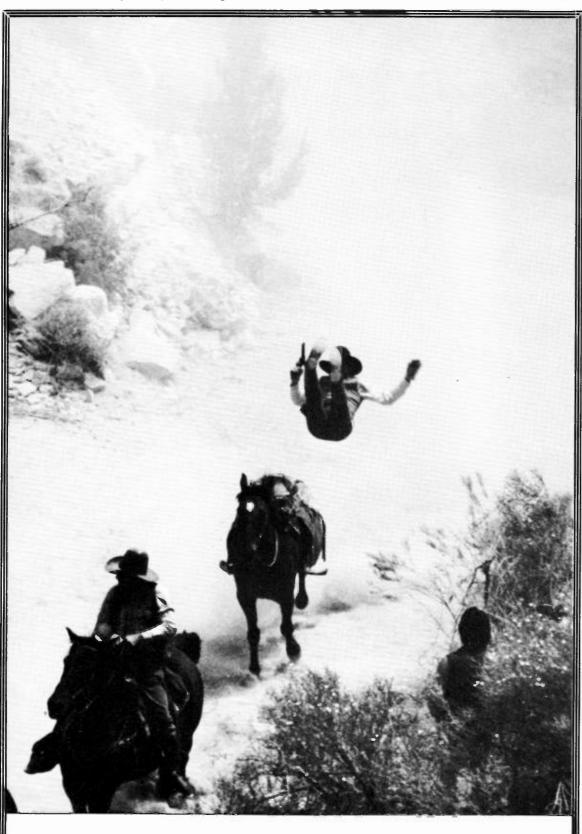
The "Speed" tape focuses on point-of-view camera work, super-slow-motion footage and other unusual techniques that attempt to make viewers feel they're experiencing the sensations of great speed that athletes experience. The "Speed" program is being produced by NFL Films vet Steve Sabol.

O'Connell thinks one of the biggest problems now facing video advertising is not a limit to its potential, but the difficulty the industry's going to have figuring out just how strong that potential is.

Advertisers are used to selling products through 30-second to spots that often include only small amounts of rather unsophisticated information. But with video advertising, there are virtually no restrictions on the length, form or content of the ads, O'Connell notes

The biggest problem right now may be simply breaking the ingrained habits that decades of tv advertising have built up. When video advertising blooms, it could mean completely different — and often more sophisticated and informative — methods of selling products, he thinks.

It's an example of how the VCR need not be the enemy to advertising or any other segment of the culture. The video revolution will mean significant changes for everyone — big opportunities for those who are a part of it, and big trouble for those who try to fight it.



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Stuntwoman Actress

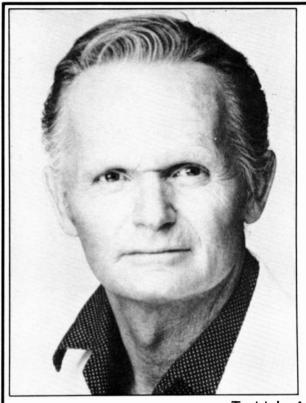
5'7''

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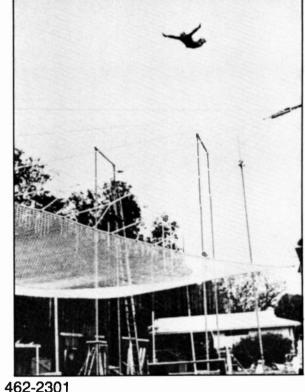




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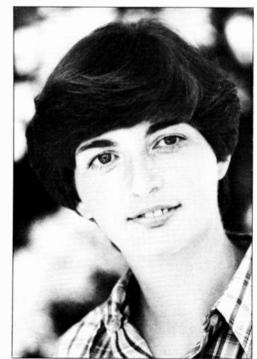
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"Twilda" & Stuntman Phil Wallace

PPV, HOMEVID (Continued from Page 182, Column 3)

about time) that commitment to PPV through impulse technology and marketing began to take hold; success stories like "Wrestlemania III," the Hagler/Leonard fight and a string of solid films were strong enough to give the faint-hearted sufficient convic-

At the risk of sounding slightly smug, all of what we 10-year veterans had been saying was inevitable finally came true.

Of course, PPV's long-time-inarriving-success has raised new issues. Now that PPV is "real," we are seeing storm clouds which threaten the vast revenue potential our business promises. The competition I refer to is the overreaction of homevideo dealers against the threat of pay-per-view intrusion on "their" marketplace.

I say the marketplace belongs to us both. Markets belong to those who seize an opportunity, who price, position and sell their special appeal to the consumer. There's room for both of us to fill the seemingly insatiable appetite for in-home entertainment. We merely serve different segments, different tastes of that market.

Pay-per-view serves the segment of the market which wants hot, current Hollywood hits and big-time special events delivered directly, conveniently, electronically to their homes. And our customers are willing to pay a premium for that convenience.

Price is not particularly an issue with the PPV customer. Timeliness and desirability of the offering are far more important. We offer theatrical hits and big events more efficiently than any other medium.

As a "broadcast" medium, we must and can satisfy the demands of the most consumers at any given time.

Video stores get into trouble when they peg their entire business on purveying mostly theatrical film hits in a "convenient" fashion. First of all, it's almost impossible for retailers to stock enough copies to meet initial demand. And, secondly, don't talk to me about convenience when you have to go get a videocassette title (if they have it) and then bring the darn thing back.

But nobody can top the homevideo store for depth of selection. It's the ultimate narrowcast opportunity. Not only that, it can be very inexpensive. The price helps compensate for the inconvenience. And the luxury of total self-selection is also appealing.

I believe we serve the same customer at different times, as well as customers who are discrete to us both. And both industries can flourish if we see it this way

In fact, PPV actually helps homevideo because we promote the same titles that are on the shelf at the video store. Yes, the stores will have trouble competing with us on the hits, but they have it all over us on inventory. Homevideo, of course, helps us in PPV by promoting the same titles we offer.

The darkest cloud on the PPV (Continued on Page 194, Column 4)

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Outlaws

sk for anything, but don't ask for scorpions from Robert Hirsch, director of Nevada's Motion Picture Division. There may be other bugs, animals and objects the Las Vegas office can provide a motion picture or ty producer, including a full crew resort-hotel package for location shoots, but lay off the scorpions.

The request for this pale beige arachnid inhabitant of warm desert regions with a poisonous sting on its tail came from a tv company about to depart for Las Vegas. But before they came, they wanted to be sure there was a plentiful supply of scorpions.

"Well, I'm willing to do a lot for our motion picture and tv cause, but when it comes to catching scorpions, black widow spiders and rattlesnakes, there is a limit to it," Hirsch remonstrated. "Now, I have been asked to go out and capture cockroaches by the hundreds and we did that. They were very accessible. Of course, that wasn't the high point of my career, but it was some-

Nevada Film Comm. Chief Happy To Provide Almost Anything, But Please, No Scorpions

thing I didn't object to. Needless to say, we don't keep our offices in that building anymore."

It is doubtful that many cock-roaches could be found in the new office Hirsch and staff occupy in the spaced-out, year-2000-designed McCarran International Airport. It is here many a hegira of producers or reps arrive to work out problems for films, commercials, videocassettes, although it took some time and some indoctrination before the correct view of Hirsch and his environment would be assimilated.

"In the area of normal location scouting, everyone has a different concept of what Las Vegas should be if they haven't been here before," he explains. "It's really fascinating when people look you right in the eye and with seriousness — totally honest — ask which

By BILL WILLARD

hotel I live in because they can't conceive there's any more to Las Vegas than hotels.

"I think for the nonfrequent visitors and the trade, the most astonishing revelation is when they come in and see that we have beautiful homes and a real community behind the facade of the Strip and downtown," Hirsch murmurs, still not without a lingering air of bemusement.

Big Change

The corrected vision of the city has opened up scores of film activities. Considering that five years ago the majority, in fact all the filming accomplished in the area, was casino-based, the change has been educative as Hirsch recalls: "If it had something to do with a slot machine or a roulette wheel, they thought of Vegas, but they didn't think of us for any other kind of filming activity."

For example, there are two scripts on his desk that have nothing to do with "Vegas for Vegas' sake." Also, there was "The Hitcher," a pic shot within 25 miles of Las Vegas and yet had no story connection with Las Vegas. The setting was actually in the Texas badlands. Also, "The Hitcher" provides a sharp economic lesson to producers.

Although Las Vegas has the high desert look, the company decided to shoot two days in Victorville. Dispatching five men to that small city, accommodations for three nights were made in a well-known motel chain with

nightly room at \$70 per man per room. Hirsch smiles, "While they were in Vegas for six weeks, they paid \$20 per man per room. So it was a rather dramatic lesson — better settle for 300% less if you want desert badland footage and the fun of being in Las Vegas."

There are problem scripts arising constantly as the Motion Picture Division tries to find ways to solve in order to make the achievement record 99%, even 100%. One dilly causing headaches was trying to find a wheat field in Southern Nevada for a shoot. There is a field of waving grain in Central Nevada in the Fallon area, but Hirsch was disinclined to believe the company would send a crew to that location, when a modest rewrite could be a reasonable compromise. "I don't know where in hell I'm going to get a wheat field, but I'm going to come up with a piece of schtick in lieu of a wheat field," he said, looking at a map of Southern Nevada. "Maybe I could sell them on alfalfa.'

Exhib Past

Hirsch was paged for the position in 1983. He grew up at the other end of pictures. His family was in exhibition for many years with the result that he viewed the business through the eyes of an exhibitor.

With his near-actor's voice resonating deeply, he reminisced: "In those days you didn't have such things as blind bidding, etc. It was a lot easier. You were able to evaluate a picture basically on what you heard, what you knew

from past experiences that worked for your situation.

"So, I got a pretty good and incisive education on what the film business was all about before this job came into being. This is where creativity has its part, although there was room for creativity in exhibition," he continued. "I remember a picture, 'The King And I,' with Deborah Kerr. We got it at the tail end of the firstrun release. It was pretty well milked, very popular at the time. We were trying to come up with a way to make some money on it and we hit upon the idea of buying the paste jewelry from the prop department and raffling each night at the nine o'clock showing, awarding the lucky ticket purchaser a piece of the paste jewelry.

"We had women coming in drenched in their own real diamonds and platinum who would kill to get in that theater so they could have a piece of jewelry that Deborah Kerr wore. It made the picture one of the biggest grossers we ever had and it all segues back into the creativity which is more evident in the production end of it."

Of more than ordinary excitement to Hirsch is involvement with scripts in rough draft phase arriving at the office. Here he must decide about possibles or impossibles, practical matters such as offensive material, particularly if it involves resort hotels, where the subject, or action, might turn off the hotel management working with them. He said that many times when a location turns out to be a lemon, production companies turn to him for suggestions on viable alternatives. "We've done pretty well in this department," he preens.

Aside from the scorpion hunt, (Continued on Page 192, Column 1)

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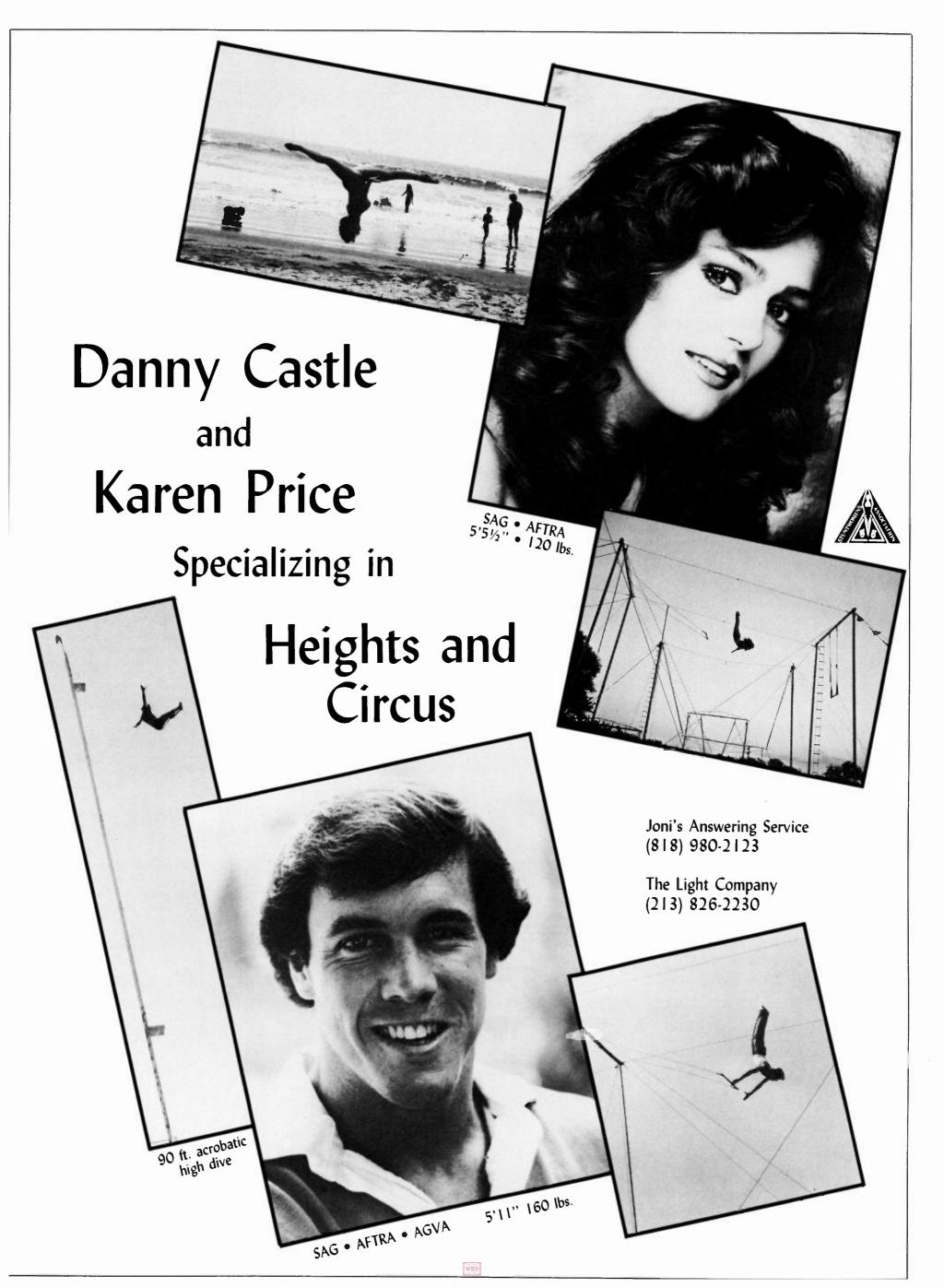
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(Continued from Page 190, Column 5)

Hirsch has had other kooky requests, not poisonous, but ludicrous. On one shoot, he describes, filming at McCarran airport was halted as the irate producer asked Hirsch to call the flight control tower and have all flights stopped in the next hour because the noise of departing and landing aircraft was interfering with the scene. Still another shoot near the airport, no relation to the first request, caused the director to demand a landing and take-off switch of runways from north/south to east/west, despite wind direction.

Hirsch chuckles remembering such incidents and other requests that are "so completely farfetched that the only thing you can do is smile and explain to the person the request can't be acted upon." Better demands on him are those requests when production people arrive and say, "I don't think you can do this, but ..."

One of those challenges concerned the John Carpenter film, "Starman," where Hirsch managed to close off both north and south lanes of the I-15 freeway north of Las Vegas for three days. Hirsch said it was done "easily" because the old Salt Lake Highway ran parallel to the freeway 30 feet below, taking care of the de-

Nevada Happy To Accommodate Filming

tour with the Nevada Highway Patrol aiding in directing traffic. So, while Carpenter and crew were filming what appeared to be a vast expanse of desert nothingness adjacent to action on the freeway, cars and trucks and buses moved unimpeded below the cameras' point of view.

Where Credit Is

Hirsch gives credit for this maneuver to a small state and absence of red tape, although the freeway detouring did involve the Federal government. He has sufficient greenlights for his tasks from the head office, that of Gov. Richard O'Brien, to give him heart for future challenges.

"Because it's a small, cohesive state government run by a gentleman who has a very kind and real interest in the tv and motion picture industry, speaking of the governor," he said, "my job is infinitely easier than if we had someone in the executive mansion who was ambivalent, or who didn't see that it was a significant industry role for us."

The State Legislature has also been compliant, having seen the

wisdom of obtaining high visibility via film and tv production in Nevada. This year, the ad budget was increased more than 100%, giving Hirsch a calling of \$70,000, exclusively for trade ads.

According to Hirsch, the overall budget includes enough funding to print a production directory listing all the service providers in the state. Most of the 400 copies printed are distributed to motion picture studios, producers, story editors and others contacting the state office requesting copies. A second directory, in process, provides information on unique locations, homes and specialized autos available in Southern Nevada.

Northern and Central area facilities are also featured in the production directory, now in its third edition. Originally about 85% of all production was in Southern Nevada, but Hirsch said the increase in northern and central shoots has increased extensively, due to elimination of the myth about not being able to get to Reno from Los Angeles.

He cites the filming of an episode of "Starman" for Columbia Pix TV when all Las Vegas hotel rooms were filled due to the Consumer Electronics Show. An excellent package was assembled with John Ascuaga's Nugget in Sparks, adjacent to Reno. This was followed by Bob Conrad's "High Mountain Rangers" with much footage spooled on the Nevada side of Lake Tahoe. "That program succeeded very well in the ratings," Hirsch said. "CBS ordered eight episodes which will go into production in the next few weeks.

"We also landed a feature film, a New York production company that began shooting (in Northern Nevada) Sept. 15 for eight weeks. We've also opened production in central or rural counties as well. The film 'Family Reunion' was shot 100% in rural Nevada in Esmerelda and Nye counties. It really has benefits we never envisioned four years ago — the thought of a film shooting in the Goldfield area in its entirety would have been pretty bizarre."

Hirsch has an office in Carson City, the state capitol, staffed by a full-time assistant and secretary. This Northern Nevada office handles location scouting, accommodies

dation packages etc., through coordination with the principal McCarran Airport office.

The "Crime Story" adventure is one of Hirsch's pet disclosures. Last year, the show's producers found sticky going getting cooperation from some Las Vegas hotel reps, but as attested editorially by the Las Vegas Review-Journal, all is roses this year: "This time around, the community has thrown out the welcome mat for the 'Crime Story' people.

Not Alarmed

"You might recall that last year, some Las Vegas tourism officials fretted publicly about the subject matter of the 'Crime Story' episodes (Vegas in its formative period, organized crime, casino skimming, union corruption, loan sharking, shootouts on Fremont Street).

"Frank Sain, head of the Las Vegas Convention & Visitors Authority, and others worried that 'Crime Story' would sully Las Vegas' image and drive away tourists. Local businesses were urged not to cooperate with producer Michael Mann (of "Miami Vice" fame and the 'Crime Story' crew."

Hirsch stoutly held fast in his belief that "Crime Story" would make the "fretters" stop their crying and realize the full potential of the NBC series.

"I think that what people saw being made was indeed a very sty lized and very interesting piece o fiction and that was not going to have any negative impact on tour ism," Hirsch said. "It was no going to cause any large company considering moving their head offices to Las Vegas from doing

"It's not going to keep Maudi Thickett from allowing her hus band to come here on a conven tion because of the terrible thing that she sees on the television screen. This was all a lot of need less folderal and was totally dis proven, much in the same way Michael (Mann) did with 'Miam Vice' ... Tourism every year that the program has been on has in creased dramatically. Obviously 'Miami Vice' has had no negative effect on Miami either."

"Crime Story" yes, even cock roaches for the glory of Las Vega and Nevada, says Bob Hirsch. Bu scorpions, no.

LISA McCULLOUGH



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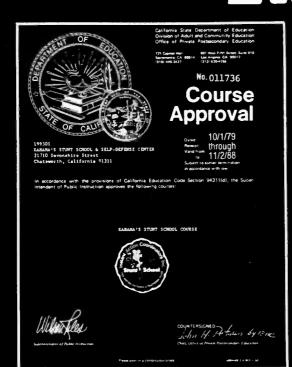


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Academy's Treasure Trove

understanding about the position of a collection, you really may find that you don't have such a clear idea until it's happened or it's too late. You've lost it.

'That's why we've found you really do have to make your plans as definite and concrete as possible, and get the material into the library. Or have a written agreement.

"Also, you have to make sure you're dealing with the person entitled to make that gift. Someone may say, 'I can get you this material,' but they're not in a position to donate that material. If you go through a second party, it often will not work."

Doug Edwards, who was at one time program coordinator for the Encounter Cinema and Theater Vanguard, local forum for experimental cinema, donated his papers and all the programming aspects of these two organizations. Experimental filmmakers send Edwards notes about their current work; those are included.

When one institute has the handle on a major collection, the other institute respects that and usually augments the collection with related items. Paramount, for instance, has handed over its still and scripts libraries, and another archive would almost certainly, if offered something out of Paramount by a third person, suggest that the item join the rest of the Paramount trove at the Academy.

As an example of the turnabout's-fair-play doctrine, the Academy, which held a great deal of the Paramount TV material, turned it over to UCLA because the Academy stays clear of television. UCLA, Paramount and the Academy resolved the situation.

In that vein, the AFI, USC. UCLA and the Academy all got together with the city, looked at the collections, inventoried them, and agreed to decide where those materials destined for the Hollywood Museum should go - the destination was the Lincoln

Heights Jail until something could be worked out.

That was limited to research materials, since the city did want to do something with the displayable artifacts. At the moment, some of those items are on loan to institutions like the Hollywood Studio Museum, the DeMille Barn now across from the Hollywood Bowl.

Orson Welles' papers were sold to the Lilly Library in Bloomington, Ind. John Ford's papers are also there. Explaining, Gill observes, "Some of the looks I get from researchers! They come in and say, "I'm working on suchand-such, and I was wondering, where are John Ford's papers? I'll say, 'Bloomington, Ind.!

Now, these are wonderful sites. They have money, they're beautifully organized, they have excellent staffs and finding aids, and the collections are well taken care of. But what has happened is that they've gotten spread all over the country.

"If you're doing a biography on a producer, a movie mogul, you just about have to go to all these libraries all over the country. If you want to know what anyone like Sam Goldwyn or Darryl Zanuck or Harry Cohn wrote, what kind of communication he had with all his producers and directors, you're going to have to go all over the country, no matter how much reciprocity's going on."

Hedda Hopper's private files, containing correspondence and interview transcriptions as they were before she picked up her quotes for her articles and columns, are lodged at the Academy. Her chummy personal letters to various friends and their notes to her, are chatty and sometimes prophetic - Hopper at one juncture foresaw the marriage of Arthur Miller and Marilyn Monroe. As for Louella Parsons, her papers apparently no longer exist

at least no trace has been found of them. Harriet Parsons told the Academy that she had no recollection of her mother's papers, but the scrapbooks containing all her columns survived; producer Parsons donated all of her mother's columns to the Academy.

The Paul Ballard collection of stills has been broken down so that the pictures are with the appropriate biography or production files. The Harry Crocker collection contains materials spotlighting Charles Chaplin, for whom Crocker was publicist.

The collections are vast and numerous, and names spring to light with impressive credentials:

Richard Barthelmess, Beulah Bondi, Frank Borzage (his albums of films include title pages used for titles in the pictures), Charles Coburn, George Cukor, Valentine Davies, Eduard Franz, Samuel Fuller, Samuel Goldwyn (represented by scrapbooks, still books, loose stills and set design still books — and a theater). William S. Hart, Edith Head, Alfred Hitchcock, John Huston, Werner Janssen, Lamont Johnson, Henry King, Isobel Lennart, Robert Z. Leonard, Anita Loos, Hattie Mc-Daniel, Norman Z. McLeod, Gregory Matkopoulos, Ralph Meeker, Lewis Milestone, Merle Oberon, Maria Palmer, Norman Panama, Mary Pickford, Charles Previn, Wallace Reid Jr., Sidney Skolsky, Pete Smith, Kay Van Riper, Perc Westmore, Patrice Wymore - and these are only a sampling.

That's no shopping list. It's an indication of how many special collections of incomparable quality the library has received as donations - and how much of a treasure chest awaits the researcher, the filmmaker, or the sincerely interested. All they have to do is

In March 1983 Jack Valenti and the Motion Picture Association of (Continued on Page 196, Column 1)

PPV, HOMEVID

(Continued from Page 188, Column 5) horizon exists because the magnitude of this dual opportunity is not yet totally accepted by some important PPV suppliers. To compete fairly and effectively, PPV needs parity release windows with homevideo. There is a discernible trend right now to hold PPV releases back later than video.

There's no doubt that, at the moment, homevideo is more lucrative on a gross revenue basis to Hollywood. But pay-per-view is just beginning to roll. Further, a PPV transaction delivers three times more revenue to a studio than does a homevid rental.

At this point, the business requires an artful balance between the present and the future. And, in enlightened self-interest, the studios should evolve methods to have the best of both worlds.

Several elements make this more than merely hopeful pleading. Our industries are evolving. Homevideo retailers are finally learning to sell tapes and stock new types of original programming. Viewer's Choice, for one, will be more aggressive in the live special event business in 1988.

These changes - video sales and PPV special events - will serve to differentiate our industries. Both will get even smarter at appealing to their customer in differentiated ways. The market has already made room for both busi-

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International Attention, And Acclaim, Won The Hard Way By Bengali Cinema

(The writer is a partner in a publishing concern and also is a free-lance journalist).

CALCUTTA

From the days of Motilal and Hiralal Sen — whose Royal Bioscope Company was set up in 1901 in Calcutta — the Bengali cinema has assiduously nurtured the concept of the higher goal. In retrospect, this is but a reflection of the Bengali's painstakingly evolved ethos, which confounds the priorities set by modern-day materialism, but provides fertile ground for the flowering of art and artists.

In the early days of the Bengali film industry, concentrated in Calcutta, such giants as Himanshu Rai were far ahead of their time. Rai had the vision to float Bombay Talkies as a public limited company, anticipating modern demands that filmmaking be recognized as an industry.

Founder of the legendary New Theaters, maker of epics - "De-"Doctor" and "Mukti" vdas," - B.N. Sircar was a real movie mogul. He was the mentor of greats such as P.C. Barua, K.L. Saigal and Kanan Devi. Under Sircar's exemplary leadership, New Theaters reached pinnacles of success in filmmaking. Directors such as Bimal Roy and Nitin Bose gave the concern some of its biggest hits — "Udayer Pather" (1945), the Hindi version of which contained a Tagore song, "Jana Gana Mana," later to become India's National Anthem.

Reaching Out

Even in those early days, the Bengali cinema exhibited some of its dynamism with a spate of coproductions with foreign countries. Madan Theaters of Calcutta is credited with being the first to go in for such a venture. Devika Rani, screen goddess of many early productions, was described by a London paper as "one of the most delicately glamorous stars ever seen." "Seeta," directed by Dabaki Bose, was the first Indian film to be screened at a foreign festival, in Venice, in 1934. Ahindra Chowdhury was generally regarded as one of the greatest stage and screen actors of the time.

The uncompromising, torchbearing avant-garde cinema had its early inception in Bengal, when a relatively unknown director named Satyajit Ray rejected the early concepts of filmmaking almost totally and gave the world "Pather Panchali" (1955). Even then, Ray showed clearly his love for, and commitment to, his native Bengal. Later, Ray followed up with "Aparajito" and "Apur Sansar," closing the trilogy on the life of his main protagonist, Apu. Having made "Devi" (1960) and "Charulata" (1964), Ray

changed gears with a highly successful music-fantasy, "Goopy Gyne Bagha Byne" (1968), written by his grandfather. Later years saw "Aranyer Din Ratri," "Pratidwandi," "Seemabaddha," "Ashani," "Sankhet" and "Jana Aranya." "Shatranj Ke Khiladi'' marked Ray's brief flirtation with the Hindi cinema. In recent times, he made the entertaining detective sory, "Joi Baba Felinath" and "Ghare Bhaire," a Tagore story, his long-cherished project, released only last year.

Ray's unwavering excellence elevated Bengali cinema as a whole to a plateau above the standards generally prevailing. His career graph is practically all peaks. At national and international levels, Ray has been accorded recognition so frequently that it would be foolhardy to attempt to recapitulate all the honors that have come his way.

Yet, Ray was not alone in the pioneering of notable cinema in Bengal. Mrinal Sen and Tapan Sinha joined in with considerable talent of their own. Sen's "Bhuvan Shome" (1969) gave rise to a spate of off-beat films which came to be clubbed together as the "new cinema" move-ment. "Baishey Shravan," "Interview," "Mrigaya," "Ek Din Pratidin" and "Akaler Sandhaney," some of Sen's later efforts, were all filmed with telling effect by this very committed director.

On the other hand, Tapan Sinha, more inclined towards the nar-rative style, made "Kabuliwala," "Kshudita Pashan," based on Tagore's "Hungry Stones, Sagina Mahato," that told of trade unionism with memorable stories which were topical at the same time. Ritwick Ghatak was another great director, whose lyrical filmic style was often reflected in the titles he chose for his films, such as "Meghe Dhaka Tara" and "Komal Gandhar."

Dedicated Directors

Filmmakers like these have fostered the uncompromising attitude common to dedicated directors in Calcutta. Younger men like Gautam Ghosh ("Dakhal" and "Paar") have also won critical acclaim and boxoffice success too, as audiences increasingly seem to rise to new levels of appreciation of the film art. Utpalendu Chakravorty, another promising director, is being financed by the National Film Development Corporation for his "Debshishu" (Hindi), which tackles a bold theme of religious superstition.

A measure of Calcutta's dedication to film as an art form is the appearance of popular Bombay stars. "Paar" starred Nasiruddin Shah and Shabana Azmi and the

Hindi venture, "Debsishu," which will see Smita Patil in an extremely challenging role with Sadhu Meher, Rohini Hattangady, Om Puri and others. Amol Palekar has acted in Bengali films like "Mothand costars with Tanuia in 'Chena Achena.'' Sarika, Simple Kapadia, Sharmila Tagore, Utpal Dutt are among others who have found artistic satisfaction in Bengali film.

In an industry where the foremost stars seek other avenues of employment and income, such as the stage, this is a pointer to Calcutta's deep commitment to the discipline of cinema. Even the redoubtable Uttam Kumar, who until his death in 1980, was the colossus of the Bengali commercial cinema for three decades and possessed the charisma to warrant the success of any film he appeared in, commanded a top price of Rs.1 lakh (U.S. \$8500) only at the zenith of his career. Today's popular stars may earn only small fractions of that amount per film.

Distinguished

By and large, Bengali films either "new wave" or otherwise - are a far cry from the garish, over-loud and exaggerated Bombay monstrosities, in which the theme itself becomes an irrelevance in the face of the boorish commercial trappings. Bengali cinema has been fortunate in having a rich fund of stories and novels in the prolific sphere of Bengali literature

From the pens of Tagore, Bankimchandra, Saratchandra and Bibhuti Bhusan Banerjee have flowed classic tales that have been woven into memorable films. Contemporary writers, taking a leaf out of their books, are also following the tradition, so that at any given time a rich and varied selection of stories and themes is available to filmmakers.

With this bank of raw material for the cinema, directors take few liberties. In Calcutta, formula films are unknown and each new venture has basically original ideas in the treatment of the story. The aesthetics are carefully monitored by the director who is the real prima donna of the show. Sex, sensationalism and violence are seldom irrelevantly portrayed, or inserted for mere titillation. The romantic pair do not necessarily lead the cast. Character artists are perceived not as props of the "hero" and "heroine," but as pillars of the narrative and often provide its primary impetus. The dramatis personae are real-life and identifiable, cast in grey rather than stark black or white. There is no attempt to pin the mandatory labels of "hero" and 'villain' on characters and each role is functional rather than ornamental.

would indicate that all this has not been in vain. Scarcely a year goes by in which a Bengali film - or a Hindi film made in Bengal for that matter - has not won high-level distinction at home or abroad.

In recent times, however, boxoffice pressures have told on Bengali cinema. The industry passed through a severe recession, which threatened to strike at its very roots. As one film flopped after another, the atmosphere of despair deepened, and producers were inclined towards morbid predictions for the future of their films. Last year, when two modest black-and-white films -"Shatru" and "Lal Golap" scored at the boxoffice, the industry awakened from its torpor.

Virtually overnight, the prophets of doom turned harbingers of joy. A flood of new ventures has been unleashed. Artists and technicians now work double and triple shifts, and the eight studio floors at Tollygunge (Calcutta's filmmaking district) are booked solid until well into next year. Tollygunge's three functional studios - New Theaters, Indrapuri and Technicians — accustomed to sporadic bursts of shooting, have had a trying time in coordinating bookings. To "Shatru," in particular, credit is due for this general euphoria, which has undeniably injected a sense of purpose into the body of Bengali cinema after a longish period.

Yet trade circles voice fears at this spate of new ventures. The pattern has already become topheavy with some hand-picked artists and directors burdened with a disproportionate number of assignments. Anjan Chowdhury, maker of "Shatru," for example, is simultaneously writing seven films and directing another five. That outstanding female star Mahua Roychowdhury, recently killed in bizarre circumstances, has left incomplete about 15 films and another 10 or so in the blueprint stage. Inevitably such pressure will dilute quality.

Audience Fickle

In a battle-scarred and shaky trade, which is in the process of finding its feet again, further failure of films will have serious repercussions. It is against this background that apprehensions about indiscriminate launchings must be viewed. It is generally agreed among the cognoscenti that the Bengali film audience, though partial to family-oriented, emotional and melodramatic fare. is fickle. In the smaller towns and villages, which form the bulk of the Bengali film market, the simple, appealing story takes precedence over sophisticated or idiomatic cinema. Not surprisingly

therefore, in Bengali commercia films there is a preponderance of the village milieu, of the tyrannical zamindar (landowner) and hapless peasant, the long-suffering mother and wife, of middleclass problems and family bonds. Also not surprisingly, most avantgarde directors have turned to Hindi projects, which not only enlarge the financial compass but also provide greater exposure for the filmmaker at the national lev-

Accordingly, Utpalendu, Mrinal Sen, Buddhadev Dasgupta and others have planned their current projects in Hindi. Tapan Sinha's 'Admi Aur Aurat,'' shown on national television, and Gautam Ghosh's "Paar," were also in Hindi. Satyajit Ray's current activities are centered around a tv serial in Hindi directed by his son, Sandip. Ray is writing and scoring music for the episodes which will be telecast in January.

The Bengali film industry is chronically prey to shortages and constraints. Its producers lack adequate finances, its studios are bereft of modern equipment and the raw stock supply position at the best of times sends shivers down filmmakers' spines.

Talent Migration

With the preeminence of Bombay, talent has migrated en masse from Calcutta. Completed films often pile up in a backlog for want of exhibition outlets, and because funds for prints and publicity are not forthcoming. Sadly, many of the Bengali cinema's best efforts fail to find distributors, who generally consider art films a risky proposition and consequently cannot be released in time.

The State Government drew up a few grandiose plans to refurbish the industry, but they did not all come to fruition. A color film laboratory is yet to be completed despite having been many years in the making. Color reels exposed at Tollygunge have to be flown to Bombay or Madras for process-

A few years ago, the government invited scripts for the purpose of producing films for deserving directors. As a result, Utpalendu's "Chokh," Aiov Kar's "Madhuban" and "Kony," a sports film based on the story of a swimmer, have been produced, but scores of scripts are still in the Government's files.

The Bengali cinema is a concomitant of Bengali culture. Like the Bengali middle class, who prefer to eschew the vulgarity and sordidness of crass commercialism in favor of cherished principles like honesty and dignity, the Bengali cinema too, seems to seek its sustenance not from the boxoffice, but from aesthetic fulfilment and critical acclaim.

Academy's Treasure Trove

(Continued from Page 194, Column 5)
America helped all serious students of film history and filmmaking by turning over the Production Code files dating from 1927 to 1967. This extraordinary donation chronicles the ins and outs of making films under strict dictates of what was to become known as the Hays Office — and with what infinite patience, ingenuity and sheer guts the filmmakers rose to the occasion.

Lodged in the special collections department of the library, each folder records in sometimes surprisingly revealing fashion the give and take of the two forces, the creators and the censors, who were on the lookout not only for domestic missteps but for what might offend foreign censor boards.

The file contains film reviews and feature articles involving the film — and reviews of source material, a book or a play. Correspondence about the film and memos — countless memos — have

been neatly bound into the folder; code certificates and analysis charts mark the progress of the work on the film, and synopses and rewrites and comments on synopses and rewrites show how detailed each frame of film was observed.

The credit sheets are included, and scribbled notes — even doodling — and censor board reports. To help fill out gaps, there are script excerpts, music and lyrics, meeting notes and treatments — and some stills.

Archivist-historian Gill confesses to "a special fondness for the Production Code Administration files because to me it cuts across so many areas, so many disciplines, and society's interest at a time, so to me that's one of my favorite collections. There are some going back to the 1920s, and that's unusual, but from 1934 they get to be pretty consistently complete files. I think it took them a while to get their procedures established.

"When Breen (Joseph I., the code administrator) was dropped into place, that really put some teeth into it. It became very obvious that Breen meant business, and from that moment you can certainly see where the MPAA really meant business and the self-policing came firmly into place—also an amazing understanding of the problems of both parties, the producers and the Association.

"And, of course, what they were really attempting to do was placate the public. Sometimes you'll have letters from a church group. Of course, they had their own consultants from the various denominations, so they'd also get their feelings about a particular script and any potential problems.

"The Association by then knew many of the problem areas. You don't kid the Boy Scouts, for example — Boy Scout jokes were out. And also characters making fun of the Boy Scouts were out.

"Making fun of any nationalities — Italians, French, even the Germans (especially the Germans prior to World War II — that was very sensitive), so it's marvelous to see those things chronicled year by year.

"And I might mention, too, that it includes the unproduced properties." That's revealing because the question arises, why weren't they produced?

The Academy is investigating the status of the unproduced properties, which studio was involved with it, what was the year the major action was taken on it. It's hoped to have the MPAA inventory all that information so the visitor will know what were the unproduced projects of, say, 1937.

The intricate details show up when titles are considered. Foreign language films and British films aside, verifying American films by their final titles isn't that easy. "Sometimes there are three files with the same name. Does that mean there are two folders that are for the same film, or are those different films? It often turns out that one was a produced project, and the other was not," says Gill.

One file may hold information on more than one version of a

film. Paramount's 1932 "Dr. Jekyll And Mr. Hyde" and MGM's 1941 remake are in the same manila folder.

If there's a remake with different titles ("The Front Page," the United Artists-Howard Hughes 1931 version turned into Columbia's 1940 "His Girl Friday"), they are lumped together.

And sometimes films are filed under alternate or former titles rather than the ultimate release

Files on "Citizen Kane," "Gone With The Wind," "Gunga Din," "King Kong," "The Moon Is Blue," "Psycho," "Singin' In The Rain" and "Wizard Of Oz," an eclectic bunch if ever there was one, as well as half the letter "Y" and all of the letter "Z" are not as yet available, according to the MPAA's cover letter.

Gill feels that those films are still retained by their current office because they've been rereleased since 1967. The MPAA keeps adding to the files — as a film is rereleased, the Association pulls its old file and adds the updated correspondence to the top of

The alphabetical gaps are, simply, missing. Says Gill, "We're really worried about it. We think what might have happened was that in all the file cabinets, at the very tail end of them, perhaps one or two drawers might have been at the top of the cabinet and then the other drawers, and when these were moved, they didn't realize that maybe they boxed the contents somewhere else. We put the word out. It may turn up - they didn't throw anything away, so it's probably going to be in storage someplace and will show

Howard Prouty, working with Gill, has been instrumental in helping work up a master index for the special collections. "We're getting there," asserts Gill. "My thought when I started cataloging, I chose all the littler ones. I did a card catalog to about 40 of the little collections, but if you're talking about collections with 20,000 titles, we need to go to the computer.

"What Howard did was devise a method of computerizing our index, to have a master index where if you were interested in even an unproduced film from 1935 and you look at it, you can see that in the MPAA we have a Production Code file record referring, say, to the Lewis Milestone collection, and maybe the screenwriter. Maybe Howard Esterbrook's collection will have a file on that script.

A searcher will be able, then, to piece all the information together like a puzzle, pulling that information from five or six different collections.

While unproduced films are accorded less respect or interest in other archives or libraries, Gill believes it's an important, unexplored area. As he says, the film would be just as interesting if it were not made — that everything was set to go, the filmmaker got all the way to the final step, and stopped. The situation is still of (Continued on Page 198, Column 1)

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Academy's Treasure Trove

(Continued from Page 196, Column 5) historic importance — and reference.

The MPAA collection, then, will serve as the foundation for the index. With almost 20,000 titles in that accumulation, the list includes most of the feature-length films released in the U.S. during a 30-year period.

Prouty now is working on that challenge as well as other collection indexes, and when MPAA has been finished, they'll be merged. The index, to be revised periodically, will be a helpful handbook to be issued in hard copy.

* * *
Those filmmakers chafing un-

der current rating restrictions would be astonished to discover what the once all-powerful Motion Picture Producers and Distributors of America could dictate. Because voluntary censorship had had a rocky road and eventually lost New York State, the industry, trying to sanitize its image and to stave off official censorship, took a stand: The MPPDA was formed in 1922 with President Harding's Postmaster General, Will H.

Hays, at the helm. As Gill says, they were placating the public.

The organization's two-pronged thrust meant tidying up the industry's image and persuading individual filmmakers to clean up their act for the good of the business. Hays, a Presbyterian elder and a figure of national prominence, turned out to be a successful choice.

By 1930, the MPPDA was called, not surprisingly, the "Hays office." The organization created the Motion Picture Production Code, though the Code didn't gain its real power until four years later.

How one film fared out of 19,500 collected in the Production Code Administrative Files illustrates the jockeying, the exasperation, the dictatorial style brandished by the MPPDA — and how a top creative team met each stimulus. Tracing that film's rocky course through the MPPDA files to completion could be instructive. And it's a clear lesson how, using one folder from the library's special collections file can illuminate the steps of crea-

tivity — and how they leapt over the hurdles too, in the end, not only to placate that audience but to conquer it.

In December 1936, Clare Boothe's all-femme-cast "The Women," with Lois Wilson in the lead, opened on Broadway to some acclaim. A 17-page synopsis dated December 28, 1936, was fired off to members of the Association.

The tag on the memo was: "This play contains: Adultery, Vulgar and obscene dialogue, Profanity."

In July 1939, MGM was to describe it as "Social problem. Comedy-Melodrama," and provided a plot summary. The trades saw moving the play from the boards to the screen a challenge. Daily Variety's review referred to Boothe's work as "an ornate comedy," which it certainly was.

The play revolves around a group of smart New York women who frequent the same manicurist, who gossip inordinately, and who uncover the delicious morsel that that sweet Mary — the Wil-

(Continued on Page 200, Column 5)



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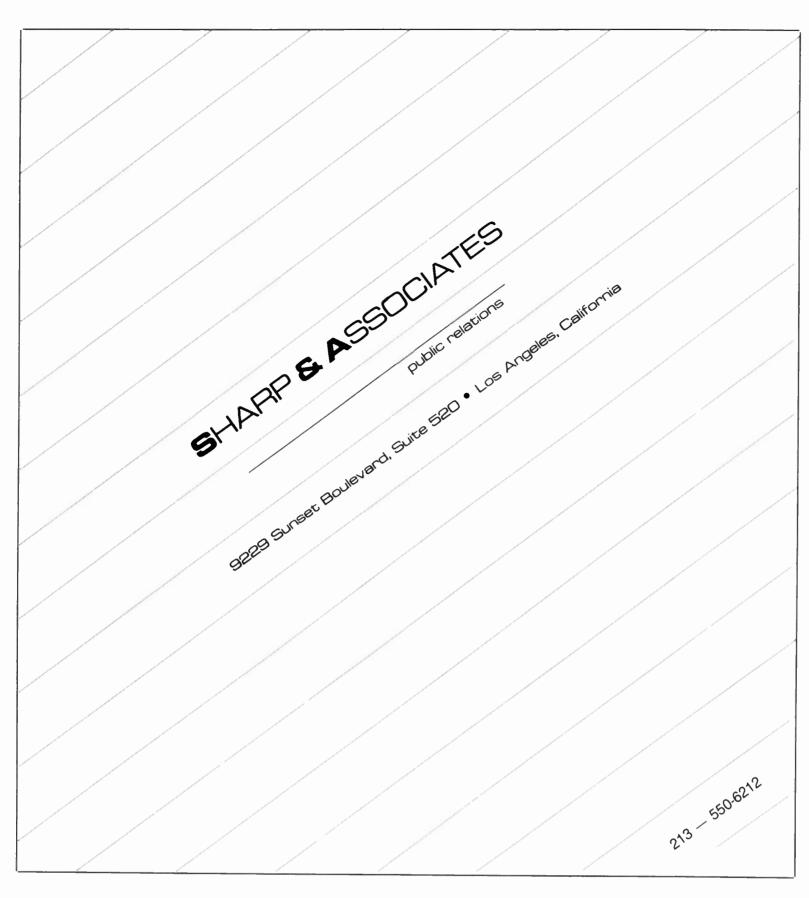
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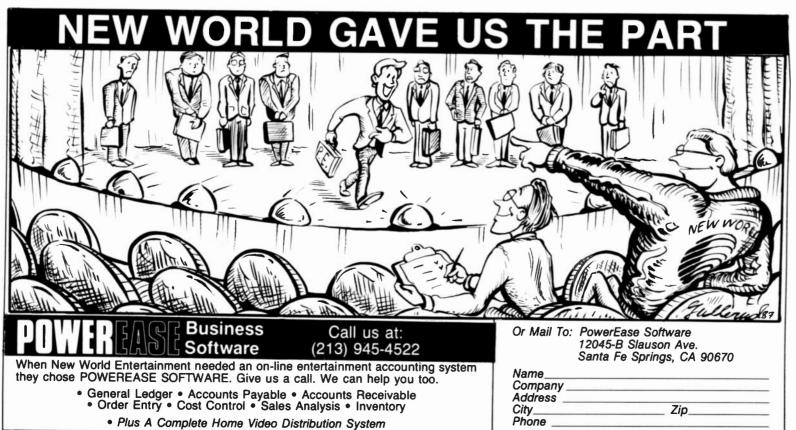


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ACADEMY

(Continued from Page 198, Column 5) son role — is a victimized wife since her husband has been playing around with Crystal Allen, the woman selling perfume in a fashionable department store.

The plot doesn't matter that much; it's the dialog and the situations that made the play, though now painfully dated, effervescent. And, as far as the Hays office was concerned, something dangerous.

RKO's Robert Sparks, showing an interest in the play, forwarded a synopsis dated January 6, 1937, to the Association quartered at 5504 Hollywood Blvd., presided over in Hollywood by Joseph I. Breen.

Breen, director of the Production Code Administration since 1934, was the man who put the teeth in the MPAA Production Code and dared producers to break it. A dynamic administrator whose toughness dated back to his early days as a foreign correspondent, Breen was "the conscience of Hollywood" who never considered himself a censor.

His job, as he saw it, was to keep the motion picture free of trouble, and to do so he didn't hesitate to take on Hollywood leaders such as Mayer, Cohn and Zanuck. Many felt, on reflection, that his ideas on how to launder a situation or dialog could rescue a picture that otherwise would have failed to get a Code Seal and could have run into state or city censors with the power to cut a film or reject it entirely.

The Production Code file on "The Women" spares no one in its tidy manila folder. Citing the "discussion of a number of marital infidelities" in the synopsis, Breen mentions "the necessary moral values which the Production Code requires. In addition to these apparent basic Code violations, the playwright indicates a vast amount of questionable dialogue dealing with these sex affairs, with very blunt discussions of pregnancy and childbirth, etc."

The outlook was anything but promising as far as the Hollywood outpost of the MPPDA was concerned. In his monthly resume of Coast activities, Breen wrote Hays in New York on Jan. 31, 1937, that "The Women" should be thumbed down for "improper treatment of adultery."

In that same resume, amidst a host of titles up for approval, presentations were nixed on two items because they "contained numerous scenes of naked, or semi-naked men and women ..."

They were both travelogs.

The RKO bid passed over (March 9), John Hammell of Paramount, having submitted a treatment of "The Women," got a near-ditto answer.

By March 18, Breen wrote a more detailed letter explaining his thinking. "In attempting to adapt this play for the screen, we would call attention, first, to the following fundamental Code requirements for the treatment of adultery on the screen: It should not be treated as comedy; it must be definitely shown to be wrong, not (Continued on Page 203, Column 1)



Mr. Bob Michaelson Messrs. Paul & Steve Schiffman Chewie Newgett International 225 Santa Monica Boulevard Santa Monica, Los Angeles 90401

Dear Uncle Bob,

I may not be as BAD as my "boss," but because you and the Chewie boys are so GOOD are becoming all of =superstars throughout the world (especially me!!!). In short, my feathered and furry friends, salute you!

XOXOXOX

Michael Jackson fever has Tokyo in a froth in the days before Michael Jackson fever has Tokyo in a froth in the days before the superstar singer arrives—pet chimpanzee in tow—for nine the superstar singer arrives—pet chimpanzee in tow—for nine saking as concerts, his first in three years. Japanese scalpers are asking as concerts, his first in three years. Japanese scalpers are asking as concerts, his first in three years. Japanese promoters from much as \$850 for \$45 tickets to the shows, which begin of the reclusive pop star has forbidden Japanese promoters from the reclusive pop star has forbidden Japanese promoters from the reclusive pop star has forbidden Japanese promoters from the reclusive pop star has forbidden Japanese promoters from the first population of the promoters are saking as the superstance of the superstance of the promoters are saking as the superstance of the LOS ANGELES TIMES

US

have their way, the next chart Jackson

nave their way, the next chart Jackson will be topping is the Dow Jones Industrial Average. Michael has set up an unprecedented licensing package that could gross more than \$1 billion within the last second and the second seco

three years, according to Bob Michaelson, president of Y&M Associates Inc.

son, president of Your Associates Inc.—
the people who bring you Michael's Pets
stuffed animals. These plush toys are
named for the animals in Michael's back-

yard zoo: Muscles the Snake, Louie the Llama — well, you get the idea.

Also due in stores starting next

month: Michael paperweights, puzzles, posters, porcelain figurines and even a Bubbles the Chimp bubble-

blowing machine. Another license covers \$4 million in kids' clothing. Of

course, there'll be no avoiding the buttons, calendars and T-shirts featuring

Bad's album art. Not to mention, adds a Y&M publicist, "anything imaginable that could be embellished by

some kind of an applique.

Meanwhile, hot-and-bothered Jackson fans stateside can find Meanwhile, hot-and-bothered Jackson fans stateside can find solace in cuddling Michael's Pots, a new stuffed-toy line from Ideal that was created to mirror the singer's menageric. Available in toy the rectusive pop suar has forbidge divulging most details about his visit. solace in cuddling Michael's Pets, a new stuffed-toy line from Ideal that was created to mirror the singer's menagerie. Available in that was created to mirror the singer's menagerie. Apout stores later this month, Michael's Pets include a chirap, a giraffe, a stores later this month, Michael's Pets include a goat. Price? About stores later this month, a snake, a bunny and a goat. Price? About stores later this month, Michael's Pets include a goat. Price? About \$25 each—but that also includes a seven-inch record featuring the \$25 each—but that also includes a particular pet.

Gloved One singing with the the particular pet. Figure 200 one singing with the the particular pet.

TIME

As he arrived at Narita airport near Tokyo, a herd of 300 photographers rushed forward to get a quick shot before he was hustled into a waiting limousine and off to his own guarded hotel room. And that was just Bubbles, Michael Jackson's celebrated pet chimpan-

ROLLING STONE

Bubbles is a chimpanzee.

Bubbles is just one of the many reallife characters who populate the elaborate fantasy world that the superstar has constructed around himself. Playing and charting with Bubbles or Louie the Llama or Crusher, his new 300-pound python, Michael can effortlessly become one of those Disney characters he so loves. Bubbles is a star of the new line of stuffed animals known as Michael's Pets, which will also be the hasis for a children's cartoon series. Bubbles even has a crib in Michael's bedroom.

FORBES

stuffed plush animal toys is due out this fall. It could be a \$50 million retail business next year, estimates one Wall Street analyst, and net more than \$2 million for Jackson.

SAN FRANCISCO CHRONICLE

 Bob Michaelson, Jackson merchandising head; holds the licenses for everything from Mi-chael's Pets to kids' clothing to porcelain figures. Hits the road as well to make sure that the Jackson corporation does not get ripped off by cheap copies.

■ Bubbles the chimp, Jackson friend and companion: lives with the singer in his mansion. Will be used extensively to publicize the tour and may even show up onstage. in stadiums and arenas around the world to promote a new and expensive line of stuffed toys based on Jacksons' own menagerie. Look out for Louie the Llama, Blackula the Tarantula, Muscle the Snake and Jabbar the Giraffe.

> DAILY NEWS Bob Michaelson, former Queens toy maker who moved to California to be maker who moved to Michael's Pets. near Jackson, owns Michael's He sald: near Jackson, owns Michael's Pets.
>
> He said:
> He said:
> It means the return of MichaelIt means the World. Jackson is a perIt means the world. Why we have
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> said world.
>
> Waited so worth waiting for.

USA TODAY

When Michael Jackson begins his world tour in Japan Sept. 12, he'll travel with his faithful companion, **Bubbles**. The 3-year-old chimp, a former experimental animal that Jackson rescued from a lab two years ago, goes to Tokyo to help promote Michael's Pets, the line of plush stuffed ani-mals designed after the sing-

mals designed after the sing-er's exotic menagerie.

Distribution of Michael's Pets was delayed to coincide with Jackson's Bad LP. The toys, including Bubbles, hit stores this week. Price: \$25.

THE NEW YORK TIMES

Jackson Conquers Tokyo. Sept. 13 — Michael Jackson began his world tour here Saturday night, performing before a sold-out crowd of 38,000 fans packed into Korakuen baseball stadium.

Souvenirs of the singer and his chimp are best sellers.

Mr. Jackson's pet chimpanzee Bubbles, who has received almost as much publicity here as the rock star, arrived a few hours earlier, wearing a red and white striped shirt and denim overalls. Bubbles was accompanied by three members of Mr. Jackson's staff.

Department stores in Tokyo have

Jackson's staff.

Department stores in Tokyo have been selling stuffed chimpanzees called "Michael's Pets" in honor of Bubbles. And the ice-cream store chain Hobson's advertised it was celebrating the beginning of Mr. Jackson's concert tour by giving away a free scoop of ice cream to each customer who purchased a \$21 stuffed Bubbles.

Hugs and Kisses to "Entertainment Tonight". Too! Michael Jackson in Japan...it's a rollercoaster ride and the merchandisers are cashing in on it! ... a line of Bubbles the Chimp dolls have been introduced and they're selling like hotcakes... Now with the World Tour and his album at number one - there is no denying that Michael Jackson the entertainer is back. Michaelmania comes stateside when he begins his U.S. tour next year.

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Academy's Treasure Trove

(Continued from Page 200, Column 5) right and acceptable, not attractive or glamorous; there must be some kind of punishment for the guilty parties; it must not be presented or treated in detail "

A breakdown of the script, included in the file, followed.

Hays forwarded copies of both letters to Adoph Zukor in New York at the end of March, 1937.

The file shows no more action on the part of Paramount, and the project seemed to rest until MGM began wrestling with it.

Presenting the project properly would seem to have been one of the keys on a whole ring of keys needed to make a dent in the hardshelled exterior of the Production Code. E.J. Mannix (MGM) seemed to have struck a responsive chord when he stated in a letter in February 1938 that the basic story is that of a wife's attempt to maintain the integrity of her home with her husband against gossiping conspirators.

That same month, the Code's Title Committee in New York entered the scene. At an earlier period they had refused the title of Lillian Hellman's "The Children's Hour" and of another film, "Sailor Beware," in the screen treatments. Breen suggested that the Committee might object to "The Women" because of its identification in the public eye with — what else? — the Broadway play.

Louis B. Mayer didn't want the play without the title. Sea Biscuit never ran under another name, no matter who owned him!

MGM proceeded with plans to produce the Boothe play, and by Oct. 8, 1938, submitted two copies of a final shooting script for "your acceptance and approval."

Three days later, not to be outdone, Breen shot back a sevenpage, single-spaced commentary, saying finally, that "the material in its present form is unacceptable." He did dangle some hope with "... we feel that it is possible to develop this story along lines which would be acceptable ...' citing examples of dialog (such as "Know any men who are faithful?" or, whoops, "Dear Mr. Hays will protect me.") and action (the steam room scenes should be shot so that it wouldn't appear that the women were without some clothing).

A week later Breen would write Mayer that the newly revised treatment submitted by producer Hunt Stromberg was acceptable. "In discussing this new treatment with Mr. Stromberg that afternoon," consoled Breen, "we agreed upon a number of details which are not specifically set forth in the treatment, all of which, as recited to us by Mr. Stromberg, appear likewise to be acceptable."

But they weren't home safe yet. Breen supplied the kicker in the form of a warning: "... some details may be presented which may not be quite acceptable,"

Norma Shearer was cast as sweet Mary, while Joan Crawford was to play the scheming Crystal Allen. Rosalind Russell, Paulette Goddard, Mary Boland, Joan Fontaine and Hedda Hopper were to be part of the all-female cast directed by George Cukor.

With everything ready to go, producer Stromberg on April 19 was able to send the script to Breen. "We start shooting next week, and, therefore, will greatly appreciate your reactions by tomorrow, Thursday:

"Affectionate regards, as usu-

al, and my thanks in advance for you cooperation."

Breen wasn't buying, and, in a letter written April 21, told Mayer it was "... unacceptable because of the wholesale characterization of so many of the characters as being either adulterous, or engaged in illicit sex activities — all this without sufficient compensating moral values ..."

There were, in his eyes, objectionable scenes, unacceptable dialog and "political censorship" dangers. On April 25, having perused the revised but incomplete script, Breen complained,

making suggestions such as a character talking about her "incision," not her stomach.

In the rush and under the gun, MGM had sent him the wrong script, and on April 29, Stromberg promised the right one by the following Monday, "together with rewrites on additional episodes up to and including the introduction of Crystal behind the perfume counter at Black's Fifth Avenue. Will thank you to write an approval of these scenes as soon as you have read them. In doing this, you can, of course, reserve your right to approve the

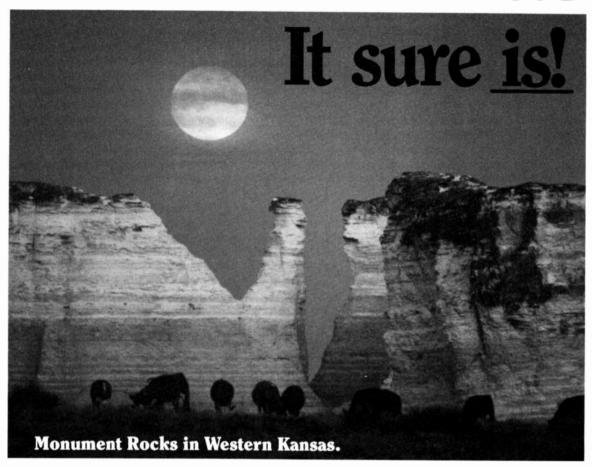
first eight pages as the dialog which these pages will embrace — the beauty establishment routine — cannot be written until the set is on the stage and all equipment and accourrement installed for the writer to dramatize.

"Cordially, Hunt."

Now, Breen seemed to be warming to the photoplay since the revisions had been made — up to a point. By May he was against Russell's character Sylvia using a slug in the telephone coin box — it might give someone in the au-

(Continued on Page 206, Column 1)

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Da Vinci Goes Hollywood: (But Leonardo, Is It Art?)

By PETE EMMET

Film directors are the artists of our day, it is often asserted (most often by directors). The day often by directors). To alter their work, by coloring or other high crimes and misdemeanors is equivalent, they unblushingly declare, to putting a moustache on the Mona Lisa. How right they are!

New discoveries have definitely established that da Vinci was, in fact, called by his contemporaries, "the Cecil B. DeMille of our time." The following eyewitness account of the creation of his most famous painting has been pieced together from notes made by the script supervisor and the publicist that day.

da Vinci's assistant: "Quiet in the garret! Ready when you are d.V."

da Vinci: "Isn't it a little dark in here?"

Assistant: "I'll get the gaffer to open a window."

da Vinci: "Very good, very good. Now Mona, I want you over here, in the chair.'

Mona Lisa: "You're not going to paint me from that side, no way, I'm always painted from the right. Where's my agent?"

da Vinci: "Don't get upset my dear, you're right. We'll put you

Writer: "Hold on, Leonardo. The scene calls for her to be looking straight ahead; that's the whole point.'

da Vinci: "Whose painting is this, anyway? Get the hell out of the atelier before I call the front office."

Hairdresser: "Can I have her for a minute, Mr. da Vinci? Her hair needs a little changing.'

da Vinci: "But I like that look."

Hairdresser: "Nobody's doing hair like that any more. By the time this picture comes out, it will be a joke."

da Vinci: "All right, all right, but make it quick. Joe, I need a new palette.'

Assirtant: "Props!"

da Vinci: "Billy, do you think the easel should stay where it is?" D.P. (Director of Paint): "You get a better angle from over there. And maybe she should be raised a little.

da Vinci: "Good idea, work it out. Now, what about the colors?" D.P.: "Why don't we try a hot magenta tint on her dress? It should bring out the color of her eyes.'

Set decorator: "No, no, no. There are rose tones in that wall behind her. It won't work.'

da Vinci: "Can we change the wall?"

Set decorator: "It will take time. And the standby painter's at lunch. We didn't want him going into meal penalty.

da Vinci: "I guess we'll have to change the dress, then. I'll make it black, and go for a bit of chiaroscuro.

D.P.: "I hate all that black and white. Too arty."

da Vinci: "Listen, you want to work on my next painting or not? It's going to be a big one, a mural. For the Pope.

D.P.: "Gee, I always wanted to do something for the Vatican." Mona (impatiently): "I'll be in my gondola when you're ready." da Vinci: "All set, Mona my sweet. Now think about the scene

for a minute. Your lover has gone, and you're fighting back tears." Mona (thinking): "It doesn't feel right, Leonardo. My character wouldn't react that way.'

da Vinci (humoring her):"How do you see it? Maybe we'll try it your way and see how it works."

Mona: "She'd have a little smile. Almost a smirk. She's been trying to ditch that bozo for a year. And she's got a sneaking

suspicion who's going to show up and console her tonight.''

da Vinci (under his breath): "Why didn't I become an animator?" Production manager: "Leonardo, we've only got this garret for the day. What time do you think you'll be ready to start?'

da Vinci: "You budget guys are going to drive me nuts. Cost, cost. What about art?'

Production manager: "I'm on your side, but what am I going to tell the Medicis? They've got a pretty florin in this as it is.'

da Vinci: "Let's get started then."

Assistant: "Please, everyone. I mean, Miss Lisa."

da Vinci proceeds to paint up a storm while the crew drinks coffee, plays cards, does needlepoint, read incunabula, etc. At last, he is finished, 30 seconds before Golden Time.

Crew (muttering): "What a cheap company . . . Michelangelo would have taken a week if he needed it ...

da Vinci: "What do you think, Charlie?"

Editor: "Take some out of the middle, it'll be perfect."

da Vinci: "Are you crazy?"

Editor: "Okay, at the bottom, then. We'll have to cut the credits and just put your name."

da Vinci: "Why not? It's my picture.

Producer: "Leonardo, I love it, the best thing you've done. I think you'd better repaint the whole left side, though. The public won't buy it, all that mist. Also, my wife thinks there should be a castle in the background.'

da Vinci: "But Lorenzo-"

Producer: "And another thing, that Mona Lisa dame is past it, if you ask me. Now, I've got a girl ..."

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Academy's Treasure Trove

dience the idea of pulling a similar

Another character's line, "Nuts?," must be read as a question.

Changes were made, writers Anita Loos and Jane Murfin, who adapted the play, were surmounting the challenges with uncommon nimbleness, and Breen was almost agreeing on the script.

But on May 16 he began fretting about how the scenes would be filmed. For instance, "Scenes 5X-11 et seg: the women should not be attired merely in 'shorts and brassieres'. Such attire is not acceptable.

And, speaking of picking, "The

play on words, 'I don't pick 'em for their character', etc. (page 114) is questionable if not read carefully ..."

The script was being submitted in sections, and by June 6 Stromberg was able to send Breen the end of the script for his approval, adding courageously, "... I am quite sure you will find that we have conformed to the requirements we have generally agreed upon.

"For your personal information at this time the picture looks magnificent, with everything done in the best of taste and with no offense in any direction . . .

"Kindest personal regards and

again my thanks for your continued cooperation.'

He was right. Breen, except for minor deletions and substitutions, gave his okay. But not without an admonition: "You understand, of course, our final judgment will be based upon our review of the finished picture.'

Ever the realist, the Production Code administrator did warn that the scene involving Crystal in the bathtub mustn't expose too much ("... no undue exposure of her body."). "You will also have in mind that certain of the political censor boards, and, quite definitely, the Board in Australia, are quite likely to delete this scene in toto. We suggest that some way be found to shoot a protection shot of this scene ...

Breen sealed his opinion of the

finished film on July 19, 1939, when he sent a NITE LETTER to Nicholas Schenck (prez of MGM parent Loew's Inc.) in Room K, Car 262, aboard the Twentieth Century Limited:

"WE SAW THE WOMEN THIS AFTERNOON AND I AM SENDING THIS TO TELL YOU THAT IN OUR JUDGMENT IT IS QUITE THE BEST PICTURE WE HAVE SEEN IN A YEAR STOP IT IS REALLY SENSA-TIONAL AND OUGHT TO BE A SMASH BOXOFFICE HIT STOP MY HEARTIEST CON-GRATULATIONS TO YOU.

JOE BREEN'

The files don't reveal any domestic state censorship boards turning down "The Women" although Massachusetts did ask for the deletion of a line in Reel 1 - "Oh, that old bag."

Overseas, things were testier in some areas. The "political censors" mentioned by Breen and Hays looked at the completed film and made their decision, ranging from "excessive nudity ... bathing suit models" (Spain, 1948; Dutch East Indies, 1940) to complaints about specific dialog such as Crystal's acidic. "There's a name for you ladies, but it isn't used outside of a dog kennel" (New Zealand, 1940; England, 1940; Alberta, 1939).

Holland in 1940 took understandable umbrage to an exchange: "Well, anyhow, a divorce has its compensations." The offensive reply: "You can spread out in bed like a swasti-

Holland also didn't think much of Crystal's insinuating, "When anything I wear displeases Stephan, I take it off." But neither did New Zealand or Australia (including use of the declaration in the film's trailer).

Ireland, according to a confidential memo by Breen, threw up its hands at the whole film "because allegedly the low moral tone of the subject was the trouble throughout."

George Jean Nathan, speaking out in the Richard Barthelmess collection, makes no bones about blue-pencilling: "Movie censors are lenient, either out of ignorance, innocence or timidity. When 'What Price Glory?' was shown in New York, a word was used in a subtitle that could never have been spoken on any stage. Why? The censors who reviewed that picture were two elderly gentlemen and one worthy elderly lady. When that subtitle was flashed on the screen, the gentlemen said: 'That must be cut!'

" 'I don't see why,' the old lady protested. 'What does it mean anyway?' They could not politely tell her, and so the word remained

Frank Nugent in his N.Y. Times review of "The Women" observed: "Possibly some of the venom has been lost in the screen translation ... A few of the blunt words have been softened. The omissions are not terribly important and some of the new sequences are so good Miss Boothe might have thought of them herself ... The most heartening part of it all, though, aside from hearing witty lines crackle on the screen,

Paulette Goddard and the others have leaped at the chance to be vixens ...' Breen, whose hand had stayed so many purportedly suggestive remarks and scandalous actions on "The Women," knew how to size up a film's boxoffice potential. Said Variety in its Sept. 6,

is the way Norma Shearer, Joan

Crawford, Rosalind Russell,

1939, review, "'The Women' is one of the smash hits of the season . . . As title indicates, it's a strong woman entry but still has plenty of spicy lines and situations for

the men."

Spurs Creativity What Breen and the Production Code had done was challenge the writers — and Anita Loos and Jane Murfin were no slouches to sharpen their wits to bring the film's script in on a disciplined course. The writers and Cukor did not attempt to circumvent the

Tough as the rules were, the Production Code demanded form, (Continued on Page 210, Column 1)

Code; instead they resorted to

creativity.

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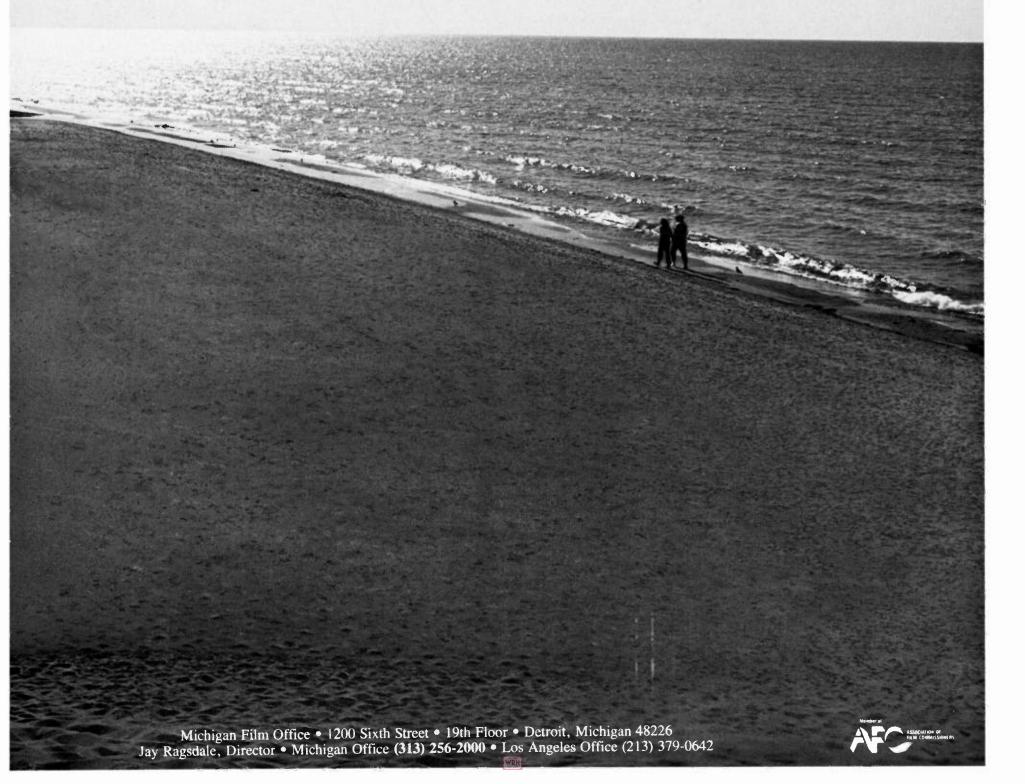


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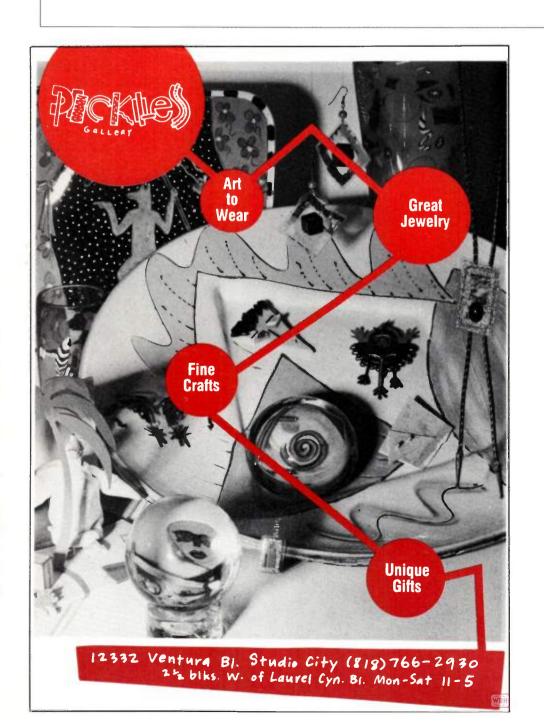
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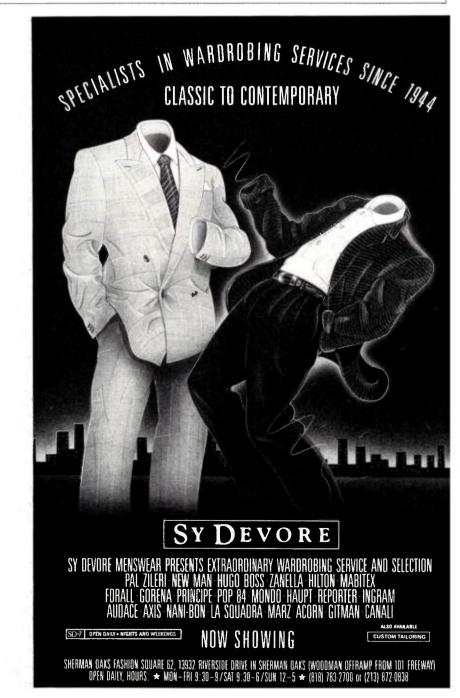
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Academy's Treasure Trove

(Continued from Page 206, Column 5) no matter how seemingly point-less the rules sometimes seemed to be. From that grew some of the finest creative scenarists, directors and producers in the history of the screen. Studying how artists worked out satisfactory solutions to seemingly impossible dictations in an age of innocence is a solid

lesson for a film student intent on the history of the medium; there are, in the library's special collections section, around 19,499 other challenging examples.

Nuggets appear without warning in the special collections. Charles Schlaifer's assemblage of letters, memos, appointments and

cal event — leaves nothing to chance.

As such, it demonstrates too, the savvy of studio organizational strategy, and might well be

perused in its original form.

In late 1947, in concurrence with the opening of 20th-Fox's powerful "Gentleman's Agree-

summaries about one of the most challenging post-World War II films shows how showmanship—intelligent planning for a theatrical event—leaves nothing to

Quotes were collected from "miscellaneous personalities" praising the picture, lauding its cast led by Gregory Peck, Dorothy McGuire, John Garfield, Celeste Holm (who took home an Oscar for Supporting Player), Anne Revere, June Havoc and so on, and admiring its direction by Elia Kazan.

Elmer Rice spoke out about the film, as did Marlene Dietrich; Joan Crawford praised it lavishly, and Henry Morganthau acclaimed it; others — John Mason Brown, John Steinbeck, Dore Schary, Irwin Shaw, Bob Capa, Arthur Miller, Robert Sherwood, James Farley, Theresa Helburn and Lawrence Langner — talked about how much they liked it.

Even Garbo talked about it: "Absolutely wonderful."

The quotations are all set down in publicist Schlaifer's "Gentleman's Agreement" campaign, another part of the special collections. The single, neatly-arranged folder traces inexorably the path a major studio would take in its efforts to sell a major production.

The actual publicity campaign was launched as early as Dec. 30, 1946, when it was announced that 20th-Fox had bought Laura Z. Hobson's novel and that it was going to be serialized in Cosmopolitan Magazine. Publisher Simon and Schuster's promotion was not only working on the book's publicity but on the film sale as well.

Darryl F. Zanuck was producing the film, and the film's casting and other assignments were making news across the country. New York-based Schlaifer, at that time director of advertising, publicity, exploitation and radio for Fox and studio publicity director Harry Brand, in Hollywood, had an intricate, highly sensitive, even heroic assignment ahead. Observing the combination of organization, honed business acumen and ballyhoo demonstrated by Zanuck, Brand, Schlaifer and associates is a lesson for any would-be promot-

(Continued on Page 211, Column 1)

Leslie Nichols Promotions



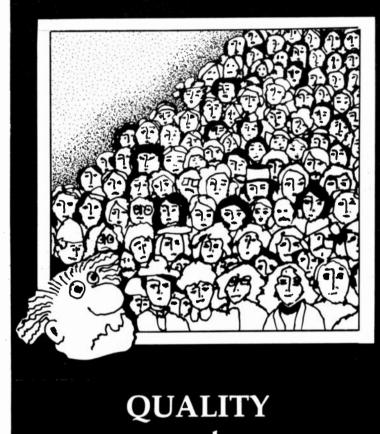
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ACADEMY

(Continued from Page 210, Column 5)
The presence of Peck, Revere and Dean Stockwell with Kazan in Manhattan and Darien, Ct., filming on location was a natural publicity aid, and the folder includes where news was planted — the papers, the radio outlets, and periodicals and, naturally, the fan magazines.

On Oct. 14, 1947, Hobson had written an excited letter from New York to Zanuck. She was planning a post-premiere party for 20 or so, and though inviting Mr. and Mrs. Zanuck as well as the Moss Harts, was concerned because Moss and Kitty suggested to her that Fox might be having a huge party like their "Wilson" party, and her small gathering would be in conflict.

She asked Zanuck to advise her as soon as possible what she should do.

Zanuck wired back Oct. 15 that, since there would be no premiere but instead a series of 10 private, invitational previews, she should contact Schlaifer.

Oct. 21, on a diplomatic note, Zanuck wired Clare Luce inviting her and "Harry and friends" to come to one of the two screenings. In the same wire, he invited the Luces to join the Zanucks in Palm Springs for a couple of weeks at the Zanuck home where Moss Hart wrote the screenplay and where, as Zanuck added, he had done well in a sporting event.

He sent a copy of his wire to Schlaifer alerting him to the situation.

The campaign folder begins with a master schedule of those private screenings in New York, starting Oct. 27, 1947. The first was for Hobson, Hart, director Kazan and Fox's president, Spyros P. Skouras. Obviously Fox had a picture worth coddling.

The idea for all the important "opinion-making" screenings was developed earlier in October in Hollywood between Zanuck and Schlaifer. The combination of powerfulness and possible controversy over the film was a matter to be considered — plus the truth that the picture was excellent screen entertainment.

The second screening, set for Oct. 28, was originally for studio department heads, but Schlaifer, backed by Zanuck and Skouras, decided to increase the audience size by inviting other home office employes. Zanuck, unable to go to New York, thanks to a stockholders' conflict, assigned Harry Brand and Harmon Jones, the film's editorial supervisor, to stand in for him.

The night before he wired the New York office that he wouldn't be there, Zanuck hosted a Hollywood showing to a group of some influence: Walter Winchell, Irving Berlin, Louella Parsons, Hedda Hopper and the representatives from Life, Time and Look, among others. Zanuck reported he was still not bored with "Gentleman," no matter how many times he had seen it, and that it went over well.

There would be 10 meetings in N.Y. to be held with invited guests up to 35-40 including those invited by the sponsor plus columnists, critics, publishers, and so on.

Observing the clockwork fashion in which experience and inspiration worked inside the major studio system reveals how well-schooled the organizers were. Schlaifer, who came up with the idea for an industry-leaders screening on Nov. 3, had had a novel concept of bringing in competitors — and the 86 leaders in attendance were enthusiastic.

Liberal, influential groups were asked to a Nov. 10 preview in the morning; that same afternoon, Simon and Schuster hosted a viewing for publisher bigwigs in New York.

Because the campaigners knew the film was a strong dramatic vehicle as well as a statement about prejudice, they didn't want kudos strictly for the picture's dynamic fight against bigotry. Screenings' in the folder) and tions (not defined in the "Origination of 'Gentleman's Agreement' Screenings' in the folder) and foreign-language press were held

the morning before the film was to open at New York's Mayfair Theater, then part of the Harry Brandt chain.

Schlaifer decided that a full audience would be an advantage at regular press previews, according to the "Origination" summary; he combined, for instance, radio and trade representative screenings. After 19 various screenings, the reports were not only encouraging, they were glowing.

The National Board of Review gave it an Exceptional Rating.

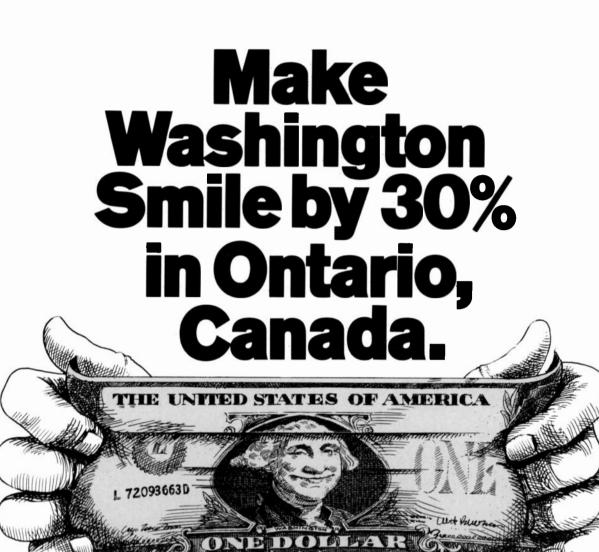
Correspondence among the principals demonstrates the wis-

dom and the force brought to bear in selling a film. Everyone was in contact; the team led by an informed Zanuck, was working.

There are four pages of excerpt from critics' opinions all praising the film, and people like Herbert Bayard Swope, Bennett Cerf, Clifton Fadiman, Jerome Chodorov, Quentin Reynolds, Clare Boothe Luce, Harold Rome and Harold Clurman hailed the film with personal notes.

The radio comments are cited, including Tex and Jinx, Mary Margaret McBride, Winchell,

(Continued on Page 212, Column 5)



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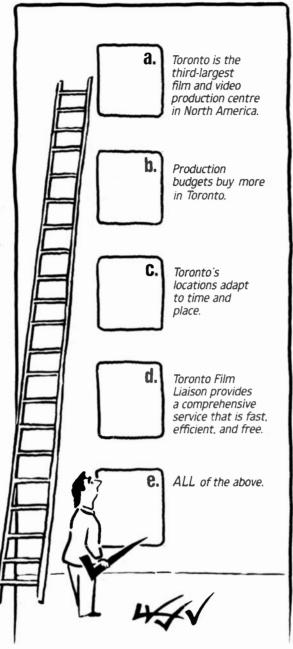
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SKIN SENSE by Nance Mitchell

Billy Rose — and Parsons: "I'm on my Woodbury Soap Box ...' Everyone was shouting hooray.

The study of the opening of a campaign, assured and enthusiastic, winds up with the advertising layouts and an outline of the national campaigns in advertising, publishing, exploitation and ra-

In conclusion, the file contains Harry Brandt's schedule for prices to be charged during the run of the film at his Mayfair Theater. Nothing was left to chance.

But there's no record of whether or not Garbo's opinion was ever used. Or whether or not she actually said it.

The minutiae involved in filmmaking, particularly location filming, can be readily spotted in the special collection unit's files on individual films. A case in point is the folder on the 1953 "Shane," producer-director George Steven's striking study in homesteading and courage as written by firsttime scenarist A.B. Guthrie Jr.

The Paramount production, filmed in Jackson, Wyoming, required two editors - William Hornbeck, studio editorial director, and Tom McAdoo, on-thespot editor.

Included in the "Shane" file is a how-to example of footage and time breakdown of the barroom fight between hero Shane and killer Chris.

Letters, timesheets, inter-office memos, endless lists and reports, publicity suggestions, timesheet of the time spent editing, the preparations for adapting Jack Shaefer's novel — and the enlightening information noted by Stanley Garvey that, though Houghton Mifflin published "Shane" in 1949 in book form, the novel first appeared in serial form in 1946 in Argosy under the title, "Rider From Nowhere.'

There's no clear overview of how "Shane" was produced in the general file, but there are pieces of the working m.o.

An inter-office memo on bright yellow notepaper with Paramount Pictures Corp. printed at the top brings up the censorship challenge. Dated July 24, 1951, the memo recites minor misdeeds:

"We have received the Breen office report on your final script dated July 18, and they have only the following comments to make:

" 'Page 3: We suggest you omit the backhouse in scene 4.'

" Page 42: The expression "turn all hell loose" is unacceptable and should be changed.

" 'Page 55: Please avoid unacceptable or excessive brutality in this scene of the fight.

Earlier, on Oct. 8, 1950, associate producer Ivan Moffat prepared quite a few intriguing names to play Marian Starrett, that brave pioneer wife, and the list in the "Shane" folder is both surprising and ambitious. Actually, Jean Arthur proved

the ideal choice, turning in a lovely, structured performance that (Continued on Page 214, Column 1)

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ACADEMY

(Continued from Page 212, Column 5) shrewdly and warmly conveyed the strengths of the woman.

Those considered for Shane, that stranger from out of town who rode out of medieval heroics into Western fiction, were among many of Hollywood's top leading men — and Alan Ladd showed his mastery of the role.

After contemplating some nine

other major actors to play the determined Joe Starrett, Van Heflin, whose billing requirements are on file as well as those other names, gave his part his individualistic strength.

While two well-known Hollywood youngsters were considered for the role of the Starrett boy, legit actor Brandon De Wilde was chosen. Included in the "Shane' file are the times the boy would be available before Carson McCullers' "Member Of The Wedding" opened in Chicago.

McCullers' short novel, "Reflections In A Golden Eye," first published in 1941, opened with the deceptively simple sentence, "An Army post is a dull place."

John Huston, who donated his entire collection to the Academy, which keeps the material in its special collections division, gives the reader a chance to examine the complexities of making this 1967 film.

As with the "Shane" file, there are limitations imposed on reproducing material in the collections.

But those limitations don't restrict the scholar or reader from obtaining a clear-eyed view of how a film can be put together and of the difficulties imposed by some situations or people. Decisions, too, can be intriguing, and letters can tell so much about individuals' reactions to events — and to other people.

One of the treasures in the "Reflections" file incorporated in the John Huston Collection would be the choice letters McCullers penned to the director both about her views on the film being made and a contemplated visit for the invalid authoress to Huston's Galway home after filming was completed in Rome.

McCullers was delighted with stills sent to her of cast members, and thought everybody seemed right for their roles. She wanted to visit the filming in Rome, but because of health limitations was unable. The entire Huston Collection, donated by Huston himself, has been covered by a detailed inventory compiled by librarian Mehr and supervised by archivist Gill; it covers most of the director-writer-producer-actor's later career, though there are no production files from the 1930s, only a few from the '40s.

Covering both produced and unproduced projects, the invaluable assemblage includes such diverse material as budgets, employment agreements, casting information, publicity clippings, correspondence and notes.

A thought-provoker for impatient filmmakers: Huston considered making "The Man Who Would Be King" from 1953 to 1975.

The production files contain production research, bound scripts, unbound script material, year-by-year correspondence files, a section on St. Clarens (Huston's home in Galway, Ireland), an autobiography, publicity, and publications broken down into pamphlets, announcements (Continued on Page 216, Column 1)

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ACADEMY

(Continued from Page 214, Column 5) and programs, sheet music, books and drawings.

For the student or the historian, the implications are obvious.

For the actor, too, there's the inspection of past masters like Huston or such beauties as Merle Oberon.

The Oberon collection covers the late actress' career — 11 scripts, 12 scrapbooks, two photo

albums, letters, press clippings from abroad, handwritten notations, five disk recordings, and sketches and portraits of her.

Looking at her own script for the 1939 Goldwyn production, "Wuthering Heights," adapted by Ben Hecht and Charles Mac-Arthur, gives an indication of how the actress worked. All her major scenes in the memorable film have been tabbed with markers for quick reference, and the 140page screenplay stings with the tragic romance after all these years.

Those recordings include "America Calling," which Oberon made in the 1940s for the Greek Relief Fund; "Night Song," which she recorded with Van Heflin and Hoagy Carmichael, isn't complete — only a recording of parts three and four, which was made for the Motion Picture Relief Fund; the 1943 "Soldiers In Greasepaint," presented by the USO and by NBC; a damaged

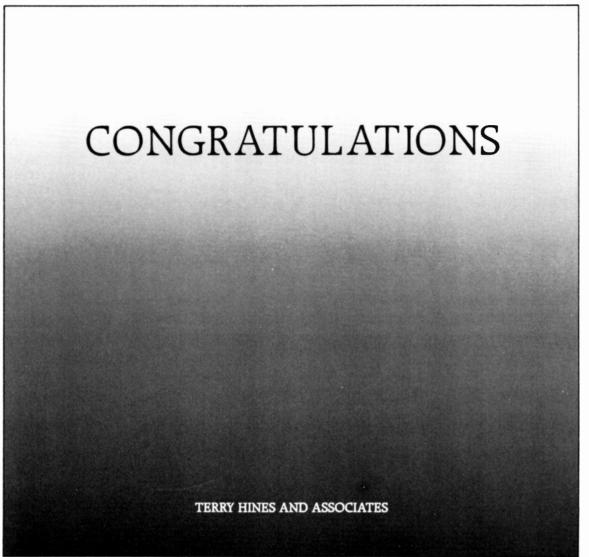
recording, "Broadcast Procedure," made for the Greek War Relief Committee.

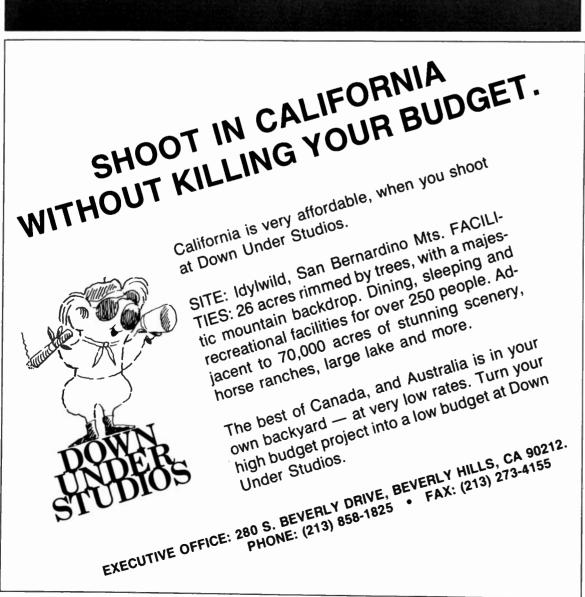
The overall effect of the Oberon collection, or of any individual's memorabilia, is one of sentiment and respect for the achievements — and how they were achieved. Biographers, historians, would-be performers can, by examining that impressive "Wuthering Heights" script, feel the power of the fertile forces involved — and draw upon them.

With offices on the sixth floor, the Players Directory, first published in January 1937, is divided into four books, or sections, with photos of the performers, their agents, or the more direct "messages."

Edited by Patricia L. Citrano, with exec director James M. Roberts acting as editor-in-chief, Arlene Grate as assistant editor and a research staff of 11, the Players Directory is published every four months "as a cooperative service to the player and the production studios of Hollywood," as the title page reads. 'Distributed to the casting departments, directors and executives of the participating studios and to others concerned with the employment of motion picture, television and radio talent."

Part 1 encompasses Leading Women/Ingenues; Part 2, Leading Men/Younger Leading Men; Part 3, Characters and Comediennes/ Characters and Comedians; Part 4, Children/Master Index. Indices (Continued on Page 218, Column 1)







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ACADEMY

(Continued from Page 216, Column 5)

list "Artists With Disabilities" (HI — hearing impaired, for example), Black Artists ("Colored" in the earlier editions), Asian Artists, North American Artists.

It's \$15 per category for a performer to publish his own photo, and the ticket to inclusion is membership in SAG or AFTRA or accepted guild or union, or representation by a qualified talent agency. Costing \$65 an issue, the Players Directory also has an alphabetical list of all players, artists' representatives, writers' representatives, Casting Society of America members, and a roster of Casting Directors in Commercials, Television and Film. Plus local addresses and phone numbers of radio and ty contacts.

The Academy's involvement in community affairs, both locally

and on national and international levels, couldn't be better illustrated than by its trio of programs involving, in one way or another, public participation.

Ric Robertson, program coordinator of Visiting Artists, of Seminars and of Lectures, handles the agenda from his seventh-floor office with enthusiastic aplomb. The Visiting Artists concept, in business since 1970, has the cooperation of all 4000 members of the

Academy and sends them off as ambassadors as well as catalysts to film-oriented college classes, festivals and assorted media centers not only across the U.S. but in Canada and Mexico.

The ball starts rolling when a host institution or individual in a college or representing a conference or properly recognized event sends off a request and explains what that event is all about. The written proposal, examined by Academy administrators, gets the okay if the request is legitimate and worthwhile.

The Academy, consulting with the faculty or administrators of the organization applying and with Academy members, seeks out the best-qualified member to help the cause. Cinematographer Vilmos Zsigmond, for instance, has led a workshop in lighting for students of the University of Arizona and Pima Community College; actor-dancer-choreographer-director Gene Nelson took off for the University of Wisconsin in Milwaukee to discuss his work; cinematographer David Walsh has gathered with University of Saskatchewan students in Saskatoon, Canada.

"A working professional can supplement the curriculum of a smaller, out-of-the-way school," Robertson points out. "The basic idea is that the major, metropolitan centers of New York and L.A. don't need much help attracting these kinds of people.

"But I was just talking to a professor in Wyoming. At his university they had experienced 11% cuts during the last couple of months, and I'm seeing something like that in a lot of schools.

"So the fact that we can offer the travel expenses makes a lot of these trips happen, whereas otherwise they wouldn't. We've probably averaged 20 to 30 trips a year for the last few years. We're not sending out thousands of people, but we're answering an important need — contact between professionals and would-be professionals in their fields."

A San Diego organization approached Robertson in 1986 about putting together a series of Monday night screenings, six in all, of

(Continued on Page 220, Column 1)



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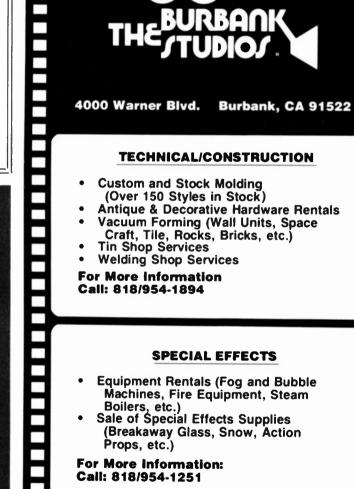
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ACADEMY

(Continued from Page 218, Column 5)
Academy Award-winning films.
He put together a program, appropriately if not inspiredly called "Academy Award Winners And Their Films," which was shown at the La Jolla Museum of Art.

Academy president Robert Wise opened the program with "West Side Story"; the following Monday, Karl Malden headed

south with "A Streetcar Named Desire," and so on, with Linda Hunt, Charlton Heston, Louise Fletcher and Walter Mirisch (Oscar winner for sound on "Apocalypse Now") putting in appearances on subsequent weeks.

The Visiting Artist talked for a few minutes before the film was shown, and, afterwards, stuck around for a q&a period. "Basically it fitted into the parameters of the Visiting Artists Program, whose purpose is to spread the word about film and about the process of filmmaking to places outside of L.A. This happened to be an educational process not within an academic community but within the general community of San Diego."

One of the highlights for Robertson and the audience after "Streetcar" occurred when a young man in the audience, addressing Malden, revealed that he was going to play Mitch in a local college production. "All of a sudden it got very quiet and Malden said, 'You know what the key to playing that character was?' and it all rested on one line.

"He described the scene that he and Blanche have out by the lake, and Blanche says to Mitch, 'You must love your mother very much!' And Mitch says, 'Yes, I do.' And Malden said, 'And you know what? He doesn't!' You could have heard a pea drop in the theater."

Malden went on to explain that the subtext of that one line solved the whole character for him. Says Robertson, "It gave us a peek into the creative process that made the program worthwhile."

Inquiries should be made to Visiting Artists Program, Program Coordinator, Academy Foundation, 8949 Wilshire Blvd., Beverly Hills, Calif. 90211.

The seminars, now under Robertson's direction, were first put together by Bruce Davis. "The guy who came looking for me, or someone like me," says Davis, "was John Pavlik, my predecessor in this job and who's out at the Motion Picture Country House now running that. He just thought that there was so much talent in these 12 pools of Academy membership. It certainly is in the original mission to spread understanding about different aspects of filmmaking and whatnot."

Held in the Little Theater, the seminars have become a constant hit. Robertson wishes he had a 150-seat theater because of the people who are turned away.

The seminars, as might be expected, are gatherings of folks interested in various aspects of filmmaking and wanting to get better acquainted with those aspects. Naturally, they are set at irregular times, mostly multi-dated, and staffed by Academy members sharing their expertise.

The public does get news of the seminars through press releases, college papers, public service announcements, flyers, the Foundation Mailing List and word of mouth

Usually Robertson, who inherited the position from Davis, schedules two multi-week seminars a year in the Little Theater, whether it's a three-week or even five-week marathon. The most recent example would be a postproduction seminar done last May: three consecutive Wednesday nights, 7 to 10, with a \$50 registration fee.

Occasionally a one-night seminar turns up in the Samuel Goldwyn Theater. Film curator Dan Woodruff led a program focusing attention on the preservation activities of the Academy — something to be further investigated.

The seminars tend to appeal to a younger group, either students or people working in the early stages of their career. A seminar is open on a first-come, first-serve basis, and is mostly sold out well before the sessions kick off.

Ric Robertson also sets up four lectures a year for the Academy in the Samuel Goldwyn Theater, and they're strong draws. The public is charged \$2 admission, and members and students get in free. In Robertson's words, supplemented with film clips, the lectures, are "quite accessible to the public."

The oldest of the quartet is the Marvin Borowsky Lecture on Screenwriting, invariably well attended. "John Sayles did our screenwriting lecture last year, and we had about a thousand people in there."

The Jack Oakie Lecture on Comedy is a challenge, Robertson agrees. "We've had some terrific people. Paul Mazursky, Jerry Lewis, Gene Wilder, Larry Gelbart are the four since the series began. It's interesting because comedy is intuitive — people do it in different ways."

Bruce Davis recalls the Gene Wilder appearance. "(Wilder) ... used other peoples' movies and only a little bit of his.

"He didn't use negative examples from other peoples' movies ... so it's not 'Look at all the good stuff I've done!' It's 'This taught me something about comedy and I tried to reuse it in this movie.'

"People in general have taken it quite seriously. A couple of the people on comedy preface their evening by saying something like, 'If you came here to laugh a lot, you're going to be disappointed because I'm taking this seriously!' And, of course, the clips are still funny. But some of them have not tried to make the actual presentation amusing at all."

Adds Robertson, "Jerry Lewis was so impressive with the amount of preparation he had done for the lecture. He has all his own films on 35m, and a lot of the original negs have reverted back to him, or he's bought them back. I think he's very aware of preserving things, and had beautiful prints and was able to get us prints of his films that studios probably couldn't have provided."

The George Pal Lecture on Fantasy is being given this year by Joe Dante, marking the Pal Lecture's sixth year. Last year's program was unique in that the Academy premiered a film by Arnold Liebovit, a 90-minute docu called "The Fantasy Film Worlds Of George Pal."

Rounding out the foursome, the George Stevens Lecture on Directing takes a different tack: An historian, a writer or scholar is invited to select a Stevens film, prepare a brief talk, and show a mint-condition print of that film. Now in its fifth year, last year's lecturer, author-historian Rudy Behlmer, selected and talked about "Gungha Din"; this past Oct. 19, Gene Phillips, professor from Loyola in Chicago, was the speaker.

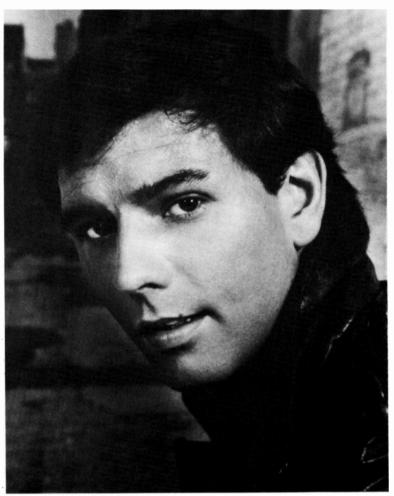
Because of the theater use during awards time, the programming season plays from May through January. Robertson, talking ideas over with Bruce Davis, president Robert Wise, and Academy exec director James Roberts, helps develop the idea for guest speakers — basically it's an ad-

(Continued on Page 222, Column 1)





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Academy's Treasure Trove

(Continued from Page 220, Column 5) ministrative selection.

The lecturer will pick out what clips he wants, tells Robertson, who finds the material, and they go over the selections together to make sure they've zeroed in on what the lecturer wants.

Producers, casting directors, and studios aren't the only ones with a subscription (a standing order sets the price at \$60 an edition; list price per copy, \$80) to the Academy's "bible of credits," as Bruce Davis terms it. The Annual Index of Motion Picture Credits, edited for the past six years by Byerly Woodward, compiles film production data annually, Jan. 1

to Dec. 31, and publishes the list in the simplest, most straightforward format possible.

The Don and Gee Nicholl Fellowships in Screenwriting, begun last year as a strictly California venture, spread this year to Connecticut, Maine, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New York, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island and Vermont. Plus Texas.

The Fellowships, providing \$20,000 are paid quarterly to fouryear college and university graduating students as well as graduate students, who can postpone taking the money until they've completed their graduate work.

In Texas, according to Rich Miller, who's in charge of the

program, the Academy has tried another tack. Anyone who's a resident of Texas and has not been previously paid to write a screenplay is eligible.

This first year of eligibility brought 213 entries from Texas.

Bruce Davis speaks frankly: "We're scared to do that in California because everybody in town has a script in his hip pocket. We want to learn what we're doing before we invite that inundation. But eventually that is the idea.

"Within the next three or four years it will be a national program and it will not simply be collegeoriented. It will be anybody."

He describes the program as "essentially a Guggenheim in screenwriting where new screenwriters, who are defined not by age but by not having gotten pair for doing screenwriting before, are given \$20,000 so that they can spend a year just screenwriting, not having to waitress or park cars or whatever."

Well funded from a gift by Mrs. Nicholl, widow of successful television comedy writer Don Nicholl, who worked on the original "'Til Death Do Us Part," the British basis for "All In The Family," the Fellowships pay tribute both to Nicholl and to the struggles the Nicholls endured before he broke through to financial success.

Entries this year were judged on a regional level, and the leading material from the regions was sent on to the Academy, where four members of the Academy's writing branch, all volunteers, read the scripts before they were passed on to the Nicholl committee: Chairman Julian Blaustein, Ben Franklin, Norman Corwin, John Gay, Arthur Hiller, Richard Kahn, Fay Kanin, Jack Lemmon, Daniel Taradash and Robert E. Wise

In addition to sending two copies of a full-length feature screenplay, entrants were asked this year for an autobiographical letter and, in that letter, mention of their ideas for a new screenplay. The submitted screenplay, of course, was a deciding factor, but the committee also tries to decide whether or not the entrant is a one-idea person or has the potential for a scenarist's career.

Although winners are required to submit a progress report each quarter during the writing year, Miller points out this is no screen-writing workshop, and writers are not given guidance or orders. "We're not getting involved like that. When the screenplay is done, we own no rights to the screenplay. We don't help them to market it, we don't push it to producer-members of the Academy. It's completely up to them.

"We are simply giving them one year to write, and they won't have to flip burgers at McDonald's at night and write during the day ..."

the brochure trumpets.

Also under the guidance of Rich Miller, whose enthusiasm for the program flashes when he talks about it, the Student Film Awards competition is open every year to students enrolled in film courses in accredited colleges, universities and art and film schools in the U.S.

With entry forms and rules

Information about application

forms, which must accompany the

submission, can be found out by

contacting Miller at the Academy.

the Student Film Awards program

"to support and encourage the

production and study of Ameri-

can film, to recognize excellence

in college and university film

production, and to promote dialog

between students and faculty," as

In 1973 the AMPAS and the Academy Foundation established

With entry forms and rules handed out each January to most of the colleges in seven regions across the U.S. — Southern California (south of, but excluding, Santa Barbara) and Hawaii are in Region Seven — films must be sent with the entry forms (listing the one or at most two people responsible for the production) to the regional juries, which submits at most four films per region.

Prints must be 16m or larger with optical and magnetic sound, and categories are broken down into dramatic, documentary, animation and experimental.

Winners' Week

What's in it for the winners? Those living outside the L.A. area are flown to town for a week of workshops, seminars, social events and, most important, the showing of their films in the Samuel Goldwyn Theater and presentation of the cash awards.

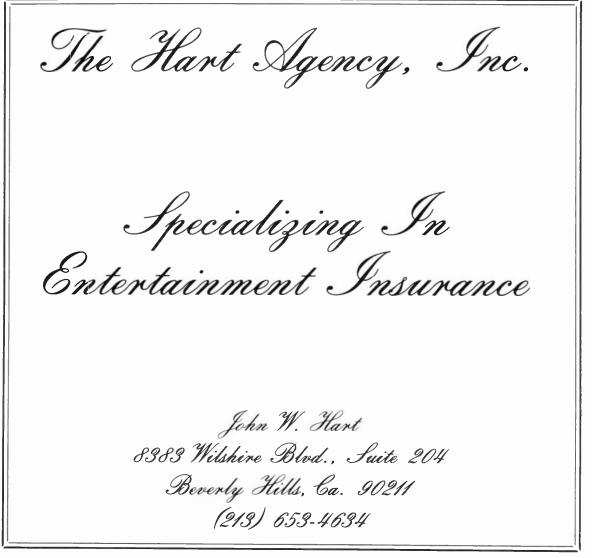
Achievement Award winners receive \$1000. The Academy may also vote an Honorary Award worth \$750 and up to two \$500 Merit Awards for each category.

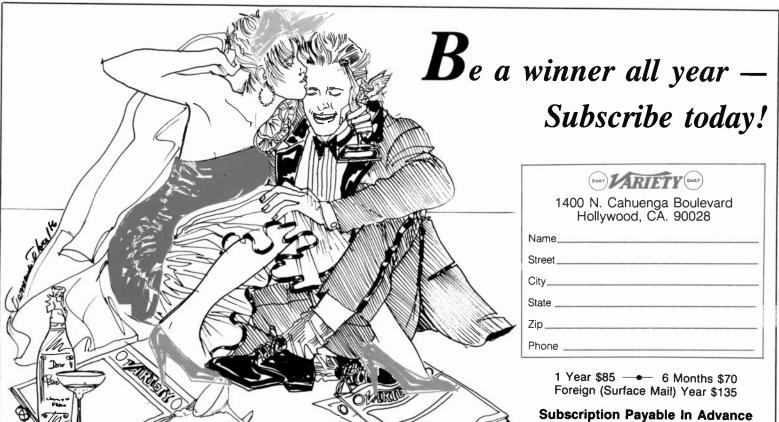
Robertson points out that a real highlight in the week, besides the screenings, is a reception at the Awards ceremony. Held in the first-floor lobby, the young filmmakers get a shot at meeting former winners in this now-exclusive club of Student Film Awards champs.

In 1981 the Academy, working with the U.S. Information Agency, the University Film Foundation, Congress and the General Assembly of the International Center for Film & TV Schools, and the American Embassies, developed a Foreign Student Film Award for a student outside the U.S. borders. The winner, whose film doesn't compete with the American entries, is also brought to L.A. for the activities and awards ceremony.

The Academy boasts a collection of 8000 film and video titles, including features and shorts. Those videos, for the curious, involve the annual Oscar Awards programs as well as ¾" and ½" cassettes of films instead of the 16m copies once in use.

"We have Awards shows, starting in 1949," explains Dan Woodruff, Academy curator of





film. "We have all the televised Awards shows on videotape. Some of them are from Kinescopes, which we've transferred to tape, and some of them are from 2" masters, which are very fragile.

"The first televised Awards show was in 1952, but we started filming it in 16m in 1949 just for history's sake." The collection is one of the most asked-for series at the Academy.

Woodruff, headquartered on the seventh floor where the executive offices are located - Robertson and Miller are on the seventh, as well — talks about the use of videotape in the preservation of film. "We are finding that for the study purposes we are more and more dependant on video because it doesn't destroy the original prints, which are becoming more and more valuable as time goes

"That doesn't mean we're making videotapes of everything we have here," he underscores. "Early public domain things, yes. Special collections from the turnof-the-century primitive cinema, we'll have videotapes on those for study purposes. We don't want to wear out our preservation prints, which are extremely expensive to duplicate.'

The Academy began its preservation program in 1947, but only this year has Woodruff been able to put together a catalog listing those films the Academy has been instrumental in preserving.

There are more than 2700 titles. The preservation program hasn't always been as prominent in the scheme of things as it is now. Funds now are being set aside each year for preservation.

The first film that the Academy received was a Thomas Edison sound film which Edison himself sent to the Academy Awards Banquet May 16, 1929, at the Roosevelt Hotel for his honorary award. There are written records of the footage, but the film itself has vanished. Probably decomposed.

They did preserve "The Great Train Robbery," 1903, in a rare, 35m, hand-tinted print, and from farther back in time, Edison's 1894 Kinetoscopic "Record Of A Sneeze" by Fred Ott. The Academy found a Lon Chaney film as well as "Road To Mandalay," which they turned over to MGM.

They have an early Lois Wilson film, "Hypocrites," D.W. Griffith and Mary Pickford films, "Ramona," "Iola's Promise," "The New York Hat ...

Working with UCLA on the reconstruction of "Stagecoach" the Academy loaned the university the original nitrate print, which the UCLA archivists used in part for reconstituting the work. The cooperative spirit among archivists typifies the dedication to the common purpose.

Does UCLA get the credit? "That's okay," Woodruff affably agrees. "We'll borrow the print."

The "Gone With The Wind" experience serves as an example of the intricate work involved in preserving something on film in the best manner possible. Originally filmed in three-strip Technicolor (they have an original print of it), the picture can't be exactly reproduced because the earlier process has been discontinued in this country.

"They've all gone to Eastman Color. We'll have a print that's closer to the original print if not the original release than prints that the studio will have today. A lot of times it will borrow back that material as references for making up new prints.

"They're re-timing the original three-strip matrices of 'Gone With The Wind' to come up with a new, restored print because they had printed it so many times and changed the color timing for different reissues of the film so much that it didn't look like it did originally.'

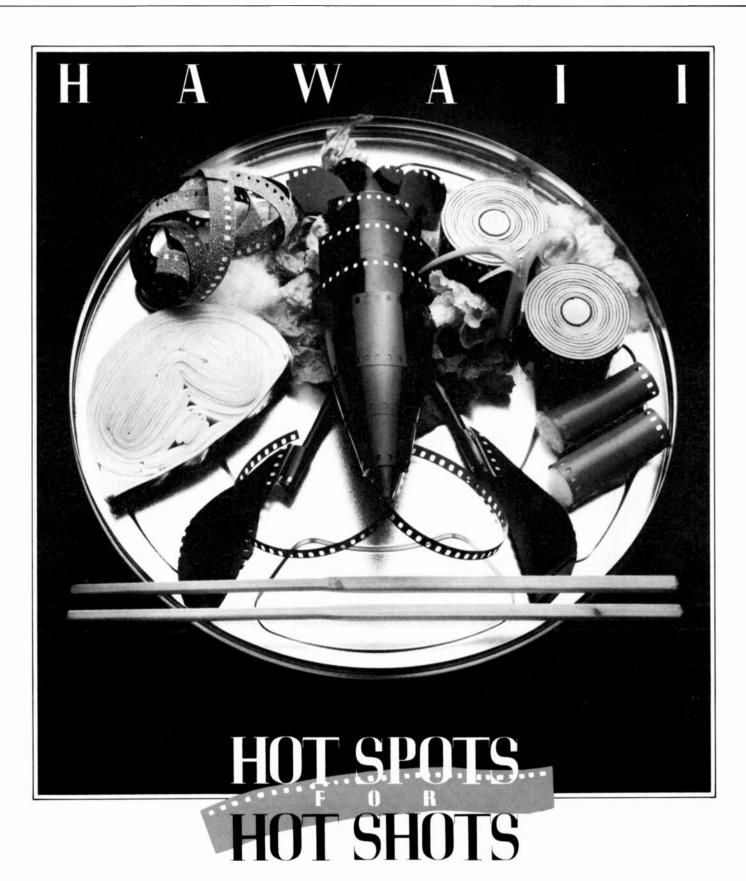
Though the Academy uses several storage buildings, including the Beverly Hills Self Storage catty-corner across Wilshire, there's only one spot where nitrate film can be stored. All 35m motion picture film used until 1952 was made from highlyexplosive nitrate - theaters had been known to burn down because of a nitrate explosion, and Woodruff has impressive stills of nitrate eruptions — and requires safe keeping and a wary eye.

(Those who have home movies on 8m or 16m from the '20s, '30s and '40s don't need to worry; the law long ago stated that film used for home or non-theatrical use has to be on safety film.)

Because of the expense and the insurance problems with nitrate, the Academy's store of historic nitrate pictures is kept with UCLA Film Archives on Cole Ave. Because of the chemical instability of the nitrate, a yearly account shows that the collection is rapidly deteriorating.

In some cases, the Academy already has prints of those disintegrating films, or the studio that owns the original material and the copyright doesn't want to make safety copies. "We've tried to collect the Best Picture winners, or films that won Academy Awards in some category or another, and we had collected them originally in nitrate and now those prints are decomposing, so we're having to go back and replace that early part of our history with new safety prints, and it's expensive —

(Continued on Page 224, Column 1)



WHEN IT COMES TO VARIETY, HAWAII IS A MIXED PLATE



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ACADEMY

(Continued from Page 223, Column 5) about \$1000 for a 10-minute b&w reel, or roughly \$10,000 for a b&w feature not including sound, and about \$40,000 for a color film."

Though UCLA stores the Academy's collection, the Academy does its own preservation, just as UCLA preserves its own films. The Academy preps the films in

its headquarters, but, because it has no optical printer, the work is sent out to one of several labs that will handle nitrate.

The Academy does programs, such as the one they did Aug. 3 at 20th Century Fox on film preservation, for members, and for University Film and Video Teachers Association. They offer seminars on preservation in conjunction with archives, and they lend, as already noted, preservation

material to other archives for programs.

Regarding the Aug. 3 program, the UFAVTA approached Woodruff about the presentation, a screening of George Cukor's "A Star Is Born," as an example of how a film can be recovered. Woodruff added a preface about film preservation, examples of some short things the Academy has rescued.

Incidentally, the Academy sent

out the restored version of "A Star Is Born" on a tour covering New York, Washington, D.C., Chicago, Dallas and the Bay Area in 1982-83.

Until year-before-last the Academy did a preservation program at Filmex, but because of the changes in Filmex, the Academy last year put on its own preservation program at the Academy of material preserved from the Hitchcock collection and early French primitives, a "sort of potpourri of things we have restored over the previous year."

The Academy boasts the largest collection of motion picture primitives in the world. The paper print collection includes virtually every film registered for copyright in this country from 1894 to 1912, the Academy houses a superior collection of original 35m Georges Melies material — Melies, the French grand-pere of everything from dissolves to double exposure — and of Louis Lumiere, whose father had sold Melies his first camera.

There's a "good representative collection" of both Edison and

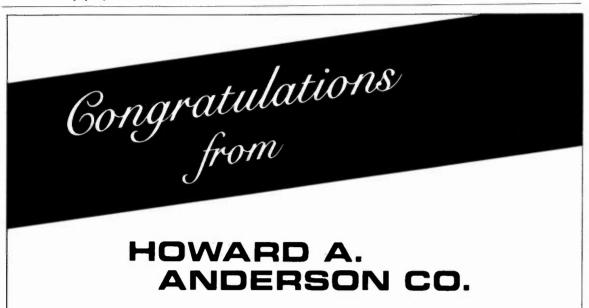
Griffith. "There's gap between 'Birth Of A Nation' and 'Wings' that I'm trying to fill in right now," says Woodruff. "Between those pictures, between 1915 and 1927, because it was before the history of the Academy, we're having to fill in."

The most challenging Academy treasure hunt was done by Ron Haver, head of the L.A. County Museum film department. Going through film can after film can in a search for the missing footage from Cukor's "A Star Is Born," he was able to piece together all but seven minutes. That portion is shown with the stills and the sound track, and the search continues for the rest of the picture.

It was that version that toured the U.S. in 1982-83.

During Haver's search, he located the long-missing 1932 "The Animal Kingdom," starring Ann Harding and Leslie Howard. Another missing film was Thomas Edison's 1910 15 min. "Frankenstein," and there seemed little chance that the relic would show up. Ever.

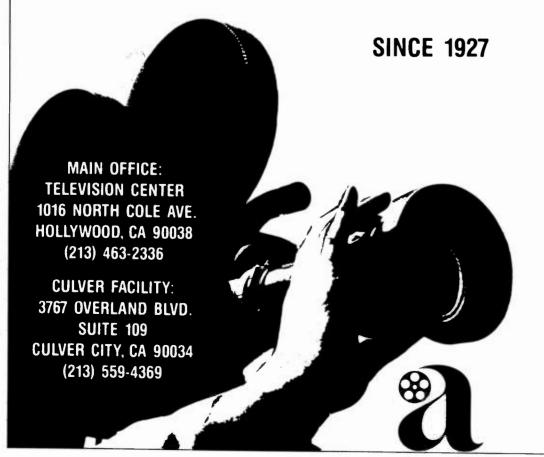
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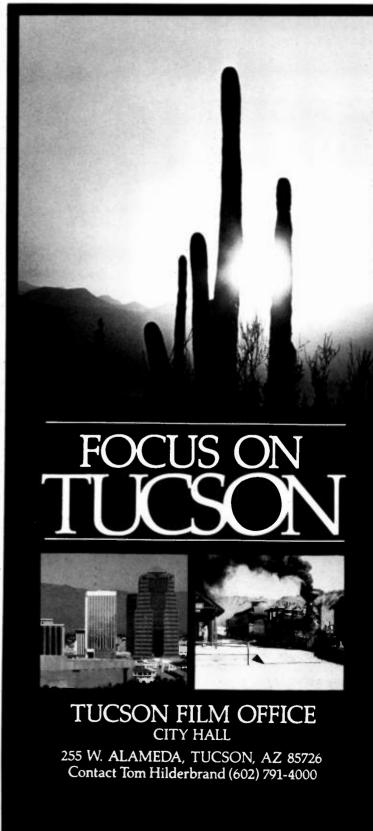


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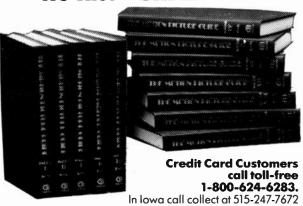
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ACADEMY

(Continued from Page 224, Column 5)

"It was one of the most soughtafter films and one day a man called me up and said he had it. Sure enough, he did — in Cudahy, Wisconsin." Seems his exwife's grandmother once toured in tent shows with a poetry reading and then would show "Frankenstein."

The unnamed benefactor brought

out the film. He wanted to keep it, but he did give the Academy a video copy so it could at least be studied. It can now be seen on videocassette at the Academy.

The others, and as yet undiscovered, on the most-wanted list are the 1917 "Cleopatra," with Theda Bara; D.W. Griffith's 1926 "That Royle Girl," with W.C. Fields; "London After Midnight," the Lon Chaney 1920 horror film; Greta Garbo's 1928

"The Divine Woman"; "The Honeymoon," Part 2 of Erich von Stroheim's 1928 "The Wedding March"; Emil Jannings in Ernst Lubitsch's 1928 "The Patriot"; and Laurel and Hardy's first feature, made in 1930, and called "The Rogue Song" (only 2½ minutes are known to exist).

The first step for the Academy in considering a donation is to determine whether or not the work is missing or lost film, or that it is in need of preservation. That latter point, because of the nitrate storage problem, the expense of transfer to safety film or the expense of disposing of nitrate, now classified as a toxic waste, would make the gift a debatable item.

Billie Burke's first film, "Peggy," has just been restored by the Academy. Burke was a major New York stage actress in 1915, so the restoration represents a coup in theatrical and film history.

"I guess everyone wants the complete 'Greed'," acknowledges Woodruff, "and the first version of 'Merton Of The Movies'. And we'd like to find those missing seven minutes of the 1954 'A Star Is Born'. By some miracle it will show up."

The Academy's interest inpreservation extends to presenting Oscars, as it did in 1937 to the Museum of Modern Art, to Kemp R. Niver in 1954, to Henri Langlois, who started Cinematheque Francaise, in 1973, and, in 1984, to the National Endowment of the Arts — part of that was for film preservation.

The Academy has a collection from Technicolor, which presented reference prints. "Unfortunately they removed reel two from every print, so we have all these wonderful pictures with the reel two's missing. There are some prints that are complete, but we do have a great collection of reference prints from Technicolor which have to be filled out with whatever exists — 16m or Eastman color print or whatever exists."

On the subject of Technicolor, though not necessarily part of the Technicolor legacy, are a nitrate Technicolor print of "Black Narcissus," the 1940 Korda "Thief Of Bagdad," "Wizard Of Oz," "Gone With The Wind," "An American In Paris," "Westside Story," "My Fair Lady" among many, many films with the original Technicolor process.

As Woodruff notes, the Academy is not set up to run prints as sheer entertainment. "First we don't want to, because we don't want to wear out these prints. We try not to run these prints unless it's necessary, for a public event or a public screening or a series because they are original prints. They're irreplaceable. If something's available on videotape, we'll suggest the person rent it and watch it for study purposes and not run an original print on a flatbed."

Woodruff thinks that the directors' collections are the most interesting. Many times there'll be home movies shot on the set, so it's footage that doesn't exist anywhere else, with the actors out of character, the director chinning with the other people on the set.

As Woodruff observes, "I think it's the best place in Los Angeles to donate your material if it's a collection you want to keep as a collection. If a director wants to have his collection of films and add to it as he makes the films, we're also set up to take care of that. Fred Zinnemann, for example, continues to give us stuff.

Richard Franklin, who directed 'Psycho II,' has given us his prints of his past works and will continue to add to his collection.

"Another thing, sometimes a director will have cuts of a film that are different from the cuts released because they had their own cut, and then the studio takes the film and makes the studio cut. So they'll have their original intention."

The Academy readily admits it does not have everything ever made, or every version of everything ever made, but claims to be trying.

Now more and more directors' collections are being donated, and contemporary directors add their newest work as they make it. Probably the biggest completed collection was Alfred Hitchcock's, and in that collection there are all sorts of screentests and outtakes, and recently released were alternate endings to "Topaz." "The ending he wanted was cut in previews, and the studio put on another ending." MCA has brought out his original ending, the European ending and the theatrical ending on homevideo laserdisk.

The Academy does not own the films, stresses Woodruff, the copyrights or the negatives and owns no rights to a picture. Films are donated for study purposes, for historical record, or for safe keeping, so they can't be duplict-

"We can duplicate things that are in the public domain, and we do make a safety negative and a reference print. The negative is your protection material. Once that print's made, that negative is never touched unless someone orders it for a documentary or something like that."

In order to see one of the Lumiere or Melies collections for a classroom study, the instructor should contact Woodruff, who inturn would see about booking the Little Theater and supplying the film.

Programming is a great part of Woodruff's day. "We do a lot of film series. We do a series with the Directors Guild, we do a series with the Museum of Modern Art, L.A. County Museum, UCLA — we're always supplying prints to other archival institutions. We have a sort of lending, gentleman's agreement between archives that they will lend us material, and we will in turn lend them material, so we're sending films all over the United States. It's very rare that we send anything out of the country.

"So, we supply prints, answer questions, and locate prints of film on videotape, they'll come to physical print. Sometimes there's a negative only, and it's going to cost \$25,000 just to strike a new print, and we will have a print. If a company is going to release a film on videtape, they'll come to us for a pre-print material.

"For instance, when Goldwyn bought the Korda pictures, we supplied footage for the videocassette release. We have material that's closer to the original gener-

(Continued on Page 231, Column 1)





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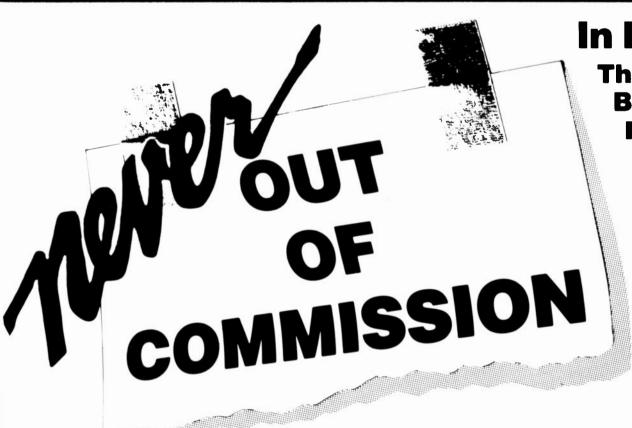
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Conversations with colossi, cinematically speaking — and more, I learned I'd had when Paramount Pictures turned 75 this year. Being two years older than Paramount myself, I'd been much more subdued about the anniversary when it hit me, but they surely had their reasons for being flamboyant about it considering how, why and where it had come about. The "by whoms," it dawned on me, had intruded on my life, and vice versa,

Paramount's 75th Celebration Awakens Memories Of The Giants That Were

in a number of odd ways.

The trio that "invented" Hollywood, that is.

There was the cornet player, Jesse Lasky, whose most favorite film was never made, "Big Brass Band." And Cecil B. DeMille, By COL. BARNEY OLDFIELD, USAF(RET.)

who had collaborated with him on a play called "California," who then went to California instead of staying with the film location he was supposed to use for "The Squaw Man," which was Flagstaff, Ariz. If that California whim had not overcome him, all glamorous datelines might have been FLAGSTAFF not HOLLY-WOOD. And Sam Goldwyn, a glove-selling smoothie who not only borrowed money but half his name from a partner named Selwyn, and abandoned his real moniker, Goldfish, as a titillation for trivia buffs.

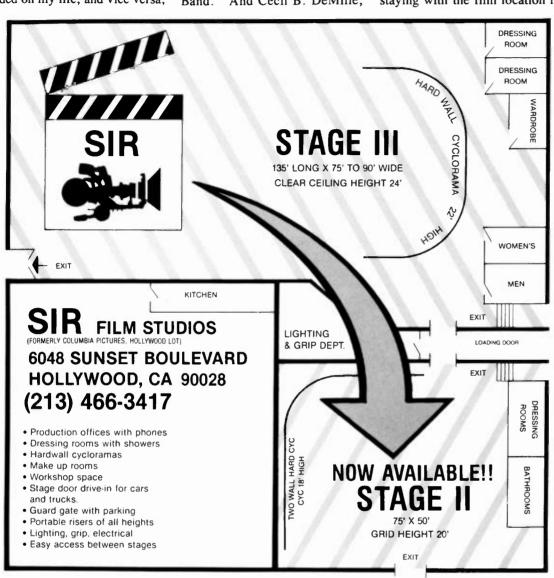
Where I was a country boy and had vented a lot of industry on barns and their contents, from their barn they created an industry. No barn I ever knew "moved around," but theirs did, starting near Sunset & Vine, then to the Paramount lot, and finally now at 2100 North Highland as part of the Hollywood Studio Museum. It makes a kind of statement that while one might get movies out of a barn.

one can't get the barn out of the movie environment!

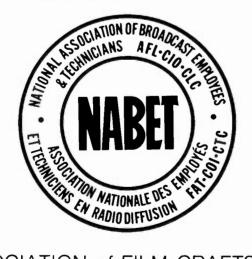
Goldwyn intruded on my marriage, for one thing. He decided on Lincoln, Neb., as the world premiere site for his film, "Her Wedding Night." It starred his "new find," Anna Sten, and she was going to make a personal appearance with the launch. As I was a newspaperman then, covering the movies, that same May 6, 1935, was to be my wedding day. Goldwyn's pressagent suggested Anna Sten as bridesmaid, but my lady put her foot down: "THIS will be no double feature," she said, and that was that.

By DeMille I was sent for. He, the public was led to believe, "produced" the very popular CBS LUX Radio Theater which voiced the plots of popular films every week, but J. Walter Thompson, the ad agency put it together and he was a "performer." Each production came on with the intro by him in that imperious, sonorous voice. Between acts, there were commer-

(Continued on Page 230, Column 1)



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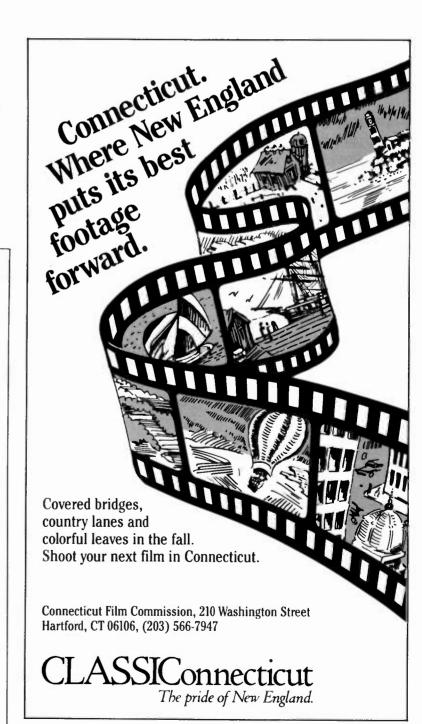
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P.S. Congratulations!!

(Continued from Page 228, Column 5) cials about the wonders of LUX soap, and guest interviews by DeMille.

The late Robert L. Ripley, who did his widely syndicated Believe-It-Or-Not, had sketched me and said I'd seen every movie made in 1936 and 1937 — and even more incredible had done it in Lincoln, Neb.! That was not so incredible when the town had nine theaters owned by four warring individu-

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Paramount At 75 Stirs Up Memories

als and circuits and among them they literally played every reel of English-speaking film made.

As weekly Variety's field hand based there, and it being the "reviewer of record," this meant a great many appearances of the lesser voltage product did its first out-of-town revelation there.

JWT and DeMille thought Ripley's anointment of me as a freak entitled me to the further exposure of guesting on the "LRT." I was sent an air ticket, put up at the Roosevelt Hotel across the street from Sid Grauman's collection of cemented-in foot and handprints, and promised their then awesome guest fee — \$125. I was on the next plane.

That was only the beginning. I was suddenly a Hollywood "insider," and, under DeMille's excellent and well-honed tutelage, was taken through how things worked. He took me off in a corner backstage of what is now the Hollywood Blvd. Henry Fonda Theater (named for another Nebraska boy), as that was where the "LRT" originated.

"That's Lawrence Tibbett over there," he said, pointing him out. "We're doing 'Naughty Marietta' tonight." Then he lowered his whisper a couple of levels. "You're going to help me with something of major importance which is going to happen during our interview interval. I'm going to announce what's to be my next motion picture tonight!"

He didn't say "movie." Motion picture had a ring to it, grandeur and sweep, and I felt as if I'd been included in the Act of Creation. The heavier the going, the harder it was to track his whispers and our heads were together. "It's been given to Louella Parsons for the lead for her column tomorrow morning, coast to coast—and the papers will hit the street here just as we finish the show tonight." I could almost hear the music indicative of this publicity orchestration welling up around

Timing

The show had to be timed to the second, and when it came to that point in the script in rehearsal, only the segment's producer, Sandy Barnett, was allowed to read it through — and signal when through. Trouble was, whether real or orchestrated by his agent, Western Union boys were coming in the stage door saying "Western Union for Mr. Tibbett," over and over, the wires congratulating him even before he'd sung. It was Western Union that almost up to ON THE AIR

Very exciting, and even more so because DeMille's next film was to be "Union Pacific." We both got anxious about when the time would come to make that announcement that it might come out that his next would be "Western Union!" We both got it right on the air, though, yet I've often wondered what would have happened had we boo-booed and said "Western Union." That would have made Louella a liar, thrown DeMille's research staff into a tizzy because he not only came up with expansive, spectacular ideas, he had to always be right — even if he wasn't.

Lasky As Prophet

Jesse Lasky, the man who had capitalized the Lasky Feature Play Co. for \$20,000 and was pushed by DeMille for more to get "Squaw Man" in the can, saw it return somewhere near a quarter of a million dollars, but was about to be rudely beached by a young Dore Schary when I talked to him. I was going in with a subject

which was then about the worst moment he'd ever known (later there was an even worse judgment error — the claim of "Sergeant York" as a capital gain matter, with which IRS disagreed).

I was at Warner Bros. then and it was into a big institutional publicity orgy about its 20th anniversary of talking pictures. Lasky as Paramount's mogul had told all his incredible stable of talent that sound tracks were only a momentary novelty and that once the fad had passed, the screen would be silent again as it was ordained to be.

"I had all our stars in my office," he told me. "I told them I understood their worries."

Uneasy

His listeners looked at each other uneasily as if the microphones coming on sets were some kind of technological cobras. They had gotten along by grimacing, miming, winsomely smiling, appearing sad, and were helped along the idea-conveyor by printed titles.

The mikes were diagnostic in shortcomings, revealed untrained vocal chords, shortfall voices, and could destroy poise. Lasky's wife was a good painter, and he had them in his office for good reason where one of her works - a treescape - hung behind his desk. It constituted his "prop," much as DeMille had lumped LUX Radio Theater and Louella Parson's lead on her column to imprint on public consciousness that momentous launch of "Union Pacific." Lasky said he turned and swept his hand across the painting and

"Just look at this picture. You can see that these trees are being blown by the wind, can't you? You don't have to hear the wind, do you?"

He remembered there was a smattering of relieved applause. Everyone got up, rushed up, shook his hand, clapped each other on the back and went happily forth to — disillusionment. He couldn't know it then, but that was a really big landmark occasion

Into Future

Subtlety, being alone with one's thoughts there in the dark, a silence in which to reflect were all going out the window. The inexorable march of high decibels, explicitness, raunchiness, language that would shame a longshoreman were all on the march to take over what men like him had nurtured, treated tenderly, and indeed,

He knew he was wrong when he talked that day, but how wrong was to come long after he was gone. He finished with a joke, saying he was somewhat like the old actor William Collier, who was in a play which opened and closed in one night, and he explained: "The play was a success. The audience was a failure."

Goldwyn In Trouble

Sam Goldwyn, his Frances, and I got on the same plane in the early '50s in Paris and we were bound for Copenhagen. We had talked about "Her Wedding Night" and Anna Sten who was

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ruled out as a "bridesmaid" when I got married, but he was in a brooding mood, not to be made happy that day. He was somewhat distraught, and Frances kept telling him, "It's going to be all right" and "not to worry." He had made a film with Danny Kaye about the revered Danish storyteller, Hans Christian Andersen, and in it there was a song called "Wilhelmina," a name far more Dutch than Danish — a minor discrepancy in far-off Hollywood, but in a small, proud country which revered its citizens who reflected the culture by being known internationally, it was an outrage and the media had erupted its displeasure.

Dreaded Arrival

Blendering national origins is never popular in direct ratio to the meagerness of the population claiming and proud of such antecedents. He was on a mission to both save face and a market, and I sat across the aisle from the Goldwyns as he squirmed in his seat and agitated conversationally about like a small boy making his first trip to the dentist. It was a quite different Sam from the one who would whiplash an overdoing actorish performer. He was cowed, and fearful. When the plane touched down on Copenhagen's Kastrup runway, Sam peered gloomily out the window and said:

"This is where Grace Moore crashed.'

It seemed an appropriate remark considering his frame of

And Then!

The plane taxied up and out there on the runway apron was a

ACADEMY

(Continued from Page 226, Column 5)

ation — it's from the original negtive or from the original release.

With all the activities going on inside the Academy, the one thing constant is film. That's what the Academy, its activities and its personnel are involved in, one way or another. Now that they're all under one roof and getting on better than reasonably well, theonly problems remain space and parking.

The garage hasn't enough space for the employes, muchless outsiders. In the evening, it's first come, first served. One of the obvious disadvantages of a Beverly Hills location is the parking problem. The Academy does have a long-time covenant with the building diagonally across the street and two farther up the street to provide parking for previews.

And everyone keeps coming oack for one reason or another Some deadly serious, some on ambitious pursuits, some arriving on flights of fancy. But whatever motive brings people to the Academy, the most reassuring thought is that the biggest crowd pleaser turns out to be an unidentified French short film from around 1905 they call "The Dancing Pig." That sure brings everything into focus.

Paramount At 75 Stirs Up Memories

sea of young people dressed up as was really right about there being Hans Christian Andersen characters, and there were welcome signs all over the place. Sam was an unbelieving man, transformed, as how could he have known that those Danes he had feared are probably the friendliest, most forgiving people on earth who felt honored that he had come to see them.

There was a Swedish radio commentator at the foot of the disembarkation stairs and as he brought forth his mike he was saying things about the "characters" who'd turned out. One was a ravishing young lady, a replica of the Little Mermaid but in ambulatory mode, gorgeous long legs clad in

"She has such long stockings," the Swede told Sam with everybody listening, "they come all the way up to her ... (he paused, started again) ... they come all the way up to her ...'

Finally Sam helped him by saying, "They're just as long as her legs are.

The Swede laughed in relief, and the celebration and welcome went on. Sam had prepared for a disaster that never came, and a man credited with more malaprops than anyone in the world, had recognized a kindred spirit and bailed him out of an entrapment - and not just Denmark but all of Scandinavia seemed to be on his side from then on.

Postscripts

In Paramount's 75th year, these intrepids were saluted once again, but to most who wrote and said, and now work on the premises for which they laid the foundations had not known them personally. I once asked DeMille what was his most remembered comment after one of his films had opened, and he said quickly:

"It was at the premiere of 'King Of Kings,' and Will Rogers came out. He took my hand in his and said, 'Cecil, you'll make a better picture when you get a better Subject.'

When Goldwyn made the post-WW II film about warriors-comehome, "Best Years Of Our Lives," Generals Eisenhower and Bradley wanted to give him the highest military decoration they could give a civilian and it would be awarded in special ceremonies in the Pentagon.

I was sent down to meet Goldwyn at the Pentagon River Entrance and escort him to the place of honor. He came in in that entrance melee, looked about for someone to tell him where to go next. He had known my namesake, the famous pioneer racing who made one of the earli est films with Mack Sennett. "Barney Oldfield's Race For A Life," with Mabel Normand.

I stuck out my hand and said: "Mr. Goldwyn, I'm here to meet you — my name's Barney Oldfield." Sam stood there a beat, a twinkle in his eye, and said: "Where I come from, I make the ioke.'

As we all know, Jesse Lasky

a good picture in a "Big Brass Band," although it was done by another fellow, Meredith Willson, not a cornet player but a piccolo player out of Mason City, Iowa, called "The Music Man."

And just recently, a plaque holding the proof copy of the 100th Hollywood Anniversary cachet and stamp done by Ron Anderson was sent to the White House, autographed by Bob Hope — and Betty and Jesse Lasky Jr. which carried "... proudly presented to President Ronald Reagan, Official Commemorative cachet, honoring the film capital of the world which he remembers with so much affection."

It was the same Ronald Reagan, who, as Screen Actors Guild prexy, wrote the Internal Revenue Service, which was about to take even the Lasky home for back taxes on that "Sergeant York" matter, asking that Mrs. Lasky, the widow, be allowed to ocupy the family residence until she, too, was gone. That and other efforts by old friends from the neighborhood called Hollywood permitted

(Continued on Page 232, Column 4)



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By MEREDITH A. LOBEL

(The author is a member of the California and New York Bars and practices entertainment law in Century City.)

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'Rights' Can Be Ticklish Legal Issue

are strongest for private individuals, but somewhat curtailed in the case of public figures. Gary Hart provides a timely example of how limited a Presidential candidate's right of privacy can be. The right of privacy is traditionally broken down into the four separate torts (a tort is a civil wrong or injury) described below, although each jurisdiction has its own rules as to how such actions are to be brought and phrased.

Using the above scenarios, if a photographer hiking in the private reserve around a tv evangelist's home shot a photo of the holy highroller lounging in his heart-shaped jaccuzzi, the evangelist could have a lawsuit for unreasonable intrusion upon an individual's solitude.

If you think you can make a mint from selling statuettes of your now departed screen idol, your screen idol's heirs could bring a suit for commercial misappropriation.

Besides never speaking to you again, your ex-lover could make a claim against you for portraying her in a false light in the public eye. And, if you could not resist using the boudoir photos she gave you of herself as the frontispiece to your sex-filled blockbuster, she could top off her lawsuit with a possible action for public disclosure of private facts.

Right of Publicity: It is perhaps more than likely that all of the above plaintiffs would sue you for having infringed upon their right of publicity. That "right" of publicity grew out of the right of privacy, or, more specifically, the tort of commercial misappropriation. The right of publicity essentially protects a celebrity's right to capitalize on his/her name, portrait or likeness during their lifetime.

Courts have expanded this protection to include the celebrity's identity, property such as the car of a famous race car driver, group image, act and even the catchphrase "Here's Johnny" as was the case when Johnny Carson successfully sued Here's Johnny Portable Toilets, Inc.

Before you start work on any project based on a living celebrity that falls under this protected area, get permission and a release.

This does not mean that you must stop work on your biography or documentary of the latest superstar, for the First Amendment is the zealous guardian of such creative and informative endeavors. But do not plan on selling Tshirts with the name or picture of the celebrity in question emblazoned on them. Nor would you film a Madonna in concert and

Memories

(Continued from Page 231, Column 5) her to live out the rest of her days

DeMaupassant to the contrary, Hollywood's Three Musketeers will always bear the names of Jesse Lasky, Cecil B. DeMille and Samuel Goldwyn, who manufactured more heroes, rescued more ladies-fair and created more royalty on the hoof than any dynasty ever did.

(Col. Barney Oldfield, a Variety scribe from 1930, and Daily Variety from 1933, is now a consultant with Litton Industries in Beverly Hills.)

then use the clip in your next teen flick unless you got her consent. The right to authorize such commercial exploitation belongs exclusively to the celebrity.

If the celebrity is particularly unhappy with the book or documentary, it is likely that he will focus on a defamation claim rather than the violation of his right of publicity. However, if you are planning a biopic, a cautious studio and your errors and omissions insuror will want you to obtain releases from the persons involved if there is any chance that a court might find your portrayal of the celebrity to be unjust appropriation of his livelihood.

Regardless of the merits of a suit, the prospect of being sued at all is often enough to stop many from the production of a film based on a living celebrity. Some even prefer to wait until the celebrity becomes a heavenly body.

You Can't Take It With You: Upon death, the celebrity's right of privacy dies along with him or her. However, in some states (including California and New York) the right of publicity may be passed on to heirs by will. Essentially, the deceased celebrity's right of publicity is limited to commercial exploitation of products, merchandise or goods.

Thus, you cannot sell play money with Jack Benny's likeness on it or use Jack Benny's name to sell your money saving coupon book without his heir's consent. Even if your screen idol died without a will, his heir can inherit the right of publicity.

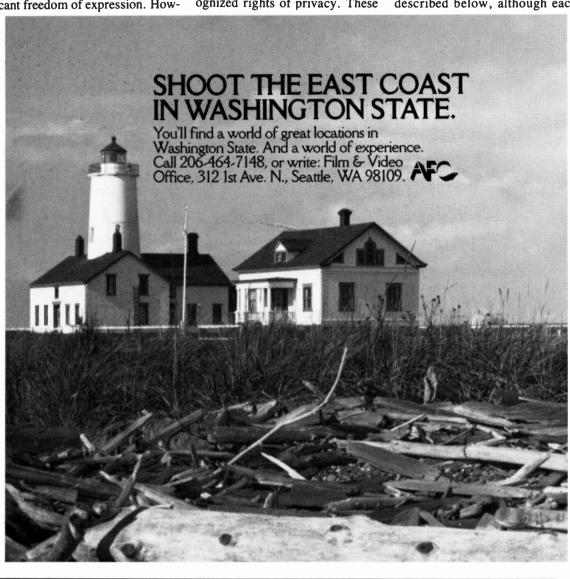
But what if you want to produce a movie based on your idol's life? You can do it and you don't have to get a release or permission from the estate, heirs or successor in interest to do so.

Both New York and California law allow the use of the deceased personality's name, voice, signature, photograph or likeness in plays, books, magazine or newspaper articles, material of political or newsworthy value, musical compositions, film, radio or television programs, original artworks or similar creative endeavors with-

Some states have set specific time limits during which the estate, heirs or successors in interest may benefit from the right of publicity. California grants a 50-year period and requests that those holding such rights register with the Secretary of State. Those who do not do so can only recover damages for the period of any infringement occurring after registration with the State. New York has no such statutory requirements.

Defamation: Defamation law presents another hurdle for creators. While the right of publicity belongs exclusively to the celebrity, anyone can bring a defamation action. In one of the above examples, your ex-girlfriend could sue you for defaming her in your fictional portrayal of her as a prostitute. She would have to prove that

(Continued on Page 234, Column 1)



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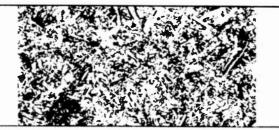
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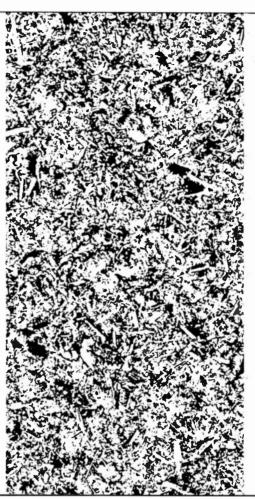
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'RIGHTS'

(Continued from Page 232, Column 5)

she is identifiable and your portrayal is false. Public figures, additionally must prove that the author's portrayal was malicious or in reckless disregard of the truth. Often, the more famous the celebrity and the greater the public interest in him, the more reluctant courts are to stifle creative endeavors involving free speech.

Defamation cases involving fiction most often arise in three instances:

- Where there is an unintended similarity between the fictional character and a real person;
- Where a real name has been used in an imagined setting;
- Where real people or events have been fictionalized.

Unintended Similarity: In the case of unintended similarity, it is best to pick an extremely banal name. The larger the class of people who have the same name, the lower the risk of defamation liabil-

Barbara Gordon, the author of the autobiographical "I'm Dancing As Fast As I Can" had changed the names and identities of real people involved in her personal story of valium addiction. Amazingly, this resulted in a lawsuit by a Dr. Eugene Allen who claimed that he was the only Dr. Allen in New

York and Gordon's portrayal of the fictional psychiatrist, also named Dr. Allen, defamed him.

Although Barbara Gordon hadn't provided many details about her protagonist, she did give him an address. The court found that the two Dr. Allens could be in part distinguished because the character's office was located on the Upper West Side, nowhere near the plaintiff's address on East 38th

In addition, the real Dr. Allen was not the source of Ms. Gordon's inspiration. He had never treated her and she had never met him. Unintended similarity of names is insufficient to find liability for

Real Events Dramatized: Many an author has found inspiration in people he has known or events he has experienced. Often newsworthy incidents provide material on which the author bases his story. Films that illustrate this include "Citizen Kane," "Missing," "Mask," "Inherit The Wind," "Dog Day Afternoon," "Anatomy Of A Murder," to name few.

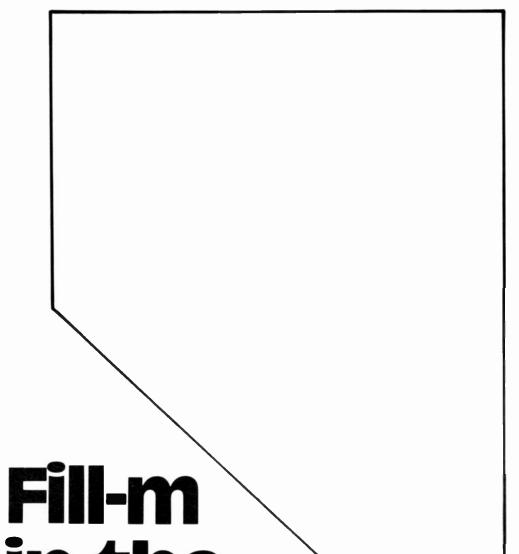
While some films seek to document a person's life and events, most blend fact and fiction to dramatize the story. In such cases, an individual who believes the portrayal of the character he identifies with to be offensive may be tempted to sue for defamation.

The film "Anatomy Of A Murder" was the subject of such a lawsuit. The actual murder of Maurice Chenoweth provided the inspiration for "Anatomy Of A Murder." Chenoweth was shot and killed by one Lieutenant Peterson for the rape of Peterson's wife. Peterson was tried for murder in Michigan in 1952. He was acquitted under the defense of insanity.

Hazel Wheeler was the widow of Maurice Chenoweth. Wheeler sued the publisher of the book as well as Columbia Pictures claiming that she was defamed by the portrayal of Janice Quill, her fictional counterpart. Wheeler complained that she had been portrayed, both in the book and the film, in an "unsavory" manner. Also,

(Continued on Page 325, Column 4)

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DAILY VARIETY FILM REVIEWS, OCT., 1986-SEPT., 1987

Following is an alphabetical listing of film reviews that appeared in Daily Variety from Oct. 1, 1986, through Aug. 31, 1987. Due to production requirements, an alphabetical supplement of September 1987 film reviews is compiled separately and appears immediately after the October-August reviews. In the case of foreign, non-English track films, the pictures are listed under their Englishtranslated title. Where films are reviewed on videocassette. all such pix received at least a token theatrical release in the domestic market.

Mon., June 22, 1987

Adventures In Babysitting (Teen-adventure -- Color)

A Buena Vista release of a Hill/Obst pro-uction. Produced by Debra Hill and Lynda)bst. Directed by Chris Columbus. Written y David Simkins. Camera (DeLuxe), Ric Vaite, production designer, Todd Hallowell; ditors, Fredric Steinkamp and William iteinkamp; music, Michael Kamen; casting anet Hirshenson and Jane Jenkins; art di-ector, Gregory Keen; set decorator, Dan flay; sound mixer, David Lee. Reviewed at Vestwood Egyptian Theater, Friday, June 9, 1987. MPAA Rating: PG-13. Running me: 99 mins.

Chris	Elisabeth	Shue
Sara	Maia Br	rewton
Brad	Keith C	oogan
Daryl	Anthony	Rapp
Joe Gipp	Calvin	Levels
Dawson Vincent	Phillip D'C	Onofrio
Brenda Pe	enelope Ann	Miller
Dan	George Ne	wburn
PruittJo	ohn Ford N	oonan
Mike	Bradley W	hitford

"Ferris Bueller" meets "Risky Jusiness" in this teen-dream set n (where else?) the suburbs of 'hicago. Chris Columbus weighs n adequately in his directorial lebut, thanks to a fresh, ,solid ead performance from Elizabeth hue. But film can never rise bove the leaden script of David imkins and, despite some nice lashes of humor, winds up only a ut above the usual adults-chaseids formula. Nevertheless, this is sure bet at the boxoffice, where will be necessary viewing for evry self-respecting suburbanite

Apparently average day in the life f 17-year-old Chris Parker (Shue, nuch more comfortable in front of ne camera than in her feature-film ow in "The Karate Kid"), starts ith mid-afternoon discovery that er dream date with main squeeze 1ike (Bradley Whitford) has been anceled. With nothing else to do, ne takes an assignment babysitting or the two Anderson kids, the 15 ear-old Brad (Keith Coogan), who as a crush on her, and Sara (Maia rewton) a little brat who idolizes hor.

Trouble starts when Chris gets a all from her best friend Brenda Penclope Ann Miller), who had ecided to run away from home but nen thought better of it upon reachng bus station in downtown Chica-

Chris heads down to the city with leith, his best friend Daryl (Anthoy Rapp) and Sara in tow and, in hort order, blows out a tire, realtes she's left her purse back in the burbs, gets a tow from a onermed man who drives by his house) find his wife cheating on him, neaks into a car that's being hotvired by professional car thief Joe

Gipp (Calvin Levels), and winds up in the headquarters of a national car-theft ring. Kids escape, but only after Keith's best friend Darryl steals a copy of Playboy with vital financial information in it (?).

Thus the chase begins, with the action reaching the sublimely ridiculous level when the kids stumble through a back door onto the stage of a blues club. Chicago bluesman Albert Collins won't let them leave until they sing the blues, so Chris leads them through spontaneously-composed "Babysit-ting Blues," that steers perilously close to being a blatantly racist stereotype. Columbus and crew pull the scene off, although Shue's high fives to the black patrons on her way out is a bit much.

There's lots more chasing, with credibility straining and straining until it completely snaps in a scene at a garage where the kids pick up the car and, eventually, race the parents home. Guess who wins that

While Columbus keeps the action moving, he undercuts a few scenes with a poor choice of angle sequences - a great sight gag with a 21/2-pound rat mistaken for a cat gets blunted because the audience never gets a good look at the industrial!strength rodent — and he lets (or makes) his young cast overact badly in a few scenes. The only party not quilty of that is Levels, who gives a sweetly controlled performance in his bit as the young thief with a conscience.

Tech credits are mostly okay. with the film's bluesy soundtrack contrasting nicely with the WASPs long journey into the Chicago

Wed., Jan. 14, 1987

SuperFantaGenio ALADDIN

(Italian — Fantasy — Color)

An Italian International Film release (Cannon in U.S.) of a Cannon Group presentation. Produced by Ugo Tucci for Compania Generale R.T. Directed by Bruno Corbucci. Screenplay, Mario Amendola, Marcello Fon-dato, Corbucci; camera (Telecolor), Silvano Ippoliti: editor, Daniele Alabiso; music, Fabio Frizzi. Reviewed at Supercinema, Rome, Jan. 3, 1987. Running time: 100 min. Genie.............Bud Spencer Also with: Luca Venantini, Janet Agren,

Umberto Raho, Julian Voloshin, Daimy

Rome - Lensed in Miami, "SuperFantaGenio" is an amia-Cannon kidpic that has friendly giant Bud Spencer working miracles for a poor boy from the wrong side of the tracks. This contemporary update of Aladdin's Lamp has fared less well than other holiday pix on Italo screens.

Alan is a wide-eyed 14-year-old who works in a junk shop after school to pick up a couple bucks. One day, while polishing a rusty old oil lamp, a fabulous genie materializes in front of him and asks to be commanded.

Not long on imagination, pic contents itself with fulfilling some pretty obvious teen wishes - owning a Rolls, flying over a traffic jam, beating up bullies and becoming a basketball champ.

The genie is also good at cleaning up the local mafia, terror of Miami shopkeepers who have to make "inpayments. Mr. Siracusa, surance the boss (who also harasses Alan's pretty mom Janet Agren), gets his in the end.

Pic may be too tame for some kids' taste; its violence is limited to fistfights, flipping baddies into the ocean and turning them into pigs and mice.

With his powerful physique and squinty eyes, Spencer makes a classic genie right out of Baghdad; young costar is a passable average kid. It's technically okay.

Thurs., Feb. 26, 1987

Alien Predator THE FALLING (Horror — Color)

A Trans World Entertainment release of a Continental Motion Pictures production, Executive producers, Helen Sarlui, Eduard Sarlui, Produced by Deran Sarafian, Carlos Aured. Directed by Sarafian. Screenplay, Sarafian, based on a screenplay "Massacre At R.V. Park" by Noah Blogh. Camera (color), Tote Trenas; editor, Dennis Hill; addi-tional editing, Peter Teschner; music, Chase/Rucker Prods.; sound, Anthony Bloch; coproducer-second unit director, Michael Sourapas; production manager, Joe Ochoa; special effects, John Balandin; casting, Lee Payne. Reviewed at 42d St. Cine 1, N.Y., Feb. 22, 1987. MPAA rating: R.

Running time: 90 min Damon . Dennis Christopher Michael Martin Hewitt Lynn-Holly Johnson Luis Prendes J.O. Bosso Samantha

New York - "Alien Predator" (that's what it says on-screen, despite confusing ads that spell it "Alien Predators") is a truly stupid horror film shot in Spain in 1984 as "The Falling."

Initially aimed at release along with two other Helen Sarlui productions by Film Ventures International, pic went on the shelf when that company experienced financial problems and surfaces instead via homevideo-firm-turned-theatrical-distrib TWE.

A stern warning, at the least, should be in the offing from 20th Century Fox, since new title not only intones the likes of Fox' "Alien" and "Aliens" hits but also manages to grab onto Fox' upcoming Arnold Schwarzenegger-starrer,

TWE also cut corners by virtually duplicating the poster art here from its 1984 flop (which reportedly put distrib Cardinal Entertainment out of business) "Creature.

It would be difficult to come up with a more obnoxious triumvirate than leading players Dennis Christopher, Martin Hewitt and Lynn-Holly Johnson, smirking, flirting and pouting as three squeaky-clean kids on a vacation in Spain in their massive recreation vehicle and dune buggy.

Too bad for them that Skylab crashed nearby in 1979 and five years later Spaniards are being exposed to the result of an experiment conducted on Skylab involving living microbes found on the moon from the Apollo 14 mission.

These microbes result in an alien critter (shown only briefly as an imitation of the small, early forms of the monster in "Alien") that inhabits a human host, drives the human crazy and in 48 hours pops out in time-honored chest-burster fashion to begin the process again.

Tedious presentation actually apes Michael Crichton's "The Andromeda Strain'' (filmed by Robert Wise in 1970) with NASA scientist Prof. Tracer (Luis Prendes sporting an incongruous Spanish accent) coming up unbelievably with an instant antidote using himself as guinea pig.

As in "Strain," there is a multileveled, underground complex replete with warning sirens and a race by Hewitt to escape that poorly imitates James Olson's crisis at the climax of Wise's film.

Deran Sarafian's direction is sluggish, relying on pointless car chases to try and drum up excitement. His script is worse, filled with mushy speeches by the three young leads and a series of idiotic references to Rod Serling's "The Twilight Zone." Special effects are weak and audiences will be very angry at the nonappearance of the expected, full-grown title monster.

Mon., Feb. 2, 1987

Allan Quatermain And The Lost City Of Gold

(Adventure - Color)

A Cannon Group replease of a Golan-Globus production. Executive produces, Avi Lerner. Produced by Menahem Golan, Yoram Globus; line producer, Michael Green-burg. Directed by Gary Nelson. Additional scenes directed by Newt Arnold, Screenplay, Gene Quintano, from novel "Allan Quartermain" by H. Rider Haggard; camera (J-D-C Widescreen, Rank Color), Alex Phillips (Zimbabwe), Frederick Elmes (L.A.); editor, Alain Jakubowicz; music, Michael Linn and (uncredited) Jerry Goldsmith; sound (Ultra-Stereo), David Jones (Zimbabwe), Mark Ulano (L.A.); production design, Trevor Williams (Zimbabwe), Leslie Dilley (L.A.); set decoration, Patrick Willis (Zimbabwe), Portia Iversen (L.A.); production manager, Michael Games (Zimbabwe), Chris Pearce (L.A.); assistant director, Tony Tarruella (Zimbabwe), Nicholas Batchelo (L.A.); special effects makeup, Colin Arthur; stunt coordinator, Solly Marx (Zimbabwe), Don Pike (L.A.); mechanical effects supervisor, Richard Johnson (Zimbabwe), Germano Natali; special effects supervisor, Eric Allard (L.A.); visual effects supervisor, Ermanno Biamonte; postproduction super visor, Michale R. Sloan; casting, Robert MacDonald. Reviewed at RKO Warner 2 Theater, N.Y., Jan. 30, 1987. MPAA Rating: PG. Running time: 99 min.

Allan Quatermain. Richard Chamberlain Jesse Huston . Umslopogaas . .James Earl Jones Henry Agon. Robert Donner .Doghmi Larbi Nasta Alleen Marson Cassandra Peterson Rahbett Robeson Quatermain. Martin Rabbett

New York - "Allan Quatermain And The Lost City Of Gold" is Cannon's poor followup to its 1985 remake of "King Solomon's Mines." Pic in fact is a remake of Harry Alan Towers' 1977 film "King Solomon's Treasure," which starred John Colicos as H. Rider Haggard's adventure hero Allan Quatermain (from the book by that name). Towers' version, lensed in Swaziland and featuring rather silly dinosaurs, was never released theatrically, a fate which almost loomed for Cannon's expensive version after numerous postponements of its release last year.

Gene Quintano's embarrassing screenplay jettisons Haggard's enduring fantasy and myth-making in favor of a back-of-the-envelope plotline and anachronistic jokes about Cleveland.

Quatermain (Richard Chamberlain reprising his role) receives a gold piece from a dving man that inspires him to trek to East Africa in search of his brother Robeson (Martin Rabbett), who's been hunting for a lost white race.

Joining him are his archeologist girlfriend (Sharon Stone, also in the 1985 film), an African warrior (James Earl Jones), a comic-relief mystic (Robert Donner camping it up) and five expendable bearers

After considerable filler, they

find the lost race of Phoenicians. ruled by bland beauty-contest queen Nyleptha (Aileen Marson; Britt Ekland was a lot more fun in the role in Towers' version). In some confusing action, Chamberlain brings the house down and kills the baddies with molten gold.

Film relies frequently on a very phony gimmick of a spear-proof tunic, and story completely runs out of gas once the heroes arrive at their destination. Director Gary Nelson has some attractive Zimbabwe locations such as Victoria Falls to work with, but most of the footage is un-

Additional scenes directed by Newt Arnold back in Hollywood a year after principal photography appear to be on the sets of Cannon's 'Journey To The Center Of The Earth" remake, providing irrelevant roller-coaster type footage in a cave, notable for poor blue-screen work and obvious models.

Acting is embarrassing, ranging from Chamberlain's unfunny tonguein-cheek delivery and Stone's hysterical approach, to the villain played by Henry Silva in a fright wig. Donner's routine went out with Gunga Din, while Cassandra Peterson, as the queen's evil sister, has no dialog and will duly be mocked in the same way she threw barbs at the performances in the horror films she hosted as tv's El-

Typical of cutting corners, the bulk of the music here is Jerry Goldsmith's rousing theme music from "King Solomon's Mines," played at least a dozen times. Lor.

Mon., May 4, 1987

The Allnighter (Teen comedy - Color)

A Universal Pictures release. Produced, directed by Tamar Simon Hoffs. Coproduced by Nancy Israel. Executive produced by James L. Stewart. Screenplay, Hoffs; camera (CFI Color), Joseph Urbanczyk; editor, Dan M. Rich; music, Charles Bernstein; production designer, Cynthia Sowder; set decorator, Debra Combs; costume designer, Isis Mussenden; sound, Rick Alexander, Andrew MacDonald, Daniel Leahy; special surf cinematographer, George Fillinger III; assistant director, H. Gordon Boos; casting, Carrie Frazier. Reviewed May 2, 1987, at the Avco Cinema, Los Angeles, Calif. MPAA Rating: PG-13. Running time: 108 min.

.....Susanna Hoffs Val Dedee Pfeiffe John Terlesky

"The Allnighter" lasts 108 interminable minutes and is distinguishable only in that every other line of dialog seems to end in the word dude, as in "Hey, dude," and "Surf's up, dude" and "Totally, dude." Boxoffice prospects look like a wipeout.

Bangles band member Susana Hoffs gets to say a good portion of the other half of the dialog in her first starring role, but she never sings. She should have.

Perhaps her mother, making her debut as a feature director here (as well as writing and producing) wanted to launch both their film careers. If so, this isn't going to do it, since pic insults even a bored teenager's intelligence. Evidently, the Hoffs have been more successful making rock videos together.

Pic's title refers to the all-night partying on the eve of commencement from a fictitious SoCal college of three roomies who share a beach house (Hoffs, Dedee Pfeiffer, Joan Cusak) and their surfing buddies who live next door (John Terlesky, James Anthony Shanta).

Hoffs is the brainy one. She plays a valedictorian who must have had a C average since neither she, nor her girlfriends, can find much more to talk about than boys who say "dude" a lot and surf.

Hoffs desperately wants to tell her bronzed blond neighbor, D.J. (Terlesky), that she's mad about him and always has been, before they all move away after graduation. He doesn't know what to make of her.

Until that climactic moment near the end of the picture when they finally "get together," it's scenes of her and her girlfriends doing what girls do (paint their toes, stuff the top of their bathing suits, having innocuous adventures) and boys being surfers (beers for breakfast after surfing. Oh yeah, and calling each other "dude").

At least two of the actors, Shanta as the philosophising surfer ("I came, I saw, I surfed") and Cusak as the aspiring video artist have two of the more moronic characters ever to grace this genre.

Shanta's character talks as if he'd been hit in the head too many times by a surfboard. In one of his better lines, he pokes his buddy Terlesky in the chest and says, "You is you . . . dude."

Cusak, the college's only New Wave artist and the only student without a golden tan, talks in code.

Then there's Terlesky, allegedly bound for law school, but finding it not the least bit inconsistent that he writes term papers for friends so they can graduate. At least one unintentional laugh comes when Shanta thanks him for writing an A paper on Spinoza.

Production values are about average for a low-budget beach flick. Continuity is poor but George Fillinger III's surf cinematography compensates — sort of.

Bri

Mon., March 30, 1987

Amazing Grace And Chuck (Fantasy — U.S. — Color)

A Tri-Star release of a Tri-Star and Rasta presentation of a Turnstar/David Field production from Tri-Star-ML Delphi Premier Prods. Produced, written by David Field. Executive producer, Roger M. Rothstein Directed by Mike Newell. Executive consultant, Ted Turner. Camera (Metrocolor; Technicolor prints), Robert Elswit; editor, Peter Hollywood; music, Elmer Bernstein; production design, Dena Roth; art direction, John Myhre; set design, Dawn Snyder; set decoration, Michael J. Taylor; costume design. Jack Buehler; sound (Dolby), Jonathan Stein; assistant director, John T. Kretchmer; casting, Lynn Stalmaster & Associates, Mall Finn. Reviewed at the Chinese Theater (AFI Fest), L.A., March 26, 1987. MPAA Rating: PG. Running time: 115 min.

Lynn Taylor......Jamie Lee Curtis
Amazing Grace Smith....Alex English
President....Gregory Peck
Russell....William L. Petersen
Chuck Murdock....Joshua Zuehlke
Johnny B. Goode...Dennis Lipscomb
Jeffries....Lee Richardson

"Amazing Grace And Chuck" is destined to go down in history as the camp classic of the antinuke genre. As amazingly bad as it is audacious, pic harks back to such political fantasies of the 1930s as "Gabriel Over The White House" and "Stand Up And Cheer" in its good-hearted naivete, but the storytelling, if it can be called that, is so inept as to leave one gaping in wonderment that this could have gotten through the usual corporate production barriers. Film has little commercial chance, but it will live forever in the hearts of connoisseurs of Hollywood's most

memorably outrageous moments.

Concoction of writer-producer David Field, former production executive at Fox and United Artists, features not so much a plot as an attitude, one fancifully suggesting that total nuclear disarmament could be achieved immediately and pacifistically if the correct forces were brought to bear upon the powersthat-be.

At the outset, Little League baseball pitcher Chuck Murdock, having been shown a Minuteman missle under the Montana prairie, announces from the mound before an important game, "I can't play because of nuclear weapons."

The coach and other players don't dig this too much because they are forced to forfeit the game, but who should read a news report of the incident but Boston Celtics star Amazing Grace Smith (played by Denver Nuggets great Alex English), who promptly gives up his \$1,000,000-per-year salary to join Chuck in protest of nukes.

Pretty soon, two Miami Dolphin players show their solidarity with the cause, and in no time, hundreds of athletes on both sides of the Iron Curtain are refusing to play until the ultimate weapon is eliminated.

When it looks as though the upcoming baseball season will have to be cancelled due to lack of players, the President of the United States (an impressive Gregory Peck) summons young Chuck to the White House to drum some sense into him

But Chuckie won't budge, and when conspiratorial big businessmen rub out Amazing Grace, the kid adopts a vow of silence, which, in turn is picked up on by millions of children around the world.

Rather than being relieved that the little troublemakers have shut up, the President and the Soviet general secretary are so alarmed that their grandchildren won't speak to them that they instantly convene a secret summit meeting, at which it is decided that nuclear weapons will be eliminated over the course of seven years.

But this isn't good enough for Chuck, who holds out for, and gets, a commitment to total nuclear disarmament, now! Then, and only then, with the President and Russian leader in attendance and Cable News Network broadcasting the event, Chuck dons his Little League uniform and heads out to the mound to make his baseball comeback.

Presence of the CNN microphones and initially mysterious credit for Ted Turner as exeuctive consultant are tip-offs as to who the true auteur of "Amazing Grace" might be. Turner's recent sports and broadcasting initiatives with the Soviets link perfectly with the film's themes.

Even so, it takes a reel or two to get any bearing on what's going on here. Field's dialog is unlike any conversation ever heard on earth, and director Mike Newell ("Dance With A Stranger") can impose no shape or rhythm on the proceedings, and allows most of the actors to flail about in unbecoming ways.

Amazing's the word. Cart.

Thurs., Oct. 16, 1986

America (Comedy — Color)

An ASA Communications release of a Moonbeam Associates production. Produced by Paul A. Leeman. Executive producer, Paul E. Cohen. Directed by Robert Downey. Screenplay, Downey; additional dialog, Sidney Davis; camera (Movielab, Guffanti color), Richard Price; editor, C. Vaughn Hazell; music, Leon Pendarvis;

sound Lawrence Hoff, Ron Harris, Frank Stettner; creative consultant, Ralph Rosenblum; art direction, C.J. Strawn; assistant director, Forrest Murray; production managerassociate producer, Ron Nealy; additional camera; Michael Sullivan, Terry Kosher, Michael Davis; postproduction supervisor, Elliott Schwartz. Reviewed at 8th St. Playhouse, N.Y., Oct. 11, 1986. MPAA Rating: R. Running time: 83 min.

Terrence Hackley Zack Norman Joy HackleyTammy Grimes Michael J. Pollard **Bob Jolly** Gypsy Beam Richard Belzer Floyd Praeger Monroe Arnold Liz Torres **Dolores Frantico** . Pablo Ferro Hector Frantico. Mr. Management David Kerman . Howard Thomashefsky Earl Justic Martin Lang. Michael Bah Laura Ashton

Also with: Robert Downey Jr., Corinne Alphen, Minnie Gentry, Chuck Griffin, Ron Nealy, Forrest Murray, Melvin Van Peebles, Michael Rubenstein, Rudy Wurlitzer.

New York — "America" is an unfunny social satire from film-maker Robert Downey. It's a hard-to-watch misfire representing a severe decline from the creator of "Putney Swope" and "Greaser's Palace" some 15 years ago.

Though produced in 1982 and on the shelf till now, picture seems a decade or more older than that, in its counterculture sensibility, washedout color and grainy photography.

Zack Norman toplines as a reporter for the 9:00 news for New York cable-tv channel 92, an amateurnight operation that features a black anchorman (Howard Thomashefsky) who shouts as if his microphone wasn't close enough.

Episodic mishmash has Norman deciding to wear a plaid skirt (a la wrestling' Rowdy Roddy Piper) while interviewing people on the street and on the air, because his wife (Tammy Grimes) found the incriminating apparel in his suitcase.

Inexplicably, Norman becomes a big hit in this new guise; later the station becomes a huge success after Grimes and the weatherman (Michael J. Pollard) fiddle with its equipment and accidentally beam its signal off the moon, broadcasting briefly all over the world (film's original shooting title was "Moonbeam").

Various running gags and subplots include a tiresome routine about a big lottery winner (Monroe Arnold) who decides to have a homosexual marriage with a millionaire investment adviser (Michael Bahr) and then buys Channel 92.

Closest the film gets to actual laughs is a ridiculous homage to Martin Scorsese in the final reel: standup comic Richard Belzer portrays a loony taxi driver who accosts Norman and literally drives his cab onto the set in order to do his comedy routine on the cable news show. He becomes a hit and a regular on the news, which is literally turned into a circus.

Acting is quite loose, with Norman, once funny in the semi-improvisational atmosphere of Henry Jaglom's "Sitting Ducks," merely grim in the lead role. Name talent such as Grimes and Pollard gives embarrassing performances, especially with poor lighting and makeup proving quite unflattering. Most technical credits are a shambles

Mon., May 4, 1987

American Ninja 2: The Confrontation

(Marital arts actioner — Color)

A Cannon Group release of a Golan-Globus production. Produced by Menahem Golan, Yoram Globus. Executive producer, Avi Lerner, Directed by Sam Firstenberg. Screenplay, Gary Conway, James Booth, from story by Conway, based on characters created by Avi Kleinberger, Gideon Amir. Stars Michael Dudikoff. Camera (TVC color), Gideon Porath: editor, Michael J. Duthie; music, George S. Clinton; production design, Holger Gross; art direction, Robert Jenkinson; costume design, Audrey M. Bansmer; sound (Ultra-Stereo), Phillip Key; associate producer, Mati Raz; assistant director, Richard Green; martial arts choreographer, Michael Stone; second unit director, BJ Davis; second unit camera, Rod Stewart. Reviewed at the Hollywood Pacific Theater, L.A., May 1, 1987. MPAA Rating: R. Running time: 89 min.

Joe Armstrong Michael Dudikoff Curtis Jackson Steve James Sgt. Charlie

McDonald Larry Poindexter
Leo 'The Lion' Burke ... Gary Conway
Col. 'Wild Bill' Woodward .Jeff Weston
Alicia Sanborn Michelle Botes
Tojo Ken Michael Stone
Pat McCarthy ... Len Sparrowhawk
Taylor Jonathan Pienaar

Third teaming, after "American Ninja" and "Avenging Force," of stars Michael Dudikoff and Steve James and director Sam Firstenberg is a rollicking actioner that will satisfy targeted martial arts fans. Chock-full of casual good humor and an off-hand sense of make-believe, "American Ninja 2: The Confrontation" never transcends its genre, but delivers the desired goods for an okay b.o. outlook.

This time out, globetrotting Army hardbodies Dudikoff and James arrive in a small Caribbean island to investigate the disappearance of four U.S. Marines. It turns out that a local drug kingpin is kidnapping soldiers and others to turn them into genetically re-engineered ninja assassins who will do his bidding worldwide.

All this merely provides an excuse for an ample number of martial arts showdowns between the heroes and the black-robed baddies who swarm from all directions only to be dispatched in tidy fashion by the good guys. Script by actors Gary Conway (who plays the narcotics overlord) and James Booth trades heavily upon the notion of Americans' inherent mental and physical superiority to native warriors, who are a dime a dozen, but in such a comic way that the viewer can laugh with it rather than at it.

Other quaint sidelights here have the U.S. military populated almost exclusively by guys sporting "Miami Vice"-style clothes and coiffures, and American soldiers going after government officials of a nation hosting the U.S. Armed Forces.

Pic was lensed in South Africa, and is extremely picturesque despite the modest means. All hands in front of, and behind, the camera keep things jumping at a snappy clip, resulting in good dumb fun. Cart.

Mon., Nov. 17, 1986

An American Tail (Animated — Color)

A Universal release of a Steven Spielberg presentation from Amblin Entertainment Produced by Don Bluth, John Pomeroy, Gary Goldman. Executive producers, Spielberg, David Kirschner, Kathleen Kennedy, Frank Marshall. Directed by Don Bluth Screenplay, Judy Freudberg, Tony Geiss, from a story by Kirschner, Freudberg, Geiss. Created by Kirschner. Designed and storyboarded by Bluth. Deluxe Color; music, James Horner: original songs, Cynthia Weil. Horner, Rarry Mann; associate producers, tors, G. Sue Shakespeare, David Steinberg. Reviewed at the Academy of Motion Picture Arts & Sciences Samuel Goldwyn Theater, Beverly Hills, Nov. 12, 1986, MPAA Rating: G. Running time: 80 min.

Voices: Cathianne Blore (Bridget), Dom DeLuise (Tiger), John Finnegan (Warren T. Rat), Phillip Glasser (Fievel Mouskewitz), Amy Green (Tanya Mousekewitz), Madeline Kahn (Gussie Mausheimer), Pat Musick (Tony Toponi), Nehemiah Persoff (Papa Mousekewitz), Christopher Plummer (Henri), Neil Ross (Honest John), Will Ryan (Digit), Erica Yohn (Mama Mousekewitz).

"An American Tail" represent one of the rare attempts these day to do serious, richly textured, old fashioned animation in a featur film format. Unfortunately, th quality of the drawing and visua design merely emphasize the gap ing distance between those artisti elements and the script, which stands as a model of yawn-inducin predictability. Steven Spielberg' name as presenter and "quality aura surrounding the production make this an automatic b.o. mag net for the holiday kiddie trade but anyone over the age of 12 wi likely experience more boredor than pleasure.

Director-designer Don Bluth i clearly devoted to maintaining class ical standards of animation in thes days of pervasive blandness an computerization in the field; hi characters are expressive, the back grounds are vivdly colorful and ofter strikingly imagined and executed and the entire venture bespeaks a artist's care.

Even the premise seems ambitiou on paper, as the film endeavors to tel the story of Russian immigrants who happen in this case to be mic of the Mousekewitz clan, and thei flight in the late 1800s to the Unite States, where, Papa Mousekewit insists, "There are no cats."

Cartoons with ambitions even this noble are as rare as Spielber; films that lose money, but ever character and every situation pre sented herein have been seen a thou sand times before.

The mouse-vs.-cat stand-off is a old as animation itself, Dom De Luise's friendly feline is uncom fortably close to the Cowardly Lioi in concept, a little bug smacks di rectly of Jiminy Cricket, and assort ed villains are straight out of Diclens by way of Damon Runyon.

Using every cliche in the book tale is told of how little Fieve Mousekewitz becomes separate from his family during a storm a sea, then makes his way through th cat-ridden, treachery-filled jungle of Manhattan before inevitably be ing reunited with his kin. By-the numbers plotting is enough to driv an adult to utter distraction.

If one didn't have to sit throug the inane musical numbers and ir sipid dialog, there would be plentift delight to be derived from gazing a any number of Bluth's drawings which often employ bold use of colc and imaginative renderings of New York City before the turn of the certury.

Bottom line is that an album c full-color frame enlargements fror the film would be more edifyin than the picture itself. Can

Thurs., Aug. 13, 1987

Poussiere D'Ange ANGEL DUST

(French — Melodrama — Color A UGC release of a President Film UGC/Top 1/Films de la Saga/FR3 Film Prod/La Sofica coproduction Execution of

UGC/Top 1/Films de la Saga/FR3 Film Prod./La Sofica coproduction. Executive pr ducer, Jacques-Eric Strauss. Directed t Edouard Niermans. Screenplay, Nierman Jacques Audiard, Alain Le Henry; came (Eastmancolor), Bernard Lutic; editor, Yw Deschamps, Jacques Witta; music, Lec Senza, Vincent-Marie Bouvot; art directio Dominique Maleret; sound, Jean-Pierre Ru Paul Bertault; assistant director, Philipp Leriche; production manager, Pierre Ta casting, Mamade. Reviewed at the Ermitaç cinema, Paris, June 26, 1987. Running tim 94 min.

Simon Blount Bernard Giraudeau
Violetta Reverdy Fanny Bastien
Martine Blount Fanny Cottencon
Landry Jean-Pierre Sentier
Florimont Michel Aumont
Broz Gerard Blain
Gabriel Luc Lavandier
With: Veronique Silver, Daniel Laloux, Yv

line Ailhaud, Patrick Bonnel, Bertie Corte

Paris — "Angel Dust" is another Gallic film noir, yet a stylish cut or two above the rest, and confirmation of the talent of director **Edouard Niermans.**

Niermans, 44, debuted in theatrical features with the unusual "Anthracite" (1980), a drama about life in a Jesuit school, obviously enriched by personal experience. But apart from a couple of tv films, director had to wait over five years for his second cinema feature, which began as an assignment from producer Jacques-Eric Strauss, who wanted a thriller.

Vigorously abetted by coscripters Alain Le Henry and Jacques Audiard (son of the late screenwriter Michel Audiard), Niermans delivers the goods. Though on the surface of it just another tale about a worldweary cop getting involved with a strange girl who drags him into a mire of murder and deceit, "Angel Dust" is shot through with a bristling cinematic energy and vivid performances by Bernard Giraudeau and Fanny Bastien.

Ironically, Giraudeau gives one of his best screen performances in a hand-me-down role of the seedy. boozing detective who hits the skids when his wife leaves him for another man, then recharges his batteries when he meets Bastien, a mysterious waiflike creature, who strikes him as a bit of "angel dust."

She in fact has a demonic side, ruthlessly organizing the murders of several pimps, lawyers and police officials linked with the slaying years earlier of her prostitute mother. Bastien gives the term femme fatale a disturbingly fresh interpretation.

Niermans and his writers invest the obvious dramatic scheme with imaginative twists and turns and an abiding sense of humor. Example of the latter is the way they at first withhold Giraudeau's profession: picked up one night for drunken vagrancy, Giraudeau wakes up next morning in a police station cell, shares a cigaret with a fellow prisoner, then before latter's amazement. pulls out his key ring and lets himself out.

Niermans and his first-rate lenser Bernard Lutic create a composite urban landscape of menacing unfamiliarity by mixing locations (often within a single sequence) shot in different French cities, notably Paris, Marseille and Lyons.

Supporting cast and other tech credits are all sharp.

Film unspools at the Venice fest in the Critics Week section.

Mon., March 2, 1987

Angel Heart (Mystery Drama — Color)

A Tri-Star release of a Mario Kassar and Andrew Vajna/Carolco International N.V. presentation of a Winkast-Union production. Produced by Alan Marshall, Elliott Kastner. Executive producers, Kassar, Vajna. Directed, written by Alan Parker, based on the novel "Falling Angel," by William Hjorts-berg. Stars Mickey Rourke. Camera (Tech-nicolor), Michael Seresin; editor, Gerry g; music, Trevor Jones; production Brian Morris; art direction, Kristi

Zea, Armin Ganz; set decoration, Robert J. Franco (N.Y.), Leslie Pope (N.O.); costume design, Aude Bronson-Howard; sound (Dol-by), Danny Michael; assistant director, Ric Kidney; casting, Risa Bramon, Billy Hop-kins. Reviewed at Lorimar screening room, Culver City, Feb. 25, 1987. MPAA Rating: R.

Running time: 113 min. . Mickey RourkeRobert De Niro Louis Cyphre. Epiphany Proudfoot.....Lisa Bonet Margaret

Krusemark.....Charlotte Rampling

Krusemark.....Stocker Fontelieu Toots Sweet......Brownie McGhee

Doctor Fowler.... . Michael Higgins Connie......Elizabeth Whitcraft Fliott Keene Spider Simpson....Charles Gordone ...Dann Florek Winesap...... Nurse..... Kathleen WilhoiteGeorge Buck Gerald L. Orange Pastor John Mammy Carter Peggy Seve

Even if it may be a specious work at its core, "Angel Heart" still proves a mightily absorbing mystery that also represents the best sustained filmmaking of director Alan Parker. Controversy over the initial X rating, later reduced to an R, certainly put the picture on the map and won't hurt initial b.o. Highly exotic and heavily elaborated telling of a small-time detective's descent into hell will grab serious viewers with its powerful technique and intricate visual patterns, but Faustian theme, heavy bloodletting and pervasive grimness may represent barriers too great for general audiences to surmount.

It appears to be against Parker's nature to tell a story simply, his tendency being to goose up every sequence with a bath of misty light and a frenzy of nervous editing. While completely recognizable from his previous films, his style here is put to generally excellent use, and sometimes brings to mind the dense layering often associated

with Nicolas Roeg.

Based upon William Hjortsberg's novel "Falling Angel," Parker's screenplay, set in 1955, has seedy Gotham gumshow Mickey Rourke engaged by mysterious businessman Robert De Niro to locate a certain Johnny Favorite, a big band singer from the pre-war days who, De Niro says, failed to live up to the terms of a contract.

Rourke, as Harry Angel, quickly discovers that Favorite, a war casualty and reportedly a vegetable, was removed years earlier from the nursing home where he was supposedly under care, and follows his leads to New Orleans, and particularly the jazz and voodoo elements within its black community.

Several people die distinctly unpleasant deaths shortly after being visited by Rourke, who himself is the victim of numerous assaults by people who don't like the sensitive areas he's poking into. Nor do the local authorities appreciate his liaison with the black 17-year-old daughter of a voodoo priestess, played by Lisa Bonet.

Climax reveals the deceptive hocus-pocus that lies at the heart of 'Angel Heart,'' but it is also powerful in its inexorable inevitability, thanks largely to the combinations of imagery that Parker has been building over the course of nearly two hours. As Roman Polanski did with "Rosemary's Baby," Parker here gets the absolute maximum out of somewhat suspect material.

Director clearly prepared the project with extraordinary meticulousness; his script is well ordered, the locations in New York and New Orleans all have an evocative lived-in quality, the browndominated color scheme is desaturated and bereft of primary hues, and the supporting players are uniformly fresh and engaging.

Rourke is a commanding lead, putting everyone around him (except De Niro) on edge, but unfortunately he looks like he just stepped off the set of "Year Of The Dragon." His constant designer stubble is completely inappropriate for the era in question — even if he is supposed to be a scruffy bum,

he'd still shave once in awhile.

De Niro, who has four major scenes, sports elegant attire, a beautiful cane and ever-growing manicured fingernails to offset his equally anachronistic big beard and long hair left over from "The Mission." His character, which he plays with great precision and economy, and also as if in on a joke of which nobody else in the cast is aware, is so weird, however, that the offbeat look seems acceptable.

Charlotte Rampling is in very briefly as an elegant fortune teller, while Lisa Bonet's striking looks are rather undercut by her Valley Girl accent, which is not terribly convincing for a poor black girl from bayou country.

Technically, film is superlative in every way, from Michael Seresin's immaculate lensing to Brian Morris' resourceful production design and Trevor Jones' ominous, mostly electronic score.

Pic was caught in Parker's original version, which received a much-publicized X rating from the Motion Picture Association of America and ultimately had to be trimmed by 10 seconds to win an R.

Controversial lovemaking scene between Rourke and Bonet becomes rather rough but, probably more to the point, involves torrents of blood leaking down on them from the ceiling, all of this being intercut with glimpses of voodoo rituals.

Bed action is quickly spied from overhead angles, but there is no frontal nudity, and sequence has its clear point, or, to twist an old phrase, "redeeming artistic val-

The view here is that much, much more than this has slipped into previous R-rated pictures, and that the scene in context is by no means far heavier or more disturbing than the implications that come out in the rest of the film. In short, X rating seems absurd, and indicates that the ratings standards are becoming increasingly conservative.

Fri., April 24, 1987

Angustia **ANGUISH** (Spanish — Color)

A Pepon Coromina production, for Samba P.C. and Luna Films. Exec producer, Pepon Coromina; associate producers, Xavier Visa and George Ayoub. Written and directed by Bigas Luna. Production managers, Paco Poch and Joan Porcar; production designer, Andreu Coromina; camera (Eastmancolor and Agfa), Josep Maria Civit; editor, Tom Sabin; sets, Felipe de Paco; casting and costumes, Consol Tura; make-up, Matilde Fabregat; special effects, Paco Teres; direct sound, Barbara Becker; dialog, M. Berlin; sound editor, Ernest Blasi; music, J. M. Pa gan. Reviewed at Real Cinema, April 11, 1987. Running time: 89 min.

With: Zelda Rubinstein, Michael Lerner Talia Paul, Angel Jose, Clara Paster, Isabel

(English soundtrack available)

Madrid — Catalan director Bigas Luna has come up with what must be the best thriller-horror pic ever made in Spain. "Angustia" is a gripping, tightly scripted and acted film which could spell big bucks in any territory in the world. Part of pic was shot in New York and California, using U.S. as well as Spanish thesps, which gives it an international flavor.

Luna has long titillated horror buffs here with films such as "Bilbao" and "Caniche" in which his almost morbid obsession with gore and detail yielded films which were brilliantly compulsive, but not altogether balanced. With "Angustia" he succeeds in combining

dementia and repulsiveness with madmen-run-loose action.

First half of pic concerns an obese lab technician who works in an eye clinic and lives in a cluttered oldtime house with his domineering mother. In the clinic, he is the keeper of a huge collection of eyeballs kept in alcohol. One day his clumsy behavior towards a patient causes a complaint to be lodged against him, triggering his dismissal. Upon returning home, his squat, unsightly mother urges him to seek revenge.

After a gory scene in which he not only cuts the throat of the woman and her fey husband with a scalpel but also gouges out her eyes for his collection, pic veers upon a startling new tack, as Bigas Luna reveals that the action thus far has been a film within a film. As the camera pulls back, audience is sitting in an old ramshackle cinema, then in a modern American site in Los Angeles.

Action now centers on two young girls who have been watching the film. One of these turns queasy, goes out to the restrooms, only to encounter a man with a silencergun, also with a mother obsession, who has shot two of the attendants and has dragged their bodies into the toilet.

Thereupon ensues a strange but fascinating mix of the two killers stalking members of the audience as they are watching the very film with the eye doctor, who sneaks up behind people seated in the audience and dispatches them. A clever plot twist at the end perfectly rounds out this 90-minute, taut film.

Fine thesping, especially by the two killers, Michael Lerner and Angel Jove, excellent production values, good special effects, and compulsive editing and Dolby music track make item a winner. Besa.

Tues., April 7, 1987

S.F. Film **Festival Review**

Anna

(U.S. - Drama - Color)

Magnus Films production. Executive producers, Deirdre Gainor, Julianne Gilliam; producers, Yurek Bogayevicz, Zanne Devine. Directed by Bogayevicz; screenplay, Agnieszka Holland, from story by Bogayevicz and Holland Camera, Bobby Bukow-ski; editor, Julie Sloane; sound, Tim Squyres; production design, Lester Cohen; art direction Danny Talpers; set decoration, John Tatlock; production man-ager, Brenda Goodman; assistant directors, Lisa Zimble, Ellen Dennis, Amy Herzig; costume design, Hali Breindel; casting, Caro-line Thomas. Reviewed at Kabuki Theater, San Francisco, April 4, 1987. No MPAA rating. Running Time: 95 min.

Anna. Sally Kirkland
Daniel. Robert Fields
KrusturePaulina Porizkova Krystyna. Director #1......Gibby Brand
Director #2....John Robert Tillotson Stage manager..... Stage manager.....Joe Aufiery Agent......Charles Randall Agent's secretary.....Mimi Wedell Baskin..... laskin Larry Pine Producer Lola Pashalinski Professor Stefan Schnabel Producer Tonda.....Steven Gilborn

San Francisco - "Anna." which world preemed at the S.F. Film Festival, should do quite well in art venues and has crossover potential. Pic offers a brilliant performance in the title role by legit vet Sally Kirkland, an engaging screen debut by international fashion model Paulina Porizkova, seamless technicals, exemplary casting by Caroline Thomas, a wry, intelligent, compassionate screenplay by Agnieszka Holland and the wonderfully revelatory direction of established legit stager and rookie film director Yurek Bogayevicz.

In its publicity, Magnus Films is said to be "dedicated to the production of features based on extraordinary scripts with modest budgets." Judging by Magnus' first feature, the hype is accurate.

The storyline is, in its way, a blend of "All About Eve," "Sunset Boulevard" and "Turning Point," yet in its own way a unique, absorbing yarn.

Kirkland so remarkably shades the title character of an expatriate Czech movie queen groping and sometimes groveling for thesp bits in Manhattan that she's like an ensemble; the breadth of her performance is living text, lensed with distinction by Bobby Bukowski.

Anna takes in a beautiful young Czech refugee (Porizkova), who, in the great American way, becomes an overnight screen leading lady, assumes Anna's trauma-filled past as her own bio and walks off with Anna's b.f., a wimpy writer essayed meticulously by Robert Fields.

Yet the Porizkova character is more ingenuous than malicious. She seizes the day, because the day beckons to her. Anna's day is entrapped in the past; she is locked into dues-paying, clearly capable but non-glitzy.

In one bruising moment — the burning of one of her old films in the projector while she watches it in a grind house, her ex-husbanddirector seated, unknowing, a few rows behind - Anna's conditionstatus is exposed, as much to her as the viewer.

Holland's screenplay is not without humor early on. There's a delicious legit audition scene for a play about seven women in which "directors" Gibby Brand and John Robert Tillotson fuss at each other in a fey running exchange.

Pic is filled with charming cameos, including chore by Stefan Schnabel as Anna's old drama prof who urges her to return to Prague so that "you can act. You'll" die if you cannot act.'

The story works on a number of levels, all spinning off Kirkland and all relevant, universal, cleanly stated. Pic was shot over five weeks at producer-reported cost of "just under \$1,000,000."

After second screening at the fest here, three distribs were seen gabbing with Magnus principals. "Anna" should be able to call its own shots, for it's an on-target piece of filmmaking. Herb.

Wed., Aug. 12, 1987

Les Mois D'Avril **Sont Meurtriers**

APRIL IS A DEADLY MONTH (French — Drama — Color)

A Sara/CDF release of a Sara Films/Canal Plus Prods./Little Bear coproduction, with the participation of Images Investissements. Executive producer, Alain Sarde. Produced by Louis Grau. Directed by Laurent Heyne-mann. Screenplay, Heynemann, Bertrand Tavernier, Philippe Boucher, from Robin Cook's novel, "The Devil's Home On Leave." Camera (Fuji Color), Jean-Francis Gondre; editor, Armand Psenny; music, Philippe Sarde; art direction, Valerie Grall; costumes. Olga Berluti: sound, Guillaume Sciama, Claude Villand, Bernard Leroux; assistant director, Frederique Noiret. Reviewed at the 3 Parnassiens cinema Paris, May 26, 1987. Running time: 88 min. Jean-Pierre Marielle

Gravier Jean-Pierre Bisson
Baumann Francois Berleand Clara Brigitte Rouan Christine Guylaine Pean

Paris - Familiar cat-and-mouse thriller material in a lugubrious Gallic vein, "Les Mois D'Avril Sont Meurtriers" is slickly executed and well acted, but leaves

little room for suspense and audience involvement.

Script by director Laurent Heynemann and Bertrand Tavernier (who originally planned to direct himself) is in fact another French recycling of an Anglo-Saxon print mystery (by Robin Cook), with the accent on talky psychological showdown rather than action. Another Cook novel was the source of Jacques Deray's equally moody and overly literary "On Ne Meurt Que Deux Fois" (1985).

Story falls into the "Crime And Punishment' mold with devious professional killer Jean-Pierre Bisson being harassed by equally sly flic Jean-Pierre Marille, who knows he is the author of a particularly gruesome gangland killing but hasn't any proof to nail him.

Despite fine performances, the Marielle-Bisson confrontations lack tension and the ironic showdown is both predictable and overdue. When Marielle is not stalking his prey, he engages in long interior monologs that reveal his chronically morbid state, a consequence of his daughter's recent death and spouse's plunge into madness.

Heynemann's clinical direction is perfect in establishing the macabre tone of the police procedural scenes, but otherwise never lets any heat into a story that needs sparks to keep intrigue going. Len.

Thurs., May 21, 1987

Aria

(Opera Compilation — Color)

An RVP Prods. and Virgin Vision presentation. Produced by Dan Boyd. Executive producer, Jim Mervis, RVP Productions, Tom Kuhn, Charles Mitchell. Coproducer, Al Clark, Mike Wahs; associate producer, David Barver, Michael Hamlyn; coordinating editors, Marie-Therese Boiche, Mike Cragg. Reviewed at Cannes Festival (in compet-tion) May 15, 1987. Running time: 98 min.

Sequence 1 — Director, Nicholas Roeg; camera, Harvey Harrison; artistic director Diane Johnson; edited, Tony Lawson; opera "Un Ballo In Maschara"; composer, Verdi; voice, Leontyne Price, Carlo Bergonzi, Robert Merrill, Shirley Verrett, Rori Grist; cast, Theresa Russell,

Sequence 2 — Director, Charles Sturridge; camera, Gale Tattersall; artistic director, Andrew McAlpine; editor, Matthew Longfellow: opera, "La Forza Del Distino", Composer, Verdi; aria, "La Vergine Delgi Angeli;" voice, Leontyne Price, Giorgio Tozzi, Ezio Flagello; cast, Nicola Swain, Jack Kyle, Marianne McLoughlin.

Sequence 3 — Director, Jean-Luc Godard;

camera, Carolyn Champetier; editor, Godard; opera, "Armide," composer, Lully; aria, "Enfin II Est En Ma Puissance"; voice, Rachel Yakar; cast, Marion Peterson, Valerie

Sequence 4 - Director, Julien Temple; camera, Oliver Stapelton; artistic director Piers Plowden; editor, Neil Abrahamson; op-era, "Rigoletto"; composer, Verdi; aria, "La Donne E Mobile"; voice, Alfredo Kraus, Anna Moffo, Annadi Stasio; cast, Buck Henry, Anita

Morris, Beverly D'Angelo, Gary Kasper. Sequence 5 — Director, Bruce Beresford, camera, Dante Spinotti; artistic director, Andrew McAlpine; editor, Marie-Therese Boiche: opera, "Die Tote Stadt"; composer, Korngold; aria, "Gluck, Das Mir Verblieb"; voice, Carol Neblett, Rene Kollo; cast, Elizabeth Hurley, Peter Birch.
Sequence 6 — Director, Robert Altman.

camera, Pierre Mignot; artistic director, Stephen Altman; editor, Robert Altman; opera, "Les Boreades"; composer, Jean-Philippe Rameau; voice, Jennifer Smith, Anne-Marie Rodde, Philip Langridge; cast, Julie Hagerty, Genevieve Page, Cris Campion, Sandrine Dumas.

Sequence 7 — Director, Franc Roddam; camera. Frederick Elmes: artistic director Mathew Jacobs; editor, Rick Elgood; opera "Tristan Und Isolde"; composer, Wagner "Liebestod": voice, Leontyne Price;

cast, Bridget Fonda, James Mathers.
Sequence 8 — director, Ken Russell;
camera, Gabriel Beristain; artistic director, Paul Dufficey; editor, Michael Bradsell; opera, "Turandot"; composer, Puccini; aria, "Nessun Dorma"; voice, Jussi Bjoerling; cast, Linzi Drew.
Sequence 9 — Director, Derek Jarman;

camera, Mike Southon; artistic director, Christopher Hobbs; editor, Peter Cartwright, Angus Cook; opera, "Louise"; composer

Gustave Charpentier; aria, "Depuis Le Jour"; voice, Leontyne Price; cast, Tilda Swinton, Spencer Leigh, Amy Johnson.
Sequence 10 and linking scenario

Director, Bill Bryden; camera, Gabriel Beristain; editor, Marie-Therese Boiche; opera, "I Pagliacci"; aria, "Vesti La Giubba"; composer, Leoncavallo; voice, Enrico Caruso; cast, John Hurt, Sophie Ward.

Cannes — "Aria" is a film that could not have happened without the advent of musicvideos. Heavyweight talent involved and unique nature of the project, however, should ensure respectable returns at specialty outlets.

A string of selections from 10 operas illustrated by 10 directors, film is the kind of sensory overload, albeit of a more sophisticated nature, that today's viewing audience has become accustomed to. Paradox of this picture is that opera purists will probably be turned off by the visual flash and film buffs might be turned off by the opera.

Style of the "Aria" segments has little in common with the rapid-fire editing of musicvideos, but they are nonetheless renderings of visual images designed to accompany music.

Producer Don Boyd, who orchestrated the project, instructed the directors not to depict what was happening to the characters in the operas but to create something new out of the emotion and content expressed in the music. The arias were the starting point for the films.

Result is both exhilaratingly successful and distractingly fragmented. Individual segments are stunning, but they come in such speedy succession that overall it is not a fully satisfying film experience. One watches with detached fascination as the duelling directors try to top each other.

Action rises and falls without really working up a head of steam or building to a climax. Along the way, one or two segments fall totally flat, and conclusion offers no real payoff. But it is still a ride with strikingly original sights and sounds along the way.

Selections also represent a variety of filmmaking styles from Bruce Beresford's rather pedestrian working of a love theme from Korngold's "Die Tote Stadt" to Ken Russell's characteristically excessive treatment of an idea distilled from Puccini's "Turandot."

Using the "Nessun Dorma" aria as his starting point, Russell suggests a state of limbo in which a woman is surrounded by the rings of Saturn and tattoed with jewels. This segment may be the most purely visual of the bunch, with a twist ending providing a jolt.

Structurally, the most ambitious of the selections is Jean-Luc Godard's working of Lully's "Armide," which he transposes to a body-building gym where two naked women try unsuccessfully to attract the attention of the men. Insinuating aria accompanies images of the cleaning woman before the royalty of the gym.

On a more whimsical note, Nicolas Roeg offers an interpretation of Verdi's "Un Ballo In Maschera. Set in Vienna in 1931, piece preserves most of the elements of the original opera about a King Zog of Albania who is visiting his girlfriend but is concerned by assassination rumors. Melodrama is played almost tongue-in-cheek, a feeling further heightened by Theresa Russell, who plays the good king.

If opera was the soundtrack of a mainstream film, it might look something like Julien Temple's version of Verdi's "Rigoletto," in which a producer chooses to cheat on his wife at the same place she's cheating

on him. Buck Henry and Beverly D'Angelo as the not-so-happy couple enhance the Hollywood parody of the piece.

The most striking clash of images is achieved by Franc Roddam, who moves Wagner's "Tristan Und Isolde" to Las Vegas. As the lush strains of the music blare, the neon sea of the casinos has never looked more strange. But even in the crassest place on earth, a loving couple can achieve the most delicate and intimate exchange.

Robert Altman turns the table on Jean-Philippe Rameau's "Les Boreades" by focusing not on the stage but 18th century Hogarthian audience full of whores and lunatics in commedia dell'arte makeup. It's a scene out of "Marat/Sade" as Julie Hagerty and Genevieve Page, among others, listen with mock seriousness to the exaggerated marital problems of Queen Alphise.

Other scenes with less zip are Charles Sturridge's elegiac theme from Verdi's "La Forza Del Destino" and Derek Jarman's nostalgic 'Louise'' by Gustave Charpentier.

Individual segments are loosely woven together by pieces from Leoncavallo's "I Pagliacci." Paralleling some of the real-life drama of Enrico Caruso who sings the aria. John Hurt plays a troubled opera star on his way to the theater.

Once arrived, he encounters his elusive muse (Sophie Ward). Finally the aria concludes with Hurt performing before an empty house and then collapsing, demonstrating the agony and ecstasy of being a performer.

Like rockvideos, the selections collected here feature plenty of sex with no fewer than five love scenes and some nudity. Viewers unfamiliar with opera might get the idea that sex goes with the territory

Each short film was produced independently of the others but what they share are uniformly lush production values. Costumes, staging, and locations are worthy of any great opera production and sound quality is loud and clear and crisp.

But what these small films actually add to the music of the operas is questionable. They seem more like separate and unrelated works that now stand on their own. Luckily, the film is rich enough to allow for viewers to find their own vantage point. Jagr.

Mon., Oct. 6, 1986

Armed Response

(Action — Color)

A Cintel Films production and release Produced by Paul Hertzberg. Executive pro ducer, Lisa Hansen. Coproduced and directed by Fred Olen Ray. Screenplay, T.L. Lankford, from story by Lankford, Hertz-berg, Ray; camera (United Color), Paul Elliott; editor, Miriam L. Preissel; music, Tom Chase, Steve Rucker; sound, Rob Janiger art director, Maxine Shepard; assistant rector, Bruce Fritzberg; special makeup effects, Makeup & Effects Lab; second unit camera, Scott Ressler. Reviewed at UA Twin 2 Theater, N.Y., Oct. 4, 1986. MPAA

Lee Van Cleef Burt Roth. Akira Tanaka . Mako Lois Hamilton ..Ross Hagen Cory Thorton Tommy Roth. ..Brent Huff Deborah Silverstein . Laurene Landon Steve . . . Dick Miller ... Michael Berryman Clay Roth David Goss
Also with: Sam Hione, Dah've Seigler, Conan Lee, Burr DeBenning, Susan Stokey,
Bob Hevilon, Kai Baker, Bobbie Bresee, Michelle Bauer, Dawn Wildsmith, Fred Olen

New York — "Armed Response" punches up a mundane actionrevenge film plotline with abovepar casting and enough style to make the formula work for genre fans. L.A.-lensed opus was filmed early this year under the better title "Jade Jungle."

Instead of his real-life acting clan, David Carradine here is surrounded by a dissimilar dad (Lee Van Cleef) and brothers (Brent Huff, David Goss) in a simple tale out of the "Maltese Falcon" bag.

Youngest sibling Goss is a private eye hired with his partner Ross Hagen to retrieve a stolen jade antique for Japanese gangster Mako, who must get the object and save face before a war with the Chinese Tongs breaks out. Greedy Hagen executes several double crosses. with Goss ending up dead and his family now at odds with Mako, who kidnaps Carradine's wife and

Papa Van Cleef is an ex-cop and Carradine a war vet plagued with recurring nightmares (weak flashback footage) of Vietnam, so both grab their weaponry and lurch into action. Helped by some effective car stunts and pyrotechnics, plus several allusions for film buffs to catch, pic delivers the action goods.

For his sixth feature film, director Fred Olen Ray steps up to a bigger budget with some stylish compositions and a few elaborate set pieces.

Cast is adequate, overcoming some very corny dialog, with Ross Hagen as the double-dealing bad guy making a strong impression resembling the late Gig Young.

Mon., Jan. 12, 1987

Assassination

(Actioner - Color)

A Cannon Pictures release. Produced by Pancho Kohner. Executive producer Mena hem Golan, Yoram Globus. Directed by Peter Hunt. Screenplay by Richard Sale. Camera (TVC Color), Hanania Baer; music, Robert O. Ragland, Valentine McCallum; editor, James Heckert; production design, William Cruise; art director, Joshua S. Culp; sound, Thomas Brandau; costumes, Shelley Komarov; assistant director, Craig Huston; casting, Perry Bullington. Reviewed at Hollywood Pacific Theater, Hollywood Calif., January 9, 1987. MPAA rating: Pg 13. Running time: 88 min.

.Charles Bronson Jay Killian. Lara Royce Craig Jill Ireland Stephen Elliott Jan Gan Boyd Tyler Loudermilk Randy Brooks Reno Bracken Frik Stern enator Bunsen Michael Ansara Briggs. James Staley Polly Simms Kathryn Leigh Scott

Short on plausibility but diverting enough to while away a Saturday afternoon, "Assassination" is the kind of bare-bones entertainment Hollywood used to turn out by the score, usually as the back end of the double bill. Formula filmmaking from the first frame, pic has a good performance by Charles Bronson and enough wit to win over an audience not looking for great art.

Story sandwiches an antagonistic man and woman in danger in a plot with more holes than swiss cheese. It's sort of a poor man's "To Catch A Thief" with elements of "It Happened One Night" thrown in for good measure.

But in the film's main section. with White House secret service agent Bronson traveling crosscountry on the run with the First Lady (Jill Ireland), one hasn't the foggiest idea where they are going or why.
What makes the film watchable

anyway is Bronson's self-assured charm. No matter that he's reaching retirement age for a secret-service man and has no business chasing young chippies, Bronson has by now mastered a low key but menacing presence that's simply fun to

watch and rarely has he been better. The fact that a corrupt senator (Michael Ansara) wants Ireland dead and the chase takes them over land, water, rail and air only adds to the silliness of the film, but this kind of entertainment was never meant to be taken seriously and Bronson and director Peter Hunt

Phoniness of the sets, a whiterthan-white White House and an awful matte job for the Washington back-drop, and unauthenticity of the action only adds to the film's likable comic-book mentality. Luckily, Richard Sale's script introduces little politics and has a nice sense of tongue-in-cheek humor to

Action scenes are less pleasing and by the end are downright monotonous. Chased by a high-priced terrorist (Erik Stern) who is good enough to somehow survive a fall off a cliff in a burning truck, Bronson and his colleagues fire more bullets than the Allied forces in World War II.

As for romance, Bronson scores with one of his colleagues (Jan Gan Boyd) but not surprisingly resists Ireland's charms. Though they spend most of the film bantering there is not much chemistry between the two and the First Lady, or "One Momma" as she is referred to in the jargon, is really rather a bore and impossible to take seriously. But that seems to be the point here.

Fri., Feb. 20, 1987

Australian Dream

(Australian — Comedy — Color)

A Ronin Films (Australia) release of A Filmside Ltd. production. Executive producer, Ross Matthews. Producers, Susan Wild, Jacki McKimmie. Directed, written by Mc-Kimmie. Camera (color), Andrew Lesnie; editor, Sara Bennett; production design, Chris McKimmie: sound, lan Grant: music Colin Timms; costumes, Robyn McDonald; production manager, Wild; assistant director, David Munro. Reviewed at Mosman screening room, Sydney, Feb. 4, 1987. Running time: 86 min.

Noni Hazlehurst Dorothy Stubbs... Graeme Blundell
John Jarratt
Barry Rugless
Jenny Mansfield
Caine O'Connel Geoffrey Stubbs Todd...... Tracv. With: Margaret Lord (marital aids

demonstrator), Lil Kelman (Sandra), John Kerr (Frank), Alexandra Black (Shirley), Jill Laos (Barbara), James Ricketson ('Baby').

Sydney — Jacki McKimmie, with her first feature film, has unfortunately not lived up to the promise of her prize-winning short film of a few years back, "Stations." She's attempted a comedy about the awfulness of life in the sprawling suburbs of Australia's major cities, but "Australian Dream," set in Brisbane, simply isn't very funny.

Central character is Dorothy (played by the always-reliable Noni Hazlehurst), the long-suffering wife of Geoffrey (Graeme Blundell), a crass butcher and aspiring rightwing politician.

Like the Tom Ewell character in "The Seven Year Itch," Dorothy is constantly dreaming erotic daydreams, all of them involving Todd (John Jarratt), whom she met while attending a demonstration of marital aids. Needless to say, when she finally gets together with her idol. she's disappointed.

Audiences will be, too, because McKimmie misses out on plenty of opportunities for no-holds-barred satire inherent in the subject. There are a few mildly amusing jokes about the sameness of suburban life, but most of them are pretty obvious.

Second half of the pic is taken up with raucous fancy-dress party held it Dorothy's home and attended by a variety of types, including a political leader, a pregnant woman, an adulterous couple, a pair of religious fanatics and a rock-band led by Todd.

Party scene goes on and on without making much sense (it looks as if quite a bit of footage got left on the cutting room floor, as a subplot involving the theft of electrical equipment from houses in the street is inexplicable in this version).

It's very much to the credit of Hazlehurst that she makes as much of poor Dorothy as she does. For the rest, Blundell makes her husband almost too repulsive, and Jarratt is rather wooden as the love object.

Visually, film attempts to capture the poor taste of these suburban dwellers, but, again, the net result is tedium rather than humor. Main problem seems to be the underwritten screenplay, by McKimmie herself, and the often awkward direction.

A theatrical life looks doubtful, but pic could work on video and other ancillary markets. It was obviously made on a low budget.

Strat.

Thurs., March 5, 1987

Bach And Broccoli (Canadian — Color)

A Cinema Plus release of a Productions La Fete production. Produced by Rock Demers. Directed by Andre Melancon; written by Bernadette Renaud and Melancon. Camera (color) Guy Dufaux; line producer, Ann Burke; art director, Violette Daneau; music, Pierick Houdy; production manager, Josette Perotta; costumes, Huguette Gagne; first assistant director, Mireille Goulet. Reviewed at Cineplex Odeon screening room, Toronto, Feb. 26, 1987. Running time: 90 min.

Fanny. Mahee Paiement
Jonathan Raymond Legault
Sean. Harry Marciano
Bernice Andree Pelletier
Grandmother France Arbour

Toronto, March 4 — For a pic that has a button-cute orphaned girl, a domesticated skunk and an eccentric uncle, "Bach And Broccoli" is considerably lacking in charm. The third of producer Rock Demers' "Tales For All" series, however, has already broken b.o. records in Quebec since its release last month.

The major obstacle to appreciating any spontaneity in the story is the dreadful dubbing from French to English. Not only do words not match lip movements, but voices and laughter are off, and a large element of fun is zapped. Maybe kids won't mind it and will be enraptured with the sweet tale, but adults will squirm during the extreme closeups of the young tyke.

Director Andre Melancon, who fared so well in "The Dog Who Stopped The War" is limited here by a well-intentioned but predictable script. It's a more grownup version of "Three Men And A Cradle," in which an 11-year-old girl (Mahee Paiement), whose parents were killed in a car accident when she was a child, is carted off to her uncle's house by her ailing grandmother, who's going to a nursing home.

Uncle Jonathan (Raymond Legault) is less than elated at seeing Fanny and hasn't a clue about child-rearing.

His first aim is to arrange for a proper family for Fanny. He's self-sufficient, stuck in his ways, but vulnerable, and ultimately succumbs to the charms of his new charge, who even prompts him to be more aggressive with a love in-

terest from work (Andree Pelletier).

Fanny is a wise child, precocious, sensitive and a lover of animals. Her pet skunk Broccoli is only the first of a menagerie that she and her downstairs neighbor Sean collect in a renovated shed. Before the end of the pic, roosters, dogs, birds, hamsters and bunnies are cohabitating in the city zoo chez Fanny.

Natch, when it comes time for Fanny to be placed in a foster home, Uncle J. is finally able to verbalize the love he's bottled up all these years.

Melancon manages to get fresh performances from the kids and he's coached Legault to give his Jonathan more depth and character than a cardboard kook. There's goodwill and cheer here and a tidy, happy ending, and maybe that's all kids need for a film outing.

Dev

Mon., May 18, 1987

Backfire

(Thriller — Color)

An ITC Prods. presentation. Produced by Danton Rissner. Directed by Gilbert Cates. Screenplay, Larry Brand, Rebecca Reynolds. Camera, Tak Fujimoto; editor, Melvin Shapiro; music, David Shire; production design, Dan Lonino; sound, Larry Sutton; assistant director, Don Hauser; casting, Mike Fenton, Jane Feinberg. Reviewed at Cannes Film Festival (market), May 13, 1987. Running time: 91 min.

MauraKaren Allen
ReedKeith Carradine
DonnieJeff Fahey
ClintBernie Casey
Jake Dean Paul Martin
Jill

Cannes — "Backfire" is an aptly named non-thriller since it never finds the spark to ignite itself. Despite a few isolated thrills, pic mostly plods through a murky marital murder plot. Name cast may draw some interest, but commercial outlook is decidedly downbeat.

Story is constructed around the psychological scars of a Vietnam veteran (Jeff Fahey), who has a recurring nightmare of combat. Luckily he's rich enough not to have to do much in life and he has his wife (Karen Allen), who he brought over from the wrong side of the tracks, to take care of him. Or does he?

Something is clearly rotten in Denmark as Fahey's worst fears have a way of becoming reality. Of course, there's ex-lover (Dean Paul Martin) lurking in the background, and once he mysteriously disappears, Keith Carradine shows up on the scene to take his place.

Several disasters later, after Fahey has been reduced to a catatonic state, the story finally stumbles to its conclusion, but it still doesn't make a whole lot of sense. Screenplay by Larry Brand and Rebecca Reynolds is just a lot of plot for plot's sake without creating characters interesting enough to leap the credibility gap.

Performances, as well, leave the characters up in the air and surely don't win any sympathy where needed. It is almost impossible to become involved in a psychological thriller if one doesn't know what the characters are thinking and why

Director Gilbert Cates stages several dream scenes and one in the shower that are truly chilling, but lack of empathy fails to sustain the mood. Film is sorely lacking in pacing and rhythm.

It's rather a shame, too, since considerable talent seems to be on hand and tech credits, especially

Tak Fujimoto's deep green photography on the west coast of Canada, provide a moody setting for what could have been.

Jagr.

(Dean Paul Martin, a captain in the California Air National Guard, was killed last March 21 when the F-4C Phantom he was piloting crashed in Wood Canyon in the San Bernardino Mountains.-Ed).

Mon., Aug. 10, 1987 Back To The Beach

(Comedy — Color)

A Paramount Pictures release. Produced by Frank Mancuso Jr. Directed by Lyndall Hobbs. Coexecutive producers, Frankie Avalon and Annette Funicello. Screenplay by Peter Krikes, Steve Meerson and Christopher Thompson; story by James Komack, based on characters created by Lou Rusoff. Camera, Bruce Surtees; editor, David Finfer; music, Steve Dorff; production design, Michael Helmy; costume designer, Marlene Steward. No further technical credits available. Reviewed at Paramount Studio Theater, L.A., Aug. 7, 1987. MPAA Rating: PG. Running time: 92 min.

Annette Annette Funicello
The Big Kahuna Frankie Avalon
Connie Connie Stevens
Sandi Lori Loughlin
Michael Tommy Hinkley
Bobby Demian Slade
Troy John Calvin
Zed Joe Holland
Mountain David Bowe

"Back To The Beach" is a wonderfully campy trip down pop culture's trash-filled memory lane. Starring Frankie Avalon and Annette Funicello as largerthan-life versions of themselves, the feature film debut of director Lyndall Hobbs pokes fun at the entire beach film genre while at the same time remaining true to its central tenets. Boxoffice prospects look good, with enough familiar faces for children of the '70s and '80s to make this more than a '60s nostalgia trip.

Five different people are credited with working on the script's skewed perspective, which takes Frankie and Annette as we remember them — as the stars of several '60s beach parties — and builds a storyline from there.

Avalon, known here as "The Big Kahuna," and Annette have married and moved out of Tinseltown to settle down in Ohio, where he sells cars and she drives her 14-year-old son Bobby to the brink of matricide by serving up a numbing series of peanut-butter sandwiches.

Family decides its time for a vacation and stops over in L.A. to visit daughter Sandi (Lori Loughlin, who gives a nice turn with a limited character), only to discover that she's living on a pier with her boyfriend Michael (Tommy Hink-

Conflict over parents arrival spells the end of domestic bliss for Michael and Sandi and shortly thereafter, Frankie and Annette are on the outs when they run into perpetual "bad girl" barowner Connie (Connie Stevens), who revives The Big Kahuna's stud self-image and sets up the rift between the happy couple.

Thus, there are two relationships to be repaired, plus the future of the wayward youth Bobby to be decided. He takes up with a gang of leather-clad punk surfers who are threatening to take over the beach.

Hobbs plays out the story in reverant lowbrow style, with Funicello leading the girls through a pajama party number, Avalon going on an all-night bender and nearly every former tv star of the last 20 years making an appearance along the way. Included is Bob Denver's Gilliganish bartender, who wants to

tell everyone about his "long trip"; Don Adams, reprising the best-known lines from the "Get Smart" years; and about half the cast of "Leave It To Beaver," including Tony Dow and Jerry Mathers doing the best send-up yet of Siskel & Ebert

There's even an appearance from the '80s icon of antihip, Pee-wee Herman, fairly destroying a cover of "Surfin' Bird" that serves as prelude to the great reconciliation and wholesale smooching at the inevitable beach bonfire.

Scripters have perhaps gone to the well once too often by stretching the film out 15 more minutes for the anticlimactic surfing showdown between Avalon and one of the surf-punk leaders.

Performances are surprisingly good, with Funicello playing her celluloid stereotype with real glee and Avalon giving a nice showing also, once he is brought back to his beach boy past. Audience also gets some real chemistry between secondary characters Laughlin and Hinkley.

Hobbs' gossip-page journalism past, with film never more than a moment away from another pop cultural reference, whether it be an old tv show, Funicello's Skippy commercials or an appearance by a contemporary rock star (Stevie Ray Vaughan, working with surf-music veteran Dick Dale on "Pipeline").

It's a fine line between stupidfunny and just plain stupid, but more often than not Hobbs and company wind up on the right side of the beach.

Camb.

Thurs., Dec. 11, 1986

Mauvais Sang BAD BLOOD

(French — Drama — Color)

AAA Classic release of a Films Plain Chant/Soprofilms/FR3 Films coproduction. Executive producer, Philippe Diaz. Produced by Alain Dahan. Stars Juliette Binoche, Michel Piccoli, Denis Lavant. Written, directed by Leos Carax. Camera (Fujicolor), Jean-Yves Escoffier; art direction. Michel Vandestien; editor. Nelly Quettier; sound, Harrick Maury; makeup, Chantal Houdoy; music, Benjamin Britten, Serge Prokofiev. Charles Aznavour, Serge Reggiani: assistant director, Antoine Beau; production manager, Michele Arnould. Reviewed at the UGC Champs-Elysees Theater, Paris, Nov. 26, 1986. Running time: 128 min.

Alex Denis Lavant
Anna Juliette Binoche
Marc Michel Piccoli
Hans Hans Meyer
Lise Julie Delpy
The American Carroll Brooks
Boris Hugo Pratt
With Sege Reggiani (Charlie), Mireille
Perrier (the young mother), Jerome Zucca, Charles Schmitt, Philippe Fretin,

Paris - Leos Carax, then only 24, was spotted at Cannes two years ago for his weirdly appealing b&w debut feature, "Boy Meets Girl," for which he was hailed in some quarters as France's new wiz kid. His second feature demonstrates that he is indeed a wiz, but one also wonders whom he thinks he's kidding. "Mauvais Sang" is all pyrotechnic flash and selfindulgence, which is finally unbearable at its uncalled-for two hour-plus running time. But pic has the playful undisciplined dazzle that can make a cult favorite.

Production attracted early attention when Carax reportedly brought the film in 18 weeks late and nearly 40% over budget, making him eligible for the Michael Cimino Overachievement Award.

Numerous scene attest to Carax' talent, as well as that of his equally dazzling lenser Jean-Yves Escoffier,

who also shot "Boy Meets Girl." But director's personal vision is still immaturely limited to stylistic cribbing (notably from his mentor, Jean-Luc Godard) and a deluge of buff references, with everybody from Charlie Chaplin to Jean Cocteau and Mel Brooks getting a big pointless wink.

Plot, or what little there is, falls into a film noir mold. A young ex-con (Denis Lavant, the plug-ugly protagonist of "Boy Meets Girl) sides with an aging gangster (Michel Piccoli) for a special burglary and ends up falling in love with the latter's much younger mistress (Juliette Binoche). She rejects the ex-con's advances because she is still in love with Piccoli.

Though the ostensible chief interest of the story is Lavant's offbeat courtship of Binoche (who is photographed with extra-loving care in what is a superior screen test but not much of a performance), viewer interest is constantly deflected by Carax' show-off direction and Escoffier's frequently virtuoso camerawork. Piccoli's sheer professionalism and presence carries him through a poorly developed part.

Question remains if Carax will grow from a clever wunderkind into a mature filmmaker with something to say and a style not cultivated at the Cinematheque.

Len.

Fri., June 19, 1987

Banzai Runner (Action — Color)

A Montage Films production. Produced and directed by John G. Thomas. Screenplay, Phillip L. Harnage; camera (United Color), Howard A. Wexler; editor, Drake Silliman; music, Joel Goldsmith; sound, Neil Wolfson; production manager, Bob Gibson; associate producer, Kenneth L. Hulbert; casting, Danny Travis. Reviewed on Vidmark Entertainment vidcassette, N.Y., June 12, 1987. No MPAA rating. Running time: 86 min.

Billy Baxter Dean Stockwell
Beck Baxter John Shepherd
Traven Charles Dierkop
Shelley Dawn Schneider
Maysie Ann Cooper
Osborne Barry Sattles
Syszek Billy Drago
Also with: Rick Fitts, Mary Lou Kenworthy,
John Wheeler, Eric Mason, Kim Knode.

New York — "Banzai Runner" is an utterly conventional action picture, symptomatic of the new breed of production which reflects limited aspirations. Good perf by name actor in the cast, Dean Stockwell, is the drawing card and homevideo shelves the destination.

In a film vaguely resembling confrere Dennis Hopper's forgettable 1981 pic "King Of The Mountain," Stockwell toplines as a California state trooper frustrated by local rich guys, dubbed "runners," who drive their costly, souped-up cars at night at speeds approaching 200 mph in informal races. Stockwell's brother was killed, run off the road by one of those dudes, and he's frustrated by official opposition which prevents him from souping up the cop cars to pursue the offenders.

Instead, his new boss, Eric Mason, wants him to concentrate on drunk drivers. After a speeding incident and another run-in construed as harrassment of a "runner," Stockwell is fired and gets a new job working undercover to bust drug dealers for the Federal government. Unconvincing plot contrivance has him getting into a race with two runners who also are the local drug kingpins and one of whom, Billy Drago (Frank Nitti in "The Untouchables"), killed his brother.

There's some good, high-speed

chasing en route to the predictable finish, but filmmaker John G. Thomas fails to introduce interesting variations on the timeworn theme of a cop's problems. Stockwell is convincing both behind the wheel and in dramatic scenes, but the supporting cast is generally too low-key. Tech credits are standard. Unrated pic is extremely tame, devoid of nudity or other exploitation elements.

Lor.

Mon., May 18, 1987

The Barbarians

(Adventure fantasy — Color)

A Cannon Group release of a Golan-Globus production. Produced by John Thompson. Directed by Ruggero Deodato. Screenplay, James R. Silke. Camera (Telecolor S.P.A.), Lorenzo Battaglia; editor, Eugene Alabiso; music, Pino Donaggio; production design, Giuseppe Mangano; sound (Dolby), Massimo Loffredi; costumes, Francesca Panicali; special effects, Francesca Panicali; special effects, Francesco Paolocci, Gaetano Paolocci. Reviewed at the Mann National Theater, Los Angeles, May 15, 1987. MPAA Rating: R. Running time: 87 min.

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Far, far away in the mythical land of the Ragnicks lived twin bodybuilders who called each other "bonehead" and tried to pass themselves off as actors in a cheesy Italian sword-and-sorcerer pic called "The Barbarians." With a little luck, pic could stay in theaters for a week.

The bodybuilders were pretty comfortable grunting and groaning, lifting boulders and such, but when it came to the speaking part, they appeared nervous — until they heard the other actors.

So then they relaxed and had a good time with their scantily-clad friends mouthing dimwitted dialog and slaying plastic dragons and "The Barbarians" turned out to be so bad it was good.

The Barbarians are actually David Paul and Peter Paul, two grotesquely overdeveloped weight-lifters with a lot of charm and screen presence, considering how ridiculous a situation they find themselves in.

Action begins when they are children and their band of itinerant artists and entertainers, the Ragnicks led by the beautiful queen Canary (Virginia Bryant) are captured by the evil Kadar (Richard Lynch) and his sadistic sorceress, China (Sheeba Alahani).

The cute little boys grow up into big bad slaves, spared their lives because of a promise Lynch kept to Bryant that he would never harm them as long as she remained his captor and pledged him her total allegiance. The whole time, he never seduces her and she doesn't age a day. They both had amazing powers.

One day, Lynch orders the Paul Bros., gladiator-style, to fight to the death. But they wise up, escape rather handily, team up with a pretty foxy cave girl (Eva La Rue), then regroup with their old buddies the Ragnicks and overthrow Kadar to try and recapture the Queen.

Not one second goes by when any of the actors seem to make even a passable attempt at trying to be credible medieval characters, except perhaps for Lynch, who has made a career out of playing bad guys of yore.

Opening dialog is spoken by Bryant, whose nasal, grating voice

is like listening to fingernails on a chalkboard. Nearly everyone else follows suit. La Rue says her lines in ValSpeak.

If the sound was turned down, better yet off, it would still be easy to figure out what was happening.

Film is actually quite interesting to watch; the scenery is beautiful, especially the expansive green valley, and the sets by Giuseppe Mangano and costumes by Francesca Panicali truly imaginative and colorful.

There is a little dismemberment, some fire breathing, dragons in dungeons and vice versa, misty lagoons with creatures lurking beneath the surface of the water and lots of comely young girls with most of their flesh exposed.

There is virtually no suspense as the story unfolds, but it is fascinating to watch to the closing credits a production that is so laughable as to be entertaining.

Brit.

Wed., May 13, 1987

Barfly

(Comedy-Drama — U.S. — Color)

A Cannon release of a Francis Ford Coppola presentation of a Golan-Globus production. Produced by Barbet Schroeder, Fred Roos, Tom Luddy. Executive producers, Menahem Golan, Yoram Globus. Directed by Barbet Schroeder. Screenplay, Charles Bukowski. Stars Mickey Rourke, Faye Dunaway. Camera (TVC Color), Robby Muller; editor, Eva Gardos; production de sign, Bob Ziembicki; set decoration, Lisa Dean; visual consultant-costume designer, Milena Canonero; sound (Ultra-Stereo) Petur Hliddal, associate producer; assistant director, Jack Baran; casting, Robert Mac-Donald, Pat Orseth, Nancy Lara. Reviewed at the Cannon screening room, L.A., May 7, 1987. (In competition at Cannes Film Festival). Running time: 99 min.

Henry (Ch	ıiп	as	ski				. Mickey Rourke
Wanda	W	/il	СО	Х	 	,		. Faye Dunaway
Tully So	ore	er	S	วก	 			Alice Krige
Detectiv	ve						,	Jack Nance
Jim					 			J.C. Quinn
Eddie					 			. Frank Stallone

"Barfly" is a low-life fairy tale, an ethereal seriocomedy about gutter existence from the pen of one who's been there, Charles Bukowski. First American fictional feature from Swiss-French director Barbet Schroeder is spiked with unexpected doses of humor, much of it due to Mickey Rourke's quirky, unpredictable, most engaging performance as the boozy hero. Grungy, squalid characters and settings will probably limit domestic audiences to the art-house circuit, but overseas take should be stronger due to heavy foreign interest in Bukowski, not to mention the director and stars, and international appeal of pix showing the underside of American life.

Much as in a Bukowski short story, a bar is the center of the universe here. Populating the dive in a seedy section of Los Angeles are a floating assortment of winos and derelicts, of which one of the youngest and most volatile is Henry, a self-styled poet of the bottle who maintains, "It takes a special talent to be a drunk."

Played by Rourke, Henry takes a nearly nightly pleasure in picking a fight with the beefy barkeep, and is in every respect a total mess. Nevertheless, it shortly becomes clear that Henry, in his drunkenness, lives a charmed, privileged existence of a sort. For one thing, he meets a terribly attractive fellow alcoholic, Wanda (Faye Dunaway), who immediately takes him in and keeps him well plied with drink and sex, to the extent that they are both interested in and capable of the lat-

For another, he is pursued by Tully Sorenson (Alice Krige), a beautiful, upscale magazine publisher who has taken a fancy to Henry's down-to-earth prose and wants to shower him with money. Henry has no objections either to the cash or Tully's body, but quickly blows his earnings by buying too many rounds for his fellow barflies, and ends up back where he started on the drunken merry-go-round.

Story doesn't amount to that much and is pitched at a rather modest level of artistic ambition. But on its own terms, pic succeeds strongly in capturing a mood, character and state of mind, and projects a timeless quality that exists alongside, but apart from, everyday reality as most people experience it.

In the barfly's world, conventional notions of time, relativity and responsibility become warped and finally irrelevent, and Schroeder has captured this admirably.

At the same time, humor comes brimming to the surface even at the most unlikely moments. Bukowski's dialog is punctuated with wry philosophical comments on life, and Rourke, who is usually so intense and sometimes overwrought onscreen, relaxes here to deliver what is probably his most appealing and successful characterization since his prestar turn in "Diner."

Virtually unrecognizable at first with his dangling, dark, long-unwashed hair and unglamorous stubble, Rourke affects a Walter Brennan-ish gimpy walk, pitches his voice high and sets an offbeat rhythm to his talk that amusingly illuminates both the man's lucidity and self-willed handicaps. Performance is the centerpiece of the film, and keeps it bouyantly alive throughout.

Faye Dunaway is also on the right wavelength as the "distressed goddess" who grows dependent upon and loyal to the wildly unreliable Rourke. One would like to know something more about her background, however, and her appearance, while run-down, still seems too sharp for the bottom-of-the-barrel milieu in question.

Alice Krige more than adequately fills her one-dimensional role, and remainder of the cast, most of whom play barroom habitues, look like the real thing.

Clearly done on a limited budget, production still looks first class, thanks to Robby Muller's top lensing and contributions of production designer Bob Ziembicki and visual consultant-costume designer Milena Canonero.

Storytelling is tight, not languid as in some of Schroeder's previous features, and what could have been an overly depressing tale about hopeless losers has been leavened by considerable, unforced comedy. Cart.

Fri., May 15, 1987

The Beat

(Youth drama — Color)

A Vestron Pictures release of a Ruthless/Klik/Wechsler production. (World sales, Interaccess Film Distribution.) Executive producers, Ruth Vitale, Lawrence Kassnoff. Produced by Julia Phillips, Jon Klik, Nick Wechsler. Written and directed by Paul Mones. Camera (color), Tom DiCillo; editor, Elizabeth Kling; music, Carter Burwell; sound (Dolby), Lee Orloff; production manager, Kevin Dowd; assistant director, Steve Love; production design, George Stoll; casting, Marcia Schulman. Reviewed at Cannes Film Festival (market), May 13, 1987. Running time: 98 min.

Mr. Elisworth John Savage
Rex Voorhaus Ormine David Jacobson
Billy Kane William McNamara
Kate Kane Kara Glover
Dr. Waxman Jeffrey Horowitz

Cannes — "The Beat," origi-

nally titled "Conjurer," is a fatuous treatment of the problems of ghetto youth in New York City, leaving no cliche unturned in its search for synthetic drama. Playing like a vulgarized telefilm version of "Dungeons And Dragons" (but without tv's production values), pic stands little chance of attracting a theatrical audience.

John Savage toplines (with many a meaningful gesture) as stereotyped sympathetic English teacher Mr. Ellsworth, trying to get through to his school-hating class in "Hellesbay," New York. The kids, underprivileged but nearly all white, belong to two warring street gangs, the Marathon Blvd. group, including brother-sister team Billy and Kate Kane (William McNamara and Kara Glover).

Catalyst for the story is new kid in class, nerd Rex Voorhaus Ormine (David Jacobson overacting considerably), a disturbed youth who spouts inane poetry.

Reviled by the kids at first, he eventually wins them over to his nutty philosophy and mind games, a variant upon "Dungeons And Dragons" in which he imagines the adult world is already dead via nuclear holocaust, with himself as the mythic hero Voorhaus, Billy as The Beggar and Kate as the Priestess/Princess ready to start a new civilization, chanting nonsense rhymes and marching to The Beat.

Since poetry is teach's pet project, soon the recalcitrant class is indulging in all sorts of idiotic selfexpression and the leads form a musical group, Mutants of Sound, whose rap routine to The Beat brings the house down at the school talent show. Hounded by the nasty school shrink, Voorhaus barely escapes the men in the white coats coming to take him away, and commits suicide in the ocean instead. His pals believe he's gone off to a better place and carry on his nutty mysticism, presumably worshipping the coat he left behind.

With adult figures (particularly the shrink and school principal) portrayed as laughable caricatures, "The Beat" is one of those well-meaning films that sets up many a straw man to knock down. Writer-director Paul Mones uses Voorhaus as the mouthpiece for many inane explanations of young people's rebellious behavior, none of which ring true. Pic is as dated as its slam dancing centerpiece.

Coming off better than leads Savage and Jacobson are the brothersister act, with McNamara sympathetic as a young Ricky Nelson type and Kara Glover's Wilhelmina model beauty shining out through the plain, feisty wrapping.

Film's tech contributions are acceptable, but its misguided attempt at realism ends up looking smaller than life (particularly a scene at the siblings' home that looks like early Salvation Army).

Lor.

Mon., Jan. 5, 1987

The Bedroom Window (Thriller — Color)

A De Laurentiis Entertainment Group release and production. Executive producer, Robert Towne. Produced by Martha Schumacher. Written and directed by Curtis Hanson. Camera (J-D-C Widescreen, color), Gil Taylor; editor, Scott Conrad; music, Michael Shrieve, Patrick Gleeson; sound, Bill Daly; art direction, Rafael Caro; costume design, Clifford Capone; stunt coordinator, Thomas Rosares. Reviewed at Broadway screening room, N.Y., Dec. 10, 1986. MPAA Rating: R. Running time: 115 min.

Terry	Sieve Guitenberg
DeniseE	lizabeth McGovern
Sylvia	Isabelle Huppert
Colin Wentworth	Paul Shenar
Det. Jessop	Frederick Coffin
Det. Quirk	Carl Lumbly

Defense Attorney Wallace Shawn Henderson Brad Greenquist

New York — "The Bedroom Window" is a thriller with an interesting premise and competent execution but lacking that pizzazz that made its Alfred Hitchock models such enduring hits. Credit filmmaker Curtis Hanson with avoiding the urge to directly ape the master, but overall pic is less than riveting entertainment.

Cast against type, Steve Guttenberg plays a malleable young executive carrying on an affair with his boss' wife, the sexy Sylvia (Isabelle Huppert). During a tryst at Guttenberg's apartment one night after a party, Huppert, looking out his bedroom window, sees a girl (Elizabeth McGovern) being assaulted outside. Fearing complications with her husband, Huppert does not come forward as a witness, but civic-minded Guttenberg agrees to help the police, pretending that he witnessed the assault. He's coached by Huppert on details of what she saw and what the suspect looked like.

Because of inconsistencies in his story and some guilty-seeming behavior, Guttenberg ultimately becomes a suspect in the rash of rape and murder cases, forcing him in the Hitchcock tradition to begin his own investigation in trying to prove who the real killer is. Of course, Guttenberg eventually becomes involved with McGovern, even using her as a willing decoy to trap the killer.

Hanson's screenplay involves several ingenious plot twists, notably a courtroom hearing in which the defense attorney (Wallace Shawn, surprisingly cast in a noncomedy role) totally destroys Guttenberg's credibility as a witness, allowing the killer to go free.

Structurally, Huppert carries the first half of the film, replaced by McGovern in importance in the final reels, and both actresses are alluring and mysterious in keeping the piece suspenseful. The killer's identity is revealed very early on, but Guttenberg's behavior and toogood-to-be-true image help to keep the viewer guessing concering his own possible involvement in wrong-doing. Unfortunately, a lot of coincidences and just plain stupid actions by Guttenberg are relied upon to keep the pot boiling.

Tech credits are impressive, though there is one repeated gaffe, as the building name where Guttenberg works is misspelled "Wentworth Development Corporation" onscreen consistently. Lor.

Mon., June 8, 1987

The Believers (Occult thriller — Color)

An Orion Pictures release. Produced by John Schlesinger, Michael Childers, Beverly Camhe. Executive producer, Edward Teets. Directed by Schlesinger. Screenplay by Mark Frost from the book, "The Religion, by Nicholas Conde, Camera (DeLuxe Color), Bobby Muller; editor, Peter Honess; music, J. Peter Robinson; production designer, Simon Holland: set decorators, Susan Bode (N.Y.) Elinor Rose Galbraith (Canada); art directors, John Kasarda (N.Y.), Carol Spier (Canada); costume designer, Shay Cunliffe; sound, Nicholas Stevenson; second-unit directors, Michael Childers, Patrick Crowley; second-unit camera, Peter Norman; casting, Donna Isaacson, John Lyons (U.S.A.), Maria Armstrong, Ross Clydesdale (Canada). Reviewed at the Samuel Goldwyn Theater, Beverly Hills, Calif., June 3, 1987. Running time: 114 min. MPAA Rating: R. Cal Jamison Martin Sheen

Jessica Halliday	Helen Shaver
Chris Jamison	Harley Cross
Lieutenant Sean	
McTaggert	Robert Loggia
Kate Maslow	Elizabeth Wilson
Deceld Colden	Manage Market
Donald Calder	Harris Yulin

Mrs. Ruiz Carla Pinza

has its believers.

Fri., June 12, 1987 **Benji The Hunted**

John Schlesinger's "The Believers," not unlike his "Marathon Man," builds on some pretty strange goings-on in New York, grows increasingly complicated and obtuse, finally falling back to center for an unsettling wrap up. This meticulously violent occult thriller is more fascinating than frightening, its theme just at the edge of reality to pass off as fiction. For those who enjoy intense rides, this is the E ticket.

Opening scenes, while seemingly unrelated, would get anyone's heart going; the first an electrocution of psychotherapist Cal Jamison's (Martin Sheen) wife, the second a tribal stabbing of a young boy.

How these two horrors are related, and what takes scripter Mark Frost almost too long to explain, is the connection between the practice of Santeria (a strange sacrificial faith based on Catholic saints) and its effect on nearly everyone Sheen comes to know upon moving to Manhattan.

In his capacity counseling members of the New York City police force. Sheen soon connects the crazy behavior of one cop (Jimmy Smits) to a series of ritualistic (and very gory) stabbings. Being the good Ph.D. that he is, Sheen uses what meager clues he has, does a little research and comes upon the rationale for the brutal murders one of the tenets of Santeria is the belief that if the first-born son is sacrificed, his parents will realize success beyond their wildest imaginings.

With production designer Simon Holland's perfect eye for the strange and the most ordinary of urban settings, Schlesinger is crafty enough to walk a fine line between using too many pat scary tricks (rainstorms, blackouts, drugged liguids) and milking the voodoo bit to the point where the sight of entrails, amulets, totems and blood lose their visual impact.

It isn't difficult to accept that the things that happen in "The Believers" could happen in real life. which is why the picture is so rivet-

What Schlesinger does is take it one step further, into the realm of horror. Incantations in the basement of a Spanish Harlem store whose owner practices Santeria is one thing; spiders crawling out of a hole in a woman's cheek is another.

Central characters, including Sheen, make it somehow believable. Naturally, Sheen has only one child, a son (Harley Cross) whose housekeeper (perfect casting in Carla Pinza) just happens to practice Santeria (the good kind, though).

In his adaptation of Nicholas Conde's book. Frost expects the audience to take more than a few leaps in plot development and swallow a number of coincidences.

The action moves along too fast to notice, however, finding time for Sheen to fall in love with his landlady (Helen Shaver) across the street and all the complications that arise from that.

In addition to Shaver's nice ladyfriend act are good turns by Smits (Victor Sifuentes on tv's "L.A. Law") as the wacked-out Tom Lopez and Robert Loggia at his crusty best as Lieutenant Sean McTaggert.

If nothing else, Schlesinger knows how to produce a film where pain and horror are beautiful to watch, a sick thought, but one that

(Animal adventure — Color)

A Buena Vista Pictures release of a Walt Disney Pictures presentation of an Embark production in association with Mulberry Square Prods. Produced by Ben Vaughn Executive producer, Ed Vanston. Supervising producer, Carolyn H. Camp. Directed by Joe Camp. Screenplay, Camp. Camera (CFI Color), Don Reddy; editor, Karen Throndike; music, Euel Box, Betty Box; an direction, Bob Riigs, Ray Brown; Benji trained by Bryan L. Renfro, Frank Inn, Juanita Inn; cougar work, Sled Reynolds, Gideon; wild animal trainers, Steve Martin, Bobi Gaddy, Madeleine Cowie Klein, Reynolds; assistant director, Camp; associate producer, Erwin Hearne. Reviewed at Walt Disney Studios screening room, Burbank, June 9 1987. MPAA rating: G. Running time: 88

BenjiAs Himself
HunterRed Steagall
Newscaster Nancy Francis
Tv Cameraman Mike Francis
Frank Inn

What actor wears a gold chain with his name on it, has a hairy chest and mugs shamelessly for the camera? It's Benji the wonder dog and he's back in "Benji The Hunted," a curious piece of work in which animals are endowed with human characteristics. Youngsters under 10 may get caught up in the story of survival in the wilds while parents get a

Although the film raises issues important to kids, such as the responsibility of friendship, it is strange to see animals making moral choices. Even more startling is the sight of the dog going through human thought patterns complete with flashbacks.

Furthermore, nature is portrayed as a playground where animals have human values and live almost like people. While films have long anthropomorphized animal behavior, one can't help wondering if pictures like "Benji The Hunted" don't give kids a distorted view of nature.

Shipwrecked after a storm, Benji is like a little person finding his way in unfamiliar territory. Not only can he emote like crazy, Benji can reason. He is a philosophical pooch who can see beyond his next meal, and deal with questions of the

When he discovers a brood of cougar cubs orphaned by a hunter's handywork, Benji takes them under wing and spends most of the film finding a new home for them. He understands, of course, that he must complete his mission before he can answer the call of his trainer (Frank Inn) who has come searching for him in a helicopter.

Along the way, Benji and the cubs meet a big bad wolf, but Benji is able to outsmart him since it is well known that dogs have higher I.Q.'s than wolves. Besides, Benji is no ordinary household pet, but a dog who can easily adapt to the rigors of life in the great outdoors. Benji is not just another pretty face, he can really act and is superbly trained, with many of his stunts truly remarkable.

Everyday logic and common sense are suspended to the point where film almost seems condescending to its target audience. Main accomplishment of writer/ director Joe Camp is his ability to tell a story almost entirely without people or dialog. Music, then, becomes doubly important but will likely seem overly sweet to older

Don Reddy's camerawork presents the mountains of Washington and Oregon at their pristine best, adding to the film's sanitized view of the world. It may be a dog's life, but not for Benji.

Tues., May 19, 1987

Beverly Hills Cop II (Comic actioner - Color -Panavision)

A Paramount release of a Don Simpson/ Jerry Bruckheimer production in association with Eddie Murphy Prods. Produced by Simpson, Bruckheimer. Executive producers, Robert D. Wachs, Richard Tienken. Directed by Tony Scott. Stars Eddie Murphy. Screenplay, Larry Ferguson, Warren Skaaren, story by Murphy, Wachs, based on characters created by Danilo Bach, Daniel Petrie Jr. Camera (Technicolor, Panavision), Jeffrey L. Kimball; editors, Billy Weber, Chris Le benzon, Michael Tronick: music, Harold Faltermeyer; production design, Ken Davis; art direction, James J. Murakami; set deco ration, John Anderson; sound (Dolby), William B. Kaplan; assistant director, Peter Bogart; cating, Bonnie Timmermann; L.A. casting, Vickie Thomas. Reviewed at the National Theater, L.A., May 17, 1987, MPAA Rating: R. Running time: 102 min.

Axel Foley . . . Eddie Murphy Billy Rosewood Judge Reinhold Jurgen Prochnow Maxwell Dent... . Ronny Cox Andrew Bogomil John Taggart... John Ashton Karla Fry... Brigitte Nielsen Harold Lutz. Allen Garfield Chip Cain. Dean Stockwell Jeffrey Friedman. . . Paul Reiser .Gil Hill Inspector Todd... Nikos Thomopolis . Paul Guilfoyle Mayor Egan.... Robert Ridgley Brian O'Conno Jan Bogomil. . Alice Adair May. Eugene Butler Glenn Withrow Stephen Liska Chauffeur Sidney Bernstein... Gilbert Gottfried

"Beverly Hills Cop II" is a noisy, numbing, unimaginative, heartless remake of the original film. Everything that was funny and appealing the first time has been attempted again here, but has all gone sour and cold. This won't impede a b.o. stampede, however, as most of those who made the initial 1984 outing a smash to the tune of \$108,000,000 in domestic rentals will want to return to partake of Axel Foley's latest adventures. But after "The Golden Child" and this one, Eddie Murphy had better pay closer attention to the scripts he approves, as they are getting increasingly sloppy.

Distinction between the first and second editions very closely parallels the difference between "Raiders Of The Lost Ark" and "Indiana Jones And The Temple Of Doom." In both series, the flair, off-handed charm and breezy humor of the original lapsed into a deadening heaviness that pounds the viewer into helpless submission in the follow-up, even though many of the key artistic contributors remained the same in both instances.

Of course, the key to successful sequels over the years has rested in maintaining continuity of cast members and not meddling too much with the winning formula. In the present case, however, the latter provision has been observed to an absurd degree, so that a redo of nearly every memorable scene from the original can be found here, resulting in a picture of overpowering familiarity and predictability.

Getting Murphy back to BevHills from his native Detroit turf is the critical wounding of police captain Ronny Cox by a group of rich baddies committing the "Alphabet Crimes," a series of violent robberies at heavily guarded locations. Once again, he goads reluctant cops Judge Reinhold and John Ashton into straying from the straight and narrow, once again the group visits a strip joint that looks like a "Flashdance" spinoff, and finally shoot it out with the villains.

Complicating matters for everyone is new city police chief Allen Garfield, a disagreeable sort looking for any excuse to fire those who were around before him. But in dramatic terms, he's just being set up for the big fall, which inevitably

Criminal element is represented by enforcer Dean Stockwell, towering hitwoman Brigitte Nielsen, who looks like Max Headroom's sister, and kingpin Jurgen Prochnow, who is barely visible in his initial scene because of ludicrously heavy backlighting that obscures his face.

On the most elementary level, script doesn't work because it has the gangsters committing major crimes on consecutive days and Murphy, working on no substantial evidence, somehow guessing where and when they will take place and racing to the scene. Just as annoyingly, virtually every clever phrase in the dialog is repeated more than once just to make sure the audience will hear it. Screenwriting 101 teaches the error of this ploy as a fun-

But then there's Eddie Murphy, who, as he has done before, keeps things entertainingly afloat with his sassiness, raunchy one-liners, takecharge brazenness and innate irreverence. Murphy's a hoot in numerous scenes, but less so than on other occasions because of the frosty context for his shenanigans.

Blame for the shortcomings must be put on both the screenwriters and director Tony Scott, who for some reason felt the need to unnecessarily hype up the proceedings with pointless car chases (screeching tires is the dominant motif of the picture) and a soundtrack designed to outdecibel the one for his "Top Gun."

Futhermore, the visual style he and lenser Jeffrey L. Kimball have applied is totally inappropriate, as the nice hard edge of "Beverly Hills Cop" and so many other Paramount films of recent years has been replaced by lighting that atomizes the characters so much that they barely seem to exist, not an effective technique for a comedy.

Also, it is becoming increasingly irritating that Murphy, no matter who he's playing, makes himself out to be such a stud but is never seen displaying the slightest inclination to prove it. For him to remain appealing to the general public, it appears, Murphy must seem sexually unthreatening. But none of this will matter at the boxoffice, as Murphy, Simpson, Bruckheimer, et al., will once again laugh all the way to the

Cart.

Mon., Jan. 26, 1987

Beyond Therapy (Comedy — Color)

A New World release of a Roger Berlind production of a Sandcastle 5 film, Produced by Steven M. Haft. Executive producer, Roger Berlind. Directed by Robert Altman Screenplay, Christopher Durang, Altman, based on Durang's play. Stars Julie Ha gerty, Jeff Goldblum, Glenda Jackson, Tom Conti, Christopher Guest, Camera (color) Pierre Mignot; supervising editor, Steve Dunn; editor, Jennifer Auge; music, Gabriel Yared; production design, Stephen Altman; art direction, Annie Senechal; costume design, John Hay; sound, Philippe Lioret, Daniel Belanger; assistant director, Yann Gilbert; associate producer, Scott Bushnell. Reviewed at the U.S. Film Festival, Park City, Jan. 24, 1987. MPAA Rating: R. Running time: 93 min.

Prudence	Julie Hagerty
Bruce	Jeff Goldblum
Charlotte	Glenda Jacksor
Stuart	Tom Cont
Bob	Christopher Gues
Zizi	Genevieve Page
Andrew	Cris Campior
Cindy	Sandrine Dumas
Le Gerant	Bertrand Bonvoisir

Cashier. . Nicole Evans Le Chef.....Louise-Marie Taillefer Mr. Bean Matthew Lesniak Charlie Laure Killing

Park City, Utah - "Beyond Therapy" is a mediocre film version of Christopher Durang's mediocre play. The difference is that this comedy somehow won a good measure of popular success onstage, whereas the screen version is headed nowhere.

Set in New York but lensed with distracting obviousness — in Paris, farce about young singles and their shrinks already seems out of date in its attitudes and concerns. Jeff Goldblum plays a bisexual fellow who lives with a man but keeps meeting nervously neurotic Julie Hagerty no matter what personal ad he places in New York magazine.

The big jokes come when Goldblum brings Hagerty home for dinner while his b.f., Christopher Guest, is still hanging around and when it turns out that the duo's respective psychiatrists, Glenda Jackson and Tom Conti, are themselves invoved.

A small handful of Durang's oneliners still get laughs, but director Robert Altman has soured the already threadbare proceedings to such an extent that, with the possible exception of the delightfully dizzy Hagerty, it is not even a pleasure to watch the wonderful actors assembled here.

This is the comedy of frustration and irritation pushed to an obnoxious and wearying degree.

Paris shooting has resulted in any number of wrong details, and all the foreign accents and French dialog from secondary actors make this a perfect cast for a picture about the Tower of Babel.

In all events, this would seem to be a judicious moment for Altman to move out of his play adaptations phase, or at least to start selecting better works to spend his time on.

Fri., Aug. 7, 1987

The Big Bang (Belgian-French Antimated — Color)

A 20th Century Fox France release of a Zwanz/Comedia coproduction, with the participation of the French Ministry of Culture and the Ministry of the French Community of Belgium. Produced by Boris Szulzinger. Directed by Jean-Marc Picha. Screenplay, Picha, Tony Hendra; animation, Stout Studio (Paris); technical director, Francis Nielsen; editor, Nicole Garnier-Klippel; music, Roy Budd; sound, Peter Hearn. Reviewed at the Annecy Animation Festival, June 2, 1987. Running time: 77 min.

Voices: (English-language track); David Lander, Carol Androfsky, Marshall Efron, Alice Playten.

Paris - Picha, the irreverent Belgian cartoonist, sets his randy sights on the apocalyptic future in "The Big Bang." Again scripted by British lampoonist Tony Hendra, it's typically lewd and leering in its punnings (English) dialog and satiric graphics, but imagination often flags, leaving film to coast on its aggressive bad taste and

The Big Bang is the Fourth World War that menaces Earth after the previous nuclear conflict, which has left the globe divided into two super-state continents; the male mutant-populated USSSR, a fusion of the U.S. and the Soviet Union (capital: Washingrad), and Vaginia, manned by what remains of the earth's female population. A new holocaust is brewing, with each side threatening to unleash its ultimate secret weapons.

The new war could spell the end of the rest of the universe, so an intergalactic council summons Fred, a washed-out, henpecked superhero (employed alongside Darth Vader and some other has-beens as interplanetary garbage collectors), back into service to zip down to Earth and avert the impending cataclysm. He bungles the job and all hell breaks loose in the end, though Fred literally is blown to Seventh Heaven in the arms of the luscious virgin he saves from the USSSR tyrant and lusts after vainly throughout his mission.

Picha dreams up a large gallery of priapic grotesques, including Hitler clones, Walkyrie-shaped tanks, deadly ballerina warriors, an anal ectoplasmic warlord, and his multibreasted Amazonian counterpart. It's a nonstop onslaught of ultimate sexual warfare but the satiric broadsides only sporadically explode with genuine hilarity, and the animation is frequently inferior to Picha's previous work.

Le

Tues., Dec. 2, 1986

RIO FEST REVIEW

The Big Easy

(Romantic drama — Color)

A Kings Road Entertainment presentation. Produced by Stephen Friedman. Executive producer, Mort Engelberg. Directed by Jim McBride. Stars Dennis Quaid, Ellen Barkin, Ned Beatty. Screenplay, Dan Petrie Jr. Camera (Deluxe Color), Afonso Beato; editor, Mia Goldman; music, Brad Feidel; production design, Jeannine Claudia Oppewall; set decoration, Lisa Fischer; costume design, Tracy Tynan; sound, Mark Ulano; assistant director, Michael Schroeder. Reviewed at the Rio de Janeiro Film Festival, Nov. 27, 1986. Running time: 108 min.

Remy McSwain Dennis Quaid Anne Osborne Ellen Barkin Jack Ned Beatty With: John Goodman, Ebbe Roe Smith,

With: John Goodman, Ebbe Roe Smith, Lisa Jane Persky, Charles Ludlam, Tom O'Brien, Marc Lawrence, Solomon Burke, Jim Garrison.

Rio de Janeiro - Until conventional plot contrivances begin to spoil the fun, "The Big Easy" is a snappy, sassy battle of the sexes in the guise of a melodrama about police corruption. World-premiered at the Rio de Janeiro Film Festival, stylish Jim McBride pic figures to be the first release from the new distribution arm of Kings Road Entertainment, sometime early next year. Selling this one will be a challenge, however, as film's quirky quality will have trouble prevailing over cop-story cliches and lack of star power at the b.o.

This marks McBride's first outing since "Breathless" and reappearance of scenarist Dan Petrie Jr. after "Beverly Hills Cop." Most of the time, the director is in strong form, but he is finally undone by the script's insistence on a final act that would look at home on any formulaic tv show.

Build-up is quite engaging. In the classic screwball comedy tradition of opposites irresistibly attracting, brash New Orleans homicide detective Dennis Quaid puts the make on Ellen Barkin, a northern import assigned by the D.A.'s office to investigate possible illegal activities in the department.

Opening reels possess a breezy freshness, as Quaid overcomes Barkin's personal anxiety and professional reservations about becoming involved with a member of the force she' supposed to check out. Couple's nights on the town include some visits to scenes of apparent gangland murders as well as to colorful, Cajun-flavored restaurants and clubs, and the inevitable sex scene, while

not tremendously explicit, still manages to be provocatively frank in regard to the specifics of what's going on and how Quaid finally turns Barkin on.

Despite his conquest, Quaid quickly finds himself holding the short end of the stick, as he's set up and prosecuted by Barkin personally for being on the take.

Although clever and resourceful enough to wiggle out of trouble, Quaid gradually realizes that the rules of the game he's been playing for years are irredeemably corrupt. Convinced that the drug-related series of murders are really the work of crooked cops rather than mobsters, Quaid cleans up his act and goes to the root of the problem on the road to an unbelievably rosy-hued resolution.

Not necessarily the likeliest of couples, Quaid and Barkin bring great energy and an offbeat wired quality to their roles. A bit like Richard Gere in McBride's "Breathless," Quaid's character is always "on," always performing for effect, during most of the action, and actor's natural charm easily counterbalances character's overbearing tendencies.

Barkin is sexy and convincing as the initially uptight target of Quaid's attentions, his provocation to shape up and, finally, his enthusiastic partner in crime-busting.

Ned Beatty projects an appealing paternalism as the homicide chief, while top supporting turn comes from the Ridiculous Theater Company's Charles Ludlam as a very Tennessee Williams-ish defense attorney. Offbeat cameos are contributed by veteran baddie Marc Lawrence, singer-preacher Solomon Burke and one-time Kennedy assassination conspiracy theorist Jim Garrison.

New Orleans' local color is fully exploited by McBride and Brazilian lenser Afonso Beato, as camerawork beatifully brings out the bold, rich hues without looking either gaudy or overly stylized.

Jeannine Claudia Oppewall's production design and Tracy Tynan's costume design artfully add to the snazzy look, while Mia Goldman's editing keeps things zipping along. Brad Feidel's evocative score is abetted by a host of mostly Cajun tunes.

Overall, the cooks here did the best they could with ingredients that tasted good but were a little tough to chew.

Cart.

Tues., April 28, 1987

Le Grand Chemin THE BIG ROAD (French — Color)

An AAA release of a Flach Film/Selena Audiovisual (AAA)/TF 1 Films coproduction. Produced by Pascal Hommais, Jean-Francois Lepetit. Written and directed by Jean-Loup Hubert. Camera (Eastmancolor), Claude Lecomte; editor, Raymonde Cuyot; music, Georges Granier; art director, Thierry Flamand; sound, Bernard Aubouy; assistant director, Olivier Horlait, Martine Durand; production manager, Farid Chaouche; casting, Marie Christine Lafosse. Reviewed at Gaumont Ambassade cinema, Paris, April 1, 1987. Running time: 107 mins.

Marcelle
Pello Richard Bohringer
Louis Antoine Hubert
MartinVenessa Guedj
Claire Christine Pascal
Priest
Yvonne
Solange
Simon Daniel Rialet

Paris — "Le Grand Chemin" is a bittersweet heartwarmer about a city boy's near-traumatic stay in the country with a childless couple. Scripted from personal memories and directed with warm restraint by Jean-Loup Hubert, this Flach Films ("Three Men And A Cradle") production offers a good blend of pathos and humor, and excellent performances from adult and child actors alike.

Hubert cast his own son, Antoine, in the pivotal role of a sensitive nine-year-old Parisian who is packed off by his pregnant mother (Christine Pascal) to spend the summer with an old girlfriend (Anemone) and her husband (Richard Bohringer) in their isolated village.

Disconcerted by the unfamiliar environment, the boy befriends a slightly older local girl who initiates him into the mysteries of rural life. The youngster, troubled by the unexplained separation of his parents, finds himself the object of a tug-of-war between Anemone and Bohringer, who vie for his affections to replace the child they lost at birth years ago.

Hubert's script has conscious echos of Rene Clement's "Forbidden Games" and other classics about children but there is freshness and poignancy in his dialog and direction of actors.

The kids, both new to acting, are fetching — Vanessa Guedj, 11, is particularly winning as the savvy, precocious little village girl.

Real acting honors go to Anemone and Bohringer as the embittered rubes whose conjugal life died with their child and who are now wrenched from their repressed states by the presence of the boy.

Tech credits are fine. Len.

Wed., Dec. 10, 1986

Billy Galvin (Family drama — Color)

A Vestron Pictures release of an American Playhouse presentation. Produced by Sue Jett, Tony Mark. Executive producers, Stuart Benjamin, Howard L. Baldwin, William Minot, Lindsay Law. Written and directed by John Gray. Camera (Color), Eugene Shlugleit; editor, Lou Kleinman; production design, Shay Austin; production manager, Eva Fryer; art design, Cecilia Rodarte; costume design, Oleska; casting, Judy Courtney, D.L. Newton. Reviewed at Main Library, Fort Lauderdale (Greater Fort Lauderdale Intl. Film Festival), Nov. 26, 1986. MPAA Rating: PG Running time: 94

mm.	
Jack Galvin	Karl Malden
Billy Galvin	Lenny Von Dohlen
Mae	. Joyce Van Patten
Nora	Toni Kalem
Donny	. Keith Szarabajka
Georgie	Alan North
Nolan	Paul Guilfoyle
Kennedy	Barton Heyman
Margaret	

the Bingo Queen . . . Lynne Charnay

Fort Lauderdale, Fla. — "Billy Galvin" is a tale about the frictions between a father and his grown son in blue collar Boston. Produced with funding from the PBS American Playhouse, it is family drama that will play well on television and vidcassette thanks to headliner Karl Malden and a strong supporting cast.

Malden plays Jack Galvin, a lovably crusty union ironworker nearing retirement. Since he was young Jack dreamed of being an architect, but his working class father was unable to send him to school. Jack hopes his son Billy (Lenny Von Dohlen) will go to college and fulfill his father's dreams.

Billy has other plans, though. He wants to follow in his father's footsteps and doggedly tries to secure a union construction job. But Jack blocks him, conspiring with his union cronies to keep the boy off the job.

Writer-director John Gray presents a realistic picture of his working-class characters and their male-dominated culture. There's much about male friendship here. Billy's two friends Donny (Keith Szabarajka) and George (Alan North) help him out when his own father won't, forming a rival family for the kid.

There's also a lot about traditional male-female roles. When Jack's wife and Billy's mom Mae (Joyce Van Patten) is not trying to patch up the split in her family, she's off playing bingo with her best buddy Margaret (Lynne Charnay).

Billy's tough-speaking bartendergirlfriend Nora (Toni Kalem) is from a younger, more liberated generation. She nevertheless spends much of her time adapting to her boyfriend's stubborn moods and problems.

This is Gray's first feature length film. Previously, he directed several shorts and an episode of the television series "Powerhouse." In "Billy Galvin" he sustains the action well, despite a plot that too often takes the characters back and forth over the same ground — Billy and Jack bickering, then making up, then fighting again.

Eugene Shlugleit broadens the story with some nice camerawork. He photographs the Galvins' world from its best vantage point, from the buildings they help assemble and from within their blue-collar homes and bars.

Unlike the recent Playhouse offering "Smooth Talk," "Billy Galvin" does not promise a strong art house or regular theatrical run. It has a lot of heart, but it lacks polish to make it on the art circuit and action to please regular audiences.

Вих.

Tues., April 14, 1987

The Black Cannon Incident HEIPAO SHIJIAN (China — Color)

China Film Import & Export Inc. presentation of a Xi'an Film Studio production. Directed by Huang Jianxin; screenplay, Li Wei, adapted from novel by Zhang Xianliang. Camera (color), Wang Xinsheng, Feng Wei. Reviewed at the Kabuki Theater, San Francisco, March 29, 1987. No MPAA Rating. Running time: 107 min.

Features: Liu Zifeng, Gao Ming, Gerhard Olschewsky, Wang Yi, Yang Yazhou.

San Francisco — This often delightful piece of political satire recalls late '40s-early '50s British sendups of the clash between free spirits and industrial dogma. Initially banned in the People's Republic, pic ended up being named outstanding film of 1986 by China's Ministry of Radio, Film & Television.

What may surprise Western audiences is pic's twitting of Communist Party hold on factory managers. In this yarn, Party folk grow suspicious about telegram sent by lead Liu Zifeng, whom Frisco fest program suggests "could be China's answer to Woody Allen."

But Liu is a harmless, chessplaying intellectual. Because he speaks German, his job at the factory is to translate for visiting German construction engineer Gerhard Olschewsky. But the Party says no. Even after frequent foul-ups with a substitute translator. Director Jianxin etches wonderful Party-factory management conferences in an elongated, all-white meeting room at which Liu's loyalty is pondered.

Pic could use some trimming, but the yarn plays okay and technicals are first-rate. Interaction between Liu and Olschewsky is niftily essayed.

Rookie director Huang Jianxin, a 1985 graduate of Peking Film Academy's Advanced Directing Class, was nominated for China Film Association's Golden Rooster directing award for this effort.

He's already lensed a sequel "Dislocation." Herb.

Wed., May 20, 1987

Oci Cironie BLACK EYES (Italian — Color)

A U.G.C. release of an Excelsior Film TV/RAI-TV Channel 1 coproduction. Produced by Silvia D'Amico Bendico and Carle Cucchi. Stars Marcello Mastroianni. Direct ed by Nikita Michalkov. Screenplay, Alex ander Adabachian, Michalkov, with the col laboration of Suso Cecchi D'Amico, based on short stories by Anton Chekov; camera (Kodakcolor, Cinecitta), Franco Di Giacomo art direction, Mario Garbuglia, Adabachian editor, Enzo Meniconi; music, Francis Lai associate producer, Gilbert Marouani. Re viewed at the Cannes Film Festival (competition), May 10, 1987. Running time: 11; min.

Romano Marcello Mastroianni
Elisa Silvana Mangano
Tina Marthe Keller
Anna Elena Sofonova
Pavel Vsevolod Larionov
Governor of
Sisoiev Innokenti Smoktunovski

Also: Pina Cei (Elisa's mother), Roberto Herlitzka, Paolo Baroni, Oleg Tabakov, Yur Bogatiriov, Dimitri Zolothukin (Konstantin).

Cannes — "Black Eyes," a freely adapted amalgamation of some short stories by Antor Chekov, is a joyful sleighride through the turn of the century with director Nikita Michalkov once more demonstrating his prowess at cracking the whip or this type of period piece. Carried along on the sheer energy of Marcello Mastroianni's sterling performance, film effortlessly swings from farce to tenderness, love to betrayal, exuberance to poignancy without missing a beat.

Those who think of Chekov as a serious, gloomy writer may find this version out on a limb, adaptation-wise, and deem pic's literary source to be no more than the cultural trappings for a pretty, agreeable Italian production that owes more to Fellini than Soviet cinema.

Whatever the case, Michalkov and his scripter Alexander Adabachian have served up a winning piece of entertainment with verve and conviction that should further expand their audience for "Slave Of Love." It is also a character study in its own right of no little merit.

Story is told by an aged, down-atthe-heel Mastroianni, whom we meet on board a ship at the turn of the century. He introduces himself to a kindly Russian passenger, Pavel (Vsevolod Larionov) and begins ironically recounting his life.

Once Romano was the idle husband of a rich aristocrat, Elisa (Silvana Mangano). She had married him for love when he was a poor student, and still defends him against her hostile family. His clowning is endearing, but his habit of running away from problems to some health spa is a cross to bear.

It is to one such place that Romano retreats when Elisa tells him the family bank is about to close, and it is there he meets Anna (Elena Sofonova). This shy Russian lady with a lapdog is different from the other women in the spa ready to succumb to his charming buffonery. Anna, too, succumbs, but it is the beginning of a deeply felt love that so upsets her she flees back to Russia. Romano determines to travel to her small village to see her again.

The Russian part of the film is prefaced by a lengthy interlude showing Romano's farcical efforts to get traveling papers by passing

himself off as a manufacturer of unbreakable glass. Eventually he bluffs his way to the town and finds Anna married to the ridiculous Governor of Sisoiev (Innokenti Smoktunovski).

Anna and Romano's fleeting reunion takes place in the midst of broad comedy - vodka toasts, gypsy bands, mistaken identity. He leaves, promising to come back soon and marry her. But once back in Italy, all his fine intentions vanish before the sight of Elisa, who has really gone bankrupt and is selling the house. It is the easy excuse he needs to betray Anna. He never returns to Russia, and his last glimpse of her occurs in a longprepared "surprise" ending, which is no surprise but at least is gracefully handled.

Apart from the fact "Black Eyes" is beautifully photographed by Franco Di Giacomo and scored by Francis Lai, and art direction—credited to both Mario Garbuglia and scripter Adabachian—some of the most atmospheric of the period, film is buoyed by a splendid international cast, including Marthe Keller in the role of Romano's alter ego and friend, Tina.

Young Russian actress Sofonova is a timid, awkward, very moving Anna; Mangano and Larionov are so perfect the parts seem written for them. Actually, script was written for Mastroianni, heart and soul of the picture, who turns in one of the most outgoing, enjoyable performances of his long and illustrious career.

Fri., Jan. 30, 1987

Black Widow (Thriller — Color)

A 20th Century Fox release of a Laurence Mark production produced in association with Americent Films and American Entertainment Partners P.L. Produced by Harold Schneider. Executive producer, Mark. Directed by Bob Rafelson. Stars Debra Winger, Theresa Russell. Screenplay, Ronald Bass. Camera (Deluxe Color), Conrad L. Hall; editor, John Bloom; music, Michael Small; additional music, Peter Rafelson; production design, Gene Callahan; set decoration, Jim Duffy, Buck Henshaw, Rick Simpson; costume design, Patricia Norris; sound (Dolby), David MacMillar; assistant director, Tommy Thompson; casting, Terry Liebling. Reviewed at the 20th Century Fox Studio, L.A., Jan. 28, 1987. MPAA Rating: R. Running time: 103 min.

Debra Winger
.Theresa Russell
Sami Frey
Dennis Hopper
. Nicol Williamson
Terry O'Quinn
Lois Smith
D. W. Moffett
Leo Rossi
Mary Woronov
Rutanya Alda
James Hong
Diane Ladd

Lacking the snap and sharpness that might have made it a first-rate thriller, "Black Widow" instead plays as a moderately interesting tale of one woman's obsession for another's glamorous and criminal lifestyle. High-gloss production holds the attention in large measure because of Debra Winger and Theresa Russell's presence centerstage at all times, and b.o. action should be decent.

Known primarily to buff audiences for her work in the films of her husband, Nicolas Roeg, Russell portrays an icy-hard, beautiful woman who, it quickly becomes clear, makes an exceptionally handsome living by marrying wealthy men, murdering them, then collecting the settlements from the wills.

This female Bluebeard is terrifically discreet and careful when it comes to dispatching her victims

and covering her tracks; she neatly poisons items bound to be consumed by the men, then makes sure she is out of town when the deaths actually occur.

Pattern would go unnoticed were it not for conscientious, disheveled Justice Dept. agent Winger, who thinks she smells a rat and begs permission to pursue the case.

Following Russell to Hawaii, where the blonde beauty is mourning the passing of her latest spouse (Nicol Williamson) while getting a great tan. Winger befriends her just as Russell is targeting her next victim, international hotel tycoon Sami Frey.

Smart cookie that she is, Russell grows suspicious of Winger's interest in her, and the intrigue grows ever-thicker as both women become involved with Frey and begin hatching strategies against the other while still maintaining a guarded friendship.

Winger first takes off after her prey for purely professional reasons, but the most intriguing aspect of Ronald Bass' screenplay is the barely submerged sexual jealousy the overworked government employe feels for the sexy, utterly confident manipulator of sex and lives.

Although Winger herself is saucy as always, her character is supposed to be a schlumpy, neurotic woman who hasn't had a date in years, and is thus fascinated by, and mightily envious of, this lady who can seduce any rich man she wants and then get away with all the money.

Tension from these emotional currents reaches its height during the episodes with dreamboat Frey, who really wants Russell but is willing to settle for Winger when she is placed at his feet.

This angle could have been played up to even more powerful effect, because the dramatic progression of the story is fairly straighforward and not especially suspenseful.

There is never a moment's doubt in Winger's or the viewer's mind as to Russell's guilt, so it is only a matter of her being caught, and how.

While the situation is unusual enough to keep one hooked, the dialog and what's actually happening on-screen is not that lively or stimulating.

In his first feature outing since "The Postman Always Rings Twice" six years ago, Bob Rafelson puts in a very professional but seemingly impersonal effort, getting the essentials up there but not getting the most out of the possibilities present.

Returning after an even longer absence — 11 years — is ace cinematographer Conrad Hall, whose work is characteristically handsome and luminous. Indeed, all the craft contributions, including Gene Callahan's varied production design, John Bloom's responsive editing and, notably, Michael Small's very effective score, are of the highest Hollywood order.

Winger and Russell are both among the most talented and watchable young actresses on the scene today, so the picture has a lot going for it thanks to their casting alone. At the same time, both play very tense, brittle women operating in a zone rather near the breaking point, so there is a nervousness and restraint in both performances that slightly harnesses them.

Frey is a delight, as always, although his character invites considerable incredulity when he announces that he wants to build a luxury hotel on top of an active Hawaiian volcano. Other supporting actors, in-

cluding Williamson and Dennis Hopper, are in very briefly, but James Hong is very effective as a seedy island detective in the employ of both women. Cart.

Fri., March 27, 1987

Blind Date

(Romantic comedy - color)

Nadia Gates Kim Basinger
Walter Davis Bruce Willis
David Bedford John Larroquette
Judge Harold Bedford William Daniels
Ted Davis Phil Hartman
Muriel Bedford Alice Hirson

Blake Edwards' "Blind Date" is one set-up that's a crack-up. Madcap adventures with Bruce Willis and Kim Basinger, coupled with a PG-13 rating, are sure to engage lots of b.o. business for Tri-Star.

Edwards has made a name for himself as a master of slapstick comedy and this is his best effort of late. It doesn't hurt that he has a deliciously funny screenplay to work with, one by "Ruthless People" scripter Dale Launer. Certainly less venal than the Disney b.o. smash, pic nevertheless makes up for lack of biting black humor with raucous silliness.

As in "Back to School," plot line for this film is kind of thin, but strong enough to hang some heavy talents. Bruce Willis, fortunately, has abandoned his mugging tv personality in favor of playing an animated, amiable, hard-working ambitious financial analyst.

Stuck without a date for a company function, he reluctantly agrees to ask his brother's wife's cousin (Kim Basinger) to accompany him. His first impression: she's darling. His first mistake: he's not supposed to let her drink and ignores the advice. Two sips of champagne later, she's out of control.

Theme of pure mayhem works well because of chemistry between the main trio of actors, Willis, Basinger and her spurned ex-beau, John Larroquette.

Basinger is cool when sober and wacky when drunk. She's usually a sexy blond, but for some reason dyed a brunette here — and still sexy. Her part is really secondary to Willis', who starts out a befuddled date with the manners of a gentleman and ends up not only befuddled, but crazy for the woman.

It's really the psychotic Larroquette who drives this romp. While Willis tries to control his date (or at least figure her out), Larroquette is hot on his tail trying to get her back. Their skirmishes are hilarious.

Pic is essentially a running string of gags with snippits of catchy dialog in between.

Edwards employs nearly every comedic trick that's ever been used in slapstick — short of a pie fight. Instead, it's pate that's thrown, and cars driven through store windows and hallway skirmishes, and lots and lots of drunk jokes (heaving in a car, walking the line). Most work, a few fall flat. Scenes where a house is driven away, or when Wil-

lis is held up by female leather types, are stupid.

The frenetic pacing punctuated with the characters' non-stop bantering may grow wearisome for some viewers hoping for a little social satire or something more meaningful than innocuous nonsense.

Well, filmmakers plainly wanted to entertain on the most elemental level. Opportunities to take jabs at wealth, the legal system, the single life are passed over in favor of the slick joke.

It all takes place in L.A., locale for of the kind of freeway fast, upwardly mobile lifestyle these characters live.

Along to add yocks are Bill Daniels as Larroquette's bombastic judge father and Phil Hartman as Willis' oily car salesman brother.

Production credits are fine. Music credits run the gamut from Henry Mancini's scoring to Stanley Jordan's guitar solo. In short, hokey and hip — which in this case is a foolproof formula.

Brit.

Tues., May 12, 1987

Body Slam (Wrestling comedy — Color)

A De Laurentiis Entertainment Group release of a Hemdale presentation of a Musifilm production. Produced by Shel Lytton, Mike Curb. Directed by Hal Needham. Stars Dirk Benedict, Tanya Roberts. Screenplay, Lytton, Steve Burkow, from story by Lytton. Camera (CFI color), Mike Shea; editor, Randy Thornton; music, Michael Lloyd, John D'Andrea; sound (Ultra-Stereo), Michael Evje, James McCann; art direction, Pamela Warner; production manager, Mary Eilts; assistant director, Tom Connolly; rock & wrestling consultant, David Wolff; coproducer, Graham Henderson.

Reviewed at Cannes Film Festival (market), May 10, 1987. No MPAA Rating. Running time: 89 min.

Harry Smilac Dirk Benedict
Candace
Van Der Vegan Tanya Roberts
Rick RobertsRoddy Piper
Capt. Lou Milano Capt. Lou Albano
Sheldon Barry Gordon
Vic Carson Charles Nelson Reilly
Tim McCluskyBilly Barty
ScottyJohn Astin
Mrs.

Van Der Vegan Deni Janssen Tonga Tom Sam (Tama) Fatu Elmo Dennis Fimple

Cannes — "Body Slam" is a pleasant surprise, a genuinely funny film that pokes fun at a scheming record industry manager while utilizing popular wrestlers to capture the spirit of the current pro wrestling renaissance.

Dirk Benedict is terrific as a gladhanding promoter, always one step ahead of the repo man. His music career failing, he lucks into managing a wrestler, Quick Rick Roberts (played by popular pro Rowdy Roddy Piper), and though creating a war with traditional managers, quickly achieves success in this new field. Forced to book his rock group act in tandem with the wrestlers, he accidently creates the rock 'n' wrestling craze.

Simple premise works because there are a load of humorous situations and slapstick, while the emphasis upon wresling is not overpowering. As a result, pic's entertainment quotient is not limited to wrestling freaks. Conversely, the presence of an ecumenical grouping of wrestlers drawn from the various pro leagues is a treat for enthusiasts.

Besides Benedict, who exudes charm as the unscrupulous guy you can't resist, cast benefits from solid support turns by various comedians. In addition, Piper, who has now retired from wrestling to pursue an acting career full time, is very sympathetic in a large role.

Virtually parodying his largerthan-life manager persona, Capt. Lou Albano is very funny as Piper's irate former mentor.

Sam Fatu, who wrestles under the name Tama, makes a good impression as Piper's tag-team partner, while there are numerous other grapplers on display, including cameos by Ric Flair, Bruno Sammartino, the Samoans Afa & Sika, Freddie Blassie and Sheik Adnan Al Kaissy.

As Benedict's rock group, Kick shares the spotlight performing several okay musical numbers. David Wolff, who with Albano and his client Cyndi Lauper launched the rock 'n' wrestling connection three years ago, served as a consultant on the picture.

"Body Slam" marks a solid

"Body Slam" marks a solid comeback for director Hal Needham, who gets the comedy timing down right and provides some effective stunts which keep the wrestling footage from merely regurgitating what is shown constantly on tv. Tech credits are pro. Lor.

Mon., Aug. 24, 1987

Born In East L.A. (Comedy — Color)

A Universal release of a Clear Type production. Produced by Peter Macgregor-Scott. Executive producer, Stan Coleman Directed, written by Cheech Marin. Camera (CFI color, Deluxe prints), Alex Phillips; editor, Don Brochu; music, Lee Holdridge; art direction, J. Rae Fox, Lynda Burbank, Hector Rodriguez; set decoration, Steven Karatzas, Enrique Estevez; costume design, Isabella Van Soest; sound, William B. Kaplan; assistant director, Javier Carreno; casting, Junie Lowry. Reviewed at the Hollywood Pacific, L.A., Aug. 21, 1987. MPAA Rating: R. Running time: 84 min.

Rudy Cheech Marin
Javier Paul Rodriguez
Jimmy Daniel Stern
Dolores Kamala Lopez
McCalister Jan Michael Vincent
Marcie Neith Hunter
Gloria Alma Martinez
Feo Tony Plana

"Born In East L.A.," Cheech Marin's first solo outing after years of partnership with Tommy Chong, proves to be an amiable, moderately amusing cross-cultural comedy. Unscreened in advance by Universal, shaggy pic generated quite a few laughs among the largely Hispanic crowd on hand opening day on Hollywood Blvd. and could collect some okay late-Summer coin in urban and Southwestern situations.

A simple tale of a misunderstanding resulting in no end of comic woe for the hero, film has L.A. native Cheech inadvertently picked up in an immigration service raid and unceremoniously dumped, along with a bunch of illegals, south of the border. Without identification or cash. Cheech, who is useless at speaking Spanish, is forced to live by his wits while figuring out a way to get back to the U.S. While wit may not be the most accurate definition of Cheech's brand of humor, the man is quick on his feet and has a keen ear for jokes, musical or otherwise, based on pop culture.

Forced to take what he can get, Cheech goes to work in Tijuana for smalltime gringo operator Daniel Stern and makes quite a success as a barker for a sleazy club. He also draws tattoos, sells oranges, sings on streetcorners, gets thrown in the clink a couple of times and attracts the attention of a lovely young lady from El Salvador who herself is working to make the trip north.

When he gets fed up with waiting to go home, Cheech tries to outsmart the border guards, and one of the funniest and most irreverent moments has him leading hundreds

of Latinos streaming down a hillside to the strains of Neil Diamond's "America." He also gets good mileage out of a routine in which he teaches a bunch of dimwitted Chinese and Indians the right "attitude" and street smarts in preparation for their inevitable arrival in the land of cool.

Pic stands or falls on a momentby-moment basis, but actually gets stronger as it goes along and even works up a little unabashed sentiment toward the end. A running gag involving Cheech's moronic cousin, played by comedian Paul Rodriguez, is pretty embarrassing, and technical credits are quite rudimentary, but there are more laughs than in the last few Cheech and Chong efforts and the film seems goodhearted, so it could have been a lot worse. Cart.

Wed., Nov. 19, 1986

The Boss' Wife (Comedy — Color)

A Tri-Star release. Produced by Thomas H. Brodek. Written, directed by Ziggy Steinberg. Camera (Metrocolor), Gary P. Thieltges; editor, John A. Martinelli; music, Bill Conti; production design, Brenton Swift; casting, Karen Rea, art direction, Albert J. Locatelli; sound, Stephan von Hase. Re-viewed at the USA Cinemas Charles Theater, Boston, Nov. 8, 1986. MPAA Rating: R.

Running time: 83 min.
Joel Keefer......
Louise Roalvang... . Arielle Dombasle Carlos Delgado...

Janet Keefer....

Harry Taphorn... Fisher Stevens Lou Jacobi Tony Dugdale. Mr. Roalvang. Suzy Dugdale. . Martin Mull . Christopher Plummer . Robert Costanzo Thalmus Rasulala

Boston - "The Boss' Wife" plays like a dirty joke without a punchline. The chief flaw is that "Wife" has no point to it. The changes in the characters' lives seem unearned, and the trip is only intermittently funny. It will probably play a lot better on cable.

Daniel Stern is a stockbroker in the bullpen of Roalvang & Co., looking for his first big break. His presentation to Roalvang (Christopher Plummer) gets him invited to an exclusive company weekend where he and Martin Mull will battle it out for a new opening higher in the company.

While her husband remains oblivious, Louise Roalvang (Arielle Dombasle) starts coming on to Stern. Her method typifies the problem with the film: it's all tease and no payoff.

Sitting at the dinner table with Stern and Plummer, she slips a pat of butter into her decolletage, leaving a deep impression on both Stern and the butter.

Yet when the moment of truth for Stern finally comes (will he forsake his own marital vows to bed the boss' wife?), nothing happens except some pointless running around. Story ends with Stern apparently ready to spurn both the Roalvangs.

First-time writer-director Ziggy Steinberg tries to pep up his script with additional farcical elements but they fail to deliver.

Melanie Mayron is Stern's wife, in one of the most sympathetic portrayals in the film, whom Stern is trying (and failing) to find the time to impregnate.

Fisher Stevens plays the obnoxious Carlos, a photographer whose book Mayron is editing. He insults everyone he meets so that he can take their picture for his book on the faces of anger.

Stevens' shtick quickly wears

thin, especially when Steinberg's script requires the audience to believe that everyone thinks that Stern and Stevens are lovers.

While Plummer, Mayron, Mull and Lou Jacobi (as Stern's mentor) can more than handle their barely sketched-in roles, Stevens and Dombasle are constrained by them, playing the same note over and

Stern is an odd choice for the lead role, coming across as a doormat for the other characters for most of the film.

This is the sort of picture where audience goes out humming the sets, which are much sturdier than the plot conventions.

This is especially so of Roalvang's office, which comes complete with a miniature train that delivers lunch, and a luxury private railroad car that transports Roalvang and his guests to their weekend destination. Kimm.

Tues., July 14, 1987

The Brave Little Toaster (Animated — Color)

A Hyperion-Kushner-Locke Production Produced by Donald Kushner and Thomas L. Wilhite. Directed by Jerry Rees. Written by Jerry Rees and Joe Ranft; screen story, Rees, Ranft and Brian McEntee, based on the novella by Thomas M. Disch. Art director, McEntee; color stylist, A. Kendali O'Connor: music, David Newman; songs Van Dyke Parks. Reviewed at the Los Angeles International Animation Celebration, Wadsworth Theater, Westwood, July 10, 1987. No MPAA rating. Running time: 80

Voices:	
Radio	Jon Lovitz
Lampy	Tim Stack
Blanky	Timothy E. Day
Kirby	Thurl Ravencroft
Toaster	Deanna Oliver
Air Conditioner,	
Hanging Lamp.	Phil Hartman
	Jonathon Benair
Elmo St. Peters	Joe Ranft

This full-length animated feature, while ultimately enjoyable, is slowed by too-plodding and toopredictable plot progressions, a group of utterly forgettable songs from Van Dyke Parks and an absence of any real tension in climactic scene. The animation, though, is superb; but the five main characters (all inanimate objects) may not be cuddly enough for kids, who will regardless miss much of the humor that lies just beneath the surface here. As with any animated feature that isn't tied directly to toys or well-known childrens' stories, this pic's domestic financial future is anybody's guess.

Story centers on five household objects - a toaster, radio, vacuum cleaner, lamp and electric blanket that come to life in a Summer cabin, where they've waited for years for their master (a boy named Rob) to return and put them to good use

Each character is fully realized, but three stand out. Kirby the vacuum cleaner, possessor of a dour stare, comes on like a cranky John Wayne with Thurl Ravencroft's voice.

Jon Lovitz turns his characterization of a blabby radio back to the golden days of that medium, calling out bits of baseball games and news headlines. While his voice is pure 30s, his character also conjures up Tom Waits' spunky emcee in "The Cotton Club."

Stealing the show, however, is the crybaby blanket (voice by Timothy E. Day), a cross between Caspar the Friendly Ghost and the Snuggles Bear from the fabric softener commercials. Blanket also gets some of the best visual humor,

playing a flying carpet in one scene, a camp tent in another.

After a showdown with an air conditioner (played in the voice of Jack Nicholson by Phil Hartman, who turns around and does Peter Lorre as a sinister hanging lamp in another scene), the quintet decides to brave the wilds of the country hills in search of their master. whom they presume to be living in a nearby city.

Most of the film involves calamitous search for Rob, with group encountering rainstorms, wild animals, a nefarious electric repairman, hypermodernized home appliances and, finally, a huge electromagnet in a silly conclusion at a junkyard.

Pic has a decidedly Disneyish feel to it, and for good reason. It was originally purchased by that studio five years ago. When producer Tom Willhite left in 1984, he took the project with him, employing a group of Disney vets to work

Jerry Rees, who directed the computer animation sequences in "Tron," keeps things moving most of the time here, but what stands out is the animation, brilliantly supervised by art director Brian McEntee and color sylist A. Kendall O'Connor, whose work harkens back to Disney's glory days of animation. Unfortunately, the story just isn't compelling enough to keep up with the pictures. Camb.

Tues., Dec. 16, 1986

Brighton Beach Memoirs (Period comedy-drama — color)

A Universal release of a Rastar production. Produced by Ray Stark. Executive producer, David Chasman. Directed by Gene Saks. Screenplay, Neil Simon, based on his play. Camera (color), John Bailey; editor, Carol Littleton; music, Michael Small; production design, Stuart Wurtzel; art direction Paul Eads; set decoration, George DeTitta Jr.,; Gary Jones; costume design, Joseph G. Aulisi; sound, Chris Newman; associate producer, Joseph M. Caracciolo: assistant director, Robert Girolami; casting, Howard Feuer. Reviewed at the Samuel Goldwyn Theater, Beverly Hills, Dec. 11, 1986. MPAA Ratings: PG-13. Hunning time: 108 min

KateBlythe Danner
JackBob Dishy
Stanley Brian Drillinger
LaurieStacey Glick
BlancheJudith Ivey
NoraLisa Waltz
EugeneJonathan Silverman
Frank MurphyJames Handy
Mrs. MurphyBette Henritze
Mr. Stroheim Steven Hill

"Brighton Beach Memoirs" emerges as one of the more successful transfers of a Neil Simon play to the screen. Admittedly, the track record on this score has not been too favorable over the vears, as what had been funny and tightly played on-stage often ended up as overly broad and limply directed on film. But the result here is surprisingly satisfactory on most counts, and domestic b.o. should follow suit into the new

The first of Simon's now-completed semi-autobiograpical trilogy ("Broadway Bound," the final installment, is Broadway's latest smash), "Brighton Beach" bowed in Los Angeles in late 1982 and opened in New York in March, 1983. None of the original cast members, which included Matthew Broderick and Zeljko Ivanek as the young brothers, have returned for the screen edition, although stage director Gene Saks has repeated his chores with a solid but nonstarname lineup of thesps here.

Set in 1937 in a lower-middle class section of Brooklyn, story details assorted life crisis of members of the Jerome family, hard-working, moral Jews whose problems are all taken to heart by Mama Kate, played by Blythe Danner.

Kate's sister Blanche (Judith Ivey) is a widow with two girls, one a frail bookworm (Stacey Glick), the other a burgeoning hot number (Lisa Waltz) with an offer to become a hoofer on Broadway. This clan is on a long temporary stay in the apartment, and there's no telling when more relatives may be on the way if some of them get out of Poland in time.

Older brother Stanley (Brian Drillinger) is under the greatest pressure, as he's on the point of being fired from his menial job, has lost money gambling and is thinking of joining the Army as an escape from his problems.

But the main focus is on teenage Eugene, an aspiring writer who thinks almost exclusively of sex, of which he knows very little, and baseball, of which he probably knows a great deal. In contrast to the uncontrolled libidos on display in the raunchy teenpix of recent years, the extreme innocence and naivete of Eugene come off as archaic, but beguilingly so, reminders of a more protected, family-oriented age.

Despite the assurance of verbal reprisals, all family members are expected to speak their minds and share their difficulties (there can be no secrets anyway, since nothing can escape Mama's notice). Emotions are fully felt, reponsibilities accepted and decisions taken, not avoided; presence of all these traditional elements will make the film particularly satisfying for older audiences.

On the other hand, this rendition of the play isn't all that funny. Amusing and sprinkled with chuckles, yes, but there are few outright laughs.

Performances are skilled all the way through, with familiar pros Danner, Bob Dishy, as the preoccupied but very decent father, and Ivey all delivering strongly, and newcomers Silverman, Drillinger, Waltz and Glick (who, in her hornrimmed glasses, quite resembles Neil Simon) make fine impressions as well.

Gene Saks, always much more successful in his stage work than in films, has a good handle on matters this time out, and pic has a pleasant, gentle feel. But the hero of the picture has to be cinematographer John Bailey. One of the top young lensers to have emerged in recent years, Bailey succeeds where many others over the years have failed, i.e., in giving a Neil Simon stage transfer a lovely look.

Production designer Stuart Wurtzel and costume designer Joseph G. Aulisi have kept to muted, brownish hues, which could have combined for a muddy, depressing result, but Bailey's lighting gives everything an airy, luminous quality that makes the largely studio-bound piece come to life. It's nothing at all flashy, but it makes all the difference.

Carol Littleton's editing keeps things moving along, and Michael Small's score is spritely. Overall impact is mild, but very pleasantly Cart.

Fri., Jan. 30, 1987

Bullseye

(Australian — Western — Color)

A Cinema Group (in U.S.) release of a PBL Prods.-Dumbarton Films production. Produced by Brian Rosen. Directed by Carl Schultz. Screenplay, Robert Wales; additional dialog, Bob Ellis; camera (System 35 Scope, Eastmancolor), Dean Semler; editor, Richard Francis-Bruce; music, Chris Neal; production coordinator, Elizabeth Symes; production manager, Carol Hughes; assistant director, Charles Rotherham; casting, Michael Lynch (Forcast). Reviewed at Hoyt:

Dora McKenzie Lynette Curran Purdy... Spence. . Bruce Spence . David Slingsby Merritt John MeillonKerry Walker .Rhys McConnochie Mrs. Gootch Judge.

Sydney - Carl Schultz' "Bullseye" is an entertaining outdoor adventure film with expansive production values, a strong basic narrative (based on fact) and relaxed, jokey style. It's an Aussie western played largely for laughs, and with the right handling could possibly tap into audiences seeking more laconic Down Under humor in the "Crocodile Dundee" tradition, though lacking latter pic's charismatic lead character.

The tall (but basically true) tale is set in the last century. Opening scenes are set on a remote Queens land cattle ranch managed by blustering Paul Chubb. One of his lowly employes is Harry Walford (Paul Goddard), who is frustrated at being lumbered with all the worst jobs around the place.

Goddard is sweet on pretty Lily (Kathryn Walker), a demure beauty who works as a maid for Chubb's long-suffering wife, Lynette Cur ran.

When Lily inherits money from a deceased aunt and takes the train to the southern port city of Adelaide to collect her inheritance, Walford is disconsolate. He and his comic sidekick, John Wood, decide to steal some cattle from his boss.

Accompanied by a couple of engaging comic villains (Bruce Spence, David Slingsby), Walford and his pal set out with their booty to cross the inhospitable desert terrain.

Miraculously, they make it to Adelaide, where they again encounter Lily, this time under more surprising circumstances.

Schultz has cast his two lead roles with unknowns (Walker is, in fact. a student with no training as an actor; she acquits herself delightfully), and they play their roles straight while a fine cast of character actors in support play for laughs.

Wood is fun as Goddard's jocular mate, and Chubb is fine as the illtempered ranch manager; Curran (the wife in "Bliss") makes her character more than usually interesting.

Spence and Slingsby are colorful villains; Kerry Walker is great as the brothel's evil madam; John Meillon (from "Crocodile Dundee") is funny as the hero's drunken lawyer in the climactic trial, while Rhys McConnochie makes an impact as a pompous judge.

Schultz and editor Richard Francis-Bruce keep the pace fast. Dean Semler's expansive photography is tops, with dazzling, vast exteriors contrasted with handsomelydesigned, low-key interiors. Production designer George Liddle has once again done outstanding work, and there's an apt, cheerful music score from Chris Neal.

It deserves to overcome the current prejudice against westerns; though it has some of the trappings of that genre, it's basically a stirring romantic drama that doesn't take itself at all seriously. Strat.

> Mon., March 16, 1987 Burglar

(Comedy/mystery — Color) A Warner Bros. release of a Nelvana En-

ertainment production. Produced by Kevin AcCormick and Michael Hirsh. Executive roducer, Tom Jacobson. Directed by Hugh Vilson. Screenplay by Joseph Loeb III, Mathew Weisman, Hugh Wilson, based on the ooks by Lawrence Block. Camera (Techicolor), William A. Fraker; editors, Fredric Steinkamp, William Steinkamp, music, Sylrester Levay; production designer, Todd fallowell; art director, Michael Corenblith; et decorator, Daniel Loren May: costume Jesigner, Susan Becker; sound mixer (Doly), Darin Knight; assistant director and asociate producer. Michael Green; casting, Marsha Kleinman; reviewed at Universal Studios screening room 1, Universal City, Ca., March 11, 1987. MPAA Rating: R. Running time: 102 min.

Bernice Rhodenbarr ... Whoopi Goldberg Bob Goldthwait Carl Hefler.... Ray Kirschman G.W. Bailey Dr. Cynthia

. . . Lesley Ann Warren Sheldrake. Carson Verrill.....James Handy Detective Todras.....Anne DeSalvo Detective

.John Goodman Nyswander.....Elizabeth Ruscio FrankieVyto RuginisLarry Mintz Knobby.

"Burglar" is one of those limited pix which could easily suffice as a trailer. That's about all the time needed to capture the humor and suspense here. Anything more than a few bucks at the b.o. should be considered a steal.

Whoopi Goldberg handles a couple of funny scenes early on with enough skill to suggest that the laughs can be sustained as mystery unfolds. However, story fizzles almost as quickly as the other characters are introed.

As a shrewd ex-con adept at diverse talents from boxing to electrical wiring, Goldberg strains believability as a wonder-woman. This self-described cat burglar is still on the prowl due to the blackmail demands of a former cop who has gone bad (G.W. Bailey).

When a second and more serious crime is committed during one of her jobs, Goldberg is forced to become her own private eye to avoid being tagged with the greater offense.

On screen as her best buddy is Bob Goldthwait. His presence is superfluous and the daffy schtick he practices is a complete dud.

Lesley Ann Warren turns in a ludicrous performance as a successful dentist who has scammed cash out of her practice for jewelry. This screechy dimwit is purportedly so airheaded that she doesn't know how many days there are in 72

Some of the others on hand include Anne DeSalvo and John Goodman as police detective partners in pursuit of Goldberg. They're party to a dumb chase sequence through S.F. Absurd attempt to replicate the legendary "Bullitt" action was the work of d.p. William A. Fraker, who has the camera credit for the original.

What seems most regrettable here is the loss of what may have been a satisfactory mystery story. Those elements alone may well have worked if comedic idiocies had been avoided.

Fri., May 15, 1987

Burnin' Love (Period comeay

A De Laurentiis Entertainment Group release of a Hemdale production. Produced by Michael Gruskoff. Executive producers, John Daly, Derek Gibson, Directed by John Moffitt. Screenplay, Terrence Sweeney, Lanier Laney. Camera (CFI Color), Mark Irwin; editor, Danford B. Greene; music, Charles Fox; additional music, Tom Rizzo; sound, Peter Shawchuk; production design, Roy Forge Smith: art direction, Gordon White; set decoration, Brendan Smith; assistant director, Jerry A. Swartz; costume design. Linda Matheson; postproduction supervisior, Randy Thornton; coproducer, Armand Speca; associate producer, Donald C. Klune. Reviewed at Cannes Film Festiva (market), May 13, 1987. Running time: 83

. Patrick Cassidy Miles Parson Babcock Bud Cort . David Graf Nathaniel . Judge Samuel John Stuart Pankin . Dave Thomas Mayor Upton Faith. Barbara Carrera Widow Chastity Georgia Brown Also with: Annie Golden, Audrie Neenan, Jayne Eastwood, Dr. Joyce Brothers

Cannes - "Burnin' Love" is a far-out, irreverent sendup of the Salem witch trials that packs plenty of laughs for its targeted Mel Brooks audience. Producer Michael Gruskoff has worked with Brooks on several features and the influence shows. Besides the patented "Blazing Saddles" brand of flatulence humor, there is a healthy respect for slapstick and vulgarity here, sometimes missing the mark but often scoring. John Moffitt, a tv grad, pilots with aplomb and Terrence Sweeney & Lanier Laney's screenplay is chock full of clever anachronisms.

Preston are well-cast as idealized young lovers in 1692 Salem, caught up in the witchhunt hysteria created by the unscrupulous town judge (Stuart Pankin) and mayor (Dave Thomas, using just a trace of his patented Bob Hope impression)

Patrick Cassidy and Kelly

who are burning landowners as witches in order to confiscate their property as part of a real estate de-

velopment scheme.

A real witch (Barbara Carrera. deliciously sexy) shows up and accuses Preston of the crime in order to take Cassidy for herself. In the manner of "Tom Jones," which remains the template for these period tales (right down to Carrera's plunging decolletage), Georgia Brown as a local tavern owner shows up in court to reveal Preston's actual parentage and save the day.

Cast excels in this romp, with many outstanding turns. Bud Cort gets some big laughs as the local person who is struck blind by Carrera (similar to Elizabeth Montgomery's tv witch on "Be-witched," she just has to squint to work magic), while Audrie Neenan as his crusty old mama steals many a scene using a voice like Margaret Hamilton's.

Pankin and Thomas make a comfortable team of bumbling villains in powdered wigs while Cassidy and Preston are effective butts of many physical gags as the too-good

Period feel is well captured on Canadian locations, with a satirical music score by Charles Fox ramming home the jokes (plus some outlandish touches as The Kingsmen's hit "Louie, Louie" playing at Thanksgiving dinner after the Indians pass around the peace pipe).

Mon., Jan. 26, 1987

Busted Up

(Drama - Color)

A Shapiro Entertainment release of a Damian Lee/David Mitchell production. Executive producer, Lawrence Nesis; producers. Lee, Mitchell; associate producer, Curt Petersen; director, Conrad E. Palmisano; screenplay, editor, Gary Zubeck; camera (Medallion Film Labs), Ludvik Bogner; music, Charles Barnett; art director, Stephen Surjik; set designer, William Fleming; sound, Nolan Roberts; assistant director Roman Buchaki second unit director, Stephen Reynolds. Reviewed at the Mann Westwood Theater, Los Angeles, Jan. 23, 1987. MPAA rating: R. Running time: 90 min.

Earl Bird......Paul Coufos Irene Cara Stan Shaw

Irving Drayton.....Tony Rosato

As low-budget boxing films go, "Busted Up" is a bust. On the bad-imitation-of-"Rocky"-scale, this one gets a three. Irene Cara sings a couple of passable tunes. The take should also be mininal.

Busted Up," as the title suggests, shows a lot of scenes of boxers getting bloodied - in the mouth, the ribs, the head.

If the good-guy boxer, Earl Bird (Paul Coufos), could survive one scene without a bruise, it might be easier to watch him (and sit through 90 minutes of abysmal narrative). At least he's potentially handsome. The assortment of others who make up his opponents are uglier than gargoyles, if that's at all possible.

In any event, Coufos co-owns a seedy gym in a seedy section of a nameless city with good buddy Angie (Stan Shaw). Faced with losing their beloved hangout to corrupt developers (whose roles might as well have been played by mannequins), they're determined to win a series of fights to raise money and buy the sleaze bags off.

Well, Coufos is going blind in one eye and Shaw's temporarily angry he wasn't told, but then agrees to look the other way just long enough to get to the last of the rounds and win the payoff.

Scripters must have been hit in the head too much to have thought up this story and the dialog that goes with it.

They have Coufos, practically blind, knock down every opponent. He can't seem to lose, not even fighting with a broken rib cage against a palooka twice his size.

But then, he derives a lot of strength from the love he receives from his six-year-old daugher who he's had by his estranged girlfriend, Irene Cara. She's a lounge singer in a cheesy joint and he just doesn't think that's a good environment say, like boxing — in which to raise a child.

The one actor who manages to stay above this drivel is Shaw, giving a very credible performance as the trainer and co-owner of the Foundation Gym.

Tech credits aren't worth men-

Fri., May 15, 1987

The Caller

(Suspenser — Color)

An Empire Pictures release of a Frank Yablans/Michael Sloan production. Executive producer, Charles Band. Produced by Frank Yablans. Directed by Arthur Seidel man. Screenplay, Sloan. Camera (Technicolor), Armando Nannuzzi; editor, Bert Glatstein: sound, Beth Bergeron; music, Richard Band; production design, Giovanni Natalucci; special effects, John Buechler; associate producer. Debra Dion; casting. Anthony Bernao. Reviewed at the Cannes Film Festival (market), May 13, 1987. Running time: 98 min.

.....Malcolm McDowell The Caller Madolyn Smith

Cannes - "The Caller" is a two-character suspense meller which has its moments of tension, but is handicapped by a script that strains credulity. The costars strive to rise above the plot, and their performances could help to stimulate some b.o. poten-

The setting is a cabin in an isolated forest, where a young widow (Madolyn Smith) lives alone. Her young daughter is with friends, and she's expecting her lover for dinner. Instead, comes the title character — his car has broken down, may he use the phone, please.

Trembling, she reluctantly lets

him in, then inexplicably offers him a drink, and then a cigarette. He neither drinks nor smokes. Eventually, he waits outside for the tow truck. But the next morning he теарреars in the village, and even more inexplicably she agrees to take a ride with him up a mountainous road.

That evening, he's back at the cabin and, still trembling (but for a different reason), she invites him to stay the night. There's heavy panting, but he fails to consummate.

And all the time, each is scoring points off the other. She illustrates how she could murder him, as he accuses her of having murdered her husband and lover.

Having rescued her from a burning garage, she attacks him with a crossbow, and as he stumbles, he grabs a live wire and the sparks literally fly. At that point, the mystery of the caller is solved.

As his face dissolves into a gruesome mess and the flesh rolls off his hand, he is, it turns out, just a robot. And there's more to come: before the fade, the caller Mark II (a perfect clone) is back, this time flashing a sheriff's card for the young woman.

Most of the action takes place within the confines of the cabin, which seems singularly well equipped for sinister goings on with a large axe with which she threatens her uninvited guest and an array of murderous knives.

Apart from her stupidity in encouraging the caller, it is hard to believe that any young woman would choose to live in such a lonely and isolated home, virtually cut off from civilization.

As he wanders around the cabin, looking for hidden secrets, he opens a cupboard in the child's room to reveal a life-size doll hanging - for a moment giving the impression that it's her daughter with the noose around her neck. It's that sort of picture, with artificial thrills to heighten the atmosphere.

Both Malcolm McDowell and Madolyn Smith to their credit give the impression that they believe in what's happening. It is no easy task for them to sustain interest for more than an hour and a half, and they largely succeed. Arthur Seidelman's direction keeps the twohander on the move, and Technicolor lensing by Armando Nannuzzi is fine.

Fri., April 10, 1987

Campus Man (Teen Comedy — Color)

A Paramount Pictures release of an RKO Pictures presentation. Executive producers, Barbara D. Boule, Marc E. Platt. Produced by Peggy Fowler, Jon Landau. Associate producer, Todd Headlee. Directed by Ron Casden. Screenplay, Matt Dorff, Alex Horvat. Geoffrey Baere from a story by Dorff, Horvat. Camera (Metrocolor, prints by Technicolor), Francis Kenny; editor, Steven Polivka; production design, David Gropman; art direction, Karen Schulz; set decorator, J. Allen Highfill; music, James Newton Howard; sound, Bruce Litecky; costume design, Elisabetta Rogiani; casting, Linda Francis. Reviewed April 7, 1987, at Paramount Pictures, Los Angeles, Calif. MPAA Rating: PG. Running time: 94 min.

Todd Barrett . . . Steve Lyon Brett Wilson Dayna Thomas. Kim Delaney Molly Gibson. . Kathleen Wilhoite Cactus Jack Miles O'Keeffe Katherine

Van Buren..... Morgan Fairchild Professor Jarman . . .

"Campus Man" gets a D for premise and a B for delivery, which averages out to a C on the entertainment scale. That's not to say mediocrity has never sold well in theaters, but this entry most likely will just pass on through.

It appears the idea here is to build a fairly tame story (no sex, no swearing, a few long kisses) for a target audience of teenage girls around likeable beefcakes - Arizona State University athletes who pose semi-nude for a campus calen-

The calendar is the idea of an obnoxious enterprising business administration major named Todd Barrett (John Dye), who bamboozles his best buddy, a stunning blond diver (Steve Lyon) to pose for the \$5 item, sit through tedious autograph-signing sessions to promote it and then agree - reluctantly to become a slick magazine's "Man of the Eighties." All this because Dye needs to raise a quick \$10,000 to pay his tuition.

Unfortunately, they both end up in hot water when Lyon gets yanked off the diving team by the NCAA.

Script was build around the reallife experience of Todd Headlee, the former ASU student given associate producer credit and whose first name is the same as the main character's.

Scripters took too many liberties with Headlee's undergrad escapades in an effort to give style and depth to a juvenile tale.

For an impoverished student, Dye gets a change of clothings with every scene, high-tech digs and a seemingly unending supply of computers and log time to organize his entrepreneurial venture.

In addition, he has nothing but time to run Barrett Enterprises, which calls into question why he's so desperate to meet tuition costs when he doesn't bother attending classes

To balance out his sleazoid role is Lyon's squeaky clean one - a committed teammate, a serious student and a decent all-around American guy. Whoever did the double for his diving scenes is also excellent.

Actually, for such a jerk, Dye runs in an interesting circle. There's the modish and moralistic school newspaper editor (Kathleen Wilhoite), his loan shark (Miles O'Keeffe) and the brittle and sassy magazine editor (Morgan Fairchild).

Tone waivers from the hip, slick and trendy (like college students like to think of themselves) to the cheesy. This has something to do with the filmmakers making maximum use of the ASU campus and environs.

Scenes alternate between nouveau academia (mostly the pool area) to the middle of nowhere. where O'Keeffe as Cactus Jack does his best virile Clint Eastwood imitations.

Fri., Aug. 14, 1987

Candy Mountain (Swiss-Canadian-French — Drama — Color)

A Metropolis Film presentation of a Xanadu Films, Zurich production, coproduced with Les Films de Plain-Chant, Les Films Vision 4 Inc., George Reinhart, Zurich, TS Prods., Milena Poylo, Paris, Swiss TV (SSR), Film A2. Produced by Ruth Waldburger. Executive producer, Gerald Dearing. Directed by Robert Frank, Rudy Wurlitzer. Screenplay, Wurlitzer; camera (color), Jennifer Auge Dr. John, David Johansen, Leon Redbone, Rita MacNeil, Tom Waits; music supervision, Hal Wilner; sound, David Joliat; art direction. Brad Ricker (N.Y.), Keith Currie (Canada): costumes. Carol Wood: casting. Risa Braemon, Billy Hopkins, Heidi Lewitt (U.S.), Gail Carr (Canada). Reviewed at the Locarno Film Festival (non-competing), Aug 10, 1987. Running time: 91 min.

Kevin J. O'Connor Elmore Harris Yulin Al Silk..... Tom Waits Cornelia **Bulle Ogier** Archie Roberts Blossom

Huey Leon Redbone
Henry
Winnie Rita MacNeil
Mario Joe Strummer
Alice Laurie Metcalf
Lucille Jayne Eastwood
Koko Kazuko Oshima

Locarno — A road pic that definitely improves in the second half, "Candy Mountain" is an outsider's vision of America that is critical and disenchanted. As road films go, this may not be at the top of the list, but it is certainly a respectable contender.

Julius Booke (Kevin J. O'Connor) is a failed rock star who dreams of rekindling his sagging career. He pretends to know intimately a famous guitar builder, Elmore Silk, and to be able to bring him out of his seclusion.

A \$2000 advance and the promise of a substantial bonus sends Julius wandering from New York into Canada on the tracks of the elusive Elmore, whom, in reality, he has never met.

The plot is built on a series of brief encounters along the road, short sketches reflecting a certain image of America's underbelly. Julius is outsmarted at every turn, each new step in his search leaving him a little poorer (he is even thrown into a strange sort of improvised jail in Canada) before he reaches his goal.

The sketches in America, including that of Tom Waits who plays Elmore's brother, are closer to caricature than they are to human observation, but once the Canadian border is crossed, codirectors Robert Frank and Rudy Wurlitzer seem to be more inclined to take their time and learn to like their characters better.

Harris Yulin, as the drop-out, guitar-building genius running away from civilization and trying to achieve perfect freedom, offers a nice cameo as the object of Julius' three-day odyssey, but the real point of the film is to show a selfish innocent discovering what life is really all about.

Frank and Wurlitzer are both familiar with the genre and seem unwilling to compromise. Though the two have not equaled their originality in past achievements, and have not produced another cult film (Frank had directed "Pull My Daisy" and Wurlitzer wrote "Two-Lane Blacktop"), they still manage to deliver a personal, if limited, portrait of the American continent.

The score offers several memorable moments, thanks to Waits, Rita MacNeil and David Johansen, and there are some good performances by Roberts Blossom as a self-appointed Canadian justice of peace and Bulle Ogier as a French woman lost in the barren Canadian landscape.

Edna.

Mon., Aug. 10, 1987

Can't Buy Me Love (Teen Comedy — Color)

A Touchstone Pictures release in association with Silver Screen Partners III of an Apollo Pictures film. Executive producers, Jere Henshaw, Ron Beckman, Produced by Thom Mount. Directed by Steve Rash. Coproduced by Mark Burg. Screenplay, Michael Swerdlick. Camera (Foto-Kem Color. Deluxe prints), Peter Lyons Collister; editor, Jeff Gourson; music, Robert Folk; production design, Donald L. Harris; set decorators, Christian W. Russhon, Andrew Bernard; costume design, Gregory Poe; choreographer, Paula Abdul; sound, Peter Bentley; assistant director, Jerram Swartz; casting, Caro Jones, Reviewed at the Samuel Goldwyn Theater, Beverly Hills, Aug. 6, 1987. MPAA Rating: PG-13. Running time: 94 min.

Ronald Miller	. Patrick Dempsey
Cindy Mancini	Amanda Peterson
Kenneth Wurman	Courtney Gains

Chuckie Miller	. Seth Green
Barbara	Tina Caspary
Iris Dev	in Devasquez
Patty	arcy de Moss
John E	ric Bruskotter

It will be interesting to see if securing the expensive rights to use the original Beatles tune for the title song and having mainline Touchstone Pictures release "Can't Buy Me Love" will earn this lackluster, low-budget youth comedy any coin at the b.o.

Originally titled "Boy Rents Girl," this first effort under Apollo Pictures banner had a promising premise that went flat upon execution.

High school nerd Ronald (Patrick Dempsey) is so desperate to be a part of the "cool" crowd, he "rents" neighbor and Miss Popularity, Cindi (Amanda Peterson), at \$1,000 for a month.

Their contract stipulates they charade as boyfriend and girlfriend, as long as there's no physical contact.

In no short time, Dempsey undergoes a makeover — new duds, new doo and no more Friday night poker games with the nerd patrol. He's now in Miss Popularity's inner circle.

Dempsey has a charm about him not unlike John Cusak and, even ir certain moments, Woody Allen.

The only inspired moments on screen, and there are too few, come after he and Peterson "break up" and before she exposes him at a party when drunk.

It's amateur hour for most of the rest of the cast, who are mostly hopeful would-be actors with generally pleasing looks and little presence — not unexpected for this level production.

Scripter Michael Swerdlick has tried to build a nonexploitive, sensitive light comedy about the often cruel and crucial experiences that shape teenagers as their personalities develop.

Result, however, is something else again. This hasn't the polish of a John Hughes picture, nor the originality of many other singular works about youth like "American Graffiti" and "Lucas."

There is a cohesive theme — be yourself — but it isn't just acted out in a number of scenes where Dempsey purposefully alienates his old buddies, it comes up in some fairly dreary dialog that could easily have been rewritten or exorcised entirely

Swerdlick has potential as a writer, as evidenced by a handful of inventive set-ups, notably when Dempsey thinks he's watching American Bandstand and masters instead an African tribal number in an effort to fit in at the school dance.

Giving some shading to secondary characters would have elevated this from the mundane. The jocks are all meatheads, the nerds geeks from top to toe and the cheerleaders horny and fickle. Dempsey has a little brother, and, not surprisingly, he's a brat whose nosing around part goes nowhere.

But for what this cost — and it doesn't look like much — this seems overall an authentic if superficial slice of what constitutes teens' materialistic lives today.

Brit.

Mon., June 8, 1987

Captive Hearts

(Melodrama - Color)

An MGM/UA Distribution Co. release of an MGM picture. Produced by John A. Kuri. Directed by Paul Almond. Executive producer, Milton Goldstein. Screenplay, Patrick N. Morita, John A. Kuri, from a work by Sargon Tamimi. Camera (Metrocolor), Thomas Vamos; editor, Yurij Luhovy; music, Osamu Kitajima; costumes, Nicoletta Massone; production designers, Steve Sardanis, Francois DeLucy; set decorators, Claudine Charbonneau, Anne Galea; sound, Patrick Rouseau; second-unit director, John A. Kuri; second-unit camera, Daniel Vincelette. Reviewed at MGM, Culver City, Calif., June 5, 1987. MPAA Rating: PG. Running time: 97 min.

Fukushima Noriyuki (Pat) Morita
Robert Chris Makepeace
Miyoko Mari Sato
Sergeant McManus Michael Sarrazin
Takayama Seth Sakai
Masato Denis Akiyama

"Captive Hearts" is a sentimental love story between a fresh-faced Army Air Corps lieutenant and a vulnerable young Japanese woman during World War II. As far as old-fashioned melodramas go, it has its moments. As for captivating large audiences, chances are slim.

Soldiers, from time immemorial, have fallen for the enemy's women — and it has been a theme used in many a film.

Here, it happens after two U.S. airmen, Robert, a young lieutenant (Chris Makepeace) and his nemesis. Sergeant McManus (Michael Sarrazin) are shot down in a remote village behind enemy lines in northern Japan.

Sarrazin, laying on a thick Brooklynese, hates the Japanese and not only won't cooperate with his captors, he will do anything to antagonize them. Not so the gentle Makepeace, who practically signs up for hard labor if it means saving his skin.

In any event, it's the beginning of Winter and while Sarrazin freezes to death, Makepeace makes friends with the villagers.

Pat Morita plays the town's elder statesman, bringing along Makepeace for walks in the countryside and showing him how his hawk deftly kills little animals on command. As it turns out, the hawk has the most interesting role.

As the traditional Japanese woman, Miyoko (Japanese tv star Mari Sato) is always two steps behind them — to cook, draw the bath, instruct Makepeace on the Japanese way to do things, etc.

Makepeace and Sato have a very innocent romance — also one which is very s-l-o-w to develop.

There are a couple of screws thrown into the works to thwart their being alone together, mostly in the presence of a wizened old man determined to make her his wife. But overall, this is an uncomplicated — and uninvolving story.

Also, pic doesn't really explain any mysteries of the Japanese culture not explored in other works or draw on the differences between these gentle types and those of other civilizations.

Perhaps the biggest flaw in the story is the lack of urgency. Except for one brief, unsuspenseful scene where a couple of Japanese soldiers come looking for the downed airman, there is little evidence that a war is even going on.

Brit.

Fri., Dec. 5, 1986

Castaway (British — Color)

A Cannon Films release of a Cannon Screen Entertainment production in association with United British Artists. Produced by Rick McCallum. Executive producers, Peter Shaw, Richard Johnson. Directed by Nicolas Roeg. Screenplay, Allan Scott, based on the book by Lucy Irvine; camera (Fujicolor), Harvey Harrison; editor, Tony Lawson; music, Stanley Myers; sound, Paul le Mare; production design, Andrew Sanders; assistant director, Michael Zimbrich, Waldo Roeg, Lee Cleary; costumes, Nic Ede, Reviewed at the London Film Festival. Nov. 13, 1986. Running time:

Gerald Kingsland...Oliver Reed Lucy IrvineAmanda Donohoe ...Georgina Hale Frances Barber Jason .Tony Richards Rod.. .Todd Rippon Ronald.....Len Peihopa Janice. . Virginia Hey Schoolteacher... Sarah Harper Shop Manager. Stephen Jenn Sorrel Johnson Man in pub. John Sessions Mike Kingsland. Paul Reynolds Geoffrey Kingsland... .Sean Hamilton Manager..... ...Arthur Cox Jackson..... Simon Dormandy ReceptionistRuth Hudson Richard Johnson Registrar. .Joseph Blatchley

London — For a film so rich in cinematic style and shot on glorious locations, Nicolas Roeg's most accessible film to date is remarkably lacking in a storyline, despite towering performances by the two topliners. Prospects are good for those interested in beautiful scenery and naked bodies.

"Castaway" looks unscathed despite many changes of production companies since project's inception almost two years ago — first United British Artists, then Thorn EMI and finally Cannon — and admirably demonstrates how boring desert island life must be.

Newcomer Amanda Donohoe (previously in "Foreign Body") spends most of the pic displaying the absence of bikini marks on her body (palm trees always seem to obscure the vital parts of Oliver Reed as Gerald Kingsland), and she copes well with a character whose motives and methods for going to the tiny desert island remain dubious.

Picture this: London is cold, wet and miserable, and the tv and newspapers are full of doom, gloom and despondency. What else does a girl do but answer an ad from a man looking for a wife to take to a tropical island for a year?

She works in a boring tax office while he spends a lot of time in swimming pools and looking wistfully at goldfish. As she says when they decide to go to the island, "It's amazing this . . . it's the ultimate blind date."

The unlikely pair — she takes him to bed but isn't really interested in him — are dropped off on the tiny island of Tuin, in the Torres Strait between Papua New Guinea and Australia, with great intentions of creating an idyllic life. Of course they have managed to forget vital medical supplies.

The sea is deep blue, the sand clean and white, and the atmosphere undeniably romantic, and as they settle down to their first night in the small tent, Reed makes a move towards her, only to receive a slap. That sets the scene for the rest of the film — sexual tension on a desert island.

"Castaway" is based on two nonfiction books — Lucy Irvine's version, also called "Castaway," and Gerald Kingsland's "The Islander" — and tries to tread a path between the two conflicting versions of their sojourn. Pic was shot in sequence, and Roeg's problem is telling an essentially straight story.

His previous pix, like "Don't Look Now" and "Bad Timing," were complex narratives with flash-backs cleverly interwoven. With "Castaway," the story is straightforward and creates a feeling that he is restraining his directorial talents and relying more on the locations (shot in the Seychelles) and the actors.

Reed gives the performance of his career as a sexually frustrated middle-aged man in search of sun and sex, and is admirably com plemented by Amanda Donohoe a the determined but fickle object o his lust.

Photography is excellent (especially underwater scenes by Mike Valentine that Jacques Cousteau would have been proud of), and at the couple's supplies dwindle and the insects start biting, impressive special effects show horribly swoller ankles, undernourished bodies, and open wounds.

Sexual tension is the center and catalyst of the film, but at a running time of almost two hours one feels there should be a bit more to the story. Roeg is an overcriticized talent, but though "Castaway" is a great ad for the tropical Seychelles, it won't be remembered as a classic

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Thurs., Dec. 11, 1986 **Gyoei No Mure** THE CATCH

(Japanese — Drama — Color)

A Shochiku production and release. Produced by Akira Oda. Directed by Shinji Somai. Screenplay, Yozo Tanaka, from the novel by Akira Yoshimura; camera (color), Mitsuo Naganuma; music, S. Saegusa. Reviewed at Chauvel Theater, Sydney, Nov. 23, 1986. Running time: 140 min.

Fusajiro Kohama Ken Ogata Tokiko Masako Natsume Shunichi Koichi Sato Aya Yukiyo Toake

Sydney — Shinji Somai's "Gyoei No Mure" is an uneven pic, interesting not so much for its story and characters, as for its vividly depicted settings.

Somai's 'Typhoon Club' won the main prize at the first Tokyo fest last year; this is a more conventional yarn, backed by a major studio, about a family of tuna fishermen.

Fusajiro (Ken Ogata), abandoned by his wife 20 years earlier, now lives with his daughter, Tokiko (Masako Natsume). She's fallen for Shunichi (Koichi Sato), a young shopkeeper who wants to be a fisherman too; Fusajiro reluctantly agrees to teach his prospective sonin-law, who's terribly seasick on their first outing.

Next time out, there's an accident and the younger man is nearly killed when the fishing line wraps around his forehead. Fusajiro seems more interested in saving the tuna than the life of his daughter's beau, but the lad survives.

One year later, the couple have married and moved away. Fusajiro goes to find his ex-wife, but a reconciliation seems impossible. He tracks down his now pregnant daughter and son-in-law just in time to be present at another accident which, this time, proves fatal.

It's not much of a plot to fill a two-hour-and-20-minute film, and the pacing is decidedly slow. Though the principal actors are all good, especially Ogata, who gives a very solid, physical performance, characterization is minimal.

Background of small fishing communities, rough weather and achingly hard work is all adequately presented, but the personal drama never really comes to life.

Visually, Somai and his cameraman, Mitsuo Naganuma, have opted for long, sometimes intricate takes, usually using hand-held camera judging by the frequent jerkiness of the image.

The many scenes shot on the tuna boats are excitingly filmed, but when the same visual pyrotechnics are used back on shore, it looks unnecessarily fussy. Almost complete lack of closeups prevents much auStrat.

some vibrant original rock songs punch along the action insidiously.

Fri., May 22, 1987

China Girl (Gang drama — Color)

A Vestron Pictures release, in association with Great American Films of a Street Lite production. (World sales, Interaccess Film Distribution.) Executive producers, Mitchell Cannold, Steven Reuther. Produced by Michael Nozik. Directed by Abel Ferrara. Screenplay, Nicholas St. John; camera (Duart Color), Bojan Bazelli; editor, Anthony Redman; music, Joe Delis; sound (Dolby), Petur Hliddel; production design, Dan Leigh; set decoration, Leslie Rollins; costume design, Richard Hornung; assistant director, Louis D'Esposito; production manager, Mary Kane; casting, Marcia Shulman; associate producer, Kane. Reviewed at Cannes Film Festive (market), May 14. 1987. No MPAA Rating. Running time: 88

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AlbyJames Russo
Tye Sari Chang
TonyRichard Panebianco
Mercury David Caruso
YungRussell Wong
Su Shin Joey Chin
Gung TuJames Hong
Mother Judith Malina

Cannes — "China Girl" is a masterfully directed, uncompromising drama and romance centering on gang rumbles between neighboring Chinatown and Little Italy communities in New York City. Unspooled at the Cannes Market but obviously worthy of official or sidebar slotting in the fest, extremely violent picture stands a good chance of receiving the critical approval it needs to attract discerning audiences.

Nicholas St. John's screenplay hypothesizes an outbreak of a gang war when a Chinese restaurant opens in Italian territory (in reality, the current N.Y. gang wars are strictly internecine between Chinese factions).

In the midst of the battling, a beautiful Chinese teenager (Sari Chang) falls in love with a pizza parlor gofer (Richard Panebianco). A la "West Side Story" and its source "Romeo And Juliet," the adults oppose the relationship and more to the point, the mafia dons and Chinese elder gangsters are in cahoots to maintain peace in their bordered territory, uniting to violently clamp down on both sets of youth gangs.

Director Abel Ferrara adopts a film noir visual style (lots of backlighting, wet N.Y.C. streets at night and looming shadowplay) and it comes as no surprise that the pic builds to a tragic (and currently unfashionable) ending.

He exacts potent acting from the entire cast (several of the supporting players previously seen in Michael Cimino's "Year Of The Dragon"), with showy turns by James Russo as the hero's older brother and David Caruso as a hothead (given some of the film's funniest lines).

Russell Wong (as handsome as a shirt ad model) and sidekick Joey Chin dominate their scenes as the young Chinese gang leaders, while newcomer Panebianco is a forceful and charismatic young find. Titleroler Sari Chang is called upon merely to be an idealized porcelain beauty and she fills the bill.

Ferrara, recently gaining notice as director of the pilot show for tv's "Crime Story" after such features as "Ms. 45" and "Fear City," creates remarkably vivid violent scenes, yet some of the picture's best work is in romantic interludes on the dance floor of downtown clubs or a classic setpiece of grief and rage set in a funeral parlor.

Joe Delia's musical score plus

Mon., May 11, 1987

The Chipmunk Adventure (U.S. — Animated — Color)

A Samuel Goldwyn release (U.S.) of a Bagdasarian Film production. Producer, Ross Bagdasarian. Screenplay by Janice Karman and Ross Bagdasarian. Directed by Janice Karman. Music, Randy Edelman, others. Chipmunk and Chipettes design, Sandra; character design, Louise Zingarelli; production design, Carol Holman Grosvenor; associate producer, Gwendolyn Sue Shakespeare; directing animators, Skip Jones, Don Spencer, Andrew Gaskill, Mitch Rochon, Becky Bristow; executive producer, Hope London. Reviewed at Cannes Film Festival (Market), May 8, 1987. MPAA Rating: G. Running time: 90 min.

Voices: Ross Bagdasarian, Janice Karman, Dody Goodman, Susan Tyrell, Anthony DeLongis, Frank Welker, others.

Cannes — After an on-again, off-again career in records and television, "The Chipmunks," the bright-and-busy brothers Alvin, Simon and Theodore created by Ross Bagdasarian Sr., are back again in their first animated feature, produced by Ross Bagdasarian Jr. and directed by Janice Karmen (the two have been busy on many other chores, too).

Pic is a friendly and, of course, tuneful little adventure story that has the three chipmunks challenging the newly invented girl trio of the Chipettes to a real-live round of their favorite videogame, "Around The World In 80 Days."

The result is animated family entertainment with no hint of true horror to scare censors anywhere, and "The Chipmunk Adventure," while never venturing into any new vistas or conceptions of animation, would seem sure to find its place on the holiday repertoire of the international cinema circuit.

The two threesomes kick off with a hilarious hot-air balloon race, not knowing that they are actually decoys for a couple of big-time diamond smugglers, Claudia (a blonde witch for a change) and Klaus Furstein (a Klaus Kinski takeoff likely to enthuse adults especially). The race takes them into dangerous situations in high seas, even higher Alps and among Fiji Island natives.

All action is interspersed with smooth sequences of song and dance, the singing, of course, of the speeded-up, high-pitched Chipmunks variety, matched, rather too shrilly, by the vocalizing of the Chipettes.

The musical style is neatly polished pop/rock by either score composer Randy Edelman or Terry Shaddick (of "Let's Get Physical" fame), Donna Weiss or Randy Goodrum. Kell.

Tues., Nov. 18, 1986

Chopping Mall (Horror — Color)

A Concorde Pictures release of a Concorde/ Trinity Pictures production. Produced by Julie Corman. Directed by Jim Wynorski. Screenplay, Wynorski, Steve Mitchell; camera (Deluxe color: Foto-Kem processina: Filmhouse prints), Tom Richmond; editor, Leslie Rosenthal; music, Chuck Cirino; sound, Walt Martin; art direction, Carol Clements; Killbots created by Robert Short; production manager-associate producer, Charles Skouras 3d; assistant director, Kristene Peterson; second unit director, Mitchell; associate producer, Ginny Nugent; optical effects, Motion Opticals; special makeup effects, Anthony Showe. Reviewed at RKO Warner 1 Theater, N.Y., Nov. 14, 1986. (MPAA Rating: R.) Running time: 76

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Allison Kelli Maroney
Ferdy Tony O'Dell
Michael John Terlesky
Boyfriend Russell Todd

Paul Bland Paul Bartel
Mary Bland Mary Woronov
Walter Paisley Dick Miller
Linda Karrie Emerson
Suzy Barbara Crampton
Leslie Suzee Slater
Greg Nick Segal
Also with: Gerrit Graham, Mel Welles,
Angela Aames.

New York — "Chopping Mall" is a wafer-thin horror picture that relies too much on the current trend towards cameos and in-jokes in place of substance. Its 76 minutes length is mainly padding rather than trim. Alternately titled "R.O.B.O.T.," pic was released in March as "Killbots" and subsequently given its silly "Chopping Mall" moniker.

Premise is an inferior update of Frank De Felitta's well-done 1973 telefilm "Trapped" that featured James Brolin trapped overnight in a department store with six Doberman guard dogs. This time around, eight teens are caught in a shopping mall overnight with three malfunctioning guard robots.

Opening reels include many unfunny, knowing references for film buffs, with guest stars Paul Bartel and Mary Woronov in their "Eating Raoul" characterizations and even Dick Miller supposedly in his "A Bucket Of Blood" role. When the teens search for weapons to defend themselves, they break into Peckinpah's Sporting Goods store; guiding light Roger Corman is saluted in numerous ways also.

Such attempts at humor peter out as film slides quickly into the regimented horror format of the robots killing off the youngsters gruesomely one by one. Highlight in the gore department is when ultra busty Suzee Slater's head is blown to smithereens, a scene the filmmakers liked enough to reprise during the end credits.

While Slater handily wins the big bosoms contest this time around for director Jim Wynorski (who rivals Frank Tashlin and Russ Meyer in this fetish), Barbara Crampton of "Re-Animator" and "From Beyond" is the best screamer. Lead player Kelli Maroney has lost the freshness and cuteness of her similar role in "The Night Of The Comet" and is awkwardly poised between teen and adult parts.

Robert Short's "killbots" and other technical credits are functional. Pic briefly segues into the territory of George A. Romero's "Dawn Of The Dead" midway through, but lacks that film's social satire.

Tues., April 14, 1987

The Color Of Destiny (A COR DO SEU DESTINO)

(Brazil — Color)
Embrafilme release of a Nativa Films

Embrafilme release of a Nativa Films production. Produced and directed by Jorge Duran; screenplay, Duran and Nelson Natotti, with assistance from Jose Joffily; camera, (color), Jose Tadeu Ribeiro. Reviewed at Kabuki Theater, San Francisco, April 5, 1987. No MPAA rating. Running time: 104 min.

Features: Guilherme Fontes, Norma Bengell, Franklin Caicedo.

San Francisco — Chilean-born Jorge Duran, screenwriter on "Pixote" and "Gaijin," does a technically attractive job in his directing debut in a yarn that offers up the political coming-ofage of a high-school student.

In light of turmoil raised by Pope John Paul II's recent trip to Pinochet-repressed Chile, prospective audience for pic will at least be backgrounded in terms of place and politics. To make it easier, Duran opens pic with a television primer

on Chile's passage from Allende to Pinochet.

But action occurs in Brazil, where lead Guilherme Fontes has grown up after parents fled Santiago. An older brother was victim of Pinochet police, and Fontes figure, in flashbacks, recalls his relationship with murdered sibling.

But the surviving brother tends to be apolitical, a bratty, not particularly likeable kid, in fact. The nature of the characterization is honest, but it makes it a little difficult to care about, or even believe, the overnight political maturation of the young man.

Moving him into this anti-Pinochet posture is the visit in Rio of a young female cousin recently sprung from a Chilean jail. There's cogent screenplay exposition of the growing bond of affection between the two. Duran handles his thesps admirably.

"The Color Of Destiny" might bring a reasonable, brief payoff at artsies in politically conscious communities. Double-bill it with "Missing," and an exhib might end up with a bountiful bowl of Chile.

Tues., Oct. 7, 1986

The Color Of Money (Drama — Color)

A Buena Vista Pictures release of a Touchstone Pictures presentation. Produced by Irving Axelrad, Barbara De Fina. Directed by Martin Scorsese. Screenplay by Richard Price, based on the novel by Walter Trevis. Camera (DuArt Color), Michael Ballhaus; editor, Thelma Schoonmaker; music, Robbie Robertson; production design, Boris Leven; set decorator, Karen A. O'Hara; sound (Dolby stereo), Glenn Williams; assistant director, Joseph Reidy; associate producer, Dodie Foster; casting, Gretchen Rennell. Reviewed at Disney Studios screening room, Burbank, Calif. Oct. 2, 1986. MPAA rating: R. Running time: 119 min.

Eddie Paul Newman	
VincentTom Cruise	
CarmenMary Elizabeth Mastrantonio	
Janelle Helen Shaver	
Julian John Turturro	
OrvisBill Cobbs	
EarlRobert Agins	
Grady Seasons Keith McCready	
Band singerCarol Messing	
Duke Steve Mizerak	
Moselle Bruce A. Young	

"The Color Of Money" is another inside look at society's outsiders from director Martin Scorsese. This time out it is the subculture of professional pool hustlers that consumes the screen with a keenly observed and immaculately crafted vision of the raw side of life. Although lacking some of the intensity of Scorsese's earlier work, pic has a distinctive pulse of its own, with exceptional performances by Paul Newman and Tom Cruise ensuring healthy boxoffice traffic.

Based on a reworking of Walter Trevis' novel by scripter Richard Price, "The Color Of Money" is a continuation of the 1961 film "The Hustler," 25 years later. And it's perfect Scorsese territory — men revealed through what they do.

But these are not men with an ordinary connection to their work, it's their religion. Back as Fast Eddie Felson, Paul Newman is a self-proclaimed "student of human moves" — a hustler. When he happens on Vincent Lauria (Tom Cruise) in a nondescript Midwest pool hall, Eddie's juices start flowing and the endless cycle starts again.

Pic is somewhat lax in the story department; what interests Scorsese is what these people are in the process of becoming. Fans of the director's previous films may find the characters a bit less extreme than Jake La Motta ("Raging Bull") or Jimmy Doyle ("New York, New

York''), but it is the distillation of what makes them tick that gives the film its arresting form.

There is nothing predictable about "The Color Of Money." It is impossible to tell what Vincent will do next as Eddie courts him almost like a lover. There is always the irrationality of relationships propelling the film and, with the introduction of Vincent's girlfriend Carmen (Mary Elizabeth Mastrantonio), a triangle of constantly shifting dimensions is created.

On a plot level, the film is fairly simple and even routine. Newman is the teacher who becomes jealous of his pupil. After a stormy week on the road in preparation for his first tournament in Atlantic City, Vincent and Carmen decide they can make it on their own.

For his part, Eddie returns to the pool table for the first time in years and, when he loses, it is the necessary fall before his resurrection. Unfortunately, at this point Price's script fails to deal with what has happened to Eddie since George C. Scott issued a warning to him at the end of "The Hustler," never to shoot again or he'd kill him.

But Scorsese is less interested in explaining Eddie's psychology than in showing his actions. Watching Vincent, Eddie says, is like "watching a home movie" of the way he used to be. The hunger for money and power and sex are all things Eddie recognizes and, while he may thirst for that himself initially, in the end he is left with something more important.

Much of this is merely suggested and what is going on beneath the surface is only revealed in bits and pieces. Some viewers may find this treatment incomplete while others willing to roll with the punches will find these characters getting under their skin. The story is not tightly structured to draw conclusions and tie up loose ends, but these characters move with a sense of being alive in the world.

On a filmmaking level, it is refreshing to see a film in which every shot serves a function and is there for a reason. Cinematographer Michael Ballhaus has given the film a richly colored and seedy texture. Actual pool shooting scenes may be too numerous for most viewers but Scorsese has attempted to keep them dramatically interesting by introducing an array of shots and angles.

But there is never just flash for its own sake overshadowing the characters. Newman's performance is as much a comment on the actor's maturity as the character's. He is quietly commanding without overstating. Indeed, one of the undercurrents of the film deals with the process of aging itself.

As the young buck, Cruise is necessarily more flamboyant and his work here is proof, for those who may have been wondering, that he really can act, given the right direction. He embodies the explosive street smarts of a kid who has a lot to learn but isn't afraid of making mistakes.

As Carmen, Mastrantonio is working on her own short fuse and is learning how to use her main talent too — her sexuality. It's a hot and disturbing performance as her actions contradict her choirgirl good looks.

In the background, however, Robbie Robertson's score, particularly an abundant selection of obscure rock and rhythm and blues tunes, is too insistent and occasionally seems to be forcing the mood of the picture. Songs will probably make better listening on the soundtrack. Jagr.

Commando Squad (Action — Color)

A Trans World Entertainment release and production. Produced by Alan Amiel. Executive producer, Yoram Pelman. Coproduced and directed by Fred Olen Ray. Screenplay, Michael D. Sonve; camera (Foto-Kern Color). Gary Graver; editor, Kathie Weaver: sound David Waelder; art direction, Corey Kaplan; special effects coordinators, Kevin McCarthy, Sandy McCarthy; second-unit director, Michael Kelly; assistant director, Gary M. Bettmann; associate producer, Herb Linsey. Reviewed at Cine 42 1 Theater, N.Y., June 6,

Cat. . . Kathy Shower Morgan William SmithSid Haig .Robert Quarry lggy Milo Long John. Ross Hagen . Marie WindsoMel Welles .Benita Martinez Quintano... Anita.....Benita Martinez With: Dawn Wildsmith, Russ Tamblyn, Tane McClure, Michael D. Sonye.

New York - Prolific action director Fred Olen Ray operates on automatic pilot with "Commando Squad," a deadly dull picture that tries to be a destitute man's "Extreme Prejudice." Boxoffice prospects not so good.

In her film starring debut, former Playboy magazine Playmate of the Year Kathy Shower keeps her apparel firmly on at all times, essaying the role of a government drug enforcement agent sent to Mexico by her boss Robert Quarry (the screen's "Count Yorga" with many pounds added) to wipe out a cocaine factory operated by an agent turned bad, William Smith.

She teams up south of the border with fellow agent Brian Thompson and they withstand torture at the hands of "B-move" vet Sid Haig in a boring series of encounters with the baddies en route to a fiery conclusion.

Pic starts out promisingly with a nicely staged and arrestingly lit (in various pastel tones) shootout in a power station, but falls apart in the second reel, never to recover it's momentum.

In an unbecoming black wig almost throughout the film, Shower is unimpressive, her beauty hidden and characterization embarrassingly relegated to nonstop voiceover narration. Costar Thompson is an unappealing leading man, delivering lines in bored fashion and looking more like Klaus Kinski than a heartthrob.

Of the typically Olen Ray-roundup of vet actors (he's replaced A.C Lyles in this regard), William Smith II and Ross Hagen are forceful, Mel Welles has a funny turn and Marie Windsor is hilarious operating the Hollywood Book & Poster store as a front for gunrunning. Russ Tamblyn pops up uncredited, just as he was in Ray's concurrent release, 'Cyclone.

Most of the listless action takes place where many old Hollywood Westerns and serials were shot, not convincingly doubling for Mexico. Best tech credits are explosions.

Wed., Dec. 17, 1986

Comrades

(British — Color)

A Film Four Intl. release of a Skreba, Curzon Film, National Film Finance Corp. Film Four Intl. coproduction. Produced by Simon Relph. Writen and directed by Bill Douglas. Camera (color), Gale Tatersall; editor, Mick Audsley; music, Hans Werner Henze, David Graham; production design, Michael Pickwoad; art direction, Derrick Chetwyn; set decoration, Olive Winter; assistant director, Redmond Morris; costumes, Doreen Watkin-son, Bruce Finlayson. Reviewed at London Film Festival, Nov. 15, 1986. Running time

Cast: Robin Soans, William Gaminara, Stephen Bateman, Philip Davis, Jeremy Flynn, Keith Allen, Alex Norton, Michael

Clark, Arthur Dignam, James Fox, John Hargreaves, Michael Hordern, Freddie Jones, Vanessa Redgrave, Robert Stephens, Imelda

London - Bill Douglas' longawaited first, full-length feature is hypnotically engaging in parts but disappointing in it final effect. If it remains at its current running time, it is not likely to have much of a boxoffice future, at least not outside Britain.

The problems, however, don't involve simply length. There is no dramatic center, no clear-cut conflict, no precise focus which satisfies sufficiently. For example, it is not until well into the second half of the film that the relationships among the principal characters actually become clear.

But that said, film is bound to have avid fans who'll apprciate its worthiness and its magical qualities. Douglas, who made a trilogy of short features in the '70s about his Scottish childhood, has an eye for fresh detail, the rituals of rural life, and the dignity of countryfolk which remind one of Ermanno Olmi's approach to similar material. Rarely before have the poverty, the pains and the pleasures, the oppressiveness of the work routine, even of the weather, been so well conveyed on film.

However, because so much time is spent on building up this rich tapestry of rural England in the 1830s, the focus is lost. Just what all the fuss was over the so-called Tolpuddle Martyrs, the subject of the film, is somewhat obscured.

Eventually one pieces together that they were a small group of peasant craftsmen who dared to form a union and ask for higher wages. They were singled out for their subversion by the British authorities, though never apparently having perpetrated any violence themselves, and deported to Australia.

Douglas did have the bright idea of framing the action from the point-ofview of a magic lantern entertainer. Many scenes have the stylized, naive quality of shadow play, with flat characters and the circular, evently spaced narrative movement associated with events depicted in the then popular traveling diorama shows.

The device not only distances the viewer, but reinforces the naive, wonder-filled attitude of mind of the chief character, George Loveless, who is the instigator and moral leader of the Tolpuddle Martyrs. Unfortunately, this character is lost sight of once the story moves to Australia.

If the film devotes too much attention to recreating the feel of the times in the first half, it loses its way in too many rivulets, trying to track too many characters in the latter half.

Although there is a unique vision at work in "Comrades" technical credits are excellent and the performances, mostly from virtual unknowns, dignified - it's a pity that more ruthlessness in scripting and editing was not exercised. Guid.

Tues., Dec. 23, 1986

Crazy Moon (Canadian - Romance - Color)

A Cinegem Canada release of an Allegro Films production in coproduction with the National Film Board. Produced, written by Tom Berry, Stefan Wodoslawky. Directed by Allan Eastman. Camera (color), Savas Kalogeras; sound editor, Andre Galbrand; art director, Guy Lalande; production manager, Michel Martin; asistant director, John Rainey. Reviewed at Cineplex Odeon screening room, Toronto, Dec. 16, 1986. Running time: 87 min.

BrooksKiefer Sutherland
Cleveland Peter Spence
AnneVanessa Vaughan
Alec
Mimi Eve Napier

Dr. Bruno. .. Harry Hill Sean McCann Anne's father Anne's mother Bronwen Mantel

Toronto - "Crazy Moon" is a loopy love story between an oddball rich kid and a feisty deaf girl. If warning bells are going off, not to worry. Allan Eastman's directorial effort, originally titled "Huggers," is done with good humor and an offbeat p.o.v., but it never really develops its potential quirkiness. The interaction between the two leads is too contrived to pull off a major boxoffice coup either. It should go straight to tv or pay-cable as a small screen smile.

Kiefer Sutherland has another weirdo role as Brooks, the bizarre teen who's a throwback to the 1930s. Brooks slicks back his hair. dresses in bow ties and baggy pants, listens to Tommy Dorsey on his walkman and inhabits a room steeped in memorabilia.

Brooks is celebrating his birthday with his autocratic daddy (Ken Pogue), his irresponsible brother Cleveland (Peter Spence), and dad's bimbo mistress.

Later that day he steals a mannequin from a sporting goods store, dresses her up as a female lawyer and puts her in the jump seat of his montorcycle as he drives around.

During the theft, Brooks eyes a cute salesgirl, follows her to her house and finds out she's deaf. Romance blooms: Anne (newcomer Vanessa Vaughan) reads lips; Brooks memorizes "The Joy Of Singing." Pic is a chronicle of their courtship. As she feels more comfy with him, she starts to "speak. She plans to go off to Europe by herself soon, too.

Cliches come quickly, as Anne spray-paints "What is music like? on the sidewalk on St. Helen's Island in Montreal, where pic was shot, and the duet dance together under a full moon with dueling Walkmen.

Funny bits with Brooks on a blind date with a young lawyer as he simultaneously puts the moves around his mannequin-lawyer, and Brooks hanging of a model of his dad's g.f. while she arrives in his room are too few here.

Set design of Brooks' room is a perfect period piece, and soundtrack is a memory-laden melange of Glenn Miller, Russ Morgan, Guy Lombardo and Jo Stafford, mixed with Rational Youth's contempo offerings.

A couple of insights into Anne's deaf life - how to type out a message on a deaf telephone, practicing 'speaking' with a therapist — are instructional, but almost too serious for tone of the pic.

Sutherland is a sickie here, affectless and mired in his family's pathology, but opens up in an affectionate way to Vaughan. She's likable and capable, so what's she doing with such a nut? Other characters are one-dimensional. Eastman directs largely for the laughs but manages to make the leads' romance goofy and warm. Devo.

Fri., May 1, 1987

Creepshow 2 (Horror — Color)

A New World release of a Laurel producroll release of a Laurel production. Produced by David Ball. Executive producer, Richard P. Rubinstein. Directed by Michael Gornick. Screenplay, George A. Romero, based on stories by Stephen King. Camera (Technicolor), Dick Hart, Tom Hurthern Camera (Technicolor), Dick Harthern Camer witz; editor, Peter Weatherly; music, Les Reed; additional music, Rick Wakeman; production design, Bruce Miller; costume design, Eileen Sieff; sound, Felipe Borrero; animation supervisor, Rick Catizone; make

up effects, Howard Berger, Ed French; associate producer, Mitchell Galin; assistant directors, Joe Winogradoff, Katarina Wittich; casting, Leonard Finger. Reviewed at the New World screening room, L.A., April 30, 1987. MPAA Rating: R. Running time: 89

Annie Lansing	Lois Chiles
Ray Spruce	George Kennedy
Martha Spruce	Dorothy Lamour
The Creep	Tom Savini
Boy Billy	Domenick John
Ben Whitemoon	.Frank S. Salsedo
Sam Whitemoon	Holt McCallany
Fatso Gribbens	David Holbrook
Andy Cavenaugh	Don Harvey
Deke	
Laverne	Jeremy Green
Randy	Daniel Beer
Rachel	Page Hannah
Annie's Lover	David Beecroft
The Hitchhiker	Tom Wright
George Lansing	Richard Parks
Truck Driver	Stephen King
Voice of the Creep	Joe Silver

The type of junk that can be turned out just because a couple of major names attach themselves to a project can be observed in full flower in "Creepshow 2." The names in question are George A. Romero and Stephen King, with the former having adapted three of the latter's stories for this omnibus snoozefest which is utterly lacking in chills or thrills. Concept, names and film's status as a sequel to the 1982 "Creepon which Warner Bros. earned \$10,000,000 in domestic rentals, forecast a certain level of opening biz, but this will be in video stores before too long.

Tied together with some humdrum animated sequences, three vignettes on offer were obviously produced on the absolute cheap, mostly in the wilderness with a minimal number of actors. All are so deficient in imagination and scare quotient that they wouldn't pass as even satisfactory episodes on a tv show like "Amazing Stories" or "The Twilight Zone.

Whatever interest some might have in seeing George Kennedy and Dorothy Lamour is undercut by their roles as helpless victims of a smalltown robbery and double murder in the first tale, "Old Chief Wood'nhead," a lifeless and listless yarn about a storefront Indian who comes to life to avenge the

crimes.
"The Raft" concerns four goodtime teens who are trapped on a platform in the middle of a small lake, then eaten alive by what looks like tarpaulin covered with black goo. Climax of this sequence features the one nice little jolt in the entire picture.

Just when one is feeling that two episodes of this stuff would be more than enough, along comes "The Hitchhiker," a painfully protracted telling of how rich gal Lois Chiles hits and runs from a hitchhiker on the highway at night and is then haunted by the bloodied but farfrom-dead fellow.

Nature of the comic book-inspired material is most suited for kids in their early and mid-teens, so it's a mystery why two of the three installments concern characters in middle age or older.

R rating, which seemingly stems from some rather gratuitously foul language and brief thrown-in nudity, might also limit attendance by those most interested in getting in.

Tues., Dec. 9, 1986

Crimes Of The Heart (Comedy-drama - Color)

A De Laurentiis Entertainment Group re-lease of a Freddie Fields/Burt Sugarman production. Produced by Fields. Executive producer, Sugarman. Directed by Bruce

Berestord, Screenplay, Beth Henley, based on her play; camera (Technicolor). Dante Spinotti; editor, Anne Goursaud; music, George Delerue; sound, Bruce Bizenz; pro-duction design, Ken Adam; art director, Ferdinando Giovannoni; set decorator, Gar-rett Lewis; costume design, Albert Wolsky; production manager, Don Heitzer; assistant director, Richard Luke Rothschild, production supervisor, Lucio Trentini; coproducers, Arlyne Rothberg, Bill Gerber; associate producer, P.K. Fields Zimmerman; casting Susan Bluestein, Reviewed at MGM screen

Susan Bluestein. Heviewed at MGM screening room, N.Y., Nov. 21, 1986. MPAA Rating: PG-13. Running time: 105 min.

Lenny Magrath....... Diane Keaton Meg Magrath..... Jessica Lange Babe Magrath.... Sissy Spacek Doc Porter Sam ShepardTess Harper Chick Boyle Barnette Lloyd . . Old Granddaddy . . Hurd Hatfield Zackery Botrelle. Lucille Botrelle. Uncle Watson... . Beeson Carroll .Tom Mason Willie Jay..... Gregory Travis

New York — Thoughtfully cast, superbly acted and masterfully written and directed, "Crimes Of The Heart" is a winner. Diane Keaton, Jessica Lange and Sissy Spacek are a delight in their roles as southern sisters attempting to come to grips with the world, themselves and the past. Humorous and moving, the film should generate enough critical praise and word-of-mouth for a healthy b.o. run, and looks to be a shoo-in for Oscar nominations in a number of categories.

Based on Beth Henley's 1980 play, Lenny (Keaton) is the eldest of three sisters and the only one still living in the large North Carolina home of their youth. It is Lenny's birthday, a day marked by youngest sister Babe's (Spacek) jailing for shooting her husband and the arrival of middle sister Meg (Lange), visiting from L.A., where she pursues a singing career.

Far from being downbeat, the interplay between Keaton's nervously frantic Lenny, Spacek's unpredicta-ble Babe and Lange as the hard-liv-

ing Meg is as funny as it is riveting.
Freed on bail, the somewhat unstable Babe joins Lenny and Meg in living in the house, bringing back a flood of memories both good and bad. We learn their father abandoned the family long ago, and that their mother committed suicide. Childhood jealousies resurface, and in the midst of it all their grandfather (Hurd Hatfield) is dying at a nearby hospital.

Yet even at its darkest, Henley's finely crafted screenplay never loses its sharp, comic edge. In the midst of a truly touching scene in which the three sisters reminisce while looking through Babe's scrapbook (chronicling all the bad events of her life), we learn their mother hung herself with the family cat via the surreal use of a newspaper photo clipping showing a sheetcovered body beside the small, sheet-covered feline.

Bruce Beresford's direction within the house is graceful, effortlessly following the action from room to room. Henley has taken the story outside with wonderful results, and Beresford makes the most of using the exterior locations.

Sam Shepard notches a strong performance in the relatively small part of Doc, and Tess Harper shows her ability as a comic actress in the role of neighbor/relative Chick. Supporting cast is strong throughout, particularly newcomer David Carpenter, and tech credits are uniformly firstrate.

Kudos go to producer Freddie Fields for bringing material that must have been a tough sale to the studios for the screen.

Fri., Jan. 16, 1987

Critical Condition (Comedy - Color)

A Paramount Pictures release. Produced by Ted Field, Robert Cort. Executive producer Bob Larson. Directed by Michael Apted Screenplay by Denis Hamill, John Hamill based on a story by Denis Hamill, John Hamill and Alan Swyer. Camera (Technicolor), Ralf D. Bode; editor, Robert K. Lambert; music, Alan Silvestri; production design, John Lloyd; set decorator, George Robert Nelson; costumes, Coleen Atwood sound, Willie Burton; assistant director Robert V. Girolami; associate producer, Eric Lerner; casting, Margery Simkin. Reviewed at Paramount screening room, Hollywood, Calif. Jan. 14, 1987. MPAA Rating: R. Run-ning time: 100 min.

Eddlenichard Fryor
Rachel Rachel Ticotin
Louis Ruben Blades
Chambers Joe Mantegna
Dr. Foster
Maggie Sylvia Miles
StuckyJoe Dallesandro
BoxRandall "Tex" Cobb
Dr. Joffe Bob Saget
Helicopter Junkie Garrett Morris

Someday someone will come up with the right material for Richard Pryor, but "Critical Condition" isn't it. Pryor barks, growls, walks on all fours and pretends to be a doctor, but misses the mark on almost all counts in this half-baked shaggy-dog story. Fans of the comic will find little to cheer about here.

Real culprits are scripters Denis and John Hamill, who have left Pryor stranded in situations even his comic inventiveness can't salvage. Basis of Pryor's appeal has been the believability of his responses. No matter how extreme the setting, his feelings always seem correct and based on real life experience.
In "Critical Condition," Pryor is

left off the leash in set-ups too dumb to be real and, without any earned emotion, all his hopping around is meaningless. Director Michael Apted's touch isn't loose enough for madcap comedy or warm enough for light romance and, despite good intentions, tone of the film is blatantly bogus.

As a would-be theater developer, Pryor gets mixed up with the mafia and to stay out of jail pleads insanity. He lands in a mental ward but escapes and is mistaken for a doctor one stormy night when a hurricane leaves the hospital in chaos. It's a premise with some promise but the script hasn't a clue where to take it.

Peppered with hokey street jargon for effect, all the Hamills can come up with is a loonie bin filled with crazies from central casting and characters running around the hosptial maniacally moving helicopters, generators and anything else that's not nailed down.

There's some lip service to what a doctor's responsibility should be and doing the right thing in a pinch, but most of the film is a search for absurd jokes that mostly fall flat. Pryor manually relieves an old lady's constipation; Pryor applies a leg cast; Pryor in the operating room and Pryor delivering a baby.

There's even a little time for romance with hospital administrator Rachel Ticotin. She's quite lovely but what draws them together is really a mystery. Pryor, too, seems a bit lost in all the commotion as he tries to keep the hospital running. He is clearly not connecting with the dreamer with a heart of gold his character is supposed to be.

At the same time pic has subplots too numerous to mention and any hospital where Sylvia Miles is the head nurse has got to be cracked. Joining Miles as a killer on the loose is her old Warhol partner, Joe Dallesandro, but it's anyone's guess what he's up to here.

Making more of an impression is

singer/songwriter Ruben Blades as a savvy orderly. In the midst of this storm, he is the one calm, intelligent center. Also likable is Randall Cobb as Pryor's buddy in the psychiatric ward. Garrett Morris is wasted as an addict waiting for his fair share of methadone

Production design adds to the artificiality of the story with walls that are obviously cardboard easily giving way to the phoney fury of the raging storm. Other tech credits are adequate but can't save the film from drowning.

Fri., March 6, 1987

Cross

(French — Color)

An AAA release of a Cinemax/Cinema 5 coproduction. Produced by Andre Djaoui. Written and directed by Philippe Setbon. Stars Michel Sardou, Roland Giraud. Camera (color), Jacques Steyn; editor, Nicole Lubtchansky; music, Michel Goglat; theme song, Setbon, Jean-Pierre Bourtayre; sound, Jean-Francois Auger; art director, Juvenal; assistant director, Philippe Rony; production manager, Antonia Seabra Reviewed at the Georges V Theater, Paris, March 2, 1987. Running time: 85 min. Thomas (Cross) Crosky Michel Sardou

Eli Cantor Roland Giraud non Lenhardt Patrick Bauchau Catherine Crosky . Marie-Anne Chaze Jacques Kester. . . Stephane Jobert Maxime Leroux Also with: Arnold Boiseau, Gerard Zalc berg, Philippe Polet, Andrea Ferraz, Anny Mirande, Louba Guertchikoff, Jean Barney.

Paris - "Cross" is a routine thriller and an unsuitable star vehicle for Gallic pop singer Michel Sardou, in his first starring film role as a lone-wolf cop who recruits a professional killer to save his ex-wife and daughter from a band of psychotic kidnapers holed up in an abandoned hotel.

The simplistic, predictable script is by screenwriter Philippe Setbon, who makes an undistinguished debut as director, claiming inspiration from the quickie thrillers of Roger Corman, to whom "Cross" is dedicated.

Film's only interesting oddity is the casting-against-type-of comedy actor Roland Giraud (one of the 'Three Men And A Cradle'') as the hired assassin. Not a convincing portrayal though the fault lay more with deficiencies of script and direction than with the capacities of Len.

Fri., Feb. 6, 1987

Crystal Heart

(Drama - Color) A New World Pictures release, Produced

by Carlos Vasallo. Directed by Gil Bettman. Screenplay, Linda Shayne, from a story by Vazquez-Figueroa. Camera (Tech nicolor), Alexander Ulloa; editor, Nicholas Wentworth; music, Joel Goldsmith; produc-tion design, Jose Maria Alarcon; sound (Doltereo), Manuel Rincon; costumes, Etta Leff; choreography, Marcea D. Lane; assistant director, Alvaro Forque; casting, Vikkie Vicars. Reviewed at Lions Gate Studios screening room, L.A., Feb . 3, 1987. MPAA

Rating: R. Running time: 103 min. Christopher Newley.....Lee Lee Curreri Tawny Kitaen Lloyd Bochner Frank Newley Diana Newley May Heatherly Simon Andreu Jean-Claude Marina Saura . Lagena Lookabill

Old tv shows don't die; they become bad films. "Crystal Heart, borrowing heavily from the 1976 Spelling-Goldberg production of The Boy In The Plastic Bubble," resurrects the poor bubble boy, has him fall in love with a rock star, break out of his hermetically sealed environment only to meet an untimely death in the arms of his beloved. This is one bubble that never should have been broken.

Mining such emotionally charged

material takes a light touch, but "Crystal Heart" has both feet on the scale and a hand on the heartstrings. Feelings aren't allowed to surface and breathe, they're suffocated.

Film takes a wrong turn from the start when it tries to turn a moving and remarkable true story into rock 'n roll fairy tale.

Script by Linda Shayne, based on story by Alberto-Vazquez Figueroa, is looking for some contemporary ground to set down on. Result could have well been called 'Flashbubble.'

Restricted to his cell since birth because of a faulty immune system, Christopher Newley (Lee Curreri) is an otherwise healthy young man who writes songs and has an unbelievably cheery disposition. Budding rock star Tawny Kitaen and sleazy manager Simon Andreu are both attracted to Curreri, but for decidedly different reasons

Even though Kitaen and Curreri have negative charisma together their romance flourishes, culminating in a ludicrous love scene with each of them on opposites of the glass. In between Kitaen runs off and does rock videos and shoe commercials, waiting for her big break.

At 103 minutes, pic goes on far longer than it should and director Gil Bettman stuffs in extraneous music sections, mostly so Kitaen can showoff her Melrose Avenue wardrobe, and scenes that play like non-sequiturs.

But aside from the ridiculous setups, biggest credibility gap is the couple itself. Curreri is a likable supporting actor but can't begin to carry a film himself and his puppy dog expression only undermines the film's attempt to generate real feel-

On her own Kitaen is quite lovely, but seems to be off in a different film. Dance numbers would be more fun if there were less of them. As the boy's doting parents, Lloyd Bochner and May Heatherly are cardboard cut-outs, due more to the writing than the acting.

Music is mostly forgettable discopop, with Kitaen lip-synching a host of tunes. Tech credits are nothing to write home about, with photography often over-saturated for no discernable reason. Jagr.

Mon., June 8, 1987

Cyclone

(Action — Color)

A Cinetel Films release. Produced by Paul Hertzberg. Directed by Fred Olen Ray. Screenplay by Paul Garson, from a story by Ray. Camera (color), Paul Elliot; editor, Robert A. Ferretti: music, David A. Jackson art director, Maxine Shepard; assistant art director, George Waldron Scott, Corey Kaplan; sound, Rob Janiger, David Waelder; assistant director, Gary M. Bettman; coproducer, Neil Lundell. Reviewed at Hollywood Pacific Theater, Hollywood, June 5, 1987. MPAA Rating: R. Running time: 83

Teri Marshall. Heather Thomas Rick Davenport Carla Hastings Jeffrey Combs Ashley Ferrare Dar Robinson Rolf Waters Martine Beswicke .Robert Quarry .Martin Landau Bosarian

"Cylcone" is a perfectly routine exploitation pic elevated slightly by a sense of humor about itself. Story of a super-charged motorcycle designed for the government and sought by double agents generates little excitement on the screen and should do about as well at the boxoffice.

Although film is under 90 minutes and takes forever to get into gear, it still seems overlong as it builds to a limp climax. All the fuss is about a super weapon, the Cy-

clone, designed for the feds by crack scientist Rick Davenport (Jeffrey Combs) and powered by a high-tech hydrogen energy source.

Of course, everyone wants a piece of anything that good and the bad guys, led by Rolf (the late stunt ace Dar Robinson), murder Combs and go after the machine but his girlfriend (Heather Thomas) stands

Most of the rest of the film involves sorting out the good guys from the bad guys. Brains behind the heist is Martin Laundau as a James Bondish villain.

Screenplay by Paul Garson shows little originality in the set-ups but allows Thomas a few good lines and some tongue-in-cheek humor. It would be impossible to take this stuff seriously in any case.

Director Fred Olen Ray stages several chases in conventional fashion that seem almost slow motion by today's standards. Performances are marginally competent, with Landau supplying an element of glee to his sinister characterization.

Tech credits feature some so-so stunts and grainy photography. The violence is mostly of the comic book variety.

Mon., Aug. 31, 1987

The Dead (Drama — Color)

A Vestron release of a Vestron and Zenith Prods. presentation of a Wieland Schulz-Keil and Chris Sievernich production for Liffey Films. Produced by Schulz-Keil, Sievernich. Executive producer, William J. Quigley. Directed by John Huston, Screenplay, Huston. Stars Anjelica Huston, Donal McCann. Camera (Foto-Kern color), Fred Murphy; editor, Roberto Silvi; music, Alex North; production design, Stephen Grimes, in col-laboration with Dennis Washington; set decoration, Josie McAvin; costume design. Dorothy Jeakins; sound (dolby), Bill Randall; assistant director, Tom Shaw. Reviewed at the Raleigh Studios, L.A., Aug. 25, 1987. Running time: 83 min.

Gretta . Anjelica Huston Gabriel Donat McCann Lily Aunt Julia . Rachel Dowling Cathleen Delany Aunt Kate . Helena Carroll .Ingrid Craigle Mary Jane. Mr. Browne . Dan O'Herlih Bartell D'Arcy Frank Patterson
Donnelly Freddy . . . Mrs. Malins . Marie Kean Molly Ivors Maria McDermottroe Mr. Grace......Sean McClory With: Kate O'Toole (Miss Furlong), Maria Hayden (Miss O'Callaghan), Bairbre Dowling Miss Higgins), Lyda Anderson (Miss Daly), Dara Clarke (Miss Power), Colm Meany (Mr. Bergin), Cormac O'Herlihy (Mr. Kerrigan), Paul Grant (Mr. Duffy), Patrick Gallagher (Mr. Egan), Amanda Baird (Young Lady), Paul Carroll (Young Gentleman), Redmond M. Gleason (Nightporter), Brendon Dillon

With poetic irony, "The Dead" will come before audiences posthumously as John Huston's last film, and as such will represent a delicate coda in a minor key to his illustrious 46-year directorial career. Film will especially appeal to connoisseurs of the author, Huston and things Irish, although its modest scale and scope will limit commercial potential to upscale art house audiences. World premiere will take place Thursday at the Venice Film Festival, with theatrical bow set for Nov. 20 in New York and Los Angeles.

A weil-crafted miniature, the cardinal virtues of which have to do with the relishing of performance and the English language, this dramatization of the James Joyce story directly addresses the theme of how the "shades" from "that other world" can still live in those who still walk the earth, and so it will be for Huston and the public on this occasion.

Huston was on record to the effect that Joyce had a greater influence

on him than any other writer, and paid homage to his hero with an adaptation that is, with one perplexing exception, scrupulously faithful to both the letter and the spirit of the 50-page tale, the concluding story in Joyce's youthful "Dubliners" collection.

Set in Dublin in 1904, Tony Huston's screenplay is a discreet elaboration upon the original text. Opening hour is set exclusively in the warm townhouse of two spinster sisters, who every winter holiday season throw a festive party and dinner for their relatives and friends.

Opening reels mainly consist of mild revelry, with various of the formally dressed characters singing, playing piano, dancing and reciting before sitting down to a lengthy dinner accompanied by lively conversation and capped by a moving speech in honor of Irish hospitality and generosity.

For readers of the story, this section represents a remarkable physicalization of the details noted by Joyce, from the richly burnished browns of the home to the polite dancing, barbed political talk and the characters themselves, who seem unerringly true.

By evening's end, the focus has clearly been placed upon the handsome couple of Gretta and Gabriel, played by Anjelica Huston and Donal McCann. Back at their hotel, Gabriel attempts some rare intimacy with his distracted wife, who, prompted by a haunting song, "The Lass Of Aughrim," she has heard at the party, throws him into deep melancholy by telling him a secret story of a youthful love.

Learning to his distress how his wife still broods about her teenage lover, who died, she believes, because of her, Gabriel sets upon a profound discourse about the living and the dead to the visual accompaniment of snow falling on bleak Irish landscapes. Although shot by a second unit, this climactic sequence represents a moving finale to both the film and Huston's career, and is marked in particular by the words, "Better to pass boldly into that other world, in the full glory of some passion, than fade and wither dismally with age."

Brought in for the California

shoot, the virtually all-Irish cast brings the story to life completely and believably, with Helena Carroll's big-hearted Aunt Kate and Donal Donnelly's drunken Freddy Malins being special delights.

Anjelica Huston proves fully up to the demands of her emotionally draining monologue, and Donal McCann is simply ideal as the thoughtful husband who has never felt true love and knows he can't inspire it in his wife.

The one instance in which the script curiously deviates from the story has to do with the lust Gabriel is supposed to feel for Gretta on the way back to the hotel. The build-up of his emotions is important so that his letdown at his wife's revelations will be all the more severe, but the Hustons completely ignore it except for a glancing remark after the fact.

Dedicated to Huston's longtime companion, Marciela (Hernandez), film looks fine, thanks to Fred Murphy's sharp lensing, Stephen Grimes' production design, done in collaboration with Dennis Washington,

and Dorothy Jeakin's costumes.

Time will put "The Dead" in perspective within the context of Huston's other achievements, but from a personal and thematic point of view, it could hardly be more apt

as parting gesture from a lively, very smart old artist. Cart.

Wed., Jan. 28, 1987

Dead Of Winter

(Suspense Drama — Color)

An MGM/UA Communications Co. release. Produced by John Bloomgarden, Marc Shmuger. Associate producer, Michael MacDonald. Directed by Arthur Penn. Screenplay, Shmuger, Mark Malone; camera (Metrocolor), Jan Weincke; editor, Rich Shaine; music, Richard Einhorn; production design, Bill Brodie; set decorator, Mark S. Freeborn; costume design, Arthur Rowsell; sound, Lee Dichter; assistant director, Tony Thatcher; casting, Maria Armstrong, Ross Clydesdale. Reviewed at MGM, Culver City, Calif., Jan. 26, 1987. MPAA Rating: R. Bunning time: 100 min.

Katie McGovern Mary Steenburgen
Mr. Murray Roddy McDowall
Dr. Joseph Lewis Jan Rubes
Rob Sweeney William Russ
Roland McGovern Mark Malone

Even though its not based on a play, Arthur Penn's "Dead Of Winter" follows in the tradition of such terrific legit-top-screen suspensers as "Sleuth" and "Deathtrap," where most of the intrigue happens within the confines of a couple of rooms over a short period of time. Dialog may not be as sophisticated or sardonic as those two celebrated Broadway hits, but machination is equally as riveting. Film needs a unique campaign to attract an audience and certainly something better to showcase Mary Steenburgen and Roddy McDowall's acting talents than the trailer that's currently playing in theaters.

Steenburgen is first-rate as the struggling actress hired by an unusually accommodating casting director (Roddy McDowall) to audition as a double for an actress removed from a film-in-progress because of an alleged nervous breakdown.

She's taken to the isolated country estate of a psychiatrist-turned-producer during a violent snowstorm (hence the title "Dead Of Winter") where she undergoes a complete makeover until she — quite uncannily — resembles the stricken actress.

Little does she know she's become the patsy for a couple of blackmailers who have already bumped off the other actress, as revealed in the very first scene of the film.

Suspense is artfully built around her gradual realization that she's trapped with a sly shrink and his obsequious fac totum, McDowall, who's turned out to be considerably more malevolent than he first appeared.

Unlike the more clever "Deathtrap" and "Sleuth" scripts, where the trappers and trapee play word games and second-guess each others' moves, this one pits a very up-front victim (who makes her fears well known to her captors) against villains who are at once nice, then nasty, then nice again.

To compensate for a lack of fascinating-evil characters, Penn weaves in the use of a number of suspense staples — cut phone lines, drugged liquids, two-way mirrors — but doesn't just throw them in at obvious places

Part of the thrill is watching the three play cat and mouse in the maze of a house they are restricted to. Production designer Bill Brodie should be credited with creating a setting that is superficially cozy and inviting (fire in the fireplace, lots of antiques, overstuffed furniture and Old Master fakes) while in some of the more unusual places are found all kinds of creepy surprises.

Complicating the tag game is

Steenburgen's triple role playing as her own character, the actress she's doubling for and that actress' sister, which would be a challenge for any actress, and one she masterfully handles.

Steenburgen and McDowall are the adversaries to follow, even though it would seem more likely that the wheelchair-bound doctor, Jan Rubes, should be the one to watch. Rubes is simply not sinister enough to be the mastermind behind this scheme.

There are other such flaws in the plot, but none is readily apparent since there's no time to breathe between scenes to give them any thought.

What helps to heighten the staccato tempo is cinematographer Jan Weincke's engrossing camera angles and Richard Einhorn's compelling score. Brit.

Mon., Oct. 13, 1986

Deadly Friend (Horror — Color)

A Warner Bros. release of a Pan Arts Layton Production. Produced by Robert M Sherman. Co-produced by Robert L. Crawford. Executive produced by Patrick Kelley Directed by Wes Craven. Screenplay, Bruce Joel Rubin based on the novel "Friend" by Diana Henstell: Camera (Technicolor). Philip Lathrop; editor, Michael Eliot; music, Charles Bernstein; production design, Daniel Lomino; set design, Roy Barnes; set decoration, Edward J. McDonald; "BB" robot, Robotics 21, Ray Raymond; sound, Don Cahn, Allan Stone, Jim Williams; assistant director, Nicholas Batchelor; casting, Marian Dogherty. Reviewed at the Vogue Theater, L.A. Oct. 10, 1986. MPAA Rating: R. Running time: 99 min.

Paul Matthew Laborteau	X
Samantha Kristy Swanso	
Tom Michael Sharre	tt
Jeannie Anne Twome	y
Elvira Anne Ramse	y
Harry Richard Marcu	

Hardcore Wes Craven fans might find "Deadly Friend" a bit on the tame side as compared to the director's "Nightmare On Elm Street," but pic has enough gore, suspense and requisite number of shocks to keep most hearts pounding through to the closing credits.

Elm Street has a different name, but it's still a cluster of dilapidated homes occupied by a handful of crazies — that is until an apparently normal teenager named Paul (Matthew Laborteaux) takes up residency with his Mom (Anne Twomey).

Paul is a bit accelerated for his age, having built a semi-intelligent robot named BB that is programmed to talk simple sentences and most importantly, defend his master. BB is a big hit with the neighborhood kids, Samantha (Kristy Swanson) and Tom (Michael Sharrett), since he helps them fend off the local nasties.

It doesn't take a genius to figure out that the nastiest of the bunch is Swanson's Dad (Richard Marcus), a drunk that beats up on his innocent daughter with some regularity—actions duly recorded in BB's memory chip of a brain as he watches from next door.

One night, Marcus goes a bit too far slapping his daughter around and she ends up having to be hospitalized. Just when the doctor's determine she's brain dead, Laborteaux steals her body and transplants BB's "brain" into her gray matter.

That's when the fun begins.

Viewers can just as easily scream as laugh through "Deadly Friend" watching the obviously made-up Swanson come back to life and walk around like a robot, crushing her enemies one by one.

Unlike psychological thrillers

that have some threads of possibility and really play on the viewers' emotions, this kind of pic is really more a vehicle for special-effects wizards to create the most startling and bloodiest scenarios possible and pace them out fairly evenly.

Craven succeeds on that level in "Deadly Friend," contrasting the transformed wholesome Swanson with her benevolent Dr. Frankenstein as he tries to control her as best he can in between rampages.

While this isn't a vehicle to showcase fine acting talents, cast assembled here are all terrific, most notably Anne Ramsey as the paranoid recluse and too much of a busybody for her own good.

Brit.

Thurs., Jan. 29, 1987

Death Before Dishonor (Exploitation — Color)

A New World Pictures release in association with Balcor Film Investors of a Lawrence Kubik/M.P.I./Bima Production. Executive producers, Frank Capra Jr., Arthur Maslansky, William Braunstein, Produced by Lawrence Kubik. Associated producer, Nava Levin. Directed by Terry J. Leonard. Story screenplay by Capra, Kubik, John Gatliff. Camera (Deluxe Color), Don Burgess; editor, Steve Mirkovich; music, Brian May; production design, Kuli Sandor; set decorator, Doron Efrat; costumes, Rochelle Zaltzman; sound, Shabtai Sarig; assistant director, Eli Cohen; casting, Michael McLean, April Webster Reviewed at the Director's Guild Theater, Hollywood, Calif. Jan. 27, 1987. MPAA Rating: R. Running time: 95 min.

Sergeant Jack Burns ... Fred Dryer Colonel Halloran ... Brian Keith Ambassador ... Paul Winfield Elli ... Joanna Pacula Maude ... Kasey Walker Jihad ... Rockne Tarkington Ramirez ... Joey Gian James ... Peter Parros

"Death Before Dishonor," as suggested by the U.S. Marine credo that is film's title, trumpets the macho virtues of a handful of Marines — this time fighting against terrorists in a fictitious Arab country called Jamal. Exploitation pix filmed in Israel, like "Death Before Dishonor," used to be Cannon's domain. Now New World's got one, and it should do well by it; if not in the theaters, then in video.

This new twist on an old plot is surprisingly good, due in no small measure that it is so timely. There is actually a line in the film where the U.S. Ambassador to Jamal says: "The U.S. does not, nor will not, negotiate with terrorists," that elicited considerable laughter from the screening audience.

Heading this corps of troopers is Sgt. Jack Burns (Fred Dryer), who is transferred with his Camp Pendelton superior, Colonel Halloran (Brian Keith) to Jamal to act as advisors to the Jamali military — bringing lots of American hardware with them.

Keith, a crusty armed services lifer, gets kidnapped; the U.S. Ambassador (Paul Winfield) won't negotiate, so Dryer has to take things into his own hands.

Dryer's adversaries, a new group that could be described as "designer terrorists" for the snazzy get-up they wear, are the stereotypically ruthless Arab bunch who kill innocent people, torture victims and do a kamikaze number on the U.S. Embassy. They're also, for the most part, very wooden actors — most notably, the butch international terrorist Maude (Kasey Walker) and the photojournalist Elli (Joanna Pacula).

Dryer is very effective as a sort of steely Clint Eastwood type, undaunted by being completely outnumbered by terrorists on most occasions.

Of course, a few of his loyal boys

get sacrificed along the way, but it does help to heighten the sympathy when a Marine buddy dies, tears well up in Dryer's eyes and some patriotic American tune can be heard in the background.

Like so many of these pix, there's a lot of bloodshed and carnage and a corresponding amount of magnificent stunt work and fancy pyrotechnics to go with them — all fairly obviously staged.

Terry Leonard's snappy direction moves things along at a good clip, which is a good thing because the dialog isn't worth pausing over even if occasionally very funny.

For a nice change from the Philippines, a favorite spot to shoot Vietnam exploiters, location here is an idyllic, isolated Israeli coastal town.

Brit.

Thurs., May 21, 1987

Der Himmel Uber Berlin (W. German-French — Drama — B/W-Color)

A Road Movies (Berlin)-Argos Films (Paris) coproduction, with WDR. Produced by Wim-Wenders, Anatole Dauman. Directed by Wenders. Screenplay, Wenders, in collaboration with Peter Handke; camera (b&w/color), Henri Alekan; editor, Peter Przygodda; music, Jurgen Knieper; production design, Heidi Ludi; costumes, Monika Jacobs; sound, Lothar Mankiewicz; assistant director, Claire Denis; associate producer, Joachim von Mengershausen; executive producer, Ingrid Windisch. Reviewed at Cannes Film Fest (in competition), May 17, 1987. Running time: 130 min.

Damiel Bruno Ganz
Marion Solveig Dommartin
Cassiel Otto Sander
Homer Curt Bois
Peter Falk Peter Falk

Cannes — Wim Wenders returns to Germany with a sublimely beautiful, deeply romantic film for the times: this tale of angels watching over the citizens of Berlin springs from the great tradition of pix about angels involved in human affairs ("It's A Wonderful Life," "Here Comes Mr. Jordan" etc), but is a quintissential Wenders film. It should find appreciative audiences in art houses around the world. (Wenders was awarded the directing prize at the Cannes Festival Tuesday for this film.)

Bruno Ganz and Otto Sander are angels who spend their time watching over the humans of the divided city. Sometimes in flight (though never actually shown flying) and sometimes perched in high places, they come down to earth to listen to the thoughts of the sad or lonely or needy. First part of the film establishes this mysterious world, with the whispering thoughts of humans filling the soundtrack.

Three humans are singled out. One's an old man, played by veteran Curt Bois, with memories of Berlin's shattered past. Another is Peter Falk, in Berlin to make a pic about the Nazi era. The third is a beautiful trapeze artist, Solveig Dommartin.

The angel Damiel (Ganz) begins to feel mortal when he watches the girl; the film, which has hitherto been in black-and-white, has moments of color as humanity begins to enroach on the world of this angel.

There's a magical moment when Sander, the other angel, notices that Ganz is leaving footprints; it means he's almost completely human. Last quarter of the film is completely in color.

Wenders invests this potentially risible material with such serenity and beauty that audiences will willingly go along with the fable. Above all, pic does for the city of

Berlin what "Kings Of The Road" and "Alice In The Cities" did for the German countryside and "Paris Texas" did for the Lone Star state

The film is a valentine to the city with Henri Alekan's camera gliding and prowling around familiar land marks as well as unknown back streets. Visually, the film is a joy.

Peter Przygodda's editing is typically loose; Wenders has never hurried things, and he doesn't here delivering a 130-minute film tha doesn't overstay its welcome. Jurgen Knieper's music beautifully enhances the moods the director is seeking.

Ganz makes the angel a very warm character; Sander is memorable as his watchful partner; Dommartin is lovely as the girl on the flying trapeze; and Peter Falk has some amusing moments as a humar who can feel the presence of an angel.

Wenders' affection for rock music is here too; the climactic meeting between Ganz and Dommartin takes place at a bar alongside a concert hall where Nick Cave and the Bad Seeds are performing. Typically, this scene is not at all schmaltzy.

Wenders is in top form with this lovely effort, which is dedicated to "all former angels" — they include Yasujiro (Ozu) and Francois (Truffaut).

Strat.

Fri., May 15, 1987

Diary Of A Mad Old Man (Dutch-Belgian-French — Color)

A Cannon Group release of a Fons Rademakers Productie (Amsterdam)-Iblis Films (Brussels)-Dedalus Films (Paris) coproduction. Produced by Henry Lange, Pierre Drouot, Fons Rademakers. Directed by Lili Rademakers. Screenplay, Hugo Claus, Claudine Bouvier, from the novel by Junichiro Tanizaki. Camera (Fujicolor), Paul van den Bos; editor, Ton de Graaff; music, Egisto Macchi; production design, Philippe Graff; sound, Victor Dekker; production managers, Jean-Marie Bertrand, Daniel Geys; assistant director, Gerda Diddens. Reviewed at Cannes Film Festival (Director's Fortnight), May 12, 1987. Running time: 91 min.

Marcel Hamelinck ... Ralph Michael
Simone ... Beatie Edney
Denise Hamelinck ... Suzanne Flon
Philippe ... Derek de Lint
Sister Alma ... Dora van der Groen
Karin ... Ina van der Molen
(In English)

Cannes — This second feature of Lili Rademakers (following "Minuet" in 1982) is a beautifully-made adaptation of a Japanese novel by Junichiro Tanizaki about an old man's erotic obsession with his daughter-in-law. Cannon will need to go the specialist route with this low-key English-track entry that plays down the kinkier aspects inherent in the subject.

The old man (Ralph Michael) is a rich businessman living with his wife and family in a large house outside Brussels (though every member of the cast speaks very upper-class English). His daughter-in-law (Beatie Edney, whose last film was ''Highlander'') is vivacious and attractive, and the old man gradually falls under her spell.

While pretending to be shocked when he wants to watch her shower or fondle her feet, she actually encourages him, though never letting him go very far. He even agrees to build a swimming pool so that he can see her in a bathing costume. His obsession seems to keep him alive after the death of his wife.

It may sound kinkier than it actually is, but this is more than a discreet mood piece, elegantly handled, but possibly too tame for many tastes. The two British leads carry the film, with Ralph Michael very good as the pathetically ob-

sessed old man. Supporting cast of Dutch, Belgian and French actors have all been dubbed, but for once the dubbing looks convincing.

Production credits are all pro, and Rademakers indicates again her talents as a director. She's married to Fons Rademakers, winner of the 1986 foreign-language Academy Award for "The Assault."

Mon., May 18, 1987

Dirty Dancing (Teen romance — Color)

A Vestron Pictures release. Produced by Linda Gottlieb. Executive producers, Mitchell Cannold, Steven Reuther. Directed by Emile Ardolino. Screenplay, Eleanor Bergstein. Camera (Color), Jeff Jur; editor, Peter C. Frank; music, John Morris; production design, David Chapman; art directors, Mark Haack, Stephen Lineweaver; sound (Dolby stereo), Miranda John Pritchett; costumes Hilary Rosenfield; choreography. Kenny Ortega: coproducer, Bergstein; assistant director, Herb Gains; associate producer, Doro Bachrach; casting, Bonnie Timmer mann. Reviewed at Cannes Film Festival (market), May 12, 1987. MPAA Rating: PG-13. Running time: 97 min.

Jennifer Grev Baby Houseman . Johnny Castle Patrick Swayze Jake Houseman Jerry Orbach Cynthia Rhodes Penny Johnson Jack Weston Lisa Houseman Jane Brucker Marjorie Houseman Kelly Bishop Neil Kellerman Lonny Price Robbie Gould Max Cantor Charles Honi Coles Tito Suarez Neal Jones Billy Kostecki

Cannes - It's the Summer of 1963 and college kids carry copies of "The Fountainhead" in their back pockets and condoms in their wallets. It's also a time for "Dirty Dancing" and in her 17th Summer, at a borscht belt resort, Baby Houseman (Jennifer Grey) learns how to do it in this skindeep but inoffensive teen-throb pic designed to titillate teenage girls. Beyond that, b.o. prospects are fairly limited.

"Dirty Dancing" is a coming of age film cut from the same mold as The Flamingo Kid," but with a bit less insight and period flavor. Too often the story takes a conventional turn rather than a true one.

But good production values, some nice dance sequences and a likable performance by Grey make the film more than watchable, especially for those who are acquainted with the Jewish tribal mating rituals that go on in the Catskill Mountain resorts.

A headstrong girl bucking for a career in the Peace Corps, Baby gets an education in life and loses her innocence when she befriends a young dancer (Cynthia Rhodes), in need of an abortion. She also gets involved with the hotel's maverick dance instructor Johnny Castle (Patrick Swayze), who teaches her to dance, and a few other steps be-

Although there are several crises along the way, it's basically a pretty easy coming-of-age with all the rough edges smoothed off. Daddy (Jerry Orbach) is a doctor and probably more forgiving and permissive than any father was in real life, especially in 1963. Hyped up drama and lack of real conflicts give the film a fairy tale-like quality.

Period flavor is simulated through a selection of well-chosen pop tunes and several of the dance numbers are fun, particularly one to "Love Is Strange" as Baby and Johnny lip synch the words. Appalling, however, is the spectacle of the great tap dancer Charles Honi Coles doing a disco shuffle.

What really keeps the film moving over its numerous credibility gaps and glaring inconsistencies is Grey's energetic performance.

Swayze's character is played too soft to be convincing, but much of that seems to come from the writing and the direction by Emile Ardoli-

Jagr.

Tues., Dec. 30, 1986

Desordre **DISORDER**

(French — Drama — Color)

Forum Distribution release of a Forum Productions International production. Produced by Claude-Eric Poiroux, Written, directed by Olivier Assayas. Camera (color), Denis Lenoir; editor, Luc Barnier; art director, Francois-Renaud Labarthe; sound, Philippe Senechal; music, Gabriel Yared. Reviewed at the Gaumont Ambassade cinema, Paris, Dec. 9, 1986. Running time: 90 min.

Yvan.....Wadeck StanczakAnn-Gisel Glass Henri. Lucas Belvaux With: Simon de la Brosse, Remi Martin, Corinne Dacla, Etienne Chicot, Juliette Mailhe, Philippe Demarle, Etienne Daho.

Paris - "Disorder," a somber chronicle of the '80s rock generation, is a fine debut feature by former critic Olivier Assayas (who recently racked up positive credits as screenwriter with director Andre Techine, whose influence is apparent in the taut, muted authority of Assayas' direction). Film, produced by local producer-distrib Claude Eric Poiroux in his recent linkup with Gallic subsid of Virgin Records, received the critic's prize at the Venice Festival.

Assayas' script explodes the film cliche about the band of youths happily pooling their forces to form a rock group. His protagonists, through promiscuity, selfishness, fear and mendacity, are unable to get their act together, literally and figuratively, and their pop dreams dissolve variously into suicide, mediocrity or loneliness.

Film opens in nightmare as story's principal characters - two boys and a girl who is involved with both rob a music shop to get instruments for their band and are forced to kill the proprietor, who catches them red-handed.

Though the police never pick up their trail, their crime weighs heavily on their subsequent behavior and leads gradually to the breakup of the trio and their mates, despite attempts to pursue their pop dreams. One of the young men finally hangs himself while the remaining protagonists try to pick up the pieces of their broken illusions.

Despite the Virgin Records connection, Assayas has avoided making a straight film with musical interludes, but a drama about young people who cannot make music because there is no psychological harmony among them.

The occasional rock fragments including a sequence at London's Gibus club featuring the Woodentops — serve as counterpoints to the action, rather than dramatic relief.

Assayas' brooding direction exacts performances of jagged relief from his leads, Ann-Gisel Glass, Lucas Belvaux and Wadeck Stanczak. Supporting roles are filled with the same precision.

Lensing, editing and other tech credits are all stylishly low-keyed.

Mon., Aug. 17, 1987

Disorderlies

Len.

(Comedy — Color)

A Warner Bros. release. Executive producers, Charles Stettler, Joseph E. Zynczak. Producers, Michael Schultz, George Jackson, Michael Jaffe. Directed by Schultz from a screenplay by Mark Feldberg, Mitchell Klebanoff. Camera (color), Rolf Kesterman; editor, Ned Humphreys; art director, George Costello; sound, William Stevenson; costumes. Susie deSanto: second unit director, Hubie Kerns, Jr. Reviewed at the Mann Hollywood Fox, L.A., Aug. 14, 1987 MPAA rating: PG. Running time: 96 min.

Kool Damon Wimbley Darren Robinson Markie Mark Morales Albert Dennis. Ralph Bellamy Tony Plana Miguel Winslow Lowry Anthony Geary Luis Montana Marco Rodriguez Troy Beyer

Everything about "Disorderlies" is gross. Obese rap singers (The Fat Boys) playing inept orderlies (as in "Disorderlies") might have seemed an appealing idea on paper, but the result is something else again.

Warner Bros. would neither screen the film nor provide a complete production kit by press time. Thus, it wasn't until the last excruciating moment of the film that one found out the Beach Boys had a cameo appearance that either ended up on the cutting room floor or was completely obscured from the cameras.

Fat jokes form the basis for this comedy" vehicle for Fat Boys Damon Wimbley, Darren Robinson and Mark Morales, three grossly overweight rappers who get one chance to shine in 96 minutes of (literally) embarassing filmmaking when they sing "Baby You're A Rich Man," their current release.

Pic opens with singers gorging themselves on cake at America's most rundown convalescent hospital, where they work as orderlies.

Enter Anthony Geary on the scene to hire the most incompetent threesome he can find to care for his ailing millionaire uncle (Ralph Bellamy) in hopes they'll do something stupid to cause the old man to die so that nearest relative Geary can inherit the whole pot.

Instead, Bellamy revives as the orderlies take him out to the rollerderby so he can paw a young chick, inadvertently destroy his medication and other such inanities. In fact, he and the Fat Boys become chums.

In a succession of pathetic scenes, the Fat Boys suffer one humiliation after another - if they're not flailing around in the pool, they're panting after Bellamy as he iogs or, worse, unable to play polo because excess poundage prevents them from staying in the saddle.

If only the Fat Boys sang more, even if they're not a pretty sight, at least there's some evidence of (well hidden) talent.

Curious why director Michael Schultz ("Krush Groove," "Car Wash") chose to completely downplay rap and the Fat Boys' particularly unique style of it. It is clear these boys are not actors and the dialog should have been written around them, not for them. Curiously, the lyrics to their song are clearer than anything they say.

As for Bellamy's role, it is undistinguished and he plays it as if catatonic. Geary, and his band of thugs, are cardboard characters.

Tech credits are poor. Even without studio-supplied production notes, it's evident from watching Disorderlies it was not shot any where resembling Palm Beach.

Thurs., Dec. 11, 1986

Dogs In Space (Australian — Color)

A Hoyts/Ronin release (in Australia) of an Entertainment Media/Burrowes Film Group presentation of a Central Park Films production. Produced by Glenys Rowe. Executive producers, Robert Le Tet, Dennis Wright. Directed and written by Richard Lowenstein. Camera (Scope, color). Andrew de Groot; editor, Jill Bilcock; musical director, Ollie Olsen; sound, Dean Gawen, Stephen Vaughan; art director, Jody Borland; executive in charge of production, John Kearney; production manager, Lynda House; assistant director, Ross Hamilton; casting, Forcast. Reviewed at Hoyts screening room, Sydney, Nov. 25, 1986. Running time: 105 min.

Michael Hutchence Anna .Saskia Post Nique Needles Tim. The Girl..... Deanna Bond .Tony Helou Luchio. Chainsaw Man... .Chris Haywood

And with: Peter Walsh (Anthony), Laura Swanson (Clare), Adam Briscomb (Grant), Sharon Jossop (Leanne), Edward Clayton-Jones (Nick), Martii Coles (Mark), Chuck Meo (Charles), Caroline Lee (Jenny), Fiona Latham (Barbara), Stephanie Johnson (Erica), Gary Foley (Barry), Glenys Osborne (Lisa), Helen Phillips (Stacey), Barbara Jungwirth (Sam's mother), Joe Camillert (Terry Towelling Man).

Sydney - "Dogs In Space" isn't a sci-fi pic about canines of the future. It's a film about a generation of young people and their lifestyle, centering around the inhabitants and hangers-on at a house in the Melbourne innercity suburb of Richmond during 1978. Oversea's, pic should spark interest among young audiences, since it shapes up as akin to an antipodean "Sid & Nancy," though without some of the ex-

Writer-director Richard Lowenstein, in a complete change of pace from his gritty "Strikebound" (story of a 1930s coal miners' strike), has eschewed a formal storyline and instead presented a kaleidoscope of characters and incidents. It's immensely impressive.

Though some of these young people work, and one (Tony Helou) is vainly studying for his exams, most spend their days sleeping off the party of the night before.

Their house is cluttered with empty bottles and beer cans and other junk, and the eight or so regular residents are invariably augmented by overnight visitors or just people passing through.

Among the regulars: Sam, played by local rock star Michael Hutchence, is very effective in his first acting job; he has a regular girlfriend, Anna (Saskia Post), who has a certain amount of ambition (she'd like to be an air hostess) but has no hope for the future as long as she stays with Sam. Her tragic fate provides the impetus of the film's final

Another key character is a runaway girl (Deanna Bond) who looks to be about 15 years old. No one asks her name, or where she comes from — she just drifts into the house and becomes a resident, eventually losing her virginity to Tim (Nique Needles), an amiable layabout.

There's no formal narrative as such in the film. The structure is very loose, with Andrew de Groots' very classy camerawork a major asset.

The pristine soundtrack, which picks up all kinds of overlapping conversations as the camera roves through the house, is another plus. Indeed, technically "Dogs In Space" is just about faultless.

The large cast is filled with interesting characters, including the always reliable Chris Haywood as a visitor with a strange fetish for chainsaws, and Fiona Latham as an attractive, very radical girl who drops by to mouth the latest slogans, though without much success.

The local police, often called in by irate neighbors because of the noise, seem extremely tolerant of the goings-on, even when the youngsters move their furniture out into the narrow street and set fire to their tv set (during a transmission of 'His Girl Friday'').

With its deafening soundtrack of rock numbers, its apparently aimless structure, and its forthright depiction of a neo-hippy lifestyle, 'Dogs In Space' is not a film for everyone. It should have great appeal for youngsters, however, and the tragic ending could serve as a dire warning against the taking of harder drugs such as heroin. With this in mind, the controversial decision of Australia's film censorship board to rate the picture "R" tag, thus legally preventing anyone under the age of 18 from attending, is inexplicable. Unfortunately, this misguided decision may well effect the film's commercial chances Down Under, unless a reversal is possible (appeals are still under-

Mon., April 27, 1987

Dolls (Horror — Color)

An Empire Pictures release. Produced by Brian Yuzna. Executive producer, Charles Band. Directed by Stuart Gordon. Screenplay, Ed Naha. Camera (color), Mac Ahlberg; editor, Lee Percy; production designer, Giovanni Natalucci; supervision, Richard Band; music, Fuzzbee Morse; "Dolls" theme, Victor Spiegel; set decoration, (U.S.), Becky Block-Cummins, (Italy) Martangella Capunao; makeup, Giancarlo Del Brocco; special makeup, Mechanical & Makeup Effects Imageries Inc.; special effects, Celeste Battistelli, doll effects, John and Vivian Brunnee, Del Brocco, David Allen; costumes. Angee Beckett; sound, G.W. Brown; assistant director, Mauro Sacripanti; casting, Beth Charkham, Reviewed at Houston International Film Festival, April 18, 1987. MPAA Rating: R. Running time, 77 min

David Bower....lan Patrick Williams Rosemary

Bower.Carolyn Purdy-Gordon Judy Bower... .Carrie Lorraine Gabriel Hartwicke. .Guy Rolfe Hilary Mason Hilary Hartwicke... Isabel Prange. Bunty Bailey Enit Tilley. Cassie Stuart Stephen Lee

Houston — "Dolls," one of Stuart Gordon's latest efforts since "Re-Animator," represents a toneddown version of the child-horror genre with only marginal use of the hardcore, on-camera violence that many teens seek. While there is nothing strikingly new about "Dolls," a working combination of classic and contemporary horror film elements should make this a reasonable boxoffice draw.

Carrie Lorraine plays little Judy Bower, whose childish innocence is the only key to survival when her father and stepmother become victims of a torrential storm and take shelter in a nearby mansion.

Rosemary Bower, portrayed nicely as the more-than-wicked stepmother by Carolyn Purdy-Gordon, almost runs over a pair of rainsopped teenage hitchhikers and verbally abuses stepdaughter Judy at every opportunity. Judy's gigolostyle father gives in continually to his aging but rich partner.

Caught in one of London's perpetual rainstorms, the family seeks shelter at the house of a kindly but quirky white-haired couple whose greatest joy in life is children and unique dollmaking.

The trio is later joined by an unasuming husinessman wi the teenage punkers from the storm and together they all find temporary shelter.

The aggressive and seductive hard rocker, deftly portrayed by Bunty Bailey, is the first to encounter the wrath of the dolls-come-to-life while attempting to pilfer the family's silver collection. After a bloody fight, she is dragged through the halls with a trail of blood left behind.

Little Judy witnesses the first sign

of horror and attempts to alert the others but finds only one believer, the bumbling businessman (Stephen Lee). In one gory scene after another, the dolls fiercely attack almost everyone.

Film premiered at the Houston International Film Festival. Pank.

Thurs., Aug. 27, 1987

Travelling Avant DOLLY IN

(French — Period Drama — Color)

A UGC release of an Erato Films/JCT Prods./Sept coproduction, with the participation of Sofinergie et Sofica Creations. Executive producer, Daniel Toscan du Plantier. produced by Claude Abeille. Written and directed by Jean-Charles Tacchella. Camera (Fujicolor), Jacques Assuerus; editor, Marie-Aimee Debril; music, Raymond Allesandrini; sound, Pierre Lenoir, Alain Lachassagne, Jean-Paul Loublier; art direction, Georges Levy; assistant director, Patrick Poubel; casting, Ginette Tachella. Reviewed at the UGC Champs-Elysees cinema, Paris, Aug. 20, 1987. (In Montreal Film Festival) Running time: 144 min.

Nino Interry Fremont
DonaldSimon de la Brosse
Barbara Ann-Gisel Glass
AngeleSophie Minet
JanineLaurence Cote
GillesLuc Lavandier
VickyNathalie Mann
Uncle RogerJacques Serre
Wanda Alix de Konopka

Paris — Jean-Charles Tacchella takes a gentle stroll down memory lane in this chronicle about the film buff generation of the late '40s. Sincere and straightforward, it has some quiet charm but fails to distill the passion of the post-war movie nuts, many of whom later went on to forge the New Wave movement of criticism and cinematic language. Technically routine, "Travelling Avant" will be a hard pic to sell abroad.

Tacchella, who was one of those silver-screen-struck youths, attempts to re-create the period in a tale of two buff pals — one a penniless provincial (Thierry Fremont), the other Parisian of bourgeois stock (Simon de la Brosse) — who pool their energies in an attempt to create a cine-club (film society) in a suburban commercial hardtop.

The failure of their venture only deepens the rift between the friends: though Fremont wants to continue with the cine-club experiment, de la Brosse is already trying to weasel his way into the studios and become a filmmaker.

Also standing between them is Ann-Gisel Glass, a more realistic buff, who seeks romance in the arms of the handsome but opportunistic de la Brosse, before finding her true love match in Fremont, who finally sees the light of the real world as balancing that reflected off the film screen.

Tacchella generally passes up the temptation of using film technique to exteriorize inner feelings or simply to set the tone of fantasy obsession, though the talk and vicarious manner of his protagonists call for exactly that kind of film reference, show-off direction, so irritatingly superfluous in many of the now-classic films of the New Wave.

Most of what audience perceives of his heroes comes from what they say, not from what they do or from what the director communicates in a purely visual manner, though Tacchella does make some half-hearted attempts at illustration when one or the other of the buffs tries to recast a moment as a film director might.

(When de la Brosse watches a sexual conquest emerge stark naked from the bathroom the next morning, he imagines her as a femme fa-

tale in a Hollywood pic — exiting fully-dressed — then as a Gallic counterpart — walking in her slip.)

Tacchella takes nearly two hours with his story, far too much time for personages who finally are too shallow and not sufficiently unusual to warrant the attention. Len.

Mon., March 16, 1987

Down Twisted (Actioner — Color)

A Cannon Pictures release. Produced by Menahem Golan, Yoram Globus. Directed by Albert Pyun. Screenplay by Gene O'Neill, Noreen Tobin, from a story by Pyun. Camera (TVC Color), Walt Lloyd; editor, Dennis O'Connor; music, Berlin Game; production design, Chester Kaczenski; art director, Richard Hummel, Douglas H. Leonard; sound, Drew Kunin; costumes, Renee Johnston; assistant director, Ramiro G. Jaloma; associate producer, Karen Koch, Tom Karnowski; casting, Perry Bullington. Reviewed at Mann Westwood Theater, March 13, 1987. MPAA Rating: R. Running time: 97 min.

MaxineCare	y Lowell
RenoCharles	s Rocket
Michelle Trudi Docl	htermann
DamalasThom	Mathews
Deltoid Norbert	Weisser
SoamesLinda	Kerridge
BradyNichol	as Guest
BlakeGay	lyn Gorg

"Down Twisted" is a film in search of a style. Part "Maltese Falcon" goes to Central America and part "Romancing The Stone" with hip design and a New Wave soundtrack, pic never quite finds the tongue-in-cheek tone it's looking for or a voice of its own. Result is considerably less fun than it pretends to be and, with a nostar cast and almost zero awareness, it has little chance at the boxoffice.

Charm of classic suspensers has always been their quirky characters rather than plot and in cases like "To Have And Have Not" it was near impossible to tell exactly what was going on, but with Bogart and company it hardly mattered. One simply gave in to the thrill of being in their presence.

"Down Twisted" probably wanted to do the same thing but as written by Gene O'Neill and Noreen Tobin and directed by Albert Pyun, the characters are too thin to carry a perfectly preposterous story. Somewhere along the line the clues that give a character substance were sacrificed for a more cosmetic look.

Plot centers around an ornate religious relic ripped off from the tiny banana republic of San Lucas. Trail of double-crossings leads to the unsuspecting Maxine (Carey Lowell) who before she knows what hit her is fending off soldiers, terrorists, and armed criminals, all hunting for the holy grail.

Lowell is thrown together with soldier-of-fortune Charles Rocket and while the two snipe at each other throughout they fail to generate much warmth, let alone heat. Lowell is indeed lovely but her constant whining marks her more as a UCLA coed than a heroine to entice an audience.

For his part, Rocket wisecracks his way through various attacks but shows little aplomb. For heroes these people are simply too ordinary to stir the imagination.

Main villain is Norbert Weisser as a slick businessman who is obsessed with capturing the gold, but there is no passion or glee to his obsession. Consequently, the object of value has too little importance to give a darn about.

Assorted scoundrels along the way include the white-haired Thom Mathews and blond and beautiful

Trudi Dochtermann, each out to cut their own deal and their partner's throat. But they too are lifeless in their evilness. It's all too much like a game for them.

Plot is severely lacking in credibility with glaring gaps in continuity that allow the heroes to escape several close calls without explaining how. Dialog doesn't help much either.

Production values are adequate but overall look and staging of the film is often stiff and contrived, if not down right laughable. Jagr.

Wed., June 24, 1987

Dragnet

(Action-comedy — Color)

A Universal release of an Applied Action/ Bernie Brillstein production. Produced by David Permut, Robert K. Weiss. Executive producer, Bernie Brillstein. Directed by Tom Mankiewicz. Screenplay, Dan Aykroyd, Alan Zweibel, Tom Mankiewicz. Camera (Deluxe color), Matthew F. Leonetti; editors, Richard Halsey, William D. Gordean; music, Ira Newborn; production design, Robert F Boyle; art director, Frank Richwood; set decorator, Arthur Jeph Parker; costume designer, Tarvn DeChellis; sound mixer (Dolby), Willie Burton; assistant director, David Sosna; associate producer, Don Zepfel; casting, Lynn Stalmaster & Associates, David Rubin; Reviewed at the Directors Guild Theater, Los Angeles, June 22, 1987. MPAA Rating: PG-13. Running time: 106

Joe Friday...... Dan Aykroyd
Pep Streebek..... Tom Hanks
Reverend
Whirley..... Christopher Plummer
Captain Bill Gannon... Harry Morgan
Connie Swail..... Alexandra Paul
Emil Muzz.... Jack O'Halloran
Jane Kirkpatrick... Elizabeth Ashley
Jerry Caesar.... Dabney Coleman

"Dragnet" tries very hard to parody its 1950s tv series progenitor but winds up more innocuous than inventive. Dan Aykroyd as Jack Webb as Sgt. Joe Friday gives the role his best, but confines of the ultra-straight cop make humor difficult to sustain. Unfettered by such limits, Tom Hanks becomes the pic's winning wildcard as Friday's zany sidekick. However disappointing the whole package may be, film probably has a decent shot at some okay Summer business.

Many of the funniest moments are right up front as homage to the tv original is set up via such voice-overs as "This is the city . . . Los Angeles, Calif." Aykroyd's staccato patter takes the audience swiftly inside the p.d., where it's learned that he's the nephew and namesake of the Webb character.

Dressed in a drab off-the-rack suit with tie snug to the collar, the crew-cut Aykroyd hilariously establishes his stern and no-nonsense persona. Since his partner has exited the force to begin operating a goat farm, Friday is teamed with a new and unlikely colleague — one Pep Streebek (Tom Hanks).

Streebek's freewheeling style — ranging from hip clothes to health food to after-hours socializing choices — offends every rockribbed precept of Friday's. Pairing does give the film a vitality that is lacking in the storyline

lacking in the storyline.

Inevitably, Friday and Streebek must pursue a case. It is here that the pic starts unraveling rapidly — largely due to exaggerated caricatures that recall television's "Batman" series and the Big Screen's "Superman" outings. Christopher Plummer is the kinkiest of the lot as televangelist Reverend Whirley. He considers L.A. the "current capital of depravity," heads up MAMA (Moral Advanced Movement of America) but secretly leads a cultist outfit called the PAGANs (People

Against Goodness and Normalcy).

Whirley is somehow allied with Police Commissioner Jane Kirkpatrick (Elizabeth Ashley) and is purportedly at odds with "Bait" sex magazine kingpin Jerry Caesar (Dabney Coleman). Relying primarily on a speech impediment for his comic device, Coleman falls short of his usual topnotch performances. Role largely becomes the excuse for gratuitous t&a as Caesar's "Baitmates" populate his secluded mansion.

Friday and Streebek plunge into the bizarre goings-on by posing undercover as street freaks. This desperate bid to get really wacky leads duo to a PAGANs' ritual where they manage to free "the virgin Connie Swail of Orange County" (Alexandra Paul) just in the nick of time. Grandiose setting for the rescue contains elements of "Ghostbusters" but is so ludicrous that it actually ends up as the film's low point.

Even as pic is bottoming out, love blossoms for Friday and Ms. Swail in story's biggest break with the nowoman-on-the-scene Dragnet lore. Following events do humanize and loosen up the Aykroyd-Webb character somewhat. Nonetheless it is still possible for Streebek to refer to his partner as "generally less fun to be around than anyone I've ever met."

Challenge overall was to allow Friday to be just that way without making him so tragically sincere that he is just plain boring. To liven him up with outlandish costuming, mindless car chases and explosive confrontations was not the answer.

Script didn't make enough of the opportunities for interplay that used to be a mainstay between Webb and Harry Morgan, who reprises the part here in a nice touch that finds him elevated to captain.

With a 1980's perspective, the Webb-Morgan exchanges look very campy — as perhaps they did somewhat at the time. More of that here between Aykroyd and Hanks — and less concern for stupefying action — could have provided the vital connecting links between past and present. In any case, one hopes that the two comedic actors will get to combine talents theatrically again.

Fri., March 20, 1987

Dr. Sun Yatsen (Chinese — Color — Widescreen)

A Pearl River Film Studio production. Directed by Sing Yinnan. Screenplay, He Mengfan, Zhang Lei. Camera (color, widescreen), Wang Hengli, Hou Yong. No other credits available. Reviewed at the Los Feliz Theater (AFI Fest), L.A., March 18, 1987. No MPAA rating. Running time: 109

mın. Dr. Sun Yatsen Liu Wenzhi

"Dr. Sun Yatsen" is an ultrapolite, whitewashed biopic of the grandfather of the Chinese revolution. As decorous as a wax museum and photographed as if the subjects were posing for official portraits, film is a superproduction of massive proportions and would have cost tens of millions if made in the West. But there is little real history to be learned here, and result will only please those satisfied by spectacle and handsome landscapes.

Script's structure becomes both laughable and monotonous after awhile, as the storytelling alternates between important formal occasions, such as the signing of documents, establishment of political parties, foundation of the Chinese Republic and the like, and stupen-

dous battles, in which hordes of soldiers sweep across the screen to no impact, since it's impossible to know who's who.

The dignified politician's tale begins before the turn of the century, follows his assorted failed efforts to overthrow the Manchus, his exile in Japan and establishment of the Chinese Alliance Party, which brought together the various revolutionary factions, the formation of the tenuous Republic in 1912 and his bowing out of the scene in the 1920s, shortly before his death, because he is "tired."

Dr. Sun Yatsen is almost invariably shown striding purposefully through the chaotic proceedings wearing expensive formal Western clothes, and never is there a mention of anything that, from the communist perspective, would be considered controversial, such as his overwhelming involvement for both parties, but for 90 minutes, nothing exciting or intimate is seen to pass between them. Myth of the Latin lover takes a beating here.

Actor Conway's directorial debut is not overly promising, and characters, from the leads down to the 'charming' eccentrics who populate the tenement building, wear out their welcome long before fade-out.

Wed., Dec. 24, 1986

Duet For One (Drama — Color)

A Cannon Films release. Produced by Menahem Golan, Yoram Globus, Directed by Andrei Konchalovsky. Screenplay, Tom Kempinski, Jeremy Lipp and Konchalovsky, based on the play by Kempinski. Camera (Rank Film Labs Color), Alex Thomson; orchestration, Michael Linn; soloist, Nigel Kennedy: production design, John Graysmark; set decorator, Peter Young; art director, Reg Bream, Steve Cooper; sound (Dolby stereo). David Crozier; costumes, Evange line Harrison; assistant director, David Tringham; associate producer, Michael J. Kagan; casting, Noel Davis, Jeremy Zimmerman. Reviewed at Cannon screening room, December 18, 1986. MPAA Rating: R. Running time: 107 min.

Stephanie Anderson ... Julie Andrews
David Cornwallis ... Alan Bates
Dr. Louis Feldman ... Max Von Sydow
Constantine Kassanis .. Rupert Everett
Sonia Randvich .. Margaret Courtenay
Penny Smallwood .. Cathryn Harrison
Leonid Lefimov ... Sigfrit Steiner
Totter ... Liam Neeson
Anya ... Macha Meril

The story of a world-class violinist who contracts multiple sclerosis and is forced to abandon her career does not seem like the most promising material for the bigscreen. But as long as "Duet For One" stays personal and specific, it is a moving portrait of a life in turmoil. Unfortunately, when director Andrei Konchalovsky shoots for big statements, film degenerates into saccharine platitudes and even Julie Andrews' gritty performance as the striken artist can't save it. Still, Cannon could have some luck selling this one as a quality item.

First half of the film is clearly stronger as Konchalovsky draws the viewer into the richly textured and fascinating world of major league music. At the top of her craft and heralded as one of the greats, it's no wonder that Andrews' Stephanie Anderson doesn't want to give it up.

She has studied since childhood to get where she is and music defines her life. Married to conductor/composer David Cornwallis (Alan Bates), the couple have a comfortably elegant house in London that just reeks with culture thanks to John Graysmark's inviting production design and Alex Thompson's warm cinematography.

When Andrews leaves her dressing room for a performance at the Royal Albert Hall, it's a glamorous look at a life that's hard to resist. But it's also a life that's coming to an end and she must adjust to the reality of her illness, which she learns about in the first five minutes of the film.

Initially, the film is not really about illness but the relationship of an artist to her art. What it means to perform is intensified because it's something that's ending.

Film is full of lovely musical interludes, both in concert and practice, and Andrews actually looks credible stroking her violin. (Nigel Kennedy plays the solos, Michael Linn arranged the music). At the same time, Stephanie approaches her predicament in a pragmatic, overly rational manner as she plans her recording schedule and the remaining days of her career.

In addition to the suggestion of a story, first half of the film offers an array of eccentric characters swirling around the violinist's life. As the philandering husband, Bates is a complex and restless soul afraid to face his own failings. Until he callously runs off with his secretary, Bates' vulnerability and physical deterioration bring an added and welcome dimension to the film.

Also filling out the picture is Sigfrit Steiner as Andrews' old and venerable accompanist and friend. He's a warming old world presence in the center of the stormy scene.

Rupert Everett plays Constantine Kassanis, a punk prima donna of a violinist who is Andrews' best student. As a character he's a bit hard to swallow, but amusing to watch nonetheless.

But Bates leaves, Steiner dies and Everett goes to Las Vegas to make money. Now with the people and music that have anchored her life for so long gone, both Stephanie and the film haven't a clue where to go and the film gets into philosophical deep water. Stripped down to the bare essentials, film focuses on the "big questions" of life and death and becomes about the illness

To confront her demise, Andrews goes into analysis and it is here the film becomes most static and inflated. As her analyst, Max Von Sydow is a cold Freudian with a soft heart who seems to have just stepped off the bus from Vienna. Add "Duet To One" to the long list of films that present therapy with the solemnity of a summit confer-

Probably by accident, one of the real-life fears that people have about analysis occurs here. Stephanie, so winning and likable in the early going despite her adversity, loses her personality

She is no longer in control of what she's doing and takes up with a local junk dealer (Liam Neeson) and tries to kill herself. Things just seem to happen to her and the final coda, one year later, is a feeble attempt at tying it all together.

Screenplay was adapted by Tom Kempinski, Jeremy Kemp and Konchalovsky from Kempinski's twoperson stage play, and, in the end, it stretches too far for metaphor and meaning.

Mon., July 13, 1987

Tandem

DUO

(French — Comedy — Color)

An AMLF release of a Cinea/Hachette Premiere/Films A2 coproduction. Produced by Philippe Carcassonne, Rene Cleitman. Directed by Patrice Leconte. Screenplay, Leconte, Patrick Dewolf, Camera (Eastmancolor), Denis Lenoir, editor, Joelle Hache: sound, Alain Curvelier, Dominique Henne quin; art director, Ivan Maussion; music, François Bernheim; assistant director, Etienne Dhaene; production manager, Frederic Sauvagnac. Reviewed at the Marignan-Concorde Cinema, Paris, June 28, 1987. Running time: 92 min.

Gerard Jugnot Mortez Jean Rochefort Sylvie Granotier Bookseller Julie Jezequel Waitress. Jean-Claude Dreyfus Councillor

Paris - Patrice Leconte, who has directed a number of mostly indifferent commercial comedies with actors usually recruited from the cafe-theater milieu, breaks away from his routine anonymity with "Tandem," a male-bonding road comedy starring Gerard Jugnot and Jean Rochefort, Leconte directs with an alertness and feeling for tone and atmosphere that weren't evident in previous pictures.

Rochefort plays the veteran producer-host of a long-running itinerant radio quiz show that he broadcasts from a different provincial town each day. On the road with him is his faithful sidekick Jugnot, who serves as chauffeur. secretary, sound man, confident and male nurse.

The script by Leconte and Patrick Dewolf describes their last lap together, during which Jugnot intercepts a message from the home station that the show is being cancelled because of diminishing ratings. Terrified that the news will be a fatal blow to his boss, Jugnot tries to keep him in the dark as long as

Despite some inevitable platitudes about loneliness and camaraderie and a happy ending that strikes a false note, "Tandem" is often fresh, funny-sad and maliciously ironic in its look at the mediocrity of success and its ignominious side-effects.

The Rochefort-Jugnot tandem, of course, is pic's main trump, with former, looking like an aging gigolo, limning a pathetically funny portrait of a straw man personality trying to hold on to his tinsel dignity and backwater renown.

Jugnot, who has donned a wig and shaved his moustache to look a bit younger, confirms the nuanced dramatic skill he displayed in his previous roles as he limns Rochefort's bedeviled drudge and alter ego.

Tech credits are fine.

Wed., Dec. 24, 1986

Eat And Run

(Comedy — Color)

A New World Pictures release of a BFD Prods. production. Produced by Jack Briggs. Directed by Christopher Hart. Screenplay, Stan Hart, Christopher Hart; camera (DuArt color), Dyanna Taylor; editor, Pamela S. Arnold; music, Donald Pippin; sound, Felipe Borrero; art direction, Mark Selemon; production manager, Briggs; assistant director, Gary Marcus; associate producer, Tom Field. Reviewed at Magno Preview 9 screening room, N.Y., Dec. 22, 1986. MPAA Rating: R. Running time: 90 min.

Mickey McSorely . . . Ron Silver

Cheryl Cohen . . . Sharon Schlarth Murray Creature. .R.L. Ryan Police captain John F. Fleming Sorely McSorely Also with: Robert Silver, Mimi Cecchini Tony Moundroukas, Frank Nastasi, Peter Waldren, Gabriel Barre, Ruth Jaroslow, George Peter Ryan, Lou Criscuolo, Tim Mardirosian, Louis Turenne,

New York — "Eat And Run" is a one-joke horror spoof that plays like a "Saturday Night Live" tv sketch stretched out to 90 minutes. Filmed as "Mangia" two Summers ago in Manhattan, New World pickup opened in Chicago last October and is headed mainly

for midnight bookings.

Ron Silver toplines as a police detective given to narrating out loud his misadventures in 1940s toughguy fashion, a habit picked up from his dad (Derek Murcott). He's on a missing persons case, the result of a tubby alien (R.L. Ryan) landing in New Jersey and eating up Italian Americans because the first person he meets (and eats) is Italian, making him addicted to "Italian food."

Silver links up romantically with judge (Sharon Schlarth) who despite being named Cohen turns out to be Italian. She improbably falls in love with the alien, but Silver saves the day, only to end up in hot water himself in a ridiculous unsatisfying ending.

Chatty film is directed by newcomer Christopher Hart (who scripted with his dad, Stan Hart) in the manner of a radio play; static visuals present a pleasant but unatmospheric background to verbal humor. High points are two welldelivered (by Silver and cohorts) variations on Danny Kaye's patented, fast-paced alliteration routines. though without Kaye's rhythm or singing attributes. Otherwise, pic is deadly dull, hammering its gag firmly into the ground via repeti-

With no special effects, gore or sexploitation, film seems like a Grated approach with dirty words inserted to get an R rating.

Mon., Jan. 26, 1987

84 Charing Cross Road (Drama — British — Color)

A Columbia release of a Brooksfilm production. Produced by Geoffrey Helman. Executive producer, Mel Brooks. Directed by David Jones Screenplay, Hugh Whitemore, based on the book by Helene Hanff, originally adapted for the stage by James Roose-Evans. Stars Anne Bancroft, An thony Hopkins. Camera (Rank & T.V.C color), Brian West; editor, Chris Wimble; music, George Fenton; production design, Eileen Diss (London), Edward Pisoni (N.Y.): costume design, Jane Greenwood (N.Y.), Lindy Hemming (London); sound, Gary Alper (N.Y.), David John (London); assistant directors, Mark McGann (N.Y.), Jake Wright (London); associate producers, Randy Auer bach, Jo Lustig; casting, Judy Courtney D.L. Newton (N.Y.), Marilyn Johnson (London). Reviewed at the U.S. Film Festival. Park City, Jan. 23, 1987. MPAA Rating: PG. Running time: 97 min.

Helen Hannff..... .Anne Bancroft Frank Doel Anthony Hopkins Nora DoelJudi Dench Maxine Bellamy George Martin. Maurice Denham Cecily Farr. . Eleanor David Mercedes Ruehl Brian Daniel Cerroll Megan Wells. .Wendy Morgan Bill Humphries J. Smith-Cameron . Tom Isbell

Park City, Utah - An uncommonly and sweetly civilized adult romance between two transatlantic correspondents who never meet, "84 Charing Cross Road" is an appealing film on several counts, one of the most notable being Anne Bancroft's fantastic performance in the leading role. Genuinely moving on numerous occasions, this Brooksfilms production does not fit snugly into any of the conventional marketing niches, but cast and quality give Columbia enough to work with to open and build the film intelligently with urban and older audiences.

Helen Hanff's slim volume of letters between herself and a dignified antiquarian bookseller in London would not seem to represent the most promising material for a popular feature film, although book has already appeared in a BBC-TV adaptation and as a stage play in London and New York.

Dramatist Hugh Whitemore, who penned the BBC version in 1975. has stuck closely to the content of the original letters, which began in 1949 as formal requests by the New Yorker Hanff for old books and grew over a 20-year period into a warm, loving exchange of missives and gifts between her and much of the staff of the bookshop of Marks

Filling this out visually are scenes from the lives of both Hanff and her principal correspondent, the prim, undemonstrative Frank Doel. With all the efficiency possible, Doel manages to fill the most esotoric and obscure request for old volumes, which are treasured above all else by the spinsterish but vibrant New Yorker.

With food rationing keeping the English on limited diets during the post-war period. Hanff sends her friends all manner of canned foods. Touched by her generosity, the quietly eccentric bookstore staff begins pleading with Hanff, the ultimate Anglophile, to finally come to England, but one thing and another always prevent it until it is too late.

Built on a basis of mutually held taste, knowledge interests and consideration, the bond between Hanff and Doel becomes a form of pure love, which is why the film is so touching in spots. Doel has his wife and two girls in London, and Hanff has her increasingly more successful television writing career in New York, but their relationship is unique and untouchable so much so that Doel's wife finally admits that she felt jealous of it.

Although well balanced between events on both sides of the pond, story suffers from an imbalance between the active, initiating Hanff, who occasionally addresses the camera directly, and the relatively passive, inexpressive Doel.

At the end, the man's humor and high intelligence are described, but these traits are never revealed; agreeable and very recognizable as a type, and quite perfectly embodied by Anthony Hopkins, one never gets beneath his surface to know what he may be thinking.

On the other hand, Anne Bancroft brings Helen Hanff alive in all her dimensions, in the process creating one of her most memorable characterizations. The voluble, opinionated Manhattanite on the one hand, she is also very alone with her books. cigarettes and booze. A significant part of her emotional life is tied up with her love of London and literature, which are inextricably linked with Doel. Banncroft has a great deal of fun with the role, but catches the viewer by the throat with it as well.

Director David Jones, who did such a fine job with the screen version of 'Betrayal," is both tactful and precise in his work here. With very delicate material, he has managed to plant numerous emotional depth-charges that detonate with increasing power along the way. Clearly a first-rate talent, Jones' name-would be welcome on films more frequently than has been

Film is loaded with an exceptional number of locations that are used for very brief sequences. Production designers Eileen Diss and Edward Pisoni, as well as costume designers Jane Greenwood and Lindy Hemming, have responded expertly to the challenge of subtly revealing the changes in London and New York over a period of two decades, and work of other behindthe-scene craftspeople is thoroughly

A nagging frustration with the story of Hanff's utter inability to just pick herself up and get over to England. An array of excuses is presented, but the bottom line is that it's not prohibitively expensive to make the trip regardless of economic station, and since she would have had a place to stay, she could have avoided those costly London hotels. But that's the way it was, which makes the tale just that much

Thurs., Jan. 15, 1987

Emmanuelle 5 (French — Color)

AAA release of an AS production. Produced by Alain Siritzky. Directed by Walerian Borowezyk. Screenplay, Borowezyk and Alex Cunningham, based on an original idea by Emanuelle Arsan. Camera (color), Max Montheillet; editor, Franck Mathieu; sound, Jean-Claude Reboul; music, Pierre Bachelet; theme song performed by Sandy Stevenson; art director, Alain Faure Reviewed at the Marignan-Concorde cine ma, Paris, Jan. 10, 1987. Running time 78

Emmanuelle . . . Monique Gabrielle Charles Foster . Dana Burns Westberg . Yaseen Khan

Paris — Another yawner like this one and "Emmanuelle" could be ready for boxoffice beddy-bye. "Emmanuelle 5" should still turn a profitable trick in its usual markets, but even the most heavybreathing followers may start to notice the series is petering out.

The sex symbol, who has reaped a commercial bonanza in four previous film installments in the past dozen years, seems now to be coasting lazily on its reputation, the usual repertoire of soft core copulations and the same bored post synchronized moans of pleasure. Still, producer Alain Siritzky has announced a ty miniseries spinoff for 1987.

Emmanuelle is now two actresses removed form her original screen performer, Sylvia Kristel, who was succeeded by Mia Nygren in "Emmanuelle 4." Now it's the turn of 23-year-old Monique Gabrielle, an attractive French-born (but California-raised) lass who's had some dance and legit experience, but nothing to prepare her for what is now a walk-through/lie-through role of no personal definition or erotic flavor.

She's as quickly forgettable as everything else in this flabbily perfunctory affair, in which the heroine creates a scandal at the Cannes Film Festival as star of a new sex opus, before she falls into the virile arms of a mysterious billionnaire industrialist and the clutches of an Eastern despot who wants to add her to his harem.

Number Five was ineptly written and directed by none other than Walerian Borowczyk, who once upon a time enjoyed international critical esteem and festival honors for his animation films and live-action erotic features, of which "Emmanuelle 5" seems the ultimate (unconscious) parody.

Wed., May 13, 1987

The Emperor's **New Clothes**

(U.S.-Israeli — Color)

A Cannon Films release of a Golan-Globus production. Produced by Menahem Golan, Yoram Globus. Executive producer, Itzik Kol. Directed by David Irving. Stars Sid Caesar, Clive Revill, Robert Morse, Screenplay, Anna Mathias, Len Talan, David Irving from a story by Hans Christian Andersen. Camera (color), David Gurfinkel; editor, Tova Neeman; music, David Kriveshei; production design, Marek Dobrowlski; art director, Avi Avivi; costumes, Buki Shieff; sound, Eli Yarkoni; associate producer. Patricia Ruben; second-unit camera, Nicho Leon. Reviewed at Cannes Film Festival (Market), May 9, 1987. Running time: 80 mins

Emperor Sid Caesar
Henry Robert Morse
Nicholas Jason Carter
Gilda Lysette Anthony
Prime Minister Clive Revill
Duke Julian Joy Chagrin
Sergeant Eli Gorenstein
Wenceslas Israel Gurion
Christine Susan Berlin-Irving

Cannes — Sid Caesar, embroidering on material similar to that of his early-days tv series, "Your Show Of Shows," is the only tailored turn in "The Emperor's New Clothes." His Emperor, spouting foreign-language jibberish and nervous delivery, gives the only spark. Even that's all too brief in an otherwise lifeless, costumed pic intended for kiddies. They're too smart to fall for this one.

Castle sets look as if they're made of cheap cardboard; a trunk of jewels looks as if it's crammed with stale chopped egg salad topped by pimento and the voices of many performers throughout and of some native English speakers, specially at the beginning, are obviously and poorly dubbed.

Pic appears to be a musical; a few original but derivative songs are sung and then abandoned quickly. David Gurfinkel's camera work is flat, as is the script. Costumes are lackluster and also look cheap.

David Irving's direction is dull. Like the emperor's new clothes themselves, there isn't anything here. Theatrical possibilities, except in very undemanding locales, seem nil as does much life on cable or video. Kids 10 years and up are unlikely and those from three to nine have better things to do. Like stay home and read the original story.

Adil.

Thurs., April 2, 1987

Empire State (British — Color)

A Virgin/Miracle release of a Team Pictures production. Produced by Norma Hayman. Executive producer, Mark Ayres. Directed by Ron Peck. Screenplay, Ron Peck and Mark Ayres; camera (Eastmancolor), Tony Imi; editor, Chris Kelly; music, various artists; production design, Adrian Smith; art director, Val Wolstenholme; sound, Ken Weston; costumes, William Peirce; casting, Sheila Trezise. Reviewed at Century Preview theater, London, March 16, 1987. Running time: 104 min.

Marion Cathryn Harrison
Pete Jason Hoganson
Cheryl Elizabeth Hickling
Danny Jamie Foreman
Suan Emily Bolton
Paul Ian Sears
Chuck Martin Landau
Richard Lorcan Cranitch
Frank Ray McAnally

London — "Empire State" is a London-set thriller full of good ideas, some that work but more that don't. It will need to be handled with care for impact offshore. Astute direction and strong soundtrack are saving graces.

Pic is a lowbudget affair but shot to look as glitzy and stylish as possible. Main problem lies with the script by director Ron Peck and executive producer Mark Ayres, which could have used polishing and perhaps a firmer hand, and overly intense performances by some youngblood British actors.

Peck has tried to update the U.S. film noir gangster pix with a transplant to London's East End, bringing together vying villains, fixed boxing matches, big deals, night clubs, crusading reporters, beautiful molls and naive outsiders. Unfortunately the canvas is too big for the tools Peck has at hand.

Story is complex with plenty of subplots, but the majority of the action is at the Empire State, a nightclub owned by Frank (Ray McAnally), which young male prostitute-turned-gangster Paul (Ian Sears) wants to take over.

The takeover bid depends on a Yank realtor (a bemused performance by Martin Landau) buying into a massive property-development scheme. He pulls out of the deal and a lot of people get upset, but since none of the characters are particularly likable, audiences aren't going to care very much.

"Empire State" is shot pop-

"Empire State" is shot poppromo style, with plenty of nods to the Yank influences (the Sears character drives a 1950 Pontiac) and works best inside the claustrophobic club, where much of the trite dialog is drowned by the music

Lensing by Tony Imi is firstrate, and production designer Adrian Smith has made good use of limited resources to create the nightclub set

Of the acting, Lee Drysdale is impressive as a genial "rent-boy" (homosexual prostitute) whose only ambition is to raise enough money to escape to the U.S., while Ray McAnally is excellent, as usual, as the club owner.

"Empire State" is almost a yuppy gangster film. A little short on action, perhaps a bit too strong on the language, and with plenty of homosexual undertones.

Adam.

Wed., March 4, 1987

End Of The Line TERMINUS

(French-West German - Color)

AAA release, Hemdale Releasing (U.S.) of a CAT Production/Films du Cheval de Fer/Initial Groupe/CLB Films/Films A2 coproduction. Executive producers, Anne Francois, Pierre-William Glenn. Produced by Anne Francois. Directed by Glenn. Screenplay, Glenn, Patrice Duvic, from an original story by Alain Gillot. Camera (Fujicolor), Jean-Claude Vicquery; sound Michel Desrois; editor, Thierry Derocles; music, David Cunningham; songs, Stan Ridgway; artistic director, Alain Challier; special effects, Jacques and Frederic Gastineau; costumes, Jacqueline Moreau; makeup, Muriel Baurens; stunt coordinator, Michel Norman; assistant director. Patrick Halpine; second unit director. Patrick Taulere. Reviewed at UGC Normandie Theater, Paris, Feb. 10, 1987. Running time:

GusKaren Allen
Stump
(Manchot)Johnny Hallyday
Doctor/Monsieur/"Little Brother"
driverJurgen Prochnow
MatiGabriel Damon
PrincessJulie Glenn
Voice of
118.4

Also with: Dieter Schidor, Janos Kulka, Dominique Valera, Jean-Luc Montama, Ray Montama, Bruno Ciarrochi, David Jalil, Andre Nocquet.

(French-track version)

Paris — There's no tiger in the tank of "End Of The Line" (Terminus), a low-octane, \$6,000,000-plus sci-fi road actioner starring America's Karen Allen, French pop idol Johnny Hallyday and West Germany's Jurgen Prochnow. Despite Hallyday's popularity on home turf, pic hit a stone wall at wickets here, and seems fated to limited mileage beyond European markets.

Actors are routed by an unimaginative script overloaded with videogame plotting and hi-tech cliches, and potholed direction by Pierre-William Glenn, formerly one of France's top-flight cinematographers.

Shot in both English and Frenchtrack versions, this poor cousin of Mad Max and other road-burning boxoffice antiheros was presold for Stateside theatrical release by Hemdale Releasing, and is due for distribution in the U.K., Australia and Scandinavia by 20th Century Fox International.

Screenplay by Glenn and Patrice Duvic imagines a futuristic international sport that is something of a cross between American football and European motor rally.

Karen Allen is the unlikely contender at the wheel of a computerguided truck, called Monster, which has been programmed at the terminal point by a super-intelligent boy (Gabriel Damon). Allen's challenge is to reach the terminus while dodging a series of small vehicles bent on intercepting Monster.

When an apparent computer malfunction leads Monster astray into uncharted territory peopled by leather hoods who do not recognize the games, Allen is taken prisoner and tortured.

Allen dies in a local infirmary, but not before bequeathing her mission to Hallyday, a one-time truck driver, himself tortured and imprisoned, with whom Allen had spent a night in jail. Though he makes no move to come to the woman's aid, Hallyday nonetheless accepts the relay in the company of an intuitive local youngster (played by Julie Glenn, the director's daughter).

Making the fatal mistake of killing off one of its stars some 40 minutes into the picture, film compounds its errors with a convoluted plot in which Hallyday's sole interlocutor is the computer, a distant relation of Stanley Kubrick's HAL, further humanized here by a speaker system in form of a human mouth. Awful as the laconic exchanges between Allen and Hallyday are, the subsequent dialogs between man and machine, as the pursuing vehicles close in on them, are hilariously inane.

Even worse are the goings-on at "Terminus," a subterranean mountain conclave where the wonderboy's monitoring of the games is controlled by a mysterious "Doctor" (Jurgen Prochnow) and an even stranger mad scientist who is using the sport as a decoy for an illegal foetus traffic.

Though steeped in Anglo-Saxon movie conventions, "End Of The Line" is overloaded with pretentious philosophical baggage and mythical allusions that betray the discomfort of the filmmakers with a straightforward lowbrow narrative and slow story's pace to a soporific crawl.

In Glenn, the cinema has lost a lenser but has not gained a film-maker.

Sporting white hair and an artificial hand (that serves no dramatic purpose), Hallyday is still a promising screen presence in search of a role and a director. Prochnow is bland in multiple roles, including that of the driver of the foetus-smuggling truck who has a climactic showdown with Hallyday.

Production design and special effects are mostly derivative but are professionally polished. Other credits are adequate.

Len.

Fri., May 22, 1987

Enemy Territory (Action thriller — Color)

An Empire Pictures release of a Millennial production. Produced by Cynthia DePaula, Tim Kincaid. Executive producer, Charles Band. Directed by Peter Manoogian. Screenplay, Stuart M. Kaminsky, Bobby Liddell, from Kaminsky's story. Camera (Precision Color), Ernest Dickerson; editor, Peter Teschner; music, Sam Winans, Richard Koz Kosinski; sound (Ultra-Stereo), Mik Cribben;

visual consultant, Ruth Lounsbury; production design, Medusa Studios, Marina Zurkow; art direction, Joanna Basinger; assistant director, Michael Spero; production manager, Joe Derrig; special makeup effects supervisor, John Bisson; stunt coordinator, Dave Copeland; pyrotechnic special effects, Matt Vogel; second-unit camera, Robert Ebinger; casting, Judy Henderson, Alycia Amuller, Anthony Barnao; associate producer, Hope Perello. Reviewed at Cannes Film Festival (market), May 14, 1987. MPAA Rating: R. Running time: 90 min.

Barry	Ray Parker Jr.
Elva Briggs	
The Count	Tony Todd
Toni Briggs	Stacey Dash
Chet	Deon Richmond
Barton	
Mr. Beckhorne	

Cannes — Though it deals in the down-to-Earth subject of urban violence, Empire's "Enemy Territory" is a very commercial picture that is far-fetched enough to almost qualify for the fantasy genre with which Charles Band's company is normally associated. Violent pic benefits considerably from a very affective film starring debut for singer Ray Parker Jr.

As its title suggests, pic's plotline is another variant on the surefire "behind enemy lines" structure previously used for Walter Hill's gang trailblazer "The Warriors."

Gary Frank portrays a meek young insurance agent sent after hours by his unscrupulous superior (Charles Randall) to a ghetto project apartment house to get Frances Foster to sign and pay for her \$100,000 insurance policy.

Alimony-ridden and not closing many clients lately, Frank is desperate for the commission and even agrees to giving Randall a big kickback on the deal.

A young white man and naive in the extreme, Frank immediately incurs the wrath of a young black in the project hallway. While Frank is getting Foster to sign and receiving her \$6000 premium in cold cash, the youth fetches his building gang, the Vampires, and all hell breaks loose

After the Vampires shoot down the black security guard who tries to protect the helpless Frank, a good samaritan telephone company workman (Ray Parker Jr.) takes Frank under his wing. The rest of the picture is their extremely tense attempt to survive until daybreak as the entire building is under siege by the Vampires.

Director Peter Manoogian executes many a vivid action scene, utlizing the claustrophobic premise to harrowing advantage. Pic's main drawback is that despite the physical realism of the production, lensed in New York City, the script relies upon far too many, lucky breaks and narrow escapes for the heroes to be believable. Target audience has to suspend all disbelief and then wallow in the carefully justified ultraviolence.

Gary Frank is terrific as the white man placed in an untenable situation and thoroughly unprepared to cope; his transition to bloodthirsty survivalist is very well-handled.

Ray Parker Jr. exudes personality, acts well and wins and maintains audience sympathy with ease; after this baptism he is clearly ready for the big time on screen (already having scored a bullseye as the "Ghostbusters" theme singer).

In suppoort, Jan-Michael Vincent has a brief but showy role as an embittered Vietnam War vet in a wheelchair waging his own war in the building, while Tony Todd is frightening as the nihilistic leader of the gang.

As the old lady who definitely needs that big insurance policy, Frances Foster is solid, later getting big laughs when she takes over Vincent's machinegun post. Stacey Dash is very sexy (resembling Rae Dawn Chong) and adapt at physical action as Foster's resourceful niece. Tech credits are proficient. Lor.

Tues., May 26, 1987

Ernest Goes To Camp (Comedy — Color)

A Buena Vista release of a Touchstone Pictures production in association with Silver Screen Partners III. Produced by Stacy Williams. Directed by John R. Cherry III. Screenplay, Cherry and Coke Sams. Camera (DeLuxe Color), Harry Mathias, Jim May; music, Shane Keister; executive producers, Elmo Williams, Martin Erlichman; art director, Kathy Emily Cherry; editor, Marshall Harvey; casting, Hank McCann; Rich Schirmer. Reviewed at the Pacific Paramount Theater, Hollywood, May 22, 1987. MPAA Rating: PG. Running time: 93 min.

Emest P. Women	Jim varney
Nurse St. Cloud	Victoria Racimo
Sherman Krader	John Vernon
Indian Chief	Iron Eyes Cody
Bronk Stinson	Lyle Alzado
Jake	Gailard Sartain
Eddy	Daniel Butler
Moustafa Hakeem-Jo	nes Hakeem
	Abdul-Samad
Bobby Wayne	Patrick Day
Crutchfield	Scott Menville
Bubba Vargas	Jacob Vargas

Jim Varney's creation of Ernest P. Worrell, honed through years of tv commercials, has become a sort of poor man's Pee-wee Herman: a living cartoon of an obnoxious, know-it-all simpleton that people either find funny, or don't. Unfortunately, in his first film, Varney's Ernest loses his edge and spends most of the time being merely a simpleton. Bad dialog and unimaginative scripting (with the exception of turtle paratroopers in the climactic scene), along with too-liberal doses of comic-book violence, quickly drag the film down. Bottom-line prospects are up in the air, but film has a shot at bringing in significant prepubescent audience.

Ernest's lifelong goal has been to become counselor at Kamp Kikakee, but he's relegated to janitorial duties, where his frequent mishaps are documented in several unfunny physical humor gags.

Camp has religious, historical significance for an Indian chief (Iron Eyes Cody), who owns the land, and granddaughter (Victoria Racimo, doing a lot with a little), who works as camp nurse.

White-bread camp atmosphere is violated by the presence of six kids from reform school (who collectively look about as sinister as "Our Gang") who are brought to camp as part of a second-chance program.

Accident to one of the counselors leaves crew short handed, so they assign Ernest to counsel the misfits. He and the little hoods never get a chance to show any on-screen chemistry, because of the weak dialog (how many 10-year-old delinquents use the term "lead-pipe cinch" these days?).

Only Hakeem Abdul-Samad, as Moustafa, the one kid who likes Ernest, gets to show any personality. The rest must lamely read dumb lines and act like certain adults think kids act.

Things come to a head when a greedy land developer dupes Ernest into convincing the Indian chief to sign away rights to the land, forcing the camp to close. This brings on the deciding fight and underscores one of the film's implicit messages (hey kids, the best way to solve a disagreement is arson).

While tech credits are mostly OK, and Shane Keister's score particularly appropriate, film never recaptures the persistent wackiness of Ernest's tv commercial. Fault is not Varney's, even Ernest is no match for a bad screenplay. Camb.

Fri., April 24, 1987

Extreme Prejudice (Action adventure — Color)

A Tri-Star Pictures release of a Carolco Pictures Inc. film. Produced by Buzz Feitshans. Exec producers, Mario Kassar, Andrew Vajna. Directed by Walter Hill. Screenplay, Deric Washburn and Harry Kleiner from a story by John Milius and Fred Rexer. Camera (Technicolor), Matthew F. Leonetti; editor, Freeman Davies; music, Jerry Goldsmith; production designer, Albert Heschong; art director, Joseph C. Nemec III; set designer, Beverli Eagan; costumes, Dan Moore; sound mixer (Dolby), Richard Bryce Goodman; special effects, Tom Fisher; assistant director, Dirk Petersmann; associate producer, Mae Woods; casting, Judith Holstra, Marcia Ross. Reviewed at Mann's Chinese Theater, Hollywood, California, April 22, 1987. MPAA rating: R Running time: 104 min.

"Extreme Prejudice" is an amusing concoction that is frequently offbeat and at times compelling. Taut direction and editing prevail despite overstaged hyper-violence that is so gratuitous to be farcical. Actioner should strike a chord with a certain crowd domestically and offshore, with some decent payback at the boxoffice.

Story pivots on the adversarial relationship between small town Texas Ranger Nick Nolte and drug kingpin Powers Boothe. Originally childhood friends, they are now on opposite sides of the law and the U.S.-Mexican border.

Presented as a severe and humorless straight arrow, Nolte's character is not easy to like but his acting nonetheless intrigues. Freewheeling and provocative, Boothe is the film's wild card as director Walter Hill signals right off that he's going to have some fun here.

Intro of Boothe shows this cocaine smuggling bad guy attired in pure white suit and brim as he fondles a scorpion before squeezing it to death. Thunderous score by Jerry Goldsmith, whose work is apropos throughout, heightens the whimsical touch.

Best aspect of the plot is involvement of a commando unit of U.S. military men operating under deep cover. Led by Michael Ironside, this squad employs the latest high tech gadgetry and weapons as they slip into town on a mission involving Boothe's drug-related cash and records. Their activity and connections are deftly revealed in a way that keeps one fascinated regardless of the Nolte-Boothe conflict.

Presence early on of Rip Torn as the local sheriff adds a colorful touch since portrayal is of such full dimension. His swift dispatch surely stands as the film's greatest lost opportunity.

As Nolte, Boothe and the commandos move toward the ultimate showdown, violence escalates and the fetish in some quarters for stylized violence takes hold. Hill seems to relish the explosives more than just about any other aspect of the

pic as semi-automatics blaze away.
In any case, story proceeds through some interesting twists on

the commando front while Nolte and Boothe try to reconcile their friendship and separate paths.

Noisy windup gets out of hand with some grotesque gunplay but Boothe gets a chance to play his role to the hilt.

Through it all, pic is suspenseful enough to maintain audience interest. Production values are tops.

Tege.

Fri., Nov. 14, 1986

Everytime We Say Goodbye (Drama-Color)

A Tri-Star release. Produced by Jacob Kotzky and Sharon Harel. Directed by Moshe Mizrahi. Written by Mizrahi, Rachel Fabien and Leah Appet, from a story by Mizrahi. Camera (color), Giuseppe Lanci; editor, Mark Burns; music, Philippe Sarde; sound, Daniel Brisseau; art director, Micky Zahar; production manager, Avner Peled. Reviewed at Preview 4 screening room, N.Y., Nov. 13, 1986. MPAA Rating: PG-13. Running time: 95

DavidTom Hanks
SarahCristina Marsillach
Peter Benedict Taylor
Victoria Anat Atzmon
Leah Gila Almagor
NessinMonny Moshanov
RaphaelAvner Hizkiyahu
Sally Caroline Goodall

New York — "Everytime We Say Goodbye" is a tale of star-crossed lovers played out against a backdrop of Jerusalem in 1942. Tom Hanks is featured as an American pilot recovering from an injury who falls in love with a girl from a traditional Sephardic Jewish family. Draw will be watching an effective Hanks in this warm, though sometimes slow-paced, film.

David (Hanks) and Sarah (Christina Marsillach) meet through the impending marriage of David's squadron leader to Sarah's best friend. Though attracted to David, Sarah is particularly conscious of their vastly different backgrounds and the fact that a relationship with an American pilot would not be tolerated by her family.

The film is not devoid of humor. Early scenes when Hanks is accepted to dinner by the family as a friend and not yet a suitor are funny and believable. Culturally rich story is aided throughout by the pic's all-Israel shoot, nicely highlighting the different worlds these two lovers come from.

The power of tradition and family turns against David when Sarah's brothers step in to stop their romance. A scene when Sarah is dragged from David's apartment back to her home to be confronted by her hysterical mother and severely disapproving family is memorable.

As the film's title suggests, David and Sarah's love is one of fits and starts. David must go back to the war, Sarah decides to uphold her heritage and marry a man she doesn't love and things look bleak for her indeed. A leave from the front for David and a last-minute change of heart by Sarah, however, makes for a happy ending.

Christina Marsillach is alluring in her American film debut and supporting cast is strong, particularly Benedict Taylor as Peter. Roy.

Wed., March 11, 1987

Evil Dead II

(Horror — Color)

A Rosebud Releasing Corp. release of a Renaissance Pictures presentation. Produced by Robert G. Tapert. Directed by Sam Raimi. Screenplay by Raimi, Scott Spiegel. Camera (Technicolor), Peter Deming; night photography, Eugene Shlugleit; art director, Philip Duffin, Randy Bennett; set decorator, Elizabeth Moore; set dresser, Wayne Leonard; sound, Tom Morrison; as-

sistant director, Joseph Winogradoff; special make-up, Mark Shostrom. Reviewed at UCLA Melnitz Theater, March 10, 1987. No MPAA rating. Running time: 85 min.

Ash	. Bruce Campbell
Annie	Sarah Berry
аке	Dan Hicks
Bobby Joe	Kassie Wesley
Possessed Henrietta .	. Theodore Raimi
inda	Denise Bixler
Ed	
Professor	
Henrietta	Lou Hancock

More an absurdist comedy than a horror film, "Evil Dead II" is a flashy good-natured display of special effects and scare tactics so extreme that they can only be taken for laughs. Financed by the De Laurentiis Entertainment Group, which retains the foreign and ancilliary rights, pic is being released unrated domestically by one Rosebud Releasing, which should find solid support among fans of the genre.

Story here is merely an excuse for director Sam Raimi to explore new ways to shock an audience — and usually he keeps his sense of humor about it. It's as if every scene tries to outdo the one that went before it, with Raimi winking at the audience all the while. The result is the kind of camp fest that an audience can shout back at.

Action, and there's plenty of it, is all centered around a remote cabin where Ash (Bruce Campbell) and his girlfriend Annie (Sarah Berry) run into some unexpected influences. It isn't long before the forces of the Evil Dead have gotten a hold of Annie and her head winds up in a vice.

It seems that Professor Knowby (John Peaks) has unleashed the spirits of the dead and they want to escape limbo by claiming possession of the living. They're a remarkably protean lot and take on all sorts of imaginative and grotesque forms almost instantaneously.

While Campbell battles the unknown with chainsaws, sawed-off shotguns, spikes and whatever he can get his hand on (his other hand has been sawed off), four other visitors make their way to the happening place. Two of them are the professor's kids, and Kassie Wesley tries to clear the air with some hocus-pocus from the Egyptian Book of the Dead.

From the looks of things, this must be the spirit capital of the universe, with all the activity going on at once. Production uses more red water than the Red Sea and it flows about as freely. Other assorted bits include floating eyeballs, disembodied hands, strange trees and one creature beyond description.

Although it all becomes a bit monotonous after a while and is basically a one-note picture, Raimi is able to maintain the level of interest with some innovative camera angles and good-looking photography by Peter Deming and Eugene Shlugleit.

Production values are surprisingly high for this type of pic. Mark Shostrom's make-up effects enhance the comic thrust of the action and Campbell cuts a suitable figure as Rambo of the gore world.

After escalating the horror for some 75 minutes, when it comes time to end the romp, Raimi is hard pressed to come up with a finale. And though the one he tries is not to be believed it falls a bit flat after what has proceeded it.

Jagr.

Mon., Nov. 24, 1986

Eye Of The Tiger

(Drama — color)

A Scotti Bros. release of a Richard Sarafi-

an film. Produced by Tony Scotti. Executive producers, Herb Nanas, Ben Scotti. Directed by Richard Sarafian. Written by Michael Montgomery. Production executive, Angela Schapiro; camera (United Color Lab), Peter Collister; sound, Dennis Carr; editor, Greg Prange; first assistant directors, Scott Maitland, Leo Zisman; production coordinator, Pilar Stallwort; art director, Wayne Springfield; set director, Kurt Gauger. Reviewed at the Mann's Hollywood Theater in Hollywood, Calif., Nov. 22, 1986. MPAA Rating: R. Running time: 90 min.

Buck Matthews	Gary Busey
J.B. Deveraux	Yaphet Kotto
Sheriff	Seymour Cassel
Father Healey	Bert Remsen
Blade	William Smith
Dawn Kir	nberlin Ann Brown
Christie	Denise Galik
Jennifer	Judith Barsi
Doctor	Eric Bolles
Jake	Joe Brooks

Gary Busey is yet another lone vigilante out to avenge his wife's brutal murder in this new pic, "Eye Of The Tiger." Yet even Busey's name and some high-action sequences will not save this one from an early arrival on the video store shelves.

In this first release by Scotti Bros., producers have opted for a very predictable story and a lot of one-dimensional characters that end up stagnating the film.

The pic opens with Buck Matthews' (Busey) release from prison, where he apparently was serving time for murder (that is not made too clear). He comes back to the small town where he grew up, to his loving wife Christie (Denise Galik), and his eight-year-old daughter, Jennifer (Judith Barsi).

There is some bad blood between Matthews and the hick sheriff (Seymour Cassel) in this town who apparently helped to set Matthews up on the murder charge (although this is not made clear either).

Matthews' hometown is being terrorized by a gang of motorcycleriding drug peddlers, all of whom wear black with black helmets and ride in packs.

One night when the pack attempts to rape a nurse, Matthews comes to the rescue, thus raising the wrath of the gang's leader, Blade (William Smith — remember Falconetti from "Rich Man, Poor Man"?).

And so the motorcycle gang makes a visit to Matthews' house, killing his wife, beating him up and sending their daughter into a catatonic state.

The rest of the film is about Matthews' one-man quest for vengeance, most of which is set to the pounding beat of rock music. Of course the townfolk are reluctant to get involved, the hick sheriff is in cahoots with Blade, and Matthews is pretty much left to his own ingenuity.

The best character in the film is J.B. Deveraux (Yaphet Kotto), one of the sheriff's lackeys.

Deveraux is a black man who has had to live in a white man's town. He is beaten down by prejudice and corruption, and has become afraid to stand up for what is right because he just wants to get his pension and leave. His friendship with Matthews finally intercedes and he comes to his aid in the end. This is obviously the most fleshed out character in this film.

Busey's character supposedly has a whole history of hard times (he fought in Vietnam, he was framed for murder), but this is only brought out in passing, never delved into as to how it affected him.

Directing by Richard Sarafian often is sluggish as scenes in between the action slow considerably. Pic starts out slowly, only gaining momentum after the rape attempt.

Busey, who has brought in his

share of memorable film moments (an Oscar nomination for "The Buddy Holly Story") obviously did not have his heart in this one. He's as forgettable as the rest.

There are some good action moments with a lot of fine stunt work, but it's not enough to save the picture.

Teen.

Wed., April 15, 1987

Fat Guy Goes Nutzoid (Comedy — Color)

A Troma release of a Golden Boys production. Executive producer, Robert Shinerock. Produced by Emily Dillon. Directed by John Golden. Screenplay, John Golden, Roger Golden. Camera (color), John Drake; editor, Jeff Wolf; music, Leo Kottke; sound, Felipe Borrero; production design, Martin de Maat; production manager-associate producer, Brooke Kennedy; assistant director, Aaron Barsky; executive in charge of production, Robert A. Mitchell; costume design, Lindsay Davis; casting, Susan Shopmaker. Reviewed at 242 St. Liberty Theater, N.Y., April 11, 1987. No MPAA Rating. Running time: 78 min.

Roger Morloche Tibor Feldman
The Mouka Peter Linari
Ronald John Mackay
Doogle Morloche Douglas Stone
Harold Max Alexander

New York — Troma pickup "Fat Guy Goes Nutzoid" is a dud. Filmed in New York in 1983 under the title "Zeisters" (a meaningless exclamation), pic is a tasteless effort that looks like a backyard home movie shot in 35m.

Slim premise has ne'er-do-well Roger Morloche (Tibor Feldman) becoming involved with pathetic, 350-pound Dave (Peter Linari), nicknamed "The Mouka," when he crashes at a camp for the retarded where his goofy brother Doogle (Douglas Stone) works. The brothers are tossed out after causing the campers to riot and Dave is a stowaway in their truck, getting involved in misadventures back in New York City.

Film takes a sentimental view of the big fellow, who cannot speak but is basically nice and pitiful. However, it uses his predicament as a steady source of cheap, vulgar gags that are neither entertaining nor sympathetic to his plight. Cast overacts to boot and film displays zero production values.

Troma released the film regionally last September but did not bother to get an MPAA rating.

Lor.

Fri., May 15, 1987

Feel The Heat (Color)

A Trans World Entertainment release of a Negocios Cinematograficos production, in association with M'Amsel Tea Entertainment, Produced by Don Van Atta. Executive producers, Moshe Diamant, Stirling Silliphant. Directed by Joel Silberg. Screenplay, Silliphant; camera (Cinecolor), Nissim Nitcho (Argentina), Frank Harris (U.S.); editor, Christopher Holmes, Darren Holmes; music, Thomas Chase, Steve Rucker; sound (Dolby), Enrique Sansalvador Viale production design, Jorge Marchegiani; production manager, Jorge Velasco; stunt coordinator-martial arts coordinator, Alan Amiel; casting, Caro Jones. Reviewed at Cannes Film Festival (market), May 13, 1987. No MPAA Rating. Running time: 87

Waldo David Dukes
Checkers
GoldbergTiana Alexandra
Jason Hannibal
DannyBrian Thompson
Raul Jorge Martinez
lke John Hancock
BrodyBrian Libby
Maria Jessica Schultz
DozuProf. Toru Tanaka

Cannes — "Feel The Heat" is an unabashed action showcase for Oriental actress Tiana Alexandra, wife of film's scripter and coproducer Stirling Silliphant.

Previously seen in TWE's exercise vidtape "Karatix," Alexandra is a real looker, solid martial arts practitioner and the only reason to sit through this weak programmer.

With apologies to Whoopi, Alexandra stars as Checkers Goldberg, a government narcotics agent working for David Dukes, who is sent undercover to Buenos Aires to infiltrate Rod Steiger's drug ring. She poses in outrageous Suzie Wong slit dresses as a bubbleheaded dancer, immediately turns Steiger on and stumbles upon the secret of the smuggling operation.

It turns out (believe it or not) that Steiger has \$500,000 of heroin surgically implanted in his dancers' breasts unbeknownst to them and sends them to America where silicone is substituted for the smack.

Alexandra dutifully goes along with the scam in hopes that boss Dukes will arrive in the nick of time before her cover is blown, i.e., before Steiger and his doctor discover she already has a massive chest hidden under those tight-fitting gowns.

This nonsense is just an excuse for all-purpose chase scenes and shootouts, plus Alexandra kicking into submission various thugs, even felling the massive former wrestler Prof. Toru Tanaka.

She's alluring and sports a perky personality, but hubby Silliphant's klutzy script sinks the outing. It's hard to believe that the writer of 'Narcissus On A Red Fire Engine' for tv's "Route 66" series and a horde of other interesting shows and pix wrote the dumb puns and vulgarities here.

Dukes, Steiger and the supporting cast have little to do.

Wed., Nov. 5, 1986

50 Years Of Action! (Docu - 16m - Color)

A Directors Guild of America Golden Jubilee Committee presentation of a DMS Production Services production. Produced, directed, written by Douglass M. Stewart Jr. Camera (CFI Color), John A. Alonzo, Caleb Deschanel, Chuck Clifton; additional camera, James Mathers; editors, John Soh, Stewart; music, Bill Conti; art direction, Jim Claytor; associate producer, Soh; assistant directors, Walter Gilmore, Steven Tramz (west coast) Joe Napolitano, Dwight Williams (east coast); sound, Fred Ginsburg, John Lifavi, Mike Lonsdale; narrator, Richard Crenna. Reviewed at the Directors Guild of America Theater, W. Hollywood, Nov. 1, 1986. No MPAA rating. Running

With: Morris R. Abrams, Stanley Ackerman, Woody Allen, John Alonzo, Warren Beatty, Steve Besner, Richard Brooks, Himan Brown, Gilbert Cates, Michael Cimino, Martha Coolidge, Norman Corwin, William Crain, Chico Day, Tom Donovan, Edward Dmytryk, Milos Forman, Arthur Forrest, Michael H. Franklin, George L. George, Alan Gordon, John Huston, Elia Kazan, Kim Kurumada, Sheldon Leonard, Dan Lew, Lynne Littman, Sidney Lumet, Rouben Mamoulian, Joseph L. Mankiewicz, Fletcher Markle, Patricia McBrearty, Adam Merims, Richard Mutschler, Gordon Parks, Ernest Ricca, Martin Ritt, John Rich, John Schlesinger, Gene Searchinger, Susan Seidelman, George Sidney, Joan Micklin Silver, Elliot Silverstein, James E. Wall, Robert Wise, Joseph C. Youngerman.

To mark its golden anniversary, the Directors Guild of America has sponsored this hourlong documentary covering its history, from its turbulent formation to the ongoing struggle for creative rights in a commercial industry. Necessarily telescoped, film nevertheless covers a lot of territory in a short time and successfully presents numerous sidelights on the main thrust of the story. There are no plans at present to distribute the picture, but a companion piece, "The Television Makers," is due for broadcast on PBS early next year.

With Milos Forman leading the way in describing the Guild as "one of the noble institutions," and Richard Brooks affirming that "the Guild really stands behind the directors and the studios know it," nearly 50 directors and assistants, veterans and comparative youngsters, fill in the highlights of the DGA's five decades, and in a general sense give the impression of an organization composed of strong individuals with character and serious purpose.

Rouben Mamoulian, the only survivor among the Guild's original dozen organizers, narrates the Guild's lean beginnings and battle with the studios for recognition.

Rare film clips and photographs help bring the key players to life, and producer-director-writer Douglass M. Stewart Jr. adroitly mixes straightforward history with colorful anecdotes and personal angles.

Key moment in Guild history and, rightly, of the film, is the internal struggle prompted by the Red Scare. Legendary Guild meeting in 1950 in which the forces of the right, led by Cecil B. DeMille, attempted to oust Guild president Joseph L. Mankiewicz but were ultimately thwarted by George Stevens, John Ford and others, is recounted excitingly by Mankiewicz and some fellow participants.

This episode represented the DGA's finest hour, but interest is maintained as docu covers such significant occurrences as the merging of radio and television directors' guilds into the DGA, and the passage of a "Bill Of Rights," which is still being evolved.

Although he is not interviewed on camera, Frank Capra emerges as an ongoing Guild hero through the decades. Pic admirably spotlights the important role of the assistant director, and points up the growing frequency of women occupying the director's chair after years of nearly total male domination.

Pic is very professionally done, although video transfers do betray themselves. Many top names participated here both before and behind the camera, and result is a worthy self-tribute by an impressive organization.

Fri., Nov. 7, 1986

52 Pick-Up (Drama — Color)

A Cannon films release. Produced by Menahem Golan, Yoram Globus. Executive producer Henry T. Weinstein. Directed by John Frankenheimer. Screenplay by Elmore Leonard, John Steppling, based on the novel by Leonard. Camera (TVC color), Jost Vacano; editor, Robert F. Shugrue; music, Gary Chang; production design, Philip Harrison; art director, Russell Christian; set decorator, Max Whitehouse; sound, Ed Novick; assistant director, Bradley Gross; casting, Lou DiGiaimo. Reviewed at Cannon screen ing room, Los Angeles, Calif., Oct. 31, 1986. MPAA Rating: R. Running time: 114 min.

Vanity Alan Raimy. John Glover Leo Franks Robert Trebor Jim O'Boyle Lonny Chapman Cini. ...Kelly Preston Bobby Shy. . Clarence . Williams III . Doug McClure

"52 Pick-Up" is a thriller without any thrills. Although director John Frankenheimer stuffs as much action as he can into the screen adaptation of Elmore Leonard's novel (previously filmed by Cannon in Israel in 1984 as "The Ambassador"), he can't hide the ridiculous plot and lifeless characters. Boxoffice outlook is modest at best.

Genre effort like "52 Pick-Up" should move like a wave — sweeping up viewers and not letting them go until the film settles down 90 minutes later. But in this case there is no rush of energy to propel the film past its improbability.

Failure of the film to fly can be traced directly to boring characters and blame must be spread around to the actors, Roy Scheider and Ann-Margret, the screenplay by Leonard and John Steppling and the direction by Frankenheimer. Characters are never given a chance at winning the audience's sympathies.

Scheider is an all-American hero who has worked his way up by his bootstraps and after many lean years now owns a successful business and a luxurious home in the Hollywood Hills. He's supposedly a workingclass kid who's made good but hasn't forgotten his roots.

Unfortunately, the original story, set in Detroit in the novel, has been transposed to L.A., with much of the grittiness of the character and his surroundings being sacrificed for a sunnier view. Despite a number of low-life locations, cinematographer Jost Vacano fails to create a menacing environment.

Caught in a blackmail scheme by an unlikely trio of porno operators who film him in bed with a cute young thing (Kelly Preston), Scheider balks at giving up his hard-earned wealth, but even more at being told

When blackmailers start playing hard ball and film the murder of the girl carried out with Scheider's stolen gun, they soon learn they are not in his league. He craftily tears their plans apart by sowing doubt and playing each against the other until they destroy themselves

Since he is clearly caught with his pants down and maintains a controlled and cold center, Scheider is just a man in trouble, not a man who needs anyone's help, even his wife's. Married for 23 years to the still attractive Ann-Margret, she seems more disturbed that her husband's problems will destroy her political aspirations than her marriage. Declarations aside, there isn't much emotion holding these people together.

Against a backdrop of sordid relationships and distasteful people, the bond between husband and wife should be what keeps the film going, but as the picture opens it's already a marriage that has gone astray. Chemistry between Scheider and Ann-Margret is minimal and undermines the film's foundation.

More lively (and likable, in a perverse sort of way) are the three thugs who are fingering Scheider. Leader of the group is John Glover as a porno filmmaker and proven psychopath. Glover gives the roles such a decadently sinister turn that he's far more interesting and lively to watch than Scheider.

Leo Franks is a quivering tub of jelly who somehow should have been in the garment business but wound up in porn. He's hardly a contest for Scheider but is amusing nonetheless. Last of the bad guys is the black hitman, Clarence Williams III, a time bomb waiting to explode. As his girlfriend-stripper, Vanity seems born to play the role.

Tech credits are individually fine but overall production fails to find a groove to give the unlikely events a measure of power.

Mon., Feb. 9, 1987

Fire And Ice

(Ski adventure - Color -Panavision)

A Concorde release. Produced, directed, written, photographed (color, Panavision) by Willy Bogner. American version by George Schlatter, Digby Wolf; editors, Petra Von Oelffen, Claudia Travnecek; music, Harold Faltermaier, Gary Wright, Panarama, Alan Parsons, John Denver; second camera, Peter Rohe; sound (Dolby), Manfred Maier; associate producers, Oliver Stahel, Karl-Heinz Faessler, Giovanni Mahler, Hussain Majadi; narrator, John Denver; John's voice, John Cooper. Reviewed at the Bruin Theater, L.A., Feb. 3, 1987. MPAA Rating: PG Running time: 80 min.

John Eaves Suzy Suzy Chaffee

Willy Bogner's ski extravaganza "Fire And Ice" plays like a feature-length succession of second-unit sequences, which makes sense since Bogner was the mastermind behind the spectacular stunt skiing scenes in four James Bond pictures. Loaded with eye-popping athletic feats accomplished on extraordinary international locales to the accompaniment of a throbbing musical score, film wouldn't seem to represent a domestic b.o. draw for viewers other than skiers, but probably has a decent future as a video attraction.

Storyline, such as it is, has ski bum John Eaves hitchhiking from New York City to Aspen in pursuit of blonde ski bunny Suzy Chaffee. Every five minutes, John has a fantasy that sets off a big production number, most of which feature amazingly acrobatic skiing, but a few of which feature ski surfing, hang gliding, wind surfing, and related derring-do.

Eaves, a Canadian freestyle champion, appears to be a virtual contortionist on skiis, and displays considerable clowning abilities as well as he chases Chaffee over cliffs, into trees, indoors and even without skiis, skidding down mountains wearing only boots.

Perhaps inevitably, pic does become repetitive at times, but at 80 minutes doesn't wear out its welcome, and Bogner's often amazing lensing rivets the attention and probably does make this the ultimate ski film for those looking for wild stunts and magnificent backdrops.

Viewers in this category will probably prefer having the film on tape and checking out some of the action time and again rather than seeing it once on the big screen.

Bogner, a former Olympic skier from Germany and head of the Bogner fashion line, spent six years on the film, which opened a year ago in Germany in a somewhat different version. Narrated by John Denver, this American edition gives Eaves a somewhat annoyingly thick accent when he speaks with a normal American-Canadian one in

Fri., Nov. 21, 1986

Firewalker (Comedy-Adventure — Color)

A Cannon Group release of a Golan-Globus production. Produced by Menahem Golan and Yoram Globus. Executive producers, Norman Aladjem, Jeffrey M. Rosenbaum Directed by J. Lee Thompson. Screenplay, Robert Gosnell from a story by Gosnell, Jeffrey M. Rosenbaum, Norman Aladjem Camera (TVC Color), Alex Phillips; editor, Richard Marx; music, Gary Chang; production design, Jose Rodriguez Granada; set decorator, Kleomenes Stamatiades; costume designer, Poppy Cannon; assistant di rectors, Russ Harling, Javier Carreno; associate producer, Carlos Gil; casting, Robert MacDonald. Reviewed at the Cannon screening room, Los Angeles, Nov. 19, 096. MPAA Rating: PG. Running time: 104

min.	
Max Donigan	Chuck Norris
Leo Porter	
Patricia Goodwyn	. Melody Anderson
Tall Eagle	Will Sampson
El Coyote	Sonny Landham
Corky Taylor	John Rhys-Davies
Boggs	. lan Abercrombie

Chuck Norris' latest outing for Cannon suffers from boilerplate scripting that sabotages whatever hope there may have been that a buddy pic with the estimable Louis Gossett Jr. would be compelling. Duo moves predictably through a search-for-the-gold yarn that is devoid of suspense. Pic should swiftly move through the b.o. turnstile.

Adventuring team is joined early on by Melody Anderson in basic setup for the search to find an Aztec temple. Her involvement all toc quickly degenerates into a clumsy vehicle for a series of Pauline's perils intended to validate basically meaningless action scenes.

Anderson takes the two guys along into Indian country where they encounter one Will Sampson. He provides the magical protection and warning of dangers that lie ahead. His involvement, however, is all too brief as trio moves toward the jungle once the villainous El Coyote (Sonny Landham) is introduced.

Not unexpectedly, story pauses long enough for a lengthy barroom brawl that gives Norris time to dispatch at least a dozen locals with karate kicks. It could be a high point — if Norris devotees go looking for martial arts action.

Disconnected scenes continue unfolding as a train ride to the back country - with the three disguised as members of the clergy - brings them closer to the temple. Strange detour, however, finds them in the hands of natives bent on beheading Norris and Gossett.

With the blade hovering above Norris' head, an old marine sidekick (John Rhys-Davies) appears to save the day. Tale bogs down in a boring bit of drunken reminiscing before action resumes.

Back in the countryside, Gossett disappears as Norris whines, "This whole idea was stupid, stupid." He might as well have been talking about the entire picture.

Pressing on nonetheless, everybody inevitably ends up inside the temple where the gold is. The evil El Coyote seems at first to have the upper hand as he prepares to sacrifice Anderson in a bloody slaying but alas Norris and Gossett emerge just in time to prevent the dagger from being plunged into her chest — or was it to untie her before the railroad train ran over her?

In any case, inner temple action provides unconvincing resolution to a strained tale. Overstaging is especially in evidence here, as it often was throughout.

Temple scenes and early ones inside a cave are especially marred by fakish environments and do nothing to enhance the credibility of the

Mon., May 18, 1987

Five Corners (Urban drama — Color) A Handmade Films production. Produced

by Forrest Murray, Tony Bill. Executive producers, George Harrison, Denis O'Brien. Directed by Bill. Screenplay, John Patrick Shanley. Camera (color), Fred Murphy; editor, Andy Blumenthal; music, James Newton Howard; production design, Adrianne Lobel; sound, Bill Daly; costumes, Peggy Farrell; producers, Michael McDonnell, Shanley;

Jodie Foster Linda Harry **Todd Graff James** Heinz . . John Turturro Melanie Elizabeth Berridge Mrs. Sabantino ... Rose Gregorio Mazola Gregory Rozakis

casting, Doug Aibel. Reviewed at Cannes

Film Festival (market), May 13, 1987. Run-

ning time: 92 min.

Sullivan . Mrs. Fitzgerald Kathleen Chalfant Cannes — "Five Corners" starts out as an affectionate look back at a Bronx neighborhood circa 1964 and then about half-way through takes a darker turn into urban violence. But the script has such a strong hold on its characters and the ensemble cast realizes them so effectively that the film never totally loses its way. Pic is an above average piece of work that could find its way to a selective audience.

Although the ethnic flavors of urban life have been extensively covered in film in recent years, "Five Corners" proves that it's still fertile ground for the right writer, and here John Patrick Shanley qualifies. In his first produced script, Shanley has clearly drawn from his own experience to create the variety of personalities and swirl of influences that make life in the boroughs of New York City so distinctive.

And it is no accident that Shanley chose 1964 for his story for it was then that the social upheaval known as the '60s was about to touch even the five corners of the Bronx. When Harry (Tim Robbins), a would-be freedom fighter in Mississippi, listens to "The Times They Are Changin" on his tinny mono phonograph, one can almost feel the rush of excitement that song once brought with it.

But before he goes off to save the world, there is business for him to take care of in the old neighborhood. Local no-goodnik Heinz (John Turturro) is out of jail and looking to renew his old battle with Harry and his old longing for Linda (Jodie Foster).

Also drawn into this tangled urban web is Linda's boyfriend James (Todd Graff), who now limps for life thanks to his last encounter with Heinz. Other residents of the neighborhood, first seemingly unrelated, gradually touch on the central action like ripples in a pond.

Revenge and retribution story takes its sweet time to unfold and almost seems a contrivance to allow the characters to play out their parts. But they are marvelously drawn parts and Robbins as the Irish working-class kid with a social conscience gets into the heart and soul of the character. Turturro is downright scary but also sympathetic as the school yard psychotic.

Also excellent is Graff as the wounded lover who delivers many of the film's best lines with a manic glee. Foster is serviceable, but a little out of her element as a tough Catholic kid. Supporting players add to the neighborhood flavor with Kathleen Chalfant especially impressive as Harry's mother, in a role that for once makes a parent an actual thinking and feeling person.

Credit must also go to director Tony Bill for assembling his cast of relative unknowns and keeping the characters honest even when the story starts to fudge.

Tech credits are first rate and Adrianne Lobel's production design and Fred Murphy's camera work contribute to the neighborhood atmosphere without making it feel like it was store-bought. Jagr.

Wed., Jan. 14, 1987

Flodder (Dutch — Color)

A Concorde film release of a First Floor Features production. Produced by Laurens Gaels and Dick Maas. Written and directed by Maas. Camera (Fuji Color; prints by Cineco), Marc Felperlan; editor, Hans van Dongen; music, Maas, sound, Georges Boaedeis; and direction, Hubert Fouille; set direction, Hans Voors; stunt coordinator, Mark Boyle. Reviewed at Tuschinski Theater, Amster-

dam, Dec. 28, 1986. Running time: 111 min. With: Nelly Frijda, Huub Stapel, Tatjana Simico, Rene van't Hof, Lou Landre, Herbert Flack, Nano Lehnhausen, Jan Willem Hees, Appolonia van Ravenstein

Amsterdam — Dick Maas, director of the 1983 Dutch thriller "The Lift," opted for laughs in his second theatrical outing, "Flodder." Pic uses a tried and tested comic theme: a goodhearted, streetwise family of slum dwellers rehoused in a salubrious uptown area. Set in an unidentifiable Western country, and snappily paced with well-timed gags, this could be one of those rare Dutch films to break out in foreign territories.

Ma Flodder (Nelly Frijda), her three sons and two daughters, and their grandfather, live in a slum located on chemically poluted soil. A do-gooding social worker persuades the city housing committee to move them, as an experiment, into a home in a plushy estate.

That's the start of this farce. The Flodders have a flawed sense of property and propriety. They go in for a little bit of thieving here, a little thuggery there, a touch of pimping and a dash of whoring — but, of course, they have hearts of gold.

Their moneyed neighbors, typically arrogant snobs — except for one (Appolonia van Ravenstein), who is married to a dull tank regiment officer. She leaves him for the elder Flodder son (Hubb Stapel) and moves in with the clan. When the family unexpectedly inherits some money, they party to celebrate the event and invite the upmarket neighbors.

Technical credits are above average for local product, especially camerawork and editing. The film looks worth more than its \$1,700,000 budget. The characters may be slightly two-dimensional (though the actors make a good shot at trying to add some depth), but essentially this is a film to entertain—and it succeeds admirably Wall.

Wed., Dec. 31, 1986

Footrot Flats

(New Zealand — Animated — Color)

A Magpie Prods. Ltd. presentation. Produced by John Barnett, Pat Cox. Directed by Murray Ball. Screenplay, Ball, Tom Scott; based on characters by Ball. Animation director, Robbert Smit; music, Dave Dobbyn; backgrounds, Richard Zaloudek; editors, Michael Horton, Denis Jones; sound design, John McKay, Reviewed at Embassy Theater, Wellington, N.Z., Dec. 8, 1986. Running time: 70 min.

Voices: Peter Rowley (Dog); John Clarke (Wal); Rawiri Paratene (Rangi); Fiona Samuel (Cheeky Hobson and Pongo); Peter Hayden (Cooch and Irish Murphy); Dorothy McKegg (Aunt Dolly); Billy T. James (Pawai); Brian Sargent (Spit Murphy) Marshall Napier

Wellington, N.Z. — The cartoon strip "Footrot Flats" is a New Zealand institution. Now emerging as a film — the first full-length animated feature from this country — pic is certain to be absorbed by the strip's addicts everywhere. It seems a safe and profitable marketing choice in Australia, Scandinavia and possibly Japan; elsewhere, it will have to be handled carefully.

The cartoon strip, the creation of Murray Ball, features humans and animals (notably Wal and his oversensitive, ever-loyal Dog) in an archetypal backwoods farming community that could exist anywhere.

Some 70% of adult New Zealanders read the strip, and an equivalent proportion of Australians are familiar with it. (It also ap-

pears in Scandinavia and in Japan.)

In the film the well-known characters are marvelously drawn (on the meticulous say-so of Ball) by Dutch-born Australian Robbert Smit, and backgrounds etched by Richard Zaloudek from the Sydney studios of Hanna-Barbera.

Like the strip, the film is for adults, and accessible to children, rather than vice versa. The tale chronicles Dog's life and loves on the Wal Footrot's small farm and Dog's entanglement with the forces of evil that emanate from the Murphy property across the river.

Uppermost in Dog's gentle mind are his protection of Wal and his passion for Jess, a neighboring dog.

Guarding Wal means diverting his attention from the wiles of buxom hairdresser Cheeky Hobson. Winning Jess means saving her from the hellhounds and villainous vermin that guard the Murphy clan and it's wicked ways.

Throughout there is a blend of whimsy, warm irony and observation of human — and animal frailty that delights. What is lacking is a drive in the screenplay to shock and set one on the edge of the seat.

The action sequences lack a feral tension of the kind that the medium of film animation is particularly adept at achieving. They are a trifle too frenetic, with cliff-hanging moments inadequately manipulated.

Even so, by creating an animated feature in structure more akin to printed cartoon form than film, director Ball is unlikely to lose those aficionados of the strip. Indeed, he may well win many thousands more.

For the uninitiated, lexicon of New Zealand sayings and folklore will be useful in distilling the detail of the Kiwi magic of the piece. However, the copious action and sly raunchiness, generally purveyed, should knock down most cultural barriers.

Although now indoctrinated in Down Under colloquialisms and symbols, following the huge success of "Crocodile Dundee," North American audiences may have difficulty with such expressions as "rattle your dags" and "dash to the dunny for a quick slash."

Equally, the mythologies that surround the hillbillies of the Appalachians are closer to the denizens of Footrot Flats, in the remote reaches of remote New Zealand, than the expanse of the Pacific Ocean and the American continent might initially suggest.

Nic.

Thurs., April 23, 1987

Forever, Lulu (Comedy — Color)

A Tri-Star Pictures release of a Lulu production. Executive producer, Michael Steinhardt. Written, produced and directed by Amos Kollek. Camera (color), Lisa Rinzler; editor, Jay Freund; music, uncredited; sound, Felipe Borrero; production design, Stephen McCabe; set decoration, Victor Zolfo; production manager, Sarah Green; assistant director, Gary Marcus; costume design, Candace Clements; editing consultant, Ralph Rosenblum; casting, Marcia Schulman Reviewed at Columbia screening room, N.Y., April 14, 1987. MPAA rating: R. Running time: 85 min.

Elaine Hines Hanna Schygulla Lulu Deborah Harry Buck Alec Baldwin Diana Annie Golden Robert Paul Gleason

Also with: Dr. Ruth Westheimer, Raymond Serra, George Kyle, Harold Guskin, Bill Corsair, Jonathan Freeman, Amos Kollek, Charles Ludlam, Cathy Gati, Beatrice Pons, Sally Jane Heit.

New York — "Forever, Lulu" is an amateurish effort desperately seeking laughs but getting mainly unintentional ones. Fortunately not the clone of "Desperately Seeking Susan" its plot summary suggests, picture is still wide of the mark as entertainment and will be mainly of interest to midnight movie followers of high camp. Mystery is why Tri-Star acquired the indie production, presumably of interest to undemanding homevideo and pay-cable users but hardly a theatrical entry.

Hanna Schygulla toplines as Elaine Hines, a European transplant living in New York who is working at temporary jobs while writing her novel. Film comically depicts her growing list of misfortunes; fired from her job; stuck with the check on a big date; stuck in the rain; evicted from her apartment, etc.

Things pick up when she contemplates suicide: wielding her gun creates confusion and results in a well-dressed couple depositing their coats and valuables in her arms out of fright.

Elaine becomes involved in a goofy adventure when she finds a package in the man's coat pocket, which leads her to an apartment where she becomes involved in a gun battle between gangsters and the police. Only Elaine survives, making off with two cases containing drugs and \$500,000 in big bills.

Pic's resemblance to Susan Seidelman's hit "Susan" pic peaks when Elaine finds a photo (signed "Forever, Lulu") of the eponymous heroine (played by rock star Deborah Harry) and starts searching for her, after earlier placing a personals ad in the paper to find the owners of the coats.

Unfortunately for the film (and Harry's fans, lured perhaps by her billing over the title with Schygulla), she doesn't find Lulu until the very end, with Harry getting perhaps one line of dialog in what amounts to an extended cameo, popping up on the outskirts of the action as a bystander from time to time. En route to this underwhelming conclusion, Elaine becomes a hit novelist due to the media attention she receives after she turns in the money and drugs to the police.

Filmmaker Amos Kollek, who in addition to his behind the camera credits delivers a poor performance as Elaine's cynical literary agent Larry, directs ineptly, with most of his would-be funny lines falling flat.

Gimmick of Schygulla, talented dramatic star from the R.W. Fass-binder troupe, giving odd, heavily accented readings to "hip" expressions is more embarrassing than funny. Pic's camp value is finally realized in an over-the-top climax staged at the Fulton Street fish market

Cast tries hard, with sympathetic readings by Annie Golden and Paul Gleason as Elaine's best pal and exlover, respectively. Schygulla has her moments, but is at the mercy of very weak material. Not to be faulted is some extremely colorful pastel lighting by cinematographer Lisa Rinzler which brightens up the lowbudget production. Lor.

Tues., Oct. 14, 1986

Formula For Murder (Italian-Color)

A Fulvia International Films production. Directed by "Martin Herbert" (Alberto De Martino). Screenplay, Hank Walker, "Herbert" (De Martino); camera (Luciano Vitoricolor), Lawrence Barkey; editor, "Vincent P. Thomas" (Vincenzo Tomassi); music, Francesco De Masi; sound, Steve Connely; art direction, Julian Wilson; stunt coordinator, Arthur Markey; dubbing editor, Nick Alexander. Reviewed at 42d St. Selwyn theater, N.Y., Oct. 4, 1986. No MPAA rating. Running time: 88 min.

New York — "Formula For Murder" is an above-average Italian thriller. Concurrent with its U.S. theatrical release, pic is available on vidcassette under the slightly different title "Formula For A Murder" from Lightning Video.

Set in Boston, where most of the film was shot, pic falls loosely into the "Gaslight" genre, as Craig (British thesp David Warbeck, dubbed with an American acent) trains paraplegic Joanna (Christina Nagy) for special athletics events to be held in New York City. They fall in love and plan to marry, which makes Joanna's lovely livein companion Ruth (Carroll Blumenberg) very jealous.

Confined to a wheel chair, Joanna's paralysis dates back to a child-hood trauma (shown in film's opening footage) when she fell down the stairs while being attacked by a rapist posing as a priest. Craig, who it turns out is in cahoots with Ruth to get Joanna's fortune, dresses up like a priest and repeatedly scares Joanna

Carried by fire acting by Christina Nagy, pic drags a bit halfway through as Warbeck procrastinates while Blumenberg urges him to kill Nagy, but it picks up again with okay twists.

Tech credits are okay and, except for the post-synchronized dialog, pic adequately passes for a U.S.-style production.

Lor.

Thurs., April 9, 1987

Quatre Aventures De Reinette Et Mirabelle

FOUR ADVENTURES OF REINETTE AND MIRABELLE (French — Drama — Color)

A Les Films du Losange production and release. Coproducer, La Compagnie Eric Rohmer. Written and directed by Eric Rohmer. Camera (color), Sophie Maintigneaux; editor, Maria-Luisa Garcia; music, Ronan Girre and Jean-Louis Valero; sound, Pierre Camus, Pascal Ribier; production manager, Francoise Etchegaray. Reviewed at the Balzac cinema, Paris, March 20, 1987. Running time. 97 mine.

Mirabelle Jessica Forde
Reinette Joelle Miquel
Waiter Philippe Laudenbach
Gallery owner Fabrice Luchini
The cheat Marie Riviere

Paris — Like his recent "Le Rayon Vert" (Summer), writer-director Eric Rohmer's "Four Adventures Of Reinette And Mirabelle" was shot in 16m, but Rohmer happily has made less use of improvisation. Though there's still less here than meets the ear, the dialog has enough humor and irony to make this an agreeable addition to the Rohmer opus that should find its audience in the usual art precincts.

Still devoted to the vagaries of fatuous young demoiselles, Rohmer now aimed his camera at two sweet young things, a city girl and a country lass who become friends and share some minor experiences in Paris.

Pic is conceived as four sketches of varying lengths and qualities. First (and the dullest) is the "L'Heure Bleue," in which Mirabelle (Jessica Forde), a Parisian, makes the acquaintance of Reinette (Joelle Miquel) when her bike blows a flat near latter's isolated farmhouse.

Though dissimilar, the girls take a liking to one another and seal their

friendship one early morning when they catch the "Blue Hour," a brief moment between night and dawn when all natural noises subside.

After this mostly tedious exposition, film perks up with Reinette coming to Paris to share her friend's apartment and attend an arts academy.

Sketch two introduces the country girl to the neurotic vicissitudes of city life when she wrangles with a cafe waiter (played with professional comic verve by Philippe Laudenbach) who refuses to accept Reinette's large bill to pay off a coffee.

In the third part, dealing with the girls' conflicting attitudes on charity and altruism, Mirabelle saves a shoplifter from arrest in a supermarket, while Reinette confronts a cheat (Marie Riviere, the wandering drip of "Summer") in a train station.

In the final story, Reinette, while keeping a bet that she can spend an entire day without speaking, tries to sell one of her paintings to an art dealer (Fabrice Luchini) who finally ends up paying her the price she wants.

Though there are two protagonists, main interest is in the chatty country girl, who in the course of her city adventures loses much of the ethical integrity and innocence she constantly sounds off about. As refreshingly played by newcomer Joelle Miquel, character is one of the more charming of Rohmer's spacey females. Forde, on the other hand, is bland as the more reserved urbanite.

Lensing and other tech credits are unexceptional. Len.

Fri., March 13, 1987

The Fourth Protocol (British — Color)

A Rank production. Produced by Timothy Burrill. Executive producers, Frederick Forsyth, Michael Caine and Wafic Said. Directed by John Mackenzie. Stars Michael Caine, Pierce Brosnan. Screenplay, Frederick Forsyth, from his novel, with additional material by Richard Burridge; camera (Rank Color), Phil Meheux; editor, Graham Walker; music, Lalo Schifrin; production design. Alan Cameron; art director, Tim Hutchinson; sound, Chris Munro; costumes, Tiny Nicholls; casting, Priscilla John, Lynn Stalmaster. Reviewed at Century Preview Theater, London, Feb. 25, 1987. Running time: 119 min. John Preston

Major Petrofsky Pierce Brosnan Joanna Cassidy Irina Vassilieva General Borisov . Ned Beatty Eileen MacWhirter Betsy Brantley Jan Marais Peter Cartright David Conville Burnam Matt Frewer Tom MacWhirter General Karpov Ray McAnally Ian Richardson Sir Nigel Irvine George Berenson Anton Rodgers

London — "The Fourth Protocol" is an expertly crafted thriller with a grim sense of realism that raises it above similar films of the genre. It should have fine b.o. prospects internationally.

A large international cast performs adequately in rather onedimensional roles, but Michael Caine as a maverick counterespionage expert gives a thorough performance in a part that doesn't really stretch his abilities.

"The Fourth Protocol" is a decidedly contempo thriller, a tale of vying masterspies and a chase to head off a nuclear disaster. Its edge is a fine aura of realism.

Novelist Frederick Forsyth, who also was an executive producer, adapted the pic from his book. Previous films of Forsyth novels like "The Day Of The Jackal," "The Odessa File," and "The Dogs Of War," were moderate suc-

cesses, but somehow lacked the narrative edge of their sources which this version comes closer to capturing.

The story is pretty straightforward. A ruthless KGB head plans to detonate a nuclear bomb close to a U.S. airbase in England so that the Brits blame the Yanks and the NATO alliance will collapse.

What follows is a good old-fashioned race against time as Caine tracks down his Russian alter-ego, Major Petrofsky (Pierce Brosnan finally getting to play a spy, albeit a baddie), and after a hand-to-hand scuffle manages to defuse the bomb.

Director John Mackenzie has constructed a well-made piece of hokum, but there is a sense that he has stuck a bit too closely to Forsyth's original version, when new life could happily have been breathed into some sections.

Pic is certainly tense enough, and all actors perform well, especially Ian Richardson as spymaster Sir Nigel Irvine, though the Russian accents of Ray McAnally and Ned Beatty are a bit dubious.

Technical credits are all fine, with Phil Meheux' photography especially good. Despite one of Michael Caine's drunk routines early on the pic lacks a sense of humor and takes itself a little too seriously.

"The Fourth Protocol" holds attention thanks to its realistic manner rather than falling back on the easy option of glitzy spy routines a la Bond.

A strong musical score by Lalo Schifrin helps things along, though there is an uneasy feeling the whole affair could have been better made into an excellent miniseries, explaining all of the book's nuances, rather than a solid, well-made film.

Adam.

Mon., Oct. 20, 1986

From Beyond (Horror — Color)

An Empire release of a Brian Yuzna production. Produced by Yuzna. Executive producer, Charles Band. Directed by Stuart Gordon. Screenplay, Dennis Paoli. Adapted from the story by H.P. Lovecraft by Yuzna, Paoli, Gordon. Line producer, Roberto Bessi. Camera (Technicolor). Mac Ahlberg; editor, Lee Percy; music, Richard Band; production design, Giovanni Natalucci; set decoration (U.S.), Robert Burns; special effects, John Buechler, Anthony Doublin, John Naulin, Mark Shostrom; costume design, Angee Beckett; sound (Ultra Stereo), Mario Bramonti; associate producer, Bruce Curtis; assistant director, Mauro Sacripanti. Reviewed at the Empire screening room, L.A., Oct. 7, 1986. MPAA Rating: R. Running time: 85 min.

Crawford Tillinghast . . . Jeffrey Combs Dr. Katherine McMichaels Barbara Crampton

McMichaels ... Barbara Crampton
Dr. Edward Pretorious ... Ted Sorel
Bubba Brownlee Ken Foree
Dr. Roberta

Bloch.....Carolyn Purdy-Gordon Hester Gilman....Bunny Summers Jordan Fields.....Bruce McGuire

Less wigged-out and somewhat more conventional than his wild debut feature, "Re-Animator," Stuart Gordon's H.P. Lovecraft follow-up, "From Beyond," still stands as an effectively gruesome horror entry that should please fans of the genre. R rating will help this one penetrate the marketplace further than its unrated predecesor was able to do, so this rates as a solid Fall exploitationer for Empire.

"Re-Animator," a cult fave, was one of the most graphically gory blood feasts since the heyday of Herschell Gordon Lewis. While not quite up to that level, "From Beyond" still has its share of enjoyably gross scenes, and works some nifty variations on the haunted house

ganra

After the brilliantly mad Dr. Pretorious is found headless in his laboratory after conducting an experiment, a beautiful shrink undertakes to interrogate the scientist's assistant to discover what happened (these two are played by Barbara Crampton and Jeffrey Combs, in a reunion from "Re-Animator").

Upon visiting Pretorious' mansion, however, Crampton begins taking an unusual interest in the doctor's invention, the Resonator, a device designed to stimulate the pineal gland, a sixth sensory organ that allows one to see "beyond."

Intense usage of the Resonator can produce results both ecstatic and horrible, and here the emphasis is on the latter, as victims tend to become crazed and then have the asparagus-like gland itself grow out of a hole in their foreheads.

Determined to get to the bottom of what the Resonator did to Pretorious, and intrigued by the machine's capacity for sexual stimulation, Crampton goes all the way in her investigation. This brings back Pretorious in a new, horrendous, tremendously lecherous form, and the ooze only stops flowing after a grand battle to the death

The special effects team had a field day with all the transformations, monsterish get-ups and horrible deaths, and connoisseurs of such things will delight in the artisans' many accomplishments.

Director Gordon, too, and his cowriters clearly enjoyed wallowing in the gruesome possibilities, and he and lenser Mac Ahlberg have brought a fair degree of style and flourish to the visual approach.

But the greatest pleasure the film offers is afforded by Crampton, who is centerstage most of the time and proves a constant delight to watch. Striking at first glimpse as the serious, bespectacled psychiatrist, she gradually exposes the inquisitive, sexual and resourceful sides of her character, and is a terrific screamer to boot.

Shot in Rome at no loss of verisimilitude, pic is actually the third film to be directed by Gordon, after "Dolls," but second to be released.

Cart.

Mon., Feb. 2, 1987

From The Hip (Comedy — Color)

A De Laurentiis Entertainment Group release of an Indian Neck production. Produced by Rene Dupont, Bob Clark. Executive producers, Howard Baldwin, Bill Minot, Brian Russell, Directed by Clark, Screenplay, David E. Kelley, Clark, story by Kelley. Camera (Technicolor, Joe Dunton Cameras widescreen), Dante Spinotti; editor, Stan Cole; music, Paul Zaza; production design, Michael Stringer; art direction, Dennis Bradford; set decoration, Edward (Tantar) LeViseur; costume design, Clifford Capone; sound David Stephenson; associate producer, Ken Heeley-Ray; assistant director, Ken Goch; casting, Mike Fenton, Jane Feinberg. Re viewed at the Directors Guild of America Theater, L.A., Jan. 30, 1987, MPAA Rating PG. Running time: 111 min.

Robin Weather Judd Nelson Jo Ann. Elizabeth Perkins John Hurt Douglas Benoit Darren McGavin Craig Duncan Dan Monahan Larry Steve Hadley David Alan Grier Roberta Winnaker Nancy Marchand Phil Ames Allan Arbus Raymond Torkenson Edward Winter Matt Cowens Richard Zobe First Judge. .Ray Walston Scott Murray Robert Irvin Elliott Second Judge Beatrice Winde Lt. Matt Sosha .Art Hindle Mrs. Martha Williams . Priscilla Pointer

Bob Clark attempts to bring the spirit of "Porky's" into the courtroom in "From The Hip" but ends up with a neither fishnor-fowl concoction that veers from raucous comedy on the one hand to ethical attitudinizing on the other. Commercial prospects look modest for this lively but mild entertainment.

Film's first section actually proves surprisingly funny and spirited as recent law school graduate Judd Nelson, in the employ of an eminent Boston firm, connives his way into getting to argue a case in court, an unheard-of assignment for so young an attorney.

Case looks hopeless going in, as the firm's client openly admits he slugged the plaintiff and is willing to pay the price. Nelson's inexperience proves to be his ace-in-thehole, however, as he does impressive battle with the prosecuting attorney and wins the jury over by cleverly showing the victim's battery charge to be frivolous.

Now the firm's fair-haired boy instead of its black sheep. Nelson next takes on a case much more difficult than the first. English professor John Hurt is accused of sexually molesting and murdering a young oirl

Despite heavy circumstantial evidence of his guilt, Nelson believes he can get the man off but increasingly comes to loathe his brilliant, repellently arrogant client, finally becoming convinced of his guilt.

So what begins as a pleasantly irreverent social comedy evolves into serious consideration of the moral priorities of attorneys and the legal system as a whole. Nelson is forced to ask himself how far he will go in defending a man he knows is lying, and dramatic crux of the picture demonstrates how he adroitly and honorably deals with this dilemma.

Pic's first half is about virtually nothing at all, but Clark manages to keep the proceedings bouyant by tossing in endless throwaway gags and energizing all the performances in disarming fashion. But as soon as the story decides to take up an issue and become concretely about something, pace sags and the sense of inventiveness slackens.

Nelson hits the same aggressive note throughout the entire film, but his gutsiness is convincing and not unappealing. Elizabeth Perkins gets to be warm and, for the most part, supportive as his g.f., and John Hurt is believably odious as the ingenious murder suspect.

Supporting cast is greatly responsible for keeping the picture alive for so long. Darren McGavin, Nancy Marchand and Allan Arbus make a delightful trio at the head of the law firm; fellow young attorneys David Alan Grier and Dan ("Porky's") Monahan amusingly support Nelson in his outrageous ploys; Richard Zobel, as the prosecuting attorney, makes a fine foil for the hero; Ray Walston and Beatrice Winde each have some choice moments as iudges, and Edward Winter is hilariously self-satisfied as Nelson's first client.

At 111 minutes, pic is decidedly too long. Tech credits are fine.

Mon., Dec. 29, 1986

Les Fugitifs THE FUGITIVES (French — Color)

Gaumont release of a Fideline Films/D.D. Pros./Eive Films/Orly Films coproduction. Produced by Jean-Jose Richer. Stars Gerard Depardieu and Pierre Richard. Written and directed by Francis Veber. Camera (Eastmancolor), Luciano Tovoli; editor. Marie-Sophie Dubus; music, Vladimir Cosma; art director, Gerard Daoudal; sound, Jean-Pierre Ruh; assistant director, Xavier Castano; Francoise Menidrey; production

manager, Jean-Claude Bourlat. Reviewed at the Gaumont Ambassade cinema, Paris, Dec. 19, 1986. Running time: 87 min.

Jean Lucas Gerard Depardieu Francois Pignon Pierre Richard Mr. Martin Jean Carmet

Jean Lucas Gerard Depardieu
Francois Pignon Pierre Richard
Mr. Martin Jean Carmet
Dr. Bourdarias Michel Blano
Commissioner Duroc Maurice Barrier
Labib Jean Benguigui
Idriss Roland Blanche
Jeanne Anais Bret

Paris — Comedy writer-director Francis Veber hits the funny-bone with his usual blithe invention in "The Fugitives," his third picture with the "odd couple" of Gerard Depardieu and Pierre Richard, who were delightfully combustible companions in Veber's "The Goat" (1980) and "Les Comperes" (1983), both boxoffice smashes here, as this new one will certainly be too.

Veber, France's most versatile screen gagsmith, has mined the vein of male-bonding farce with surprising freshness and variety since his first success in this mode: the 1973 Edouard Molinaro comedy, "L'Emmerdeur."

Since then becoming his own director, Veber has polished his manner, succeeding in giving his well-oiled laugh machines a pleasing human hum, thanks especially to the Depardieu-Richard tandem.

Once again cast as the virile (but vulnerable) pro and the neurotic booby, thrown together by wild circumstance and forced to see it through in each other's unwanted company, they transcend artifice and routine, becoming old friends one is always happy to see again.

In "Fugitives," Depardieu is a professional bank robber who wants to go straight, and Richard an unemployed man who desperately attempts a holdup as a solution to his woes.

But the bank where Depardieu decides to open an account on his first day out of prison is the same one Richard tries ineptly to rob. As police surround the premises, the neophyte wrongdoer grabs a hostage: Depardieu. "Can't you take somebody else?" the ex-con growls.

Unable to convince the cops that he's been taken hostage by the puny Richard, Depardieu is forced to flee with him and lie low until he can clear himself. But their lives are inextricably cemented by Richard's autistic six-year-old daughter, who becomes attached to the hulking outlaw and recovers her speech to ask him to stay. Unsuccessfully fighting his own feelings, Depardieu helps Richard regain custody of the child and escapes with them across the border.

Veber's comic imagination is in high-gear as he whips along his cleverly assembled gag vehicle, loaded with snappy dialog and droll scenes of role-reversals and farcical mishaps. Among instances that would figure in any Veber anthology are the bungled bank robbery, and a sequence in which Depardieu is treated for a bullet wound by a senile veterinarian, played to hilarious perfection by Jean Carmet.

Veber's use of overt sentiment as

a plot device (employed previously in "Les Comperes," with its theme of disputed paternity) is taken much farther here in the scenes with the child. Veber tugs at the heart strings with relative tact, misjudging only his use of Vladimir Cosma's slightly saccharine musical theme. The new tone of seriousness is also reflected in Richard's more realistically nuanced portrayal of the hapless chump.

Fine supporting cast includes Michel Blanc (Depardieu's Canneslaureled costar in "Menage") in a cameo as a drunken doctor. Tech credits, which include lensing by talo ace Luciano Tovoli, are firstate.

Len.

Mon., June 22, 1987

Full Metal Jacket

(Vietnam War drama — Color)

A Warner Bros. release. Produced, directed by Stanley Kubrick. Executive producer, Jan Harlan. Coproducer, Philip Hobbs. Screenplay, Kubrick, Michael Herr, Gustav Hasford, based on the novel "The Short-Timers," by Hasford. Camera (Rank Color), Douglas Milsome; editor, Martin Hunter; music, Abigail Mead; production design, Anton Furst; art direction, Rod Stratford, Les Tomkins, Keith Pain; costume design, Keith Denny; sound, Edward Tise; special effects supervisor, John Evans; technical adviser, Lee Ermey; associate producer, Michael Herr; assistant director, Terry Needham; casting, Leon Vitali. Reviewed at The Burbank Studios, Burbank, June 16, 1987. MPAA rating: R. Running time: 116 min.

Animal Mother Adam Baldwin
Pvt. Pyle Vincent D'Onofrio
Gny. Sgt. Hartman Lee Ermey
Eightball Dorian Harewood
Cowboy Arliss Howard
Rafterman Kevyn Major Howard
Lt. Touchdown Ed O'Ross

After a seven-year silence and amidst the usual atmosphere of secrecy, speculation and high expectations, Stanley Kubrick has delivered "Full Metal Jacket," an intense, schematic, superbly made Vietnam War drama that will impress some and confound others. Previewed in more than 100 theaters last Friday night, Warner Bros.' release should open well due to advance interest, but ultimate b.o. will depend upon whether "Platoon" has created a deep new market for Vietnam War stories or, in fact, has stolen the new film's thunder.

As has been the case with all of the director's films since "2001: A Space Odyssey," initial reaction will be strongly divided; anyone anticipating the ultimate Vietnam trip, a Southeast Asian "Dr. Strangelove" or a topper to "Platoon" will surely be let down. As always with Kubrick, it is best to throw all preconceived ideas to the wind.

Kubrick has dealt with the futility and horrors of war on numerous occasions in the past, notably in "Fear And Desire," (his little-seen first film), "Paths Of Glory" and "Dr. Strangelove," and if there is a way in which "Full Metal Jacket" does disappoint, it is in the familiarity of the basic combat genre material. Most of what's on view here has been seen before in some way or another, and pic is perhaps lacking that extra philosophical dimension that has marked Kubrick's greatest films.

But this graphic portrait of two evels of hell on earth generates considerable power via many riveting sequences, extraordinary dialog and first-rate performances.

Like the source material, Gustav Hasford's ultra-violent novel, "The Short-Timers," Kubrick's picture s strikingly divided into two parts. First 44 minutes are set exclusively n a Marine Corps basic training camp, while remaining 72 minutes including end credits) embrace events surrounding the 1968 Tet Dffensive and skirmishing in the levastated city of Hue.

Always a great screen subject, basic training has surely never had to essential mechanics and motivations stripped so bare as they are tere. Boldly and with considerable lark humor, entire section illustrates how young men are systematically dehumanized and refashioned is killing machines, and reminds omewhat of "A Clockwork Oringe" in its portrait of the eprogramming of young men.

Gradually emerging through it all are the irreverent Pvt. Joker (Matthew Modine) and the earnest Cowboy (Arliss Howard), but engaging the D.I.'s special interest is the overweight simpleton Pvt. Pyle (Vincent D'Onofrio), whom the sergeant bullies and ridicules mercilessly until the kid goes over the edge.

Kubrick acidly demonstrates how successfully the Marine machine transforms boys into killers, and first act ends with a stunning act of violence that exposes the potential for a trained soldier to warp into an assassin.

Director's other point as he makes the jump over to Vietnam is that not even the contorted rigors of camp can prepare one for the realities of warfare; the demands of the former are a known quantity and can be fulfilled to the letter, whereas the latter is ruled by chance and uncertainty.

Film softens a bit in the midsection as Joker and Rafterman (Kevyn Major Howard), both working for Stars and Stripes, check the lay of the land. But the screws soon tighten as Cowboy's men, joined by the journalists, slowly move through the bombed-out city and begin being picked off by sniper fire. Pic concludes with a dramatic confrontation that echoes the climax of the first section.

Brilliantly staged and timed, protracted finale recalls "Paths Of Glory" in its searing delineation of war's awful essentials, but Kubrick's dispassionate calculation also gives the sequence the dimensions of a fateful chess game in which all are disposable pawns. The director's assessment of human beings and the world they have wrought remains low.

Much wonderment was devoted to how Kubrick, who won't fly and supposedly hasn't left the British Isles in some 20 years, would recreate the Vietnam War in the environs of London. He has done so with precise details but on a limited scale, with just a few soldiers running and hiding among the ruins in an urban conflict.

In this regard, production designer Anton Furst has amazingly fashioned a cohesive alien world, while lenser Douglas Milsome, moving up from second-unit cameraman, has helped his boss obtain a subdued, slightly desaturated look dominated by greens, blues and gray skies. Film is, unsurprisingly, technically impeccable.

While it doesn't develop a particularly strong narrative line, script by Kubrick, Michael ("Dispatches") Herr and novelist Hasford is loaded with vivid, outrageously vulgar military vernacular that contributes heavily to the film's power.

Performances by the all-male cast (save for a couple of Vietnamese hookers) are also exceptional. Surrounded on one side by humorously macho types such as Adam Baldwin's Animal Mother and Dorian Harewood's Eightball, and on the other by less secure soldiers such as Cowboy and Rafterman, Modine effectively holds the center by embodying both what it takes to survive in the war and a certain omniscience.

But most memorable of all, from the opening section, are Vincent D'Onofrio as the blubbery recruit who snaps from sweet dummy to madman, and Lee Ermey, a former Marine and Vietnam vet who doubles as technical adviser here (a role he filled on "Apocalypse Now," "The Boys In Company C" and "Purple Hearts") and is mesmerizing as the D.1. who never speaks beneath a shout. One shudders to think of Kubrick making him do 50 takes of all his scenes.

Cart.

Mon., Aug. 24, 1987

The Garbage Pail Kids Movie (Kidpic — Color)

An Atlantic Entertainment Group release. A Topps Chewing Gum production. Executive producers, Thomas Coleman, Michael Rosenblatt. Produced, directed by Rod Amateau. Coproducers, Michael Lloyd, Melinda Palmer from screenplay by Palmer and Amateau. Camera (Image Transform & United Color), Harvey Genkins; editor, Leon Carrere; music, Lloyd; production designer, Robert I. Jillson; set decorator, Hub Braden; costume designer, Judie Champion; sound, Clifford Gynn; Garbage Pail Kids animatronics, John Buechler, Mechanical Make-up Imageries, Inc.; assistant director, Thomas A. Irvine; casting, Pam Rack. Reviewed at Atlantic Entertainment screening room, W. Hollywood, Calif., Aug. 19, 1987. MPAA Rating: PG. Running time: 100 min.

Anthony Newley
Mackenzie Astin Captain Manzini Dodger . . Tangerine. . Katie Barberi Juice Ron MacLachlar Ali Gator . . . Kevin Thompson Greaser Greg . . . Phil Fondacaro Robert Bell . Arturo Gil Messy Tessie Sue Rossitto Valerie Vomit . Debbie Lee Carrington

Vile, smelly, rude, ugly—that's what characterizes "The Garbage Pail Kids Movie," a far cry from wholesome children's entertainment. Topps Chewing Gum sold the little creatures first as bubble-gum characters and now it brings them to life via this production. Better they should have left them inanimate. Boxoffice is iffy.

"The Garbage Pail Kids" is at the opposite end of the kid-film spectrum from saccharine stuff like the "Care Bears" series.

Each kid is distinguished by a revolting bodily function alluded to in their name: Windy Winston (flatulence is a speciality), Foul Phil (killer breath), Messy Tessie (gooey, running nose), Ali Gator (likes to eat toes) and Valerie Vomit.

They are germinated out of green slime in a garbage can heavily guarded by an eccentric magician cum antique dealer (Anthony Newley).

Mackenzie Astin, playing the shopkeeper's helper, inadvertently lets the midget monsters loose. At first he's revolted, then he warms to them as they help him become popular with the girl of his fancy, Tangerine (Katie Barberi), a punky neophyte fashion designer.

Astin's an innocent and Newley's likable, if conspicuously absent much of the time. But presence of a trashy femme as an object of the boy's desires and the sadistic circle she runs in is clearly not geared for adolescents.

There appears to be little distinction between what's good and bad behavior and the Garbage Pail Kids are about one notch higher on the discipline scale than the baddies who like to beat up on poor, defenseless Astin.

Usually children's film fare has some morals colorfully woven in with the adventure. This comes off as a total free-for-all for the Kids, whose antics go unchecked, while Astin learns at an early age that women can be manipulative

Granted, the Garbage Pail Kids seem to be having a lot of fun. The question is, can anyone stand watching them?

There is one glorious moment in the film — when the Kids get

locked away in the State Home for the Ugly.

Brit.

Thurs., April 30, 1987

Gardens Of Stone (Drama — Color)

A Tri-Star Pictures release. Produced by Michael I. Levy, Francis Coppola. Executive producer Stan Weston, Jay Emmett, Fred Roos. Coexecutive producer David Valdes. Directed by Coppola. Screenplay by Ronald Bass, based on the novel by Nicholas Proffitt. Camera (DeLuxe Color), Jordan Cronenweth; music, Carmine Coppola; editor, Barry Malkin; production design, Dean Tavoularis; art director, Alex Tavoularis; set decorator, Gary Fettis; sound (Dolby stereo), Thomas Causey; costumes, Willa Kim, Judianna Makovsky; assistant director, David Valdes; casting, Janet Hirshenson, Jane Jenkins, Bonnie Timmermann. Reviewed at Lorimar Telepictures screening room, April 24, 1987. MPAA Rating: R. Running time: 111 min. Clell Hazard..................James Caan

Clell Hazard.......James Caan Samantha Davis....Anjelica Huston "Goody" Nelson...James Earl Jones Jackie Willow.....D.B. Sweeney Homer Thomas.....Dean Stockwell Rachel Field...Mary Stuart Masterson Slasher

Williams Dick Anthony Williams
Betty Rae Lonette McKee
Lt. Weber Sam Bottoms
Pete Deveber Elias Koteas
Flanagan Larry Fishburne
Wildman Casey Siemaszko

"Gardens Of Stone," Francis Coppola's muddled meditation on the Vietnam War, seems to take its name not so much from the Arlington Memorial Cemetery, where much of the action takes place, but from the stiffness of the characters it portrays. As storytelling, it is a seriously flawed film. As a political tract, it is shamelessly incomplete. And as filmmaking, it is a major disappointment.

Coppola's name above the title will ensure some interest at the box-office, but somber tone and turgid pace are sure to keep the lines short.

Structured around the small details and formal rituals of military life, pic opens and closes with a funeral and in between is supposed to be the emotional stuff that makes an audience care about the death of a soldier. But it is a case of form substituting for feeling and although there is unlikely to be a dry eye in the house at the finale, there is a hollowness at the film's core.

As a two-time combat vet biding his time training young recruits for the Old Guard, the Army's ceremonial unit at Fort Myers, Virginia, Clell Hazard (James Caan) knows the war is wrong but cannot oppose it. Rather than protest, he feels it is his responsibility to prepare the young soldiers as best he can, especially young Private Willow (D.B. Sweeney), the son of an old Korean War buddy.

Script by Ronald Bass, from Nicholas Proffitt's novel, attempts to create sympathetic soldiers whose first loyalty is to their brothers in arms. It's a point of view, however, that totally begs the issue of moral responsibility and seals the soldiers off from the rest of the world.

Indeed, it is a world unto itself as Caan swaps tales of horrors and heroism with his buddy "Goody" Neison (James Earl Jones). It is hard to grasp the affection and values of these men although they are given numerous opportunitites to hold forth. Since there is little or no organic flow to the action, scenes are often merely set-ups for awkward exposition.

Most contrived of the relationship is Caan's affair with Anjelica Huston who plays a Washington Post reporter vehemently opposed to the war. For starters the attraction is assumed rather than demonstrated and Huston seems far too intelligent to make the choice she does. Basically the supportive woman waiting in the wings, she also has enough stilted dialog to destroy her character.

At the heart of the film is Caan's connection to the youngster, but Sweeney's character is such a gungho soldier that even the explanations offered here can't condone his actions. On a more visceral level, he's simply not an engaging presence.

Staging is surprisingly static and Coppola's view of army life lacks the emotional underpinnings to allow an audience to embrace its apologist politics. It is not enough to simply feel strongly about a position to make it dramatically convincing.

More to the point and Coppola's proven strengths are some lovely ensemble scenes such as when Sweeney courts his wife-to-be (Mary Stuart Masterson) and gets a decidely mixed reception from her family. Here the crossfire and play of conflicting values creates a tension that says more about the era than the puffed up posturing of the rest of the film.

Given the material they have to work with, performances fail to ignite the characters, with Caan having his moments but overall remaining mostly an enigma. Huston is often stiff and stagey while Jones is in another universe all together.

As in most Coppola films, production values are first-rate, with longtime collaborator Dean Tavoularis' production design evoking the mood of the times. Jordan Cronenweth's cinematography is dark and suggestive. If only the film had more to say. Jagr.

Tues., May 19, 1987

The Gate (Canadian — Color)

A New Century Entertainment/Vista Organization release of an Alliance Entertainment production. Produced by John Kemeny. Directed by Tibor Takacs. Screenplay, Michael Nankin. Camera, (Medallion Film Labs), Thomas Vamos; editor, Rit Wallis; music, Michael Hoenig, J. Peter Robinson; production design, William Beeton; sound (Dolby), Doug Ganton; special effects, Randall William Cook; makeup, Craig Reardon; coproduced by Andras Hamori; assistant directors, Michael Zenon, Bill Bannerman, Kathleen Meade; casting, Mary Gail Artz, Clare Walker. Reviewed at Cannes Film Festival (market), May 15, 1987. MPAA Rating: PG-13. Running time: 92 min.

Glen Stephen Dorff
Al Christa Denton
Terry Louis Tripp
Lori Lee Kelly Rowan
Linda Lee Jennifer Irwin
Mom Deborah Grover
Dad Scot Denton

Cannes — Well written and directed, with excellent special effects and sympathetic performances, "The Gate" is a winner in the horror genre. What it lacks in plot and originality, pic more than makes up for in scary monsters and good fun, while keeping violence within bounds to hold on to PG-13 status. Boxoffice prospects are good.

The Gate of the title is an innocentseeming hole in the backyard of a typical suburban home, through which the Demon Lord and his gruesome minions emerge to try to take possession of the earth.

Lead character Glen, a sensitive little boy plausibly limned by Stephen Dorff — vet of commercials and Disney's "Still The Beaver" — and his imaginative best friend (Louis Tripp) dig open the hole to get unusual rocks. They in-

advertently loose all the stored-up evil, though baddies don't strike till mom and dad go away for the weekend, leaving Glen's older sister (Christie Denton) in charge.

After a series of dark omens, including death of the family dog and a bout of levitation, the boys realize that something supernatural is going on. (Amusingly, they find out that the Demon Lord is behind it thanks to the liner notes of an LP by a heavy metal group.)

Attack by the evil forces, consisting mainly of waves of slimy pintsized trolls, takes up last third of the pic, building to a suitably chilling climax.

Realistic movement and expressions of the little monsters highlight Randall Cook's fine effects. But unlike most others in the genre, pic doesn't depend exclusively on the gory trappings of horror technology for its appeal.

Script — maiden effort by Michael Nankin — and knowing touch of Canadian helmer Tibor Takacs (producer John Kemeny is also Canadian) create and sustain interest in what becomes of the characters, though they remain stereotypes.

If any of the more recent horror titles can be deemed suitable for kids, this one shouldn't scare parents off, precisely because credible human elements predominate over ooze.

Jay.

Wed., May 13, 1987

The Glass Menagerie (Theatrical drama — Color)

A Cineplex Odeon Films release. Produced by Burtt Harris. Directed by Paul Newman. From the play by Tennessee Williams. Camera (Du Art Color), Michael Ballhaus; editor, David Ray; music, Henry Mancini; production design, Tony Walton; art director, John Kasarda; set decorator Susan Bode; sound, Andrew McKee; costumes, Walton; assistant director, Burtt Harris; as sociate producer, Joe Caracciolo. Reviewed at the Cannes Film Festival (In competition) May 11, 1987. Running time: 130 min.

Amanda Joanne Woodward
Tom John Malkovich
Laura Karen Allen
Gentleman Caller James Naughton

Cannes — Paul Newman's production of "The Glass Menagerie" is a reverent record of Tennessee Williams' dream play and one watches with a kind of distant dreaminess rather than an intense emotional involvement. It's a play of stunning language and brilliant performances creating living nightmares well served by Newman's direction. Like a literary classic, everyone will know about it, but relatively few will actually

Williams' characters are like a textbook of the tortured family, not because everyone has read the play in high school, but because he wrote them to be examples of lives eating away at each other. His accomplishment was to blend realism and symbolism into a kind of demonstration of how parents and children emotionally betray each other

In this dreamscape Amanda (Joanne Woodward) is the center of a universe of her own making and her children are her satellites. But she is every overbearing mother more than a specific character, and she and her children are drawn in broad strokes and dark colors that keep them at a distance and contain their emotional impact.

Newman has heightened this impression by framing the action at the beginning and the end with Tom (John Malkovich) returning years later to look back at the wreck of his life. Smack in the middle of Depression-era America, he, too, is any son who longs to escape the banality of his life and demands of his mother.

With his sleepy sweet voice and slightly fey body movements, Malkovich is able to suggest the feelings he is carrying inside as the casualty of a woman who has fed him illusions all his life.

But the greater victim in this world is his crippled sister Laura (Karen Allen), who is doomed to live in perpetual waiting for a gentleman caller who will never come and whose life is worthless.

While Amanda's sexual attitudes are even more antiquated today than when the play was produced in 1945, it is the psychology that still rings true

In this darkened deadend, Allen's wide open face shines with an unbearable sadness. When her gentleman caller finally does come, the clash between her reticence and James Naughton's hollow optimism is heartbreaking in its failure to hold out any promise.

But as in any great production of "The Glass Menagerie," all of the performances must reflect off of Amanda; and Woodward is a constantly moving center of nervous neurotic energy with her active hands and darting eyes always seeming to be reaching out for something to grab onto. Her frenzy when the gentleman caller is due to arrive and when he's gone is heated without being exaggerated.

Credit on this count must go to Newman, who has his hand on the emotional pulse of the piece and seems always to have the camera there too. Kudos also to cinematographer Michael Ballhaus, who virtually keeps the whole film bathed in a haunting glow suitable to a dream.

Henry Mancini's music is uncharacteristically subtle, while Tony Walton's production design and costumes add to the half-real, halfimagined atmosphere.

"The Glass Menagerie," was first filmed in 1950 with Jane Wyman, Gertrude Lawrence, Kirk Douglas and Arthur Kennedy. Play was filmed again for tv in 1973 with Katharine Hepburn, Sam Waterston, Joanna Miles and Michael Moriarty

Fri., Dec. 12, 1986

The Golden Child

(Fantasy comedy-drama-Color)

A Paramount release of a Feldman/Meeker production in association with Eddie Murphy Prods. Produced by Edward S. Feldman, Robert D. Wachs. Executive producers, Richard Tienken, Charles R. Meeker. Directed by Michael Ritchie. Stars Eddie Murphy. Written, coproduced by Dennis Feldman. Camera (Metrocolor), Donald E. Thorin; editor, Richard A. Harris; music. Michel Colombier; production design, J. Michael Riva; art direction, Lynda Paradise; set design, Virginia Randolph; set decoration, Marvin March; costume design, Wayne Finkelman; sound (Dolby), Jim Alexander visual effects produced at Industrial Light & Magic; visual effects supervisor, Ken Ralston; visual effects coordinator, Pamela Easley; makeup designed and created by Ken Chase; associate producer, Gordon A. Webb; second unit director, Peter Norman; second unit camera (L.A.), Robert Thomas. Reviewed at the National Theater, L.A., Dec. 10, 1986. MPAA Pating: PG-13. Running time: 93 min.

Chandler Jarrell	Eddie Murphy
Sardo Numspa	Charles Dance
Kee Nang	Charlotte Lewis
The Old Man	Victor Wong
The Golden Child	J.L. Reate
Til	andall "Tex" Cobb
Doctor Hong	James Hong
Kala	Shakti
Yu	Tau Logo
Khan	Tiger Chung Lee
Fu	Pons Maar

Tommy Tong Peter Kwong

"The Golden Child" is a golden turkey, which in this case means that a bad film will make a piece of change. Eddie Murphy represents the one and only draw, which will be quite enough to get the pic profitably through the holiday season. But the star, while still likeable, is operating here at reduced levels of energy, sass and humor, which would prevent the Paramount release from reaching blockbuster status.

Aside from the negligible "Best Defense," in which the comedian had a glorified cameo role, "The Golden Child" is by far the weakest and silliest film to date in which Murphy has appeared. A strange hybrid of Far Eastern mysticism, treacly sentimentality, diluted reworkings of Murphy's patented confrontation scenes across racial and cultural boundaries, and dragged-in ILM special effects monsters, film makes no sense on any level, which sometimes matters to mass audiences and sometimes

Concoction dreamed up by Dennis Feldman has Murphy as a social worker specializing in tracking down missing children who is recruited to rescue the virtually divine Golden Child. Eponymous character, a so-called perfect child with magical powers of good, has been kidnapped in an overblown opening sequence by an unmitigated villain portrayed by a bearded Charles Dance, who wears a long leather coat a la a Sergio Leone baddie.

Much nonsense ensues involving assorted bikers, chop-socky-happy Orientals, a serpentine sorceress and Charlotte Lewis, the dark beauty from Polanski's "Pirates" who is sent to inform Murphy that he is The Chosen One, i.e., the one who must save The Golden Child and thus rescue the world from the forces of evil.

The second unit, but not Murphy and Lewis, travels to Nepal at this point, which enables Murphy to produce a large knife which Dance says he will accept in trade for the kid. Going back on his word, the dapper Dance promptly transforms himself into a winged dragon, but the outcome of the climactic battle is as predictable as the ending of a Republic Western.

As in "Beverly Hills Cop," the villain is an imperious, jaded Englishman whose mansion Murphy must penetrate in order to save the day. Instead of taking on a bunch of rednecks, as in "48 HRS..." the master of jive and profanity here lets a pack of bikers know who's boss.

Michael Ritchie, who used to make films that were about something, directs in a visually busy and cluttered manner, and employs such baffling strategies as cutting away to a heavy metal music video while a major fight sequence is in pro-

gress.

Michel Colombier's score is brain-poundingly idiotic, but other contributions, including J. Michael Riva's production design, the gentler special effects involving birds and a dancing Pepsi can, and the presence of the beatific J.L. Reate (actually a girl) in the title role, represent fleeting grace notes in an otherwise mindless enterprise.

Tues., May 12, 1987

Cart.

Good Morning Babylon (Italian-French-U.S. — Drama — Color)

Vestron release (U.S.) of a Filmtre/MK2 Prods./Pressman Film Corp./RAI-1/Films A2 coproduction. Produced by Giuliani G. De Negri. Directed by Paolo and Vittorio Taviani. Screenplay, the Tavianis, based on an idea by Lloyd Fonvielle; Script collaborator, Tonino Guerra. Camera (color), Giuseppe Lanci; music, Nicola Piovani; art director, Gianni Sharra; costumes, Lina Nerli Taviani editor, Roberto Perpignani; sound, Carlo Palmieri; assistant director, Mimmola Cirosi, production manager, Tommaso Caleyi; associate producers, Fonvielle, Caldecot Chubb, Milena Canonero, Marina Gefter Carvi. Reviewed at the Club de l'Etoile, Paris, April 30, 1987. (Out-Of-Competition at Cannes Film Festival.) Running time: 115

11111.	
Nicola	Vincent Spano
AndreaJoa	quim de Almeida
Edna	Greta Scacchi
Mabel	. Desiree Becker
Donnanno	Omero Antonutti
D.W. Griffith	Charles Dance
Mrs. Grifftih Ber	angere Bonvoisin
The Venetian	Margarita Lozano
Massimo Venturiello.	David Brandon
Andrea Prodan	Brian Freilino

Paris - Italo filmmaking brothers Paola and Vittorio Taviani, working with a budget large by Italian standards but inadequate for the needs of their script, have made a molehill of a picture out of a mountain of an idea. "Good Morning Babylon" will need strong play on the Tavianis' arthouse reputation to get by, though even admirers may admit the directors, with their first pic in English, are out of their element with material that removes them from their cultural and geographic roots.

Buff expectations of a re-creation of the production of the Griffith masterpiece will be sorely disappointed by the Tavianis' fanciful, coyly schematic view of early Hollywood (in fact filmed largely in Italy), and sticklers of historical accuracy will let out a howl of indignation at their preposterous approximation of filmmaking in its pioneer days.

Lacking the material means to evoke a physical reality (with glaringly second-rate model work and glass shot special effects by art director Gianni Sbarra), the Tavianis try to compensate by treating their story as an intimate pastoral epic. Hollywood indeed may have looked like a sprawling bungalow colony, but the image of the film industry as a glorified day camp for adults is often risible.

The liberties taken with the realities of Hollywood on the eve of the war might have gone down better had the Tavianis succeeded in their characterizations.

But there is little depth or psychological insight in the twin protagonists, inseparable brothers (in the image of the Tavianis themselves) who set out for America to make the fortune that will save the family's venerable church restoration business from bankruptcy.

After a transatlantic crossing that's charmingly treated like a Chaplin vignette, the brothers work their way painfully across America until they happen upon a group of other Latin immigrants who've been hired to build the Italian pavilion at the San Francisco Exposition of 1914.

D.W. Griffith is excited by the expo pavilion and orders its architects to be hired for his planned superproduction. Though mere laborers, the brothers brazenly impersonate the master masons, but are exposed and relegated to menial labors.

Since the Tavianis' salute to the pioneers of cinema (likened by Griffith in one scene to the cathedral builders of history) can only be suggested, film's exaltation of the collective artisanal spirit is merely

an empty gesture.

Acting too, leaves something to be desired, with the inseparable brothers blandly portrayed by Vircent Spano and Joaquim de Almeda, and Griffith impersonated be Charles Dance as a smug artist who seems to anticipate his place if future film history tomes.

Desiree Becker and Greta Scacchi (so fine in Diane Kurys' movie land romance, "A Man In Love' founder as love interests for th protagonists.

Attractively lensed by Giusepp Lanci and scored by Nicola Piova ni, film could have benefited from some tighter editing, especially for Stateside playoffs.

Ler

Tues., Oct. 21, 1986

The Good Wife (Australian — Color)

Also: Peter Cummins (Ned Hopper).
Carole Skinner (Mrs. Gibson), Barry Hil
(Mr. Fielding), Susan Lyons (Mrs. Fielding), Helen Jones (Rosie), Lisa Hensley
(Sylvia), May Howlett (Mrs. Carmichael),
Maureen Green (Sal Day), Garry Cook
(Gerry Day).

Sydney — Ken Cameron's thir feature, "The Good Wife (filmed earlier this year as "The Umbrella Woman"), is a class romantic drama set in the sma Australian country town of Corimandel in 1939. Pic's downbestheme and serious tone will confine it to arthouses in most terr tories. It should do modest-to good business worldwide.

Rachel Ward toplines in her be role since "Dead Men Don't Wei Plaid" as the eponymous wil who's bored with her unexciting life in this rural backwater.

She's married to a burly, wel intentioned logger (real-life hubt Bryan Brown) and spends her tin cooking, cleaning and helping othe women in childbirth; part of he problem is that she's childless her

Sonny, her husband, and hi younger brother, Sugar (Steven V dler), who comes to stay with then are immature, unknowingly inser sitive young men who can't under stand Marge's loneliness and isolation.

When Sugar unexpectedly asks he may sleep with her, Marge' reaction is to suppose "one man' like another," and to approach he husband for permission — permission reluctantly given. But sex wit Sugar is even duller than sex wit Sonny, and Marge remains frustrated and unsatisfied until, 30 minute into the film, Neville Gifford (Sar Neill) arrives in town.

Gifford's the new hotel barma and instantly (and somewhat ur believably) makes a play for her i broad daylight in the main stree understandably, Marge refuses though she's obviously attracted Gifford warns her "you only go once chance with me," and he at parently means it.

Before long he has more wome

the can handle — married womas well as naive shoppirls and el chambermaids while Marge omes more and more obsessed 1 the handsome stranger, evenlly openly chasing after him, iging about scandal and shame nerself and her uncomprehendspouse.

The Good Wife" is the story of obsession; the obsession of a nan for a man who cares nothfor her. With fine performances n Ward, Brown, Neill and Vi-, plus exquisite recreation of a e-knit rural community just bethe outbreak of World War II. an impressive new Aussie duction.

en Cameron has already proved Monkey Grip" and "Fast Talk-' that he's excellent with acand for his first period film been ably assisted by the glowcinematography of New Zealer James Bartle ("The Quiet th") and production designer y Campbell.

ohn Scott did a tight job of edit-, but Cameron Allan's rather etitive music score adds little to picture. Jan Sharp has marlled a classy team for her first Strat. duction.

Wed., Dec. 10, 1986

Gothic

(British — Color)

Virgin Films release of a Virgin Visions uction. Produced by Penny Corke, Exive producers, Al Clark, Robert Deaux. Directed by Ken Russell. Screen-Stephen Volk; camera (Eastmancolor), Southon; editor, Michael Bradsell; mu Thomas Dolby; sound, Bruce White; uction design, Christopher Hobbs; assis-tirector, Iain Patrick; art director, Michael wwed at the London Film Festival, Nov. 986. Running time: 90 min.

ron . elley .Gabriel Byrne Julian Sands
Natasha Richardson ıry . ιire . Myriam Cyr Timothy Spall
Andreas Wisnlewski Polidori tcher irray. . Alec Mango shton Dexter Fletche Pascal King
Tom Hickey ur guide rkish automation Lynda Coggin chanical woman ... Kristine Landon rkish automation

ondon — The thinking man's Nightmare On Elm Street," or etic masterpiece capturing the g-ridden inspiration for a literevent? Ken Russell's "Gothic" nany ways defies classification. office potential may be limited, for unrelenting terror and style pic could gain cult impact.

ussell's films always have been much an acquired taste, but with thic" he is back to his theatrically avagant best in a similar style to ahler" and "The Music Lovers. et on a stormy June night in 1816 ie Villa Diodati in Switzerland, lrug-induced excesses of the poet on (Gabriel Byrne) and his four sts inspired both Mary Shelley to te "Frankenstein" and Dr. idori "The Vampyre," two ic horror classics.

c starts as Shelley (Julian Sands), over Mary (Natasha Richardson) her half-sister Claire (Myriam) arrive at the sprawling villa. lley is chased by poetry-mad ipies avid for his body, and runs he building to be met by Byron his lover/guest Dr. Polidori.

eing established poets and artisypes, they soon get down to some ous drug-taking, and after a short y in which they decide "it is the of dreams and nightmares," they 1 a seance round an ancient skull onjure up their deepest fears. y all accounts it is just a quiet ht in for Byron, but while Dr.

Polidori tucks himself away in his room to dream of vampires. Shelley and his two women become convinced there is something lurking

As the storm grows so does the terror in the villa, and Shelley, wandering into a ramshackle barn, comments "the smell of the grave is here.

As the group becomes more drugsoaked and terrified, the villa with its darkened passages, spiral staircases, shuttered rooms, and menacing candlelight, becomes a labyrinth of horror.

They eventually manage to conquer their 'monster' by smashing that pesky skull, the storm abates, and next thing you know it is morning, and everything was - surprise, surprise - drug-induced dreams.

Ken Russell has made an unrelenting nightmare that is both uncomfortable and compulsive to watch. Photography, by Mike Southon, and lighting are exceptional, and Stephen Volk's screenplay amply displays the power of imagination on minds wracked with opium.

Gabriel Byrne and Natasha Richardson (daughter of Vanessa Redgrave and Tony Richardson) are powerful and hold the film together, while Julian Sands is as wooden as in "A Room With A View" and his only saving graces are that he runs about well and looks poetic.

Timothy Spall, previously seen in the tv series "Auf Wiederschen ' is an unexpected delight as the Pet. foppish Dr. Polidori, and brings needed touches of humor to the pic.

Fri., July 24, 1987

Grand Canyon: The Hidden Secrets (Adventure — Color)

A Cinema Group venture and Investmore Ltd. presentation of a World Cinemax pro duction. Coproduced by Kieth Merrill and O. Douglas Memmott. Executive producer, Richard James. Directed and written by Merrill. Camera (Metrocolor in IMAX), Reed Smoot; music, Bill Conti; IMAX consultant and aerial photography, David Douglas; edi-tor, Stephen L. Johnson; production design-er, Roger Crandall; sound, Randy Thom. No further technical credits available. Reviewed July 22, 1987 at Mitsubishi-IMAX Theater, Los Angeles. No MPAA rating. Running

Cast: Bruce Simballa, Daniel T. Majetich, Coby Jordan, Martin Litto

This film, shot in 1984, is breaking out to dozens of IMAX theaters this year, as an example of a nearly-ideal use of the medium. Merrill has captured the grandeur of the Canyon in a manner and format that no documentary has ever been able to. Attempts at telling stories of the Canyon's past are mostly lame, and film perhaps would have been better if the pictures were allowed to speak for themselves. As it is, they overwhelm the story line and stand as a shining example of how technology can bring us closer to nature. Figures to be a long runner at any IMAX theater it plays at, since it's simply one of the best of its kind.

Mounting a camera on a helicopter as its winds through the gorgesand gullies of the Canyon, director Merrill creates a stunning series of shots that gives the viewer the impression of hang-gliding through the rocks.

Nearly as breathtaking are the sequences in the Canyon's rapids, which include one particularly daring stunt scene in which a wooden raft breaks up among the rocks and

Typical of this format, story re-

traces several expeditions of Canyon explorers, complete with reverent, whispered voiceovers that make awestruck pronouncements such as, "man passes in a whisper, a mere breath at the edge of eternity." This gets downright annoying after a spell.

Merrill would have been better served making this a straight documentary and retracing voyages of explorers, rather than having audience suspend disbelief for the sake of bad acting, stilted dialog and plot oversimplifications.

Still, the sweeping shots from in the air and on the Canyon's rim, and the large screen on which they are projected, rank among the most visually impressive in film history.

Film also has the capability to be projected onto an OMNIMAX (elliptical) screen, creating even more of a you-are-there impression but at the same time robbing the picture of some of its crispness. Formats are best kept to themselves, although this swapping figures to go on as long as there aren't enough new films made in either the IMAX or OMNIMAX formats to provide either with a steady stream of new pictures. Camb.

Wed., Jan. 14, 1987

Il Burbero THE GROUCH (Italian — Comedy — Color)

A C.D.I. release of a C.G. Silver Film production. Produced by Mario and Vittorio Cecchi Gori. Associate producer, Luciano Luna for Alexandra Film. Written and direct-ed by Castellano & Pipolo. Camera (Cinecitta Color), Alfio Contini; editor, Antonio Siciliano; music, Detto Mariano; art direction, Massimo Corevi. Reviewed at Artiston Cinema, Rome, Jan. 1, 1987. Running time:

Tito Forrisi......Adriano Celentano Mary Cimino Mary Cimino
Macchiavelli Debra Feuer
Giulio Macchiavelli Jean Sorel
Also with: Mattia Sbragia, Angela Finoc-

chiaro, Peppe Lanzetta, Percy Hogan.

Rome - Top b.o. attraction Adriano Celentano snarls and grumbles his way through his Christmas pic, "Il Burbero" (The Grouch), under the direction of vet comic team Castellano & Pipolo. Pic is a light, easy-todigest mix of Celentano comedy and tongue-in-cheek mystery, as the star grudgingly helps a dumb American blonde look for her missing husband. Boxoffice has been satisfying locally, and should garner the star his usual audiences offshore in related markets.

After N.Y.C waitress Mary (Debra Feuer) gets a phone call from new hubby Giulio Macchiavelli (Jean Sorel) in Florence, telling her to take the next plane because they've struck it rich, she crosses paths with the obnoxious lawyer Tito Torriso (Celentano).

Mary does some very dumb things, like falling out windows, and the Grouch withholds affection until the very last scene.

Unlike most Celentano pix, 'Grouch' is bereft of singing and dancing, but has more continuity than most, and keeps buoyant spirits for its duration. Pretty newcomer Feuer is a peppy plus and plays well beside Celentano's deadpan misanthrope.

'Grouch'' doesn't hang onto reality as much as U.S. adventure films, preferring cartoon-style gags like Tito blinding a pilot with a pocket mirror, even though the plane is flying away from him. Plowing through the silliness, audience can find a few entertaining gags at the bottom of the hayloft.

It's technically adequate. Yung.

Tues., Aug. 11, 1987

Ground Zero

(Australian — Thriller — Color)

A Hoyts (Australia) release of a Michael Pattinson-Burrowes Film Group presentation of a BDB production. Produced by Pattinson. Directed by Pattinson, Bruce Myles. Stars Colin Friels, Jack Thompson, Donald Pleasence. Screenplay, Jan Sardi, Mac Gudgeon; camera (Panavision, Eastmancolor), Steve Dobson; editor, David Pulbrook; music, Chris Neal; sound, Gary Wilkins; production design, Brian Thomson; line producer, assistant director, Stuart Freeman; production manager, Narelle Barsby; casting, Bruce Myles; second unit director - camera, David Eggby

Jack Thompson Trebilcock. Prosper Gaffney Donald Pleasence
Pat Denton Natalie Bate
Commission President Simon Chilvers . Neil Fitzpatrick Hooking. Wallemare Ballantyne Peter Cummins

Sydney — The pic with most nominations (9) in the 1987 Australian film awards is a crackerjack contemporary thriller with a powerful political theme. It should do great business Down Under, and perform solidly elsewhere. The Michael Pattinson-Bruce Myles film looms as one of the brightest Aussie productions.

Theme is a classic one: a man searches for the truth about his father's death more than 30 years ago, and in doing so stumbles on a secret that places him, and those close to him, in danger.

Harvey Denton (Colin Friels), a cinematographer, is first seen shooting a hot dog commercial in downtown Melbourne. His father was also a cameraman, and Denton is in the process of transferring his old 16m home movies to video when unexpected things start to happen.

His apartment is burglarized, and his film stolen; at the same time, his sister's house is also robbed. He starts to receive anonymous phone calls from a man with a strange voice urging him to watch the television news: Denton's ex-wife (Natalie Bate), a tv newsreporter, is currently covering an Australian Commission of Enquiry into British nuclear testing that took place in South Australia in the late '40s and early '50s.

Denton meets a mysterious type from ASIO (Aussie equivalent of the CIA) and learns that his father did not accidentally drown in 1953. as his family had been told, but was instead shot at the British test site. The ASIO man is played, with icy intensity, by Jack Thompson, giving another strong, but, for him,

very different, performance.

Denton's life is threatened, and he seeks the solution to the .nystery at the former test site in the desert, where he meets an old handicapped man who must communicate via an artificial voice-box; this old man had come from England to select the best sites for testing, but stayed on as an obsessed hermit. Donald Pleasence gives a characteristically strong performance in this role.

Plot comes down to some missing film, shot by Denton's father, which will apparently give lie to British assertions that no aborigines were killed during the tests; apparently Denton Sr. had filmed aboriginal bodies at the site. The villains turn out to be British secret service agents, trying to cover up what happened all those years ago.

All this will ring true to Australian audiences, because the Commission of Enquiry actually occurred (the film apparently uses actual testimony in some scenes) and the British have shown recently that they don't take kindly to the exposure of guilty secrets of the past (as evidence by the Thatcher gov-

ernment's attempts to suppress the book, "Spycatcher").

All this has been packed into a suspenseful thriller, which only falters slightly about two-thirds of the way in, to pick up for an edgeof-the-seat climax, and then an effectively unexpected epilog.

The production is handsome in every department, with superior photography (Steve Dobson), interesting production design (Brian Thomson) and a solid music score (Chris Neal).

Colin Friels makes an impressive hero, and the supporting cast is tops down the line. For Michael Pattinson, who produced and codirected, this is a big step forward after his last film, the disappointing youth "Street Hero.

Television footage of President Reagan and Aussie Prime Minister Bob Hawke discussing nuclear issues plus old newsreel footage of then-P.M. Robert Menzies at the South Australian atomic test site. add to the authenticity.

The film ends with a long list of service personnel known to have been at the test site, who have since died from cancer. Titles also note that no statistics were ever kept for aborigines who may have perished as a result of the tests: they were counted with the kangaroos and emus who died in the nuclear blasts.

Wed., Aug. 5, 1987

Hamburger Hill

(Vietnam War drama — Color)

A Paramount release of an RKO picture. A Marcia Nasatir and Jim Carabatsos production in association with Interaccess Film Distribution. Executive producers, Jerry Offsay, David Korda. Directed by John Irvin. Coproducer, Larry De Waay. Screenplay, Carabatsos. Camera (Rank Color, Technicolor prints), Peter MacDonald; editor, Peter Tanner; music, Philip Glass; production design, Austen Spriggs; art direction (Philip pines), Toto Castillo; sound (Dolby), David Hildyard; special effects coordinator, Joe Lombardi; assistant directors, Steve Harding, Soc Jose (Philippines); casting, Mary Colqu-houn, Ken Metcalfe (Philippines). Reviewed at Paramount Studios, L.A., Aug. 4, 1987. MPAA Rating: R. Running time: 110 min.

Languilli Anthony Barrile
Motown Michael Patrick Boatman
Washburn Don Cheadle . Michael Dolan Murphy... McDaniel. ... Michael Dolan
... Don James
Dylan McDermott
... M.A. Nickles
... Harry O'Reilly
... Daniel O'Shea
... Tim Quill Frantz..... Galvin... Duffy.. Gaigin . . Beletsky Tommy Swerdlow Bienstock... Courtney Vance ...Steven WeberTegan West Doc. Worchester Lt. Eden . . . Mama San Kieu Chinh Doug Goodman
...J.C. Palmore
.J.D. Van Sickle Lagunas . . Newsman.

"Hamburger Hill" is the third and least entry in the current cycle of Vietnam War dramas. Well produced and directed with an eye to documentary-like realism and authenticity, pic centers upon a military undertaking of familiar futility and, crucially, never cements the intense audience identification with its diverse dogfaces. Abundance of tough action should be enough to satisfy mainstream audiences, and approach is sufficiently serious to warrant a respectful reception for decent b.o. results.

Most of the Vietnam films released to date, going all the way back to "The Green Berets," have etched strong points of view, either political or artistic, and so have registered vividly in the mind and memory.

"Hamburger Hill" is probably the most straightforward of the bunch, as it follows a squad of 14

recruits from initial r&r through 10 days' worth of hell, as the men make 11 agonizing assaults on a heavily fortified hill.

First 40 minutes attempt to show the developing relationships among the guys, and screenwriter-coproducer Jim Carabatsos has been particularly attentive to delineating the tensions between the blacks and whites in the group; they're all on the same side in the same mess, but the blacks feel they have had no choice but to come, whereas somehow it's different for the white boys.

The joke here, however, is on the whites, since the majority of them are very thinly differentiated from one another. Few of the characters are supplied with recognizable backgrounds and personal stories, even if some have — a la "A Chorus Line" — little scenes all to themselves. Compounding the problem is that the actors seem rather similar to one another, more like New York stage actors than authentic rednecks.

In any event, the net result is that, by the time the squad is helicoptered in to begin its attempt to take the hill, the viewer feels something for only one or two of the men. By and large, these could be any guys from anywhere, which might be part of the point but doesn't help the interests of storytelling.

More than an hour is devoted to the protracted effort to scale the undistinguished piece of Vietnamese real estate of the title. As physically impressive as some of it is, the action also proves dispiriting and depressing, as the soldiers slide helplessly down the muddy slopes in the rain and are inevitably picked off by enemy gunfire.

With an empty, Phyrrhic victory at its conclusion, film is clearly commenting upon the senselessness of war, but also seeks to pay tribute to the grunts who had to do the dirty work, both by way of intercutting shots of the Vietnam War Memorial into the opening credits, and via a concluding poem.

On another level, pic implicitly endorses the view of many conservatives that the United States made its biggest mistake by agreeing to fight the war on the enemy's terms on its own turf, rather than blowing the communists to smithereens.

Carabatsos' dialog is rife with colorful Army slang, and most interesting quiet scenes have the G.I.s expressing their bitterness about the longhaired peaceniks back home who are dumping on them and, they imagine, making out with their girlfriends as well.

Director John Irvin, who shot a documentary in Vietnam in 1969, the year the action takes place, makes fine use of the Philippines locations and the verisimilitude supplied by the production team.

After underscoring the opening titles, original music by Philip Glass doesn't reappear again for 90 minutes, and even then only briefly. Most of the score is comprised of recognizable period rock tunes. Very welcome indeed is the RKO antenna logo, which appears just after the Paramount mountain at the outset.

Wed., March 25, 1987

The Hanoi Hilton (Drama — Color)

A Cannon Group release of a Golan-Globus production. Produced and directed by Menahem Golan, Yoram Globus. Written and directed by Lionel Chetwynd. Camera (TVC Color), Mark Irwin; editor, Penelope Shaw; music, Jimmy Webb; sound (Ultra-Stereo), Gary Cunningham; production design, R. Clifford Searcy; art direction, Carol

Bosselman; set decoration, lan Cramer; production manager, Joel Glickman; assistant director, Bob Bender; costume design, Richard LaMotte; casting, Perry Bullington. Reviewed at Broadway screening room, N.Y., March 16, 1987. MPAA rating: R. Running time: 123 min.

Williamson	Michael Moriarty
Fischer	Jeffrey Jones
	Paul Le Mat
	Stephen Davies
	Lawrence Pressman
	Aki Aleong
	Gloria Carlin
	John Diehl
	Rick Fitts
	David Soul
	David Anthony Smith
	Ken Wright
	Doug Savant
	John Vargas
	Michael Russo

New York — "The Hanoi Hilton" is a lame attempt by writer-director Lionel Chetwynd to tell the story of U.S. prisoners in Hoa Lo Prison in Hanoi during the Vietnam War. Special pleading aside (pic's end credits 16 former POWs for their assistance, listing on-screen the extent of their incarceration), pic is a slanted view of traditional prison-camp sagas, injecting lots of hindsight and taking right-wing potshots that do a disservice to the very human drama of the subject.

Chetwynd missteps very early on in this overlong (exceeding two hours running time) picture, with the characterization of Aki Aleong as the cultured but sadistic martinet of a prison commandant.

Aleong's performance is technically okay, but film fans will immediately recognize the verbal cadence and sinister styling as right out of Richard Loo's memorably hissable (and often-quoted) performance in "The Purple Heart" in 1944. What worked during World War II as propaganda won't wash in a 1987 feature film.

Michael Moriarty heads a curiously bland cast portraying POWs on a set that conjures up "Hogan's Heroes" rather than the gritty realism intended (pic was lensed in California with unconvincing jungle location scenes and stock footage for action material).

He's thrust into a position of authority when the ranking officer played by Lawrence Pressman is taken off to be tortured. Episodic structure introduces new prisoners as more pilots are shot down over a roughly 10-year span (including some comic relief such as one prisoner who says he fell off his ship accidentally and was captured).

Pic is desperately lacking side issues or subplots of interest (such as the fun black humor or interpersonal rivalries of such forerunners as Bryan Forbes' "King Rat") with Chetwynd monotonously hammering away at the main issue of survival in the face of inhuman treatment.

Main thematic point that carries the narrative was done far better in "The Bridge On The River Kwai"; namely, that the prisoners must maintain military discipline and lines of authority by rank at all costs, lest their captors isolate and break them down.

There is an intrinsic interest in watching the ensemble cast overcome their travails, but unbelievability intrudes, especially in later reels when characters start mouthing statements about the war that benefit from years of hindsight.

Worse yet, in attempting to present the POWs' p.o.v., Chetwynd moves deep into poor taste territory with verbal potshots at Bertrand Russell and Sen. William Fulbright, an embarrassing pastiche of Jane Fonda (an actress wearing a

"Klute" wig sitting next to a guy with a bad complexion is supposed to represent the star, renamed Paula, visiting North Vietnam), and a purely right-wing portrait of British journalist who covers up a POW's bloody, torture-induced wounds so that his newsreel camera won't show them and disturb his pro-North Vietnam interview.

This is propaganda pure and simple and sounds particularly loath-some (relative to the right's pronouncements lately regarding the Iran/Contra affair) when characters blame the news media back home reporting on the war for exacerbating the prisoners' problems.

Cast struggles with this intractable material, with the more familiar faces, such as Jeffrey Jones, Paul Le Mat and David Soul, emerging far too laidback for their roles. At the other extreme, Michael Russo really overdoes it as the heinous interrogation officer named (no kidding) Fidel the Cuban. That presumably rules out the film being invited to next year's Havana Film Festival.

Pic was once on track by Chetwynd as a telefilm, and given a network's standards-and-practices office, which would have removed the scurrilous material, it would undoubtedly have worked better than as a low-budget theatrical feature.

Mon., May 11, 1987

Hansel And Gretel

(U.S. — Color)

A Cannon Group presentation of Golan-Globus production. Producers, Menahem Golan, Yoram Globus. Screenplay by Nancy Weems, Len Talan. Directed by Talan; camera (color) Ilan Rosenberg; editor, Irit Raz; music (based on Engelbert Humberdinck opera) adapted by Michael Cohen with lyrics by Enid Futterman and Weems; production design, Marek Dobrowolski; editor, Raz; costumes, Meira Steinmatz; casting and associate producer, Patricia Ruben; executive producer, Itzik Kol; production manager, Zion Haen. Reviewed at Cannes Film Festival (Market), May 9, 1987. Running time: 86

Hansel	Hugh Pollard
Gretel	Nicola Stapleton
The Mother	Emily Richard
The Father	David Warner
The Witch	Cloris Leachman
Also with Eugene I	Kline, Warren M. Fei
nin Josh Buland Lut	uf Nouasser Beatrice

Shimshoni, others.

Cannes — Now that the cat of Cannon's Movie Tales features is out of the bag, the big question is, of course, will this cat sell tickets? It may, but only if a special audience of grandparents with younger than just sub-teen grandchildren wants to go back to the cinemas to watch thoroughly unsophisticated, but very straight story-telling fare with only the slightest inkling of Steven Spielberg Age technical production

values.

In essence, the Brothers Grimm's "Hansel And Gretel," from which producer and casting director Patricia Ruben and director Len Talan have fashioned this piece of family entertainment, is the straight goods as a horribly fascinating tale of innocence's triumph over the meanness of poverty as well as over witchcraft and any other power beyond the grasp of common folks.

With fragile, though neat production dress (most shooting done in an Israeli studio), and an economy budget, the film version comes through as a rather flat-footed rendition with stodgy acting and rather tame special effects.

In the story of the poor woodcutter's kids being imprisoned in the witch's candy house, the initial suspense suffers from being drawn out way beyond the filmmakers' skills in implying redeeming sly wit and fireworks asides.

True horror is on display only briefly and not convincingly to any alarming degree. As the wtih, Cloris Leachman does add a twist and a slightly Marty Feldman'ish turn to run-of-the-mill witch portraiture. As the kids' father, David Warner generates some sympathy, but in the title roles Hugh Pollard and Nicola Stapleton appear nice enough but terribly bland.

The original 19th century opera score by Engelbert Humperdinck has very little added to its insipid musical contents by its present-day adaptors. And plot's happy-ending wrapup is clearly a dud. Kell.

Wed., Jan. 21, 1987

Happy '49 (Drama — Color)

Executive producer, Vardar Film; coproduced by Union Film, Makedonija Film, Gradski Kina; directed by Stole Popov; screenplay, Gordan Mihic; camera (WS Color), Miso Samoilovski; editor, Laki Cemcev; music, Ljupco Konstantinov; costumes, Jasminka Jesic; sound, Jordan Janevski; set design, Nikola Lazarevski. Reviewed at the Preview House theater, Jan. 19, 1987. No MPAA rating. Running time: 128 min.

KostaSveto Cvetkovich
Bota Meto Jovanovski
VeraVladica Milosavljic
Father Aco Gjorcev
Buger Petar Arsovski
ToleGoce Todorovski
Dile Jorgev Dushan Kostovski

"Happy '49" is an impressive second feature from Yugoslavian director Stole Popov. Film is a wrenching, poignant portrayal of the disintegration of one Yugoslavian family during the Stalin era that is told with exceptional sensitivity and style.

Already the Grand Prix winner of the Yugoslavian film festival, "Happy '49" is that country's candidate this year for consideration for an Academy Award in the best foreign film category.

As the title suggests, this is the story set just after World War II when Joseph Stalin unleashed a web of secret police and informers to enforces totalitarianism behind the Iron Curtain — an effort vehemently opposed by Yugoslavia's leader Marshal Tito.

At a time when the country is struggling for its independence from the USSR, against democratic influences and torn by the separate interests of its own people — the Serbs, Croats and Slovenes — is the smaller conflict between two brothers in love with the same woman.

One is Kosta (Sveto Cvetkovich), a black marketeer, the other, Bota (Meto Jovanovski), a wavering communist. They have a love/hate relationship with each other over political differences, allegiance to their homeland and with Vera (Vladica Milosavljic), the object of desire.

The world that they grew up in has disintegrated, the new one is corrupt and everything seems to have soured the lives of their loved ones. "Happy '49" is a powerful love

"Happy '49" is a powerful love story that examines filial loyalty in the most adverse of times. It is a bleak, disheartening picture that is colored by suicide, violence, betrayal and sadness.

Like many other good films, it is the elements of personal strength within a framework of bleakness that gives this work cinematic distinction.

There is nothing black and white about Popov's visualization of this period in Yugoslav history. His characters represent a very real dilemma faced by many people living under strict regimes and I forces beyond their power erode individuality and the hur spirit.

As Kosta, Cvetkovich is at or self-centered and vain, later becoming the opposite. He gives a coplex performance as the handso leading man not ready to abance the brother he despises, or the value man who can never be entirely handsome the self-center of the s

Milosavlijc is fragile, as snould be, and Jovanovski propriately confused about ideologies, his emotions and qu dary with his uncle, the Inforbureau enforcer who is par responsible for his wrongful prisonment.

At just over two hours long, film — surprisingly — never la Maybe that's because Popov dire his subjects as if he were sitting to the sides, witnessing the perso tragedies of people too intriguing ignore. He strikes a nice balance filming expressive, realistic sce that never appear staged, while the same time are not so grimy to a turn-off.

Continuity, however, is flaw though it may not be the fault of filmmaker. This was a partia government-financed picture an low-budget one, which may count for some sloppy mixing; uneven camera work. This is escially evident in confrontatio scenes between Cvetkovich and underground adversary, Bu (Goce Todorovski) where punching and kicking sounds desynch well with the action. B

Wed., May 27, 1987

Happy Hour (Comedy — Color)

A TMS Pictures (The Movie Store) reliof a Four Square production. Executive ducer, J. Stephen Peace. Produce Peace, John De Bello. Directed by De E Screenplay, De Bello, Constantine Di Peace; camera (CFI Color); Kevin Morr editor, De Bello; music, Rick Patterson, Fox; song, Devo; sound (Ultra-Stereo), Thompson Jr.; production design, Di stunt coordinator, Monty Jordan; produsupervisor, Robert Matzenauer; cas Samuel Warren & Associates. Reviewe UA Twin 2, N.Y., May 22, 1987. MPA&ing: R. Running time: 86 min.

Richard Gillila Blake Teegarden. Fred .Jamie F Misty Roberts Tawny Kita Ty Henders Bill .Rich Lit Mr. X Hancock Eddie Deez Cathy Teegarden Kathi Diama Meredith Casey. . Debbie Gat Also with: James Newell, Beverly T Debi Fares, Eric Christmas.

New York — The filmmaker the intentionally bad 1977 rele "Attack Of The Killer Tor toes" have not progressed one ta in a decade, judging by the gularly unfunny "Happy Hou a purported comedy about be Poor writing and inept techni will have viewers claiming "S Grapes," pic's original title w shot back in 1985.

Richard Gilliland blandly prays a scientist working for North shall Beer who accidentally invaning redient that makes product irresistible and addictional Unfortunately, he cannot reprodist formula, so only one bottle the stuff exists, half of which is all len by rival Lakeside Beer.

Picture consists of poorly sta and ill-timed slapstick as a buncl zanies try to capture both brew ies' vials of the ingredient. Cha less overacting is encouraged director John De Bello, except the casting of mimic Rich Little: James Bond-type of suave spy, § en a very laidback, boring read by Little. Film is so dated that Li as a running gag vocally doing an mpression of Cary Grant to fool ecurity guards.

Despite its R rating, pic has no udity or sex. Technical quality is isgraceful, with poorly synched ialog (done intentionally as a gag n "Killer Tomatoes" but just a oner here), and no color correcting. Latter caused most of the print creened to be very reddish, virtualy making lovely costar Tawny Kiaen look as garish as a circus lown; some shots are greenish with no matching. The only pro redit is an effective music score.

Pic ends with a bimbette addressing the audience directly, informing probably is too stupid to undertand the film's message. Supposdly a satire of society's crassness epitomized in beer advertising, ilm's shoddy attempt to make a fast uck is transparently clear. Lor.

Fri., Aug. 7, 1987 Happy New Year

(Comedy — Color)

A Columbia Pictures release of a Columbia-Delphi IV production. Produced by erry Weintraub. Executive producer-roduction manager, Allan Ruban. Directed y John G. Avildson. Screenplay, Warren ane, based on Claude Lelouch's film "La Ionne Annee." Camera (Continental Color Peluxe prints), James Crabe; editor, Jane (urson; music, Bill Conti; sound, James labat; production design-associate producer, Villiam J. Cassidy; art direction, William F. latthews; set decoration, Don Ivey; assistant irector, Clifford Coleman; second-unit direcor. Bruce Malmuth: special prosthesis make p, Robert Laden. Reviewed at Columbia 5th venue screening room, N.Y., Aug. 5, 1987. IPAA Rating: PG. Running time: 85 mins. Nick Peter Falk Carolyn Benedict .Wendy Hughes Edward Sanders Tom Courtenay Sunny . NinaJoan Copeland Tracy Brooks Swope Curator Daniel Gerroll inthony Heald, Claude Lelouch.

New York — Crime pays off in his unpretentious buddy picture bout two middle-aged jewel thieves oing for the big score in West 'alm Beach, Fla. Columbia, which s releasing "Happy New Year" vithout much fanfare, may have alculated that the boxoffice payoff will be modest, but topliners 'eter Falk and Charles Durning eam with an easygoing charm hat will play amiably on the tv creen when this film makes its vay into video, feevee and broadast outlets.

Nick (Peter Falk) and Charlie Charles Durning) are career criminal vartners who've never been scared triaght by time in the slammer.

According to Durning's retropective voiceover narrative — a levice that neuters the film of sussense but tilts viewer sympathy oward the protagonists — tnese eist-meisters are a couple of oldashioned guys whose values were haped in the 1940s when "dames" nd "broads" could always be ounted on to fall for a bauble.

Film is funniest and most engrossng in the first hour or so when Falk nd Durning are casing the West 'alm Beach branch of Harry Winton jewelers.

Falk's modus operandi is to masuerade alternately as a doddering, ich octogenarian and his sister /ho, driven in a hot Rolls Royce hauffered by Durning, are shoping for five and six-figure trinkets.

This leads to a series of amusing neounters with the fey and smarmy ewelry store manager Edward anders (expertly rendered by Tom lourtenay), who from Falk's hard oiled honor-among-thieves perspective is a soulless money-grubber

deserving the worst.

Along the way Falk meets and falls for a beautiful, high-toned antiques dealer, Carolyn Benedict (Wendy Hughes), who moves in a circle of insufferably smug and wealthy pseudo-sophisticates.

After some initial resistance, Hughes improbably falls for this charming conniver because he's a man "who knows who he is," although she does not know just who Falk really is. She finds out when the heist goes awry and Falk is extradited back to New York while Durning gets away.

Even more improbably, Hughes stands by her man, although she does so in ample Manhattan luxury and with one slight breach of faithfulness. This sets up some clumsy sermonizing on sexual mores in changing times by Durning, whom the cops are hoping to catch by springing Falk on early parole. The police, however, underestimate this master of disguise, the power of love and the allure of Rio de Janeiro.

Although the film sags towards its resolution, director Avildsen handles the story with a light touch, including a gentle soundtrack of prerock 'n' roll standards that would be at home in a Woody Allen film and a cameo by Claude Lelouch who directed the original French film.

Mon., Oct. 6, 1986

Hardbodies 2

(Sex comedy — Color)

A CineTel Films release of a Lee Fry presentation of a Chroma III/First American Capital production. Produced by Jeff Begun, Ken Solomon, Dimitri Logothetis, Joseph Medawar. Executive producer, Lee Fry. Directed by Mark Griffiths. Screenplay, Griffiths, Curtis Scott Wilmot, based on characters created by Steve Greene, Eric Alter. Camera (color), Tom Richmond; editor, Any Blumenthal; music, Jay Levy, Eddie Arkin; art direction, Theodosis Davlos. Reviewed at the UA Movies, Granada Hills, Oct. 3, 1986. MPAA Rating: R. Running

Scott	Brad Zutaut
Rags	Sam Temeles
Sean	Curtis Scott Wilmot
Morgan	Brenda Bakke
Cleo	Fabiana Udenio
Cookie	Louise Baker
Logan	James Karen
Zacherly	Alba Francesca
Carlton Ashby	Sorrells Pickard
Lana Logan	Roberta Collins
Ms. Rollins	Julie Rhodes
Brucie	Alexi Mylones
Cleo's Father	George Tzifos
Kidnapper's Wife	Ula Gavala
Kidnapper	George Kotandis

With "Hardbodies 2," the sexploitation film comes almost full circle back to its 1950s origins in the nudist camp picture. Even if the Greek isle of Rhodes is not officially a nudist camp, it functions very much like one for the film's sole purpose, which is to expose as much sun-drenched female flesh as possible. This would have been fine for the raincoat brigade 25 years ago, but there's no conceivable audience for this limp dirty-old-men's farce except for die-hard fans of the modestly successful 1984 original.

Two randy Yanks arrive in Greece to work on a low-budget picture along with a third fellow, Scott, who is saddled with a drip of a fiancee.

With time for a side trip on a floating classroom, which all students attend topless, the cheeky threesome get through the chaotic film shoot, while Scott transfers the engagement ring to the finger of his native leading lady, whom he discovers waiting tables on the island.

Crude and stupefyingly unimagi-

native attempts at comedy abound, and only the scenery — both human and natural — keeps one from dwelling for 88 minutes on the fact that life is too short to fill it with this sort of thing.

Only bright spot is Fabiana Udenio, who somewhat resembles Michelle Johnson physically and comes off very sweetly as the local girl upon whom the sleaziness of those surrounding her has not yet rubbed off.

Cart.

Mon., June 8, 1987

Hard Ticket To Hawaii (Action — Color)

A Malibu Bay Films release. Produced by Arlene Sidaris. Written and directed by Andy Sidaris. Camera (United Color), Howard Wexler; editor, Michael Haight; music, Gary Stockdale; assistant director, M.M. Freedman; production design, Sal Grasso, Peter Munneke; costume design, Fienn; martial arts choreography, Harold Diamond; skateboard stunts, Russell Howell; second-unit camera. Harmon Lougher; associate pro-

noway Abiletienonii woss
Donna
Taryn
Jade Harold Diamond
Seth Romero Rodrigo Obregon
EdyCynthia Brimhall
PattycakesPatty Duffek
Jimmy-John Jackson Wolf Larson
Rosie Lory Green
Kimo Rustam Branaman
Ashley David DeShay
Michelle/

Michael Michael Andrews Whitey Andy Sidaris Also with: Kwan Hi Lim, Joseph Hieu, Peter Bromilow, Glen Chin, Russell Howell, Richard Lepore, Joey Meran, Shawne Zarubica.

New York — Currently in regional release, "Hard Ticket To Hawaii" is a very campy action picture that fondly recalls the bosomy Russ Meyer epics of the 1970s. Filmmaker Andy Sidaris, better known as a sports director for ABC-TV, shares Meyer's obsession with extremely well-built young women and is more than willing to share same with escapist audiences.

Former Playboy magazine models Dona Speir and Hope Marie Carlton topline as women running an air freight service in Hawaii who become entangled unwittingly with diamond smugglers.

Rowdy Abilene (Ronn Moss) is called in to help, bringing along his martial arts sidekick, Jade (Harold Diamond), with extraneous subplots involving an international drug ring and a large snake on the loose which, according to the risible dialog. "has been infected by deadly toxines from cancer-infested rats."

To quote the film's memorable coming attractions' tag line: "This ain't no hula!" Rather, Sidaris treats his disposable plotline and array of groaner one-liners as a thinly veiled excuse to have numerous beauties strip for the camera.

Voyeurs will be delighted, camp followers will have a field day with the bad acting and action fans should be contented with particularly outre setpieces. Strangest action a scenes include a skateboarder henchman (Russell Howell) shooting at the horses while carrying a full-size inflatable lovedoll; Moss simply whips out a bazooka and explodes the guy

plodes the guy.

Hilarious climax has the deadly snake popping out of the toilet to confront Speir (and, of course, yielding a wet t-shirt shot in the process), with Moss crashing in through a wall on his motorcycle in the nick of time to blast the beastie with his trusty bazooka.

As noted, cast is an eyeful, backed up by some lovely Hawaiian locations. Acting is hoot and tech credits are acceptable. Some of the in-jokes are a bit obscure, but Sidaris fans will recognize the auteur in the lengthy, self-mocking cameo role and appreciate endless plugola for his previous pix, particularly "Malibu Express," to which "Hard Ticket" is a sequel.

Thurs., May 28, 1987

Harry & The Hendersons (Adventure Comedy — Color)

A Universal Pictures release of a Universal/Amblin Entertainment production. Produced by Richard Vane, William Dear. Directed by Dear from a script by him, William E. Martin, Ezra D. Rappaport. Camera (DeLuxe Color), Allen Daviau; editor, Donn Cambern; production design, James Bissell; art direction, Donn Woodruff; set design, William James Teegarden; set decoration, Linda DeScenna; music, Bruce Broughton; sound (Dolby), Willie Burton; "Harry" designer, Rick Baker; assistant director, L. Andrew Stone; second unit director, Bissell; casting, Mike Fenton, Jane Feinberg, Judy Taylor (L.A.), Patti Kalles (Seattle). Reviewed at Universal Pictures, Universal City, May 21, 1987. MPAA rating: PG. Running time: 110

George Henderson John Lithgow
Nancy Henderson Melinda Dillon
Sarah Henderson Margaret Langrick
Ernie Henderson Joshua Rudoy
Harry Kevin Peter Hall
Jacques Lafleur David Suchet
Irene Moffit Lainie Kazan
Dr. Wallace Wrightwood Don Ameche

"Harry & The Hendersons" is proof that the folks at Amblin Entertainment, a.k.a. Steven Spielberg's production company, can't keep using the same "E.T." formula for every kiddy pic. Still, attachment of the filmmaker's name and a PG rating should generate a healthy b.o., but adults would be wise to bring a dose of insulin if they intend to sit through to the end.

Here, they've taken Big Foot, put him in Chewbacca's leftover "Star Wars" costume and given him E.T.'s sweet disposition — resulting in a lobotomized hairy animal who is so wimpy, it's painful.

What was once original, clever and appealing in previous Spielberg fare has become so predictable to be boring.

Film could be titled, "Big Foot Meets A Happy, Loving Suburban Family In The Woods Camping And Goes Home With Them To Become Docile When Bathed And Fed."

The excitement and suspense of running into Big Foot, later named Harry (Kevin Peter Hall), is wrapped up in the first few minutes of the film when Dad (John Lithgow) runs over the beast in the family stationwagon, figures him for dead, straps him onto the roof and takes him home to Seattle with the rest of the family sort of agreeing to it.

Theirs is a typical Spielberg house in the suburbs — decorated in yuppie coziness that's soon turned topsy-turvy when Harry revives and scares the living daylights out of the Hendersons.

To complicate matters, while he's causing havoc but acting more like the Cowardly Lion, nettlesome neighbor Irene (Lainie Kazan) is being a pest, while not far away, lifelong Big Foot stalker Jacques Lafleur (David Suchet) is hot on his nemesis' trail.

Maybe if Harry were ferocious a little while longer, or didn't understand English so well or acted a little funny or quirky, there might have been some spark to his character. About the only gags that work come from when he bumps his head on the door.

Family is a little too perfect also.

Mom (Melinda Dillon) is genuinely good natured, with a bratty son (Joshua Rudoy) and a very obedient teenage daughter (Margaret Langrick) to compliment Dad's growing hysteria as Harry is sighted around town and quickly becomes a misunderstood beast in the eyes of the terrified public.

Lithgow, who started out a hunter working in his father's gun store, comes to the realization that maybe shooting animals isn't a worthwhile form of recreation.

That's about it for message, but enough for screenwriters to milk it for all its worth.

At 110 minutes, outing really drags towards the end with a seemingly endless chase scene where Harry is pursued in a garbage truck by a zillion cops and several crazy rifle-brandishing zealots.

Filmmakers tried hard for a threehanky ending when Harry is ordered back to the wild to escape getting killed. Indeed, watching his soulful blue eyes tear up with the thought he's leaving his pals, the Hendersons, is bathos to the max.

Children want to be surprised and delighted by creatures they see on the screen, not wishing they would get lost.

Brit.

Tues., Dec. 2, 1986

Heartbreak Ridge (Action-adventure — Color)

A Warner Bros. release of a Malpaso production in association with Jay Weston Prods. Produced and directed by Clint Eastwood. Executive producer, Fritz Manes. Screenplay by James Carabatsos. Camera (Technicolor), Jack N. Green; editor, Joel Cox; music, Lennie Niehaus; production design, Edward Carfagno; set decoration, Robert Benton; costume supervision, Glenn Wright; sound mixer (Dolby), William Nelson; assistant director, Paul Moen; casting, Phyllis Huffman. Reviewed at The Burbank Studios, Dec. 1, 1986. MPAA Rating: R. Running time: 130 min.

Highway Clint Eastwood Marsha Mason Aggie Major Powers Everett McGill Sgt. Webster Little Mary . Moses Gunn Eileen Heckart Roy Jennings . Bo Svenson Boyd Gaines
Mario Van Peebles
Arlen Dean Snyder Le Lieutenant Ring Switch Choozoo Fragetti Aponte Profile Vincent Irizarry Tom Villard Quinones Mike Gomez 'Swede'' Johanson

"Heartbreak Ridge" offers another vintage Clint Eastwood performance — this time within a flat and predictable story. There are enough mumbled half-liners in this contemporary war pic to satisfy those die-hards eager to see just how he portrays the consummate Marine veteran, which should translate into bountiful boxoffice.

Eastwood is Gunnery Sergeant Tom Highway — a man determined to teach some of today's young leathernecks how to behave like a few good men. Decorated for action in Korea and Vietnam, the aging Eastwood confronts a ragtag bunch of feisty lads in a plodding series of drills that often look more like an unauthorized training film.

While relishing his chance to give these grunts some old-style values, Eastwood is challenged by a modern major (Everett McGill) bent on driving him out of the Corps because of his fisticuffs, hard-drinking and officer-challenging ways.

Audience is thus assured that he's going to punch out a few more and even tangle with the major himself. This Eastwood character, however, is supposed to represent more than brawn and have some added dimensions. Enter Marsha Mason.

She's cast as his foul-mouthed exwife struggling to survive by pushing drinks at a town bar. She just happens to have returned to the area right before he did and there's no doubt they'll be struggling to sort out previous troubles.

Effort to revisit that past prompts Eastwood to begin reading various femme publications in search of knowledge about such matters as nurturing a relationship — a comical touch that fails to give him much of the depth that was apparently intended.

Meantime, he is indeed shaping up his troops — who are destined, of course, to give the sarge their grudging respect. As one of that group, Mario Van Peebles delivers perhaps the film's finest performance as a soldier who initially cares mostly about rock guitar playing gigs and boisterous invective.

Eastwood's stern ways inevitably prevail as his platoon is called up for emergency overseas combat. Since this is a 1980s tale, there were few actual choices and presumably the Marines' calamitous Beirut experience was not a viable one. Grenada got the nod.

Guns are blazing as Eastwood's cadre faces its first real action after hitting the beaches. For good measure, he leads off the combat by blowing away a handful of Cuban regulars and swiping one of their renowned cigars for later pleasures.

As film moves towards its jingoistic peak in these sequences, Eastwood's insubordinate bent culminates in a final conflict with the major — whose orders he had blatantly ignored. No matter. A general conveniently shows up and absolves him of any wrongdoing.

Events are proceeding so assuredly by now that one nearly forgets that Eastwood has once more left behind Mason — just as the duo was possibly getting together. Earlier pretense of a genuine rapport — including one fine scene in which Mason recalls her side of his Vietnam experience — collapses upon his return from the Grenada battle when not a word is spoken as the credits roll. So much for an evolving man who can love, think, articulate and still go to war.

Notwithstanding unsatisfying storyline, Eastwood's direction stood out in sure pacing through latter twothirds of pic. Tege.

Mon., March 9, 1987 **Heat**

(Actioner — Color)

A New Century/Vista Film Co. release. Produced by Keith Rotman, George Pappas. Directed by R.M. Richards. Screenplay, William Goldman, based on his novel of the same title. Associate producers, John Vane, Vicki Taft; camera (Technicolor), James Contner; editor, Jeffrey Wolf; music, Michael Gibbs; art director, Jerry Wunderlich; sound, Rusty Coppleman; costumes, Norman Salling; assistant director, Jerry Sobul; second-unit director, Stan Barrett; casting, Rich Pagano (L.A.), Paula Herald (N.Y.). Reviewed at ABC Entertainment Center, Rm. 630, Feb. 25, 1987. MPAA Rating: R. Running time: 101 min.

Whatever spark of an absorbing story there is in this pitting of Burt Reynolds in his trademark toughie-with-a-heart role against slimy Las Vegas types is never allowed to come to full flame. A lukewarm actioner, "Heat" will find an audience in those who like gritty, seamy productions, but is sure to get a cold reception from femmes who've always been attracted to Reynolds' suave, witty ways.

Under R. M. Richards' plodding direction, William Goldman's script (adapted from his book) becomes a muddled, violent, and sadly humorless experience.

Role of a down-on-his-luck gambler and sometime bodyguard suits Reynolds just fine. He's known as "Mex," a nickname for his real name, Nick Escalante, a heavy known on the streets of Sin City as an occasionally brutal but principled man.

Reynolds' persona is established early on in a series of scattered sequences that show him drunk, hung over and generally depressed to the point that he will never get his act, or enough money, together to real-

ize his dream of leaving Vegas forever and visiting Venice.

Between shots of him popping another four aspirin, Reynolds finds himself grudgingly tracking down the perverted punk mobster's son (Neill Barry), who brutally attacked his former neighbor (Karen Young), and taking on an assignment to be

the bodyguard at the casinos for a teetotalling, low-rolling millionaire (Peter MacNicol).

Tone of the pic alternates between a sad portrayal of a lonely, bitter man and a slice-'em-up crime story involving the underbelly of Vegas where the police never figure in.

Reynolds has two interesting relationships, with Young and with MacNicol, and just when the dialog starts to get beyond the immediate and Reynolds seems about to open up, Richards cuts to the next scene.

It's never quite clear how these two people's lives have affected Reynolds' character. He seems to be affected by their vulnerability, but that's never seen in his face — resulting in a cold and somewhat detached drama.

The sight of Young's severely bruised face should elicit some deeper reaction from Reynolds than his physical drive to avenge her assailants. Even if the actress plays her role a little too much on the hard side (she never cries), she is still a pathetic figure.

Not enough is made of Reynolds' relationship to MacNicol, either — the more complex and interesting of the two supporting roles.

There was a kernel of an intriguing friendship that could have been better developed between them, but it is squelched time and again in favor of less involving scenes.

Pic races to conclusion after lumbering along for over an hour as Reynolds, rather masterfully, manages to spear, set afire and suffocate three of Barry's henchmen in a matter of minutes.

Lawless feeling from beginning to end results in a lackluster ending, even if the good guys do win out.

Best minor performance is turned in by Diana Scarwid, who exhibits as much emotion in her three speechless minutes on film as blackjack dealer as any of the other actors with speaking parts.

Tech credits are uneven. Richards resorts to slow-motion shots when Reynolds is doing his karate number, too reminiscent of countless low-budget pix, but the jazzy score adds mood where little exists. Brit.

Mon., March 30, 1987

Heaven (Docufantasy — Color)

An Island release of a Perpetual production for RVP Prods. Produced by Joe Kelly. Executive producers, Tom Kuhn, Charles Mitchell, Arlyne Rothberg. Directed by Diane Keaton. Camera (color), Frederick Elmes, Joe Kelly; music, Howard Shore; edi-

tor, Paul Barnes; art direction, Barbara Ling; sound, Peter F. Chaikin, John E. Kaufer, Tom Moore; associate producer, Tom Stovall; associate editor, Bruce Shaw. Reviewed at the Raleigh Studios screening room, L.A., March 25, 1987. MPAA Rating: PG-13. Running time: 80 min.

"Heaven" represents an exercise in frivolous metaphysics, an engagingly light-hearted but ultimately light-headed inquiry into the nature of paradise. Diane Keaton's feature directorial debut is a small-scale, non-narrative work using trendily shot interviews, snazzy optical effects and loads of film clips and songs to illustrate fanciful notions of the hereafter. Keaton's name will provide a draw in limited, specialized theatrical release, but it's no coincidence that a video company RVP Prods. (formerly RCA Video Prods.) produced the picture, since it will probably perform better in the home arena.

Keaton neither appears nor speaks from behind the camera in this oddity, which has a measure of quirky charm but little substance despite the potential weightiness of the subject.

Close to 100 individuals, all of them unknown except for boxing promoter Don King, are quizzed on such matters as, "What is Heaven?" "Is there sex in Heaven?" and "How do you get to heaven?"

The people are interviewed in a variety of distorted, high-tech, expressionistic settings, and lit and shot in such a way that portions of their faces are often obscured by heavy grid shadows and frame edges.

Peppering all these speculations are often goofy clips from old films and tv shows. Excerpts, none of which are identified, range from extravagant depictions of the afterlife, Hollywood-style, to the hilarious expostulations of early broadcast ministers and evangelists.

Keaton has a lot of fun with her raw materials, repeating images and sentences, creating funny, jazzy rhythms with the editing and music, cutting quickly and abruptly, and generally tap dancing madly in the postproduction end to keep the show moving.

Unfortunately, film really doesn't build into anything and, with only a handful of the dozens of interview subjects proving memorable, what's left is a picture about which one can legitimately ask, "Where's the beef?"

Undoubtedly with the ultimate video destination in mind, pic has been framed in the old 2.33x1 Academy format. Technically, it's a dream, and Keaton clearly has a feel for image manipulation and the joy of playing with the medium's tools. But 80 minutes is too long to spend on an illustrated amusement-park tour of wacky notions of what might lie in the great beyond. Cart.

Fri., May 22, 1987

Hellraiser (British — Color)

A New World Pictures release in association with Cinemarque Entertainment of a Film Futures production. Produced by Christopher Figg. Executive producers, Christopher Webster, Mark Armstrong, David Saunders. Written and directed by Clive Barker, based on his novel, "The Hellbound Heart." Camera (Technicolor), David Worley; music, Christopher Young; sound (Dolby), John Midgely; assistant director, Salwyn Roberts; art direction, Jocelyn James: stunt arranger, Jim Dow Dall.

Reviewed at Cannes Film Festival (market), May 13, 1987. Running time: 90 min. Larry Cotton......Andrew Robinson

Julia Cotton Clare Higgins
Kirsty Ashley Laurence
Frank Cotton Sean Chapman

Frank the monster Oliver Smith Steve Robert Hines Also with: Antony Allan, Leon Davis, Michael Cassidy, Frank Baker, Kenneth Nelson, Gay Barnes, Niall Buggy.

Cannes — "Hellraiser" is a wellpaced sci-fi cum horror fantasy which should appeal to a wide youth audience around the globe. Though there's little new here within the horror genre and the make-up effects occasionally look rather rubbery, item has several twists for the devotees of gore to delight in. Pic is well made, well acted, and the visual effects are generally handled with skill.

Film concerns a dissipated adventurer who somewhere in the Orient buys a sort of magic music box that is capable of providing its owner hitherto undreamed of pains and pleasures, and which ultimately causes him to be torn to shreds in a temple that transforms itself into a torture chamber.

Back home, his brother has just moved into a rickety old house with his new wife; digs had formerly been the dwelling of the ill-fated adventurer. Latter returns, by rising through the floor boards, partly decomposed, seeking human flesh and blood, which, when devoured, will enable him to regain his own human form.

To attain this, he uses his sister-inlaw, who also happens to have been his ex-lover. She lures men up to an empty room and dispatches them with a hammer.

But after a while, the brother's daughter gets wind of the queer goings-on, and she nearly becomes the new victim of the terror, as she grapples with the skinless uncle, the magic box, and the monsters that the box have evoked.

The monsters and the uncle (who has meantime killed her father) pursue her, but she manages to make her escape at the end after countless gallons of blood and ooze have been spilled.

The horror and violence should be a come-on in most theatrical markets, but could prove a handicap where such fare is prohibited. Pic is also rather strong for tv including, as it does, beside the anatomical horror effects, several fornication scenes. But, on the whole, audiences with a taste for horror should lap up this item with relish.

Besa.

Wed., June 10, 1987

High Season (British — Color)

A Hemdale release, presented by British Screen and Hemdale, Film Four Intl., Curzon Film Distributors and Michael White Film. Produced by Clare Downs. Executive producer, Michael White. Directed by Clare Peploe. Stars Jacqueline Bisset, James Fox. Screenplay, Mark Peploe, Clare Peploe; camera (color), Chris Menges; editor, Gabriella Cristianti; music, Jason Osborn; production design, Andrew McAlpine; costumes, Louise Stjernsward; associate producer, Mary Clow. Reviewed at Bijou Preview theater, London, May 26, 1987. Running time: 92 min.

Katherine Jacqueline Bisset
Patrick James Fox
Penelope Irene Papas
Sharp Sebastian Shaw
Rick Kenneth Branagh
Carol Lesley Manville
Konstantinis Robert Stephens
Yanni Paris Tselios

London — "High Season" is one of those picture-postcard films; it looks marvelous but has very little else to offer than the view. Pic may have some success in the Summer U.K. market, but offshore prospects appear limited.

Someone should have told director Clare Peploe that shots of beautiful scenery do not a boffo film make, and since she cowrote the screenplay (with Mark Peploe), she has to shoulder some of the blame for a weak and generally unfunny script.

The publicity material describer it as a "comedy about the absurdities of life," but the comedy—what there is—is too gentle to raise little more than a smile. In its favo the pic has very few pretensions and the scenery is easy on the eye.

"High Season" has a weaving plot with lead characters meander ing in and out, but it pivots around Jacqueline Bisset as a photographe and the folk she meets up within a tiny village in Rhodes.

As well as poking fun at the tourists, also thrown in are subplote about a valuable Grecian urn, as elderly Russian spy — an art historian friend of Bisset, with overtones of Anthony Blunt — and a rebellious Greek national.

Everything gets rounded off to a relatively happy ending with Bisse and her estranged hubby (James Fox) reunited, a tacky statue to the "unknown tourist" destroyed, and Sharp (Sebastian Shaw), the elderly spy, off to Russia via Turkey.

Best of the cast are Kenneth Branagh and Lesley Manville as a seemingly archetypal English tourist couple, but in fact he is a bungling British agent while she falls in love with Yanni, the local hunky Greek shopowner. Irene Papas seems to enjoy herself overacting madly, while James Fox looks unsure about what sort of film he is appearing in.

Chris Menges' photography makes you want to book the next flight to Greece, and in fact gives the pic a look of quality and style that belies the script. It is staggering to believe it took two people to produce such a weak story.

Other technical credits are fine.

Adam.

Fri., May 22, 1987

High Tide (Australian — Color)

A Hemdale release (in U.S.), Filmpac (in Australia) of an FGH/SJL production. Executive producers, Antony I. Ginnane, Joseph Skrzynski. Produced by Sandra Levy. Directed by Gillian Armstrong. Stars Judy Davis Screenplay, Laura Jones; camera (color) Russell Boyd; editor, Nicholas Beauman music, Mark Moffiatt, Ricky Fataar; production design, Sally Campbell; sound, Ben Osmo production manager, Julie Forster; assistan director, Mark Turnbull; casting, Liz Mullinar; associate producer, Greg Ricketson Reviewed at Cannes Film Festival (market) May 14, 1987. Running time: 104 min.

Lilli Judy Davis
BetJan Adele
Ally
MickColin Friels
ColJohn Clayton
Lester Frankie J. Holden
Tracey
Mechanic Mark Hembrow

Cannes — Director Gillian Armstrong teams with Judy Davis again for the first time since "My Brilliant Career" and the result is a powerfully emotional, beautifully made film which will touch the hearts of all but the very cynical. It should perform solidly worldwide in quality situations.

Setting is the small Australian coastal town of Eden. Davis plays a member of a trio of blond-wigged back-up singers to Elvis Presley initator Frankie J. Holden (the opening sequence, featuring their act, looks like a moment from Arinstrong's

second feature, "Starstruck").

Fired by Holden because of her bitchy attitude, and stranded wher her car breaks down, Davis rents a cheap trailer by the sea while she awaits completion of the necessary

uto repairs.

One night, when hopelessly lrunk in a restroom, she's helped by an adolescent girl (Claudia Karan) who lives with her grandmother Jan Adele) in another trailer.

Davis befriends the child, who pends much of her time in the surf on a board that belonged to her long-lead father; only when Davis meets he grandmother does she realize Carvan is her own daughter who he'd left years before in the afternath of her husband's death.

The grandmother wrongly believes Davis has deliberately tracked lown the child intending to take her tway; but Davis isn't looking to be ied down, though she's drawn to he wide-eyed child who is so obviously lonely and troubled. Thus the tage is set for an emotionally wrenching climax to the film.

If the above sounds perilously like coap opera, it doesn't at all play that vay, thinks to the well-written screenlay by Laura Jones, the fine direction of Armstrong and the powerful performances.

Jan Adele makes the grandmother, who still enjoys a sexual fling even hough she has a regular lover, a wonlerfully warm character. Claudia Carvan sharply etches the pain and nsecurity hiding beneath the tough om-boyish exterior of the child; and ludy Davis, always a consummate actress, provides great depth and subtlety, making her character come /ividly alive.

She even extends her range in this ole, and few will forget the scene where her daughter finally asks if she's her mother.

Davis' real-life husband, Colin riels, has a small but crucial role is a local fisherman with whom she has an affair and to whom she tells he truth about her daughter. When Davis walks out on him, he spills he beans.

Support roles are all well etched. Russell Boyd's camerawork is outtanding, and editor Nicholas Beaunan did a good job in keeping the acing tight. Opening scenes are eemingly disconnected, but it all tomes together quickly. Special nention should be made of the beautiful alegant gradit titles.

iful, classy credit titles.

"High Tide" seems set for good uns in Australia and major cities ound the world. It's basic story nay be a deceptively simple one, but thanks to Armstrong's assured landling it becomes a memorable emotional experience.

Strat.

Wed., March 18, 1987

Hollywood Shuffle (Comedy — Color)

A Samuel Goldwyn Co. release. Produced by Robert Townsend. Executive producer Carl Craig. Directed by Townsend. Screenlay, Townsend, Keenen Ivory Wayans; Camera (color) Crest Labs, Peter Deming; nusic, Patrice Rushen, Udi Harpaz; editor, W.O. Garrett; art director, Melba Katzman Farquhar; sound, William Shaffer; choreographer, Donald Douglass; casting, Brown & Livingston. Reviewed at Lorimar Telepicures screening room, March 11, 1987. MPAA rating R. Running time: 82 min.

Bobby Taylor Robert Townsend Anne-Marie Johnson
.....Starletta Dupois Lydia Bobby's Mother Bobby's Grandmother ... Helen Martin Craigus R. Johnson
Domencik Irrera NAACP President . Paul Mooney Producer Lisa Menoe Commercial Director Robert Shafer Mr. Jones .. John Witherspoon Ludie Washingtor Tiny Donald Keenen Ivory Wayans

Brimming with imagination and energy, "Holiywood Shuffle" is he kind of shoestring effort more appealing in theory than execution. Produced, directed and cowritter by actor Robert Townsend, pic is a free-form look at the trials and tribulations of black actors trying to make it in today's Hollywood. Scattershot humor misses as much as it hits, but film is entertaining enough to lure an audience looking for something a little different.

Based on what must be his personal experience looking for work, Townsend uses this as his starting point for a running series of disjointed vignettes, originally intended as shorts and later put together for a feature. Unfortunately, many of the bits simply go on too long and overall tone of the film is too casual and off-handed to bring home some serious points with much impact.

Target of Townsend's musings are the stereotyped roles that blacks are often forced to play, and their desire to do something better. At a cattle call for a blaxploitation pic to be made by a white production company, Townsend starts to feel guilty and questions what he's doing is right after he gets the part.

Examination of Townsend's inner workings gives the film an excuse for numerous digressions. Scenes in the actor's subconscious are dramatized on screen. Most amusing of these is a school for black actors, run by whites, of course, where the students are trained to shuffle and jive and generally fit the preconceived notion of what blacks are like.

Another brilliantly conceived bit is "Sneakin' Into The Movies," a takeoff of the Siskel & Ebert film reviewing show, this time critiqued

by some real soul brothers who have markedly different taste than their models. Several clips are created for the pair to review but the scenes drag and are not really very funny in themselves.

In addition, the segment seems to reinforce the very stereotyping of black sensibilities that the film is trying to dispel. While the point that "we'll never start playing Rambos until we stop playing Sambos" is well taken, Townsend is not above resorting to skin-deep characterizations and cheap shots to serve his own purposes.

Performances of the ensemble cast, many of whom play more than one role, are likable but without much that sticks to the ribs. Production values are predictably crude given the film's \$100,000 budget, but "Hollywood Shuffle" creates enough good will to overlook many of its shortcomings.

Jagr.

Wed., Oct. 8, 1986

Hoosiers

(Period sports drama - Color)

An Orion release of a Hemdale presentation of a Carter De Haven production. produced by De Haven, Angelo Pizzo. Executive producers, John Daly, Derek Gibson. Directed By David, Anspaugh. Stars Gene Hackman. Screenplay. Pizzo. Camera (CFI Color), Fred Murphy; editor, C. Timothy O'Meara; music, Jerry Goldsmith; production design, David Nichols; art direction, David Lubin; set decoration, Janis Lubin, Brendan Smith; costume design, Jane Anderson; sound (Dolby), David Brownlow; associate producer, Graham Henderson; assistant director, Herb Adelman; second unit director, Pizzo; second unit camera, Oliver Wood; casting. Ken Carlson. Reviewed at the Directors Guild Theater, L.A., Oct. 6, 1986. MPAA Rating: PG. Running time: 114

IP	
Coach Norman Dale .	Gene Hackman
Myra Fleener	Barbara Hershey
Shoote	Dennis Hopper
Cletus	Sheb Wooley
Opal Fleener	Fern Persons
Whit	Brad Boyle
Rade	. Steve Hollar
Buddy	Brad Long
Everett	David Neidon
Merie	Kent Poole
Offie	Wade Schenck
Strap	Scott Summers

Jimmy......Maris Valainis

"Hoosiers" is an involving tale about the unlikely success of a smalltown Indiana high-school basketball team that paradoxically proves both rousing and too conventional. Centered around a fine performance by Gene Hackman as the coach, Orion release will have to be groomed carefully, but there is likely an audience in Middle America for this solid, upbeat fare. Pic will open for a week's Oscar-qualifying run in Los Angeles in December, and will bow nationally early next year.

Opening stretch is highly promising, as Hackman, a former college coach, arrives in Hickory, Ind., in 1951 after a 10-year Navy stint. Although tough and proud, Hackman is clearly being given a last chance here by an old friend and, despite his bravura, he lives under something of a cloud.

The locals, who take basketball as seriously as they do God and corn, are slow to accept this new-comer, particularly when his unusual coaching methods turn a winning team into a loser early in the new season. Just when he's about to be booted out, a former star player returns, Hackman's lessons begin to pay off and the team starts winning.

And winning and winning. Hickory High, a farmland school with only 64 boys to draw upon for a team, soon finds itself heading for the qualifying rounds for the state championship. At this point, what had been a carefully calibrated, closely observed character study of a driven man and his charges becomes a well-made but standardissue sports yarn about the triumph of an underdog.

First half offers Hackman many special moments, as he superbly delineates the determination of a man to teach and, in the process, build character in his own way regardless of the negative consequences this might have for him-

self. In fact, the most intriguing aspect of the character is his invariable compulsion to help others and bring out their best, even at his own expense.

This tendency is seen not only in his relationships with the kids on the team, but in his unnecessary but valiant effort to resurrect the life of town drunk Dennis Hopper, a former basketball star and father of one of the team's current players, and in his partially successful effort to draw out school official Barbara Hershey, an emotional closet case.

During the opening reels, firsttime feature director David Anspaugh, an award-winner for his tv work on "Hill Street Blues" and "St. Elsewhere," paints a richly textured portrait of rural American life, both visually and through glimpses of the guarded reticence of the people. Dialog by Angelo Pizzo, like Anspaugh a native Hoosier, rings true, and the characters are neither sentimentalized nor caricatured.

Tension is built nicely as the farmboys advance through the playoffs, but it nearly becomes a different picture, one devoted almost exclusively to the matter of winning or losing games. The sport, as played in early 20th century gymnasiums, is covered extremely well, but the feeling persists that we're now in "Rocky" country, that we've seen this same routine many times over.

By the time the games accumulate, one has come to care about the

characters sufficiently to root them on, but one also regrets losing the concentration on them that brightened the earlier parts of the film.

Pic belongs to Hackman, but Hopper, after "Blue Velvet" and "River's Edge," gets another opportunity to put in a showy turn as a local misfit. Hershey's role is perfunctory, and one of the great virtues here is the authentic feel stemming from all-Indiana shooting and the extensive use of natives in the cast.

Fred Murphy's lensing is excellent, Jerry Goldsmith's score is engaging and uncharacteristically throbbing in a disco way, and David Nichols' production design and Jane Anderson's costumes contribute heavily to the verisimilitude.

Cai

Fri., July 10, 1987

Hope And Glory (Period drama — Color)

A Columbia release, in association with Nelson Entertainment and Goldcrest. Produced, directed, written by John Boorman. Coproducer, Michael Dryhurst. Camera (Technicolor), Philippe Rousselot; editor, Ian Crafford; music, Peter Martin; production design, Anthony Pratt; art direction, Don Dossett; set decoration, Joan Woollard; costume design, Shirley Russell; sound, Peter Handford; assistant director, Andy Armstrong; casting, Mary Selway. Reviewed at The Burbank Studios, Burbank, July 9, 1987. MPAA Rating: PG-13. Running time: 113 min.

Clive Rohan David Hayman Mac Derrick O'Connor Molly Susan Wooldridge Dawn Rohan Sammi Davis Grandfather Ian Bannen Bill Rohan Sebastian Rice-Edwards Bruce Jean-Marc Barr Grandmother Annie Leon Hope Amelda Brown Faith Jill Baker Charity Katrine Boorman Sue Rohan Geraldine Muir Roger Nicky Taylor Headmaster Gerald James Pauline Sara Langton Teacher Barbara Pierson Luftwaffe Pilot Charley Boorman	Grace Rohan	Sarah Miles
Molly Susan Wooldridge Dawn Rohan Sammi Davis Grandfather Ian Bannen Bill Rohan Sebastian Rice-Edwards Bruce Jean-Marc Barr Grandmother Annie Leon Hope Amelda Brown Faith Jill Baker Charity Katrine Boorman Sue Rohan Geraldine Muir Roger Nicky Taylor Headmaster Gerald James Pauline Sara Langton Teacher Barbara Pierson	Clive Rohan	David Hayman
Dawn Rohan Sammi Davis Grandfather lan Bannen Bill Rohan Sebastian Rice-Edwards Bruce Jean-Marc Barr Grandmother Annie Leon Hope Amelda Brown Faith Jill Baker Charity Katrine Boorman Sue Rohan Geraldine Muir Roger Nicky Taylor Headmaster Gerald James Pauline Sara Langton Teacher Barbara Pierson	Mac	. Derrick O'Connor
Grandfather lan Bannen Bill Rohan Sebastian Rice-Edwards Bruce Jean-Marc Barr Grandmother Annie Leon Hope Amelda Brown Faith Jill Baker Charity Katrine Boorman Sue Rohan Geraldine Muir Roger Nicky Taylor Headmaster Gerald James Pauline Sara Langton Teacher Barbara Pierson	Molly	. Susan Wooldridge
Bill Rohan Sebastian Rice-Edwards Bruce Jean-Marc Barr Grandmother Annie Leon Hope Amelda Brown Faith Jill Baker Charity Katrine Boorman Sue Rohan Geraldine Muir Roger Nicky Taylor Headmaster Gerald James Pauline Sara Langton Teacher Barbara Pierson	Dawn Rohan	Sammi Davis
Bruce Jean-Marc Barr Grandmother Annie Leon Hope Amelda Brown Faith Jill Baker Charity Katrine Boorman Sue Rohan Geraldine Muir Roger Nicky Taylor Headmaster Gerald James Pauline Sara Langton Teacher Barbara Pierson	Grandfather	lan Bannen
Grandmother Annie Leon Hope Amelda Brown Faith Jill Baker Charity Katrine Boorman Sue Rohan Geraldine Muir Roger Nicky Taylor Headmaster Gerald James Pauline Sara Langton Teacher Barbara Pierson	Bill Rohan Seba	stian Rice-Edwards
Hope Amelda Brown Faith Jill Baker Charity Katrine Boorman Sue Rohan Geraldine Muir Roger Nicky Taylor Headmaster Gerald James Pauline Sara Langton Teacher Barbara Pierson	Bruce	Jean-Marc Barr
Faith. Jill Baker Charity Katrine Boorman Sue Rohan Geraldine Muir Roger Nicky Taylor Headmaster Gerald James Pauline Sara Langton Teacher Barbara Pierson	Grandmother	Annie Leon
Charity Katrine Boorman Sue Rohan Geraldine Muir Roger Nicky Taylor Headmaster Gerald James Pauline Sara Langton Teacher Barbara Pierson	Hope	Amelda Brown
Sue Rohan Geraldine Muir Roger Nicky Taylor Headmaster Gerald James Pauline Sara Langton Teacher Barbara Pierson	Faith	Jill Baker
Roger Nicky Taylor Headmaster Gerald James Pauline Sara Langton Teacher Barbara Pierson	Charity	.Katrine Boorman
Headmaster Gerald James Pauline Sara Langton Teacher Barbara Pierson	Sue Rohan	Geraldine Muir
Pauline Sara Langton Teacher Barbara Pierson	Roger	Nicky Taylor
Teacher	Headmaster	Gerald James
	Pauline	Sara Langton
Luftwaffe Pilot Charley Boorman	Teacher	Barbara Pierson
	Luftwaffe Pilot	. Charley Boorman

John Boorman makes a real change of pace from his adventures through the realms of legend and the mystical in "Hope And Glory." Essentially a collection of sweetly autobiographical anecdotes of English family life during World War II, richly made pic boasts numerous piquant sequences, but hits mostly familiar notes and never develops a strong dramatic line. British homefront war stories have been few and far between in recent times, and those that have gotten made, such as "Hanover Street" and "Yanks," were duds, so it will be difficult for Columbia to carve out a domestic commercial niche for this one bevond the specialized houses where the director's name will mean something.

In creating by far the most conventional film of his highly individual career, Boorman often evokes memories of such stately, even sappily sentimental oldies as "This Happy Breed" and "Mrs. Miniver" while trying to convey how special his childhood was during the blitz.

After all the years, some of the emotional traps are still easy for the viewer to fall into, but material feels like slice-of-life vignettes rather than inspired fiction that has been properly reshaped for dramatic purposes

Tale is narrated from an adult perspective by Billy, an exquisite-iooking 9-year-old who finds great excitement in the details of warfare but also has the air of a detached observer and, therefore, possible future writer.

With war declared in 1939, Dad goes off to serve king and country (by becoming a typist) while Billy, his sexually precocious teenage sister and his other, little sister almost get shipped off to Australia, but at the last minute are held back to endure the incessant air raids and generally experience everyday life under extraordinary conditions.

Best scenes are those with Billy centerstage, and particularly those showing the unthinking callousness kids can display in the face of others' misfortune and tragedy.

As soon as a raid is finished, the boys can be counted upon to run out into the rubble of the devastated suburban houses and loot them.

The greater the destruction, the greater their excitement, and Boorman hits a very true note when some of the lads boast and fight over having been the first to learn about the death of a neighbor girl's mother.

After well over an hour, film has only briefly left the middle-class street, and one suspects that the design of the work is meant to reveal the war from this oblique vantage point. But then the Rohan family's home is destroyed, and Mom Sarah Miles takes the kids out to Grandpa's idyllic home by a river in the country, where the raging conflict becomes an afterthought.

Certain visual flourishes involving the water and lush greenery strikingly conjure up memories of other, more exotic Boorman films, and it appears that the writer-director might be entering more subjective territory as a way of charting his own flight from mundane reality to the world of imagination and creativity.

But, alas, this proves not to be the case, and the last half-hour of the picture, which is dominated by Ian Bannen's broad portrayal of the old patriarch, meanders way off the subject, never to return.

The melodrama normally found in such a setting has been largely avoided — Dad isn't injured or killed. Mom doesn't have an affair in his absence, there are no particularly painful separations, although Dawn, the adolescent daughter, predictably becomes pregnant thanks to her affair with a Canadian serviceman.

Unfortunately, Boorman has found little to serve in its stead except for some rosily remembered moments that made childhood for his generation in its own way unique.

Happily, young Sebastian Rice-Edwards is a marvelous camera subject and holds the center well. His younger sister, played by Geraldine Muir, is even cuter, as is Sara Langton as the girl whose mother is killed.

The adults, however, come off rather less well, with Sarah Miles overdoing things and projecting little inner feeling and no one else making much of an impression.

Physically, film is outstanding, as lensing, production design and costumes are all aces. Peter Martin's score, however, is annoyingly intrusive, and soundtrack in general seems much too loud and cluttered.

Car

Wed., Jan. 14, 1987

Hotel Colonial

(U.S.-Italian — Drama — Color)

A Columbia Pictures release (Orion in U.S.) of a Yarno Cinematografica/Legeis Theatrical coproduction Produced by Mauro Berardi William M. Siege. Executive producer, Ira R. Barmak. Directed by Cinzia Th Torrini. Screenplay Enzo Monteleone, with the participation of Torrini Barmak. consultation by Robert Katz, camera (Technicolor), Giuseppe Rotunno, editor, Nino

Baragli; music, Pino Donaggio; art direction, Giantito Burchilliaro. Reviewed at Barberini Cinema, Rome, Jan. 3, 1987. (No MPAA Rating.) Running time; 104 min.

Marco Venieri. John Savage
Carrasco. Robert Duvall
Irene Rachel Ward
Werner. Massimo Troisi
Also with: Anna Galiena.

Rome — "Hotel Colonial" is another Italian attempt to break into the international market-place. This American-financed coproduction comes closer than most to getting the look right, thanks to colorful lensing in Mexico locations masquerading as Colombia and a top cast of American thesps. Boxoffice looms as a large question mark for this bigbudgeter, the third feature of young femme helmer Cinzia Th Torrini.

Unfortunately, "Hotel Colonial" wastes the talent of its actors in a totally inconsequential, and pretty illogical, pastiche of adventure yarns that once more unveils the worst horrors of the jungle, where a mad Mr. Kurtz reigns over his heart of darkness.

When Marco Venieri (John Savage) learns brother Luca, an exterrorist, has just shot himself in Colombia, he goes to the refrigerator and has a flashback to their childhood on the Venice Lido, when Luc found his first real pistol.

Next, the improbably Venetian Savage is in Bogota to identify the body. Friendly embassy aide Irene (Rachel Ward) confirms the fingerprints of the mutilated corpse Marco sees aren't his brother's. Marco's thirst to know the truth about Luca's disappearance takes him through sordid back streets peopled by ill-intentioned locals, a picturesque cock fight and a filthy jail.

At last he arrives in a remote outpost with a comfy hotel and swimming pool, owned by the mysterious drug trafficker Carrasco (Robert Duvall). Carrasco takes a shine to the boy and tries to teach him to love the ways of the jungle by showing him how to blast cute monkeys out of trees, but to no avail

Not even a displaced Italian ferryman crazy over soccer (great Neapolitan character actor Massimo Troisi is pic's one true highlight) can coax a sportive spirit out of grave Marco. Then Marco discovers a chest full of little Indios girls' scalps, and takes it upon himself to mete out justice.

At least the action is fast-paced, and ace cameraman Giuseppe Rotunno turns every shot into a picturesque visual delight, thanks also to art director Giantito Burchilliaro's splashy sets, and helmer Torrini's skill at blocking the action.

Savage and Duvall do their valiant best to overcome painful dialog and hopessly cliched roles, but it's a losing battle. Only Troisi, who seems to have written his own part, gives pic a breather with some honest comic relief.

Yung.

Mon., May 11, 1987

Hot Pursuit

(Teen comedy - Color)

A Paramount Pictures release of an RKO Picture. Produced by Pierre David, Theodore R. Parvin. Directed by Steven Lisberger. Executive producers, Tom Mankiewicz, Jerry Offsay. Screenplay, Lisberger, Steven Carabatsos, from a story by Lisberger. Camera (Metrocolor), Frank Tidy; editor Mitchell Sinoway; sound, Manuel Topete, Eric Batut; art directors, Fernando Ramirez, Chris Dorington; production design, William J. Creber; music, Rareview; assistant director, Max Kleven; casting, Amanda Mackey. Reviewed at Paramount Studio screening room, Hollywood, May 8, 1987. MPAA Rat-

"Hot Pursuit" is the kind of terrific teen adventure comedy that is fast becoming a rarity in Hollywood. It doesn't pander to or insult its audience or alienate anyone over 13. What it does do is entertain — with hearty laughs, likeable characters and enough roadblocks to make matters interesting. Mostly, though, it's the altogether winning performance of John Cusak that distinguishes this effort from all others. Word of mouth could generate some heat at the b.o.

Cusak is supposed to join his girlfriend (Wendy Gazelle) and family on vacation, but misses the plane and has one heck of a time trying to catch up.

He lands on the Caribbean island okay, but then gets sidetracked by three ganja-smoking natives, then shanghaied by a buccaneer (Robert Loggia), finding himself at wits end when he lands in jail on trumped-up charges.

He gets a break, finally is within earshot of Gazelle and her family — now on a yacht that is soon to be a hijacked by a crook — when things go awry again.

This is the sort of romp that is predictable in its story line and original in its delivery.

Cusak has the kind of gawky, quasi-native personality that almost everyone can identify with their teenage years.

Under some fairly adversarial conditions (also some pretty unrealistic ones), he manages to mumble, bumble and tumble his way through the jungles of paradise with a certain kind of clumsy finesse that's hard not to chuckle at.

He is certainly one of the most appealing disheveled tourists to grace the screen recently. He's neither an Ugly American, a spoiled rich kid, sex-crazed jock, or yuppie preppy. Rather, he's a regular guy who becomes "Mr. Determined" in his quest to find his gal, with whom he has a real healthy, affectionate friendship.

It certainly helps that the characters he encounters, even the evil ones, are benign. Towards the end, when he tries to be a teenage Rambo against a bunch of gun-brandishing thugs, there's never a hint that anyone's gong to die. This is safe and sane comedy where the good guys and the bad guys play tag until the bad guys are had.

Loggia acts as if he's having a good time playing a rogue living on a none-too-seaworthy sloop and Gazelle is at first self-conscious, but later seems quite comfortable with her role as Cusak's adoring sweetheart.

That's not to say the pic has no shortcomings. There are numerous holes in the plot and some questionable typecasting of secondary characters.

Action starts out on a Jamaicalike island where the natives turn out to be friendly, though thoroughly preoccupied with getting stoned. Next land mass is a Banana Republic inhabited by Spanish-speaking greasy types who are either corrupt and/or stupid.

Director Steven Lisberger handles it all with real warmth, for which he can be forgiven a few trespasses. At one point, Cusak poses as a Latino to get on a flight, where he then exposes a hijacker with a fake bomb, takes command of the plane — and demands a pina colada.

Another surprise of this film is to realize, after a space of time, the absence of a throbbing rock score in the background.

Frank Tidy's beautiful cinematography makes this frenetic adventure with a hapless high schooler a real pleasure to watch.

Brit.

Fri., Jan. 23, 1987

Hotshot

(Sports actioner — Color)

An International Film Marketing release. Produced by Steve Pappas. Executive producers, Pappas, Herman Meckler. Directed by Rick King. Screenplay by Joe Sauter, King, with additional material by Ray Errol Fox, Bill Guttentag. Camera (DeLuxe color), Greg Andracke, Edgar Moura; editor, Stan Salfas; music, William Orbit', production design, (N.Y.) Ruth Ammon, (Brazil) Berta Segall; set decorator, Betsy Klompus; costumes, Karen Perry; assistant director, Matthew Carlisle; casting, Maurenn Fremont. Reviewed at Charles Aidikoff Screening Room, Beverly Hills, Calif., Jan. 21, 1987, MPAA Rating: PG. Running time: 91 min.

Jimmy Kristidis Jim Youngs
Santos Pele
Vinnie Fortino Billy Walock
Coach Leon Russom
Jerry Norton David Groh
Georgia Kristidis Rutanya Alda
Nick

Kristidis....Peter Henry Schroeder

"Hotshot" is another entry in the seemingly endless pile of "Rocky" clones, this time set in the world of professional soccer. Amateurishly made and acted, pic was probably designed for the huge international soccer audience and features a low-keyed and likable performance by onetime soccer hero Pele. But even fans of the sport are likely to find little to cheer about here.

Screenplay by Joe Sauter and Rick King pulls a switcheroo and instead of a young hero poor as a church mouse, he's rich as a king. In fact, that's his problem. Mommie and Daddy have better things in mind than a career in professional soccer for their son Jimmy (Jim Youngs).

And boys being boys, Jimmy rebels, leaves the safe confines of the family mansion and tries out for the New York Rockers. When things go sour there he heads for Brazil and soccer lessons from the retired master himself, played by Pele.

Director Rick King delivers this action with a remarkable lack of drama, helped in no small measure by a screenplay which may not have one good line to its credit.

Cast is uniformily stiff, with nearly every scene horrrendously blocked and totally false. Music by William Orbit is bombastic, if nothing else.

So, with so much going for it, does the soccer action save the day? Unfortunately, no. Game footage is, for the most part, dull and uninvolving, with camerawork by Greg Andracke and Edgar Moura concentrating on the narrow point of view and sacrificing the flow and scope of the game. King breaks into gratuitous slow motion too many times for it to have any purpose.

times for it to have any purpose.

As silly as "Hotshot" is, it's harmless nonsense. And though he is not a professional actor and doesn't seem to speak very much English, Pele is a delight to watch for his smile and handling of a soccer ball. Once a champ, always a champ, even in a losing cause.

Jagr.

Thurs., April 9, 1987

Hour Of The Assassin (Political Thriller — Color) A Concorde Pictures release. Executive producer, Roger Corman. Produced and directed by Luis Llosa. Screenplay-production supervisor, Matt Leipzig; camera (color), Cusi Barrio; editor, William Flicker; music, Fred Myrow; additional music, Richard Emmett; sound, Edgar Lostanau; art direction, Martha Mendez; stunt coordinator, Patrick Statham; sound unit camera. Enrique Masias; postproduction supervisor, Deborah Brock; associate producers, Fernando Vasquez de Velasco, Rolando Ore T.; special effects, de Velasco; casting, Daniel Camino, Juan Manuel Ochoa. Reviewed on MGM/UA Home Video vidcassette, N.Y., March 25, 1987. MPAA rating:

R. Running time: 93 min.

Martin Fierro Erik Estrada
Sam Merrick Robert Vaughn
Ortiz Alfredo Alvarez Calderon
Folco Orlando Sacha
Paladoro Reynaldo Arenas
Adriana Lourdes Berninzon
Navarro Ramon Garcia
Casals Oswaldo Fernandez
Villaverde Francisco Giraldo

New York — "Hour Of The Assassin," originally titled "License To Kill," is an unusual thriller to come from Roger Corman, filmed in Peru and dealing with a plot to cancel out dramatic reforms in the mythical South American country of San Pedro. Producerdirector Luis Llosa starts out like a house afire, with the opening reel playing like "Z," but pic falls back on standard ploys, including numerous car chases (so beloved by executive producer Corman) and peters out with an inconclusive ending. "Assassin" opened in Pittsburgh last January and is a May homevideo release.

Erik Estrada portrays a guy whose dad was a San Pedro communist killed by the group whose leader, Roberto Villaverde (Francisco Giraldo), has just won the election and promises democratic reform. Playing on this history, Estrada is recruited in Los Angeles. where he currently resides, and brought home to assassinate Villaverde to settle the score. Unbeknownst to Estrada, the people hiring him are not leftists but, in fact, another key faction, the rightwing generals who oppose both the left and Villaverde's democratic party.

Robert Vaughn has a large role here, as the CIA man from the U.S. Embassy who is trying to head off any assassination at all costs. He ultimately goes to the leftists, led by Casals (Oswaldo Fernandez) for help, and though they don't like the CIA, they unite with him against a common enemy, pinpointing Estrada as the likely hitman. Finale unconvincingly has Vaughn saving Estrada's life, with none of the issues at stake resolved.

Up until the finish, pic works well enough, with both Estrada and Vaughn performing adequately and providing lure to tv fans. Leading lady Lourdes Berninzon is uncomfortable with the English language dialog, as are other supporting players. Pic benefits from an excellent musical score by Fred Myrow, whose infrequent film assignments include "Leo The Last," "Soylent Green" and the plaintive "Lolly-Madonna XXX" music. Lor.

Thurs., May 21, 1987

House II: The Second Story (U.S. — Color)

A New World release. Produced by Sean S. Cunningham. Written and directed by Ethan Wiley. Camera (Metrocolor), Mac Ahlberg; editor, Marty Nicholson; music, Henry Manfredini; production design, Gregg Fonseca; sound, Kim Ornitz; associate producer, Andrew Z. Davis; casting, Melissa Shott; assistant director, Betsy Magruder. Reviewed at Cannes Film Festival (market), May 15, 1987. Running time: 85 min.

Bill Towner ... John Ratzenberger Kate ... Lar Park Lincoln Lana ... Amy Yasbeck Also with: Gregory Walcott (Sheriff), Dwie Brown (Clarence), Lenora May (Judith Devin Devasquez (Virgin).

Cannes — The original "House' had some suspense and quirky hu mor; the sequel has neither. Thi house isn't worth a visit. Pic may open strong if imaginatively mar keted, but word of mouth is likely to be murder. Don't expect a third story on the "House."

What passes for a plot in directo Ethan Wiley's throwaway screen play has Arye Gross move into th house in which his parents wer murdered 25 years earlier.

Gross hears about the existenc of a skull filled with jewelry, sup posedly buried with the body of on of his ancestors, so he and his en trepreneur pal Jonathan Stark exhum the 170-old-corpse, who's played by Royal Dano, unrecognizable under disfiguring makeup.

The old-timer wants to have funow that he's alive again, but a evil spirit wants that skull, and soo the trio are transported through the walls of the house into another work— a primeval jungle— to do battle

Wiley is determined to be cut rather than scary. He intros som cuddly creatures — a baby ptero dactyl, plus a critter who's a cros between a dog and a caterpillar – but they don't add anything to th pic's charm.

Action scenes aren't very thrill ing or suspenseful, and the pic's un certain tone will prevent much au dience involvement. Strai

Mon., March 9, 1987

Hunk

(Exploitation - Color)

A Crown International Pictures release Produced by Marilyn J. Tenser. Associat producer, Steven J. Wolfe. Written, directe by Lawrence Bassoff. Camera (Foto-Kem ir dustries Color), Bryan England; editor Richard E. Westover; art director, Catherin Hardwicke; music, David Kurtz; costum designer, Bernadette O'Brien; sound (Do by), Bernie Kriegel; assistant director, R.E Graham; casting, Paul Bengston, Davi Cohn. Reviewed at the Pacific Metro Theater, Los Angeles, March 6, 1987. MPAA ra

ing: PG. Running time: 102 min.

Hunk Golden John Allen Nelson
Bradley Brinkman Steve Levitt
O'Brien Deborah Shelton
Sunny Rebeccah Bush
Dr. D James Coco
Garrison Gaylord Robert Morse
Constantine
Constapopolis Avery Schreiber

"Hunk" is the perfect film follonely beach bunnies to see on a Winter day, a time when their favorite golden boys have retreated to the tanning salons. With no sex, no violence and only a handful of salacious lines, pic is easily adolescent fare.

As beach stories go, "Hunk" isn't exactly junk. And it does have a new twist that distinguishes it from other fun-in-the-sun films—the blond, blue-eyed main character doesn't surf. He does, however, drive a snazzy convertible, flex his pecs a lot and turn all the pretty girl's heads.

Here, the hunk is actually named Hunk. Hunk Golden (John Allen Nelson), formerly the computer nerd Bradley Brinkman (Steve Levitt) who trades his soul for the Summer in exchange for a hard body and instant popularity.

The she-devil who made him do it comes in the form of a gorgeous brunette (Deborah Shelton of "Dallas" fame). Trouble is, she's going to turn him back into a wimp by Labor Day if he doesn't consent to live in hell for all eternity and help her do Satan's work on earth.

ames Coco turns up as Dr. D. he-devil and mastermind of this ieme. He's about the only one in s silliness interested in Allen's ıl and not his body.

At one time or another, he shows as a Nazi, a pirate and a ghoulish reman - looking about as sinisas a cream puff. If he's having 1, and he appears to be, what es it matter? This isn't Dante's

Dialog is above par most of the e, sinking below the surf when it es to be serious. Screenwriter wrence Bassoff has a psycholot with the unlikely professional niker of Dr. Sunny Graves (Recah Bush) fall all over the goldboy, lecturing him on how beaus only skin deep.

f the filmmakers really believe 3, there wouldn't be much of a nt to this pic. Brit.

Fri., Dec. 19, 1986

Hyper Sapien PEOPLE FROM ANOTHER STAR (Sci-Fi Drama — Color)

\ Tri-Star Pictures release of a Jack wartzman presentation of a Taliafilm II duction. Produced by Schwartzman, al Levy. Directed by Peter Hunt. Screeny, Christopher Adcock, Christopher Blue. rnie Paige, from a story by Blue. Camera chnicolor), John Coquillon; editor, Rob-Benrich; music, Arthur B. Rubinstein: iduction design, Harold Lange; cos-nes, Kathy Marshall; sound, Frank Grifs: special effects. David Harris. "Kirbi" matronics, Rodger Shaw; casting, Mike iton Associates. Reviewed at the Cinex Royal Center, Vancouver, Dec. 14, 16. MPAA rating: PG. Running time: 93

lobyn	Syndey Penny
irt (Robert Edward	
McAlpin)	Ricky Paull Goldin
asper McAlpin	Keenan Wynn
avy	Rosie Marcel
en. Myrna King.	Gail Strickland
ncle Aric	Dennis Holahen
es	Chuck Shamata

Vancouver - Juvenile sci-fi in e '50s utopian style, revamped eptly for the Spielberg era, fails deliver more than indulgent turday matinee chuckles and oans. Colorless leads, hamred by leaden dialog, fail to ike any sparks from a Johnnyme-lately fantasy featuring a ozily executed comic alien, and iorse-opera setting that reeks of stiche. Unlikely to ring bells 10ng Homo sapiens, the listless c is hardly a contender in the eletide stakes nor will it prove uch more to the point during its S. release next February, expt among the undemanding failv audience.

Written originally by its initial dictor Michael Wadleigh ("Wol-1") this second of two pix lensed Western Canada in 1985 (the st was "RAD") was initially also Canada-U.K. coproduction.

It intros a trio of ETs from the anet Taros who flee from their othership moored on our moon. byn, a young woman, Tavy a rl-child, and Kirbi, a three-eved. ree limbed baby sloth are taken der the wing of rancher's son rt in Aladdin, Wyo. The quartet ads refuge at the homestead of isty Granpa Jasper (Keenan Wynn his 211th pic, and final screen pearance).

Meantime, Robyn's Uncle Aric, mmander of the mothership, sets t in desultory pursuit, tracked in rn by a suspicious cop, Les, who ars an assassination attempt on e life of Senator King, who is amping the boondocks for reelecon. King is a friend of the McAln family and at a barbecueedown at the ranch the aliens let the cat out of the bag.

Sluggishly directed by Brit veteran Peter Hunt, "Hyper Sapien" is floored by reliance on sub-par special effects that will not deceive the average six-year old. The Tri-Lat Kirbi is a gas-guzzling nonstarter that feeds on hot coals and drains off gas tanks to aid its growth. Cute

But Kirbi's human protectors are no more appealing, and his alien companions proffer no real competition when it comes to winning characterizations. Seldom, even in the annals of moppet sci-fi, has there been so much ado about so lit-

tle.

Technical credits are passable, with veteran Brit cameraman John Coquillon's lensing a severe disappointment, for those acquainted with his Peckinpah days. Arthur B. Rubinstein's score is more robust than the occasion merits.

Thurs., April 2, 1987

I Remember You YA TEBYA POMNYU (U.S.S.R. - Color)

Uzbekfilm Studio production. Directed and written by Ali Khamrayev. Camera (Color), Rifkat Ibragimov. Features Vyacheslav Bogachev, Gulya Tashbayeva, Zinaida Sharko. Art direction, Rustam Khamdamov. Reviewed at Kabuki theater, San Francisco, March 26, 1987. No MPAA rating. Running

San Francisco - "I Remember You," made in 1985, reportedly held out of release for a time based on politics and then, after Gorbachev's "glasnost," unspooled at the fest in Nantes, France, is simply a visual stunner.

The framing and cutting is so lushly crafted that one doesn't even need subtitles to be drawn into the unfamiliar civilization of Samarkand.

In a way, this story of a man looking for his father's burial site is a travelog, a roundtrip train ride across the Soviet. There's no "evil empire" ambience here; some of the snow-packed gray landscape looks, in fact, like patches of our own Mid-

The father died in the fighting near Leningrad in World War II. The son, in a not unfamiliar plot line, is trying to find himself by finding the grave.

This section of the screenplay is the pic's strength, particularly in brilliantly lensed and cut shots at a military burial records office-ware-

There's a wedding scene so painterly that the beauty of the image is emotionally touching; reminiscent of, but so much lovelier than, the "Godfather" and "Deer Hunter" ethnic wedding moments. Frisco film fest publicity calls director-writer Ali Khamrayev "a film poet," and in this case that is not hype.

The find-the-grave seg is too short, for the balance of the pic focuses on a budding train trip romance and flashbacks of the central figure's youth. The story process gets a bit remote at times. But the visuals keep carrying the pic. Print source is Goskino. Herb.

Wed., Nov. 19, 1986

Impure Thoughts (Fantasy comedy - Color)

An ASA Communications release. Executive producers, Kirk K. Smith, Stan M. Wakefield. Produced by William VanDer-Kloot, Michael A. Simpson, Michael J. Malloy. Directed by Simpson. Screenplay, Malloy, Simpson; camera (Eastmancolor), VanDerKloot; editor, VanDerKloot, Wade Watkins; music, James Oliverio; production design; Guy Tuttle; sound design, David Terry. Reviewed at USA Cinemas Copley Place, Boston, Nov. 12, 1986. No MPAA rating. Running time: 83 min.

John Putch Danny Stubbs. Terry Beaver William Miller Kevin Harrington Steve Barrett.. Lane Davies Young Bill... Young Danny Benji Wilhoite ...J.J. Sacha .Sam McPhaul Young Kevin. Young Steve Jason Jones Sister Juliet Father Minnelli . . Mary McDonough Sister of Purgatory narration by Dame

Also with: Mary Nell Santacroce, Charlie Hill, Carmen Thomas, Sandra Dorsey, Ran-di Layne, Muriel Moore, Carol Haynes, Dennis Harrington, Bob Bost, Shirlene Foss

Boston — "Impure Thoughts" plays like a Catholic version of The Twilight Zone." The Springfield, Mass., distributor of "Impure Thoughts" is attempting to tap into Boston's large Catholic audience. Without a strong word-ofmouth campaign, picture may have a difficult time reaching the audience that would most appreci-

An opening bit of dialog has Dame Judith Anderson defining purgatory; audience next is shown a grey, virtually featureless room. This is the waiting room to the afterlife, where the four main characters bide their time waiting to be cleansed of their sins.

There's Danny (John Putch), who was killed in Vietnam; Steve (Lane Davies), who's become a gay atheist; Bill (Terry Beaver), the businessman, and Kevin (Brad Dourif) the good husband and fa-

Since they are different ages and were never all close friends, they try to figure out what they have in common, other than having attended St. Jude's parochial school in West Virginia in the early '60s

Flashbacks show a series of black outs of what life was like for students of a Catholic school in that time and place. The jokes are somewhat predictable, and many will be lost on non-Catholic audiences.

As for Catholics, many may well be amused, and will appreciate that in spite of the jokes and complaints, the positive side of Church life is stressed as well.

Davies' character does much of the carping, having authored "The Catholic Church: From Latin To Lunacy.'' Dourif argues for the benefits of their shared education, but the flashbacks also show him to be the nerd of the group.

Whether Dourif's remaining the only practicing Catholic of the four is a comment on the result of a parochial school education is left for the viewer to judge.

Most of the film is spent either at the school or in purgatory, which prove to be rather unappealing locations, particularly with the low whine heard throughout the purgatory scenes. It is those few flashbacks outside the school that are highlights of the film. Kimm.

Mon., June 22, 1987

Innerspace (Comic fantasy-adventure — Color)

A Warner Bros. release of a Steven Spielberg presentation from Amblin Entertainment of a Guber-Peters production. Produced by Michael Finnell. Coproducer, Chip

Proser. Executive producers, Spielberg, Peter Guber, Jon Peters. Coexecutive producers, Frank Marshall, Kathleen Kennedy. Directed by Joe Dante. Screenplay, Jeffrey Boam, Proser, story by Proser. Camera (Technicolor), Andrew Laszlo; editor, Kent Beyda; music, Jery Goldsmith; production design, James H. Spencer; art direction, William Matthews; set design, Judy Cam-mer, Gene Nollman; set decoration, Richard C. Goddard; costume design, Rosanna Norton; sound (Dolby), Ken King; visual effects supervisor, Dennis Mauren; special makeup effects, Rob Bottin; assistant director, Pat Kehoe; second unit action director, Glenn Randall Jr.; second unit camera, David

Worth; casting, Mike Fenton, Jane Feinberg, Judy Taylor. Reviewed at the Avco Cinema, L.A., June 20, 1987. MPAA Rating: PG. Running time: 120 min.

Lt. Tuck Pendelton.	Dennis Quaid
Jack Putter	Martin Short
Lydia Maxwell	Meg Ryan
Victor Scrimshaw	
Dr. Margaret Canker	
Mr. Igoe	Vernon Wells
The Cowboy	
Wendy	
Pete Blanchard	
Dr. Greenbush	
Mr. Wormwood	
Ozzie Wexler	
Dr. Niles	
Lydia's Editor	
Duane	
Dream Lady	
Messenger	
Cab Driver	
Man In Restroom	

"Innerspace" has b.o. smash written all over it. An archetypal Steven Spielberg Summer entertainment directed by Joe Dante with his own special brand of fun, visual roller-coaster serves up the right blend of comedy, adventure and the fantastic to keep packing audiences in at least through Labor Day.

Using the same premise as the 1966 sci-fier "Fantastic Voyage, pic has a miniaturized Dennis Quaid injected into the body of Martin Short, but does entirely different things with the situation, as both Quaid and Short are subjected to equal amounts of outrageous

Hot dog Air Force flyer Quaid is prepared at the outset to be shrunken and pilot a tiny craft through the bloodstream of a laboratory rabbit. But evildoers are on to the unprecedented experiment and, after a hectic chase around Silicon Valley, the syringe bearing the fearless voyager finally implants itself in the behind of Short, a hapless grocery clerk.

Filmmakers' ingenuity quickly begins asserting itself. As Quaid travels through different parts of the unsuspecting schnook's body and speaks to him over his radio, Short believes he's going crazy. "Somebody help me, I'm possessed!" he cries, before finally accepting what's happened to him.

In the meantime, the baddies representing amoral multinational interests willing to sell the miniaturization technique to the highest bidder, are in hot pursuit of Short, since Quaid carries with him the missing piece of device's mechanism. As Quaid can see the outside world through Short's eyes on a video monitor, he directs his meek host on how to cope with physical threats in a macho way.

At the same time, Short enlists the help of Quaid's girlfriend, reporter Meg Ryan, to whom he quickly takes a shine and, to the growing annoyance of the helpless Quaid, he starts to romance. In all respects, pic's plot twists and turns are managed with great cleverness and ultimately dovetail smoothly.

Some major comic adventure and special effects set pieces are particularly successful, notably Short's escape from a speeding refrigerated truck into a car alongside, his computerized plastic surgery that amazingly transforms him into a villain and back again, the partial miniaturization of arch-fiends Kevin McCarthy and Fiona Lewis to the size of midgets (or gremlins), and a battle to the death between Quaid and an assassin conducted above a cauldron of acid in Short's stom-

Quaid is engagingly reckless and gung-ho as the pioneer into a new dimension, although he is physically constrained in his little capsule for most of the running time. Short has infinitely more possibilities and makes the most of them, coming into his own as a screen personality as a mild-mannered little guy who rises to an extraordinary situation. Meg Ryan is game as the spirited doll both men hanker for, and supporting cast is filled out with a good assortment of familiar faces.

Director Dante keeps the action moving at a dynamic but not exhausting clip, and never lets an opportunity for comedy slip by. The one major sequence in Jeffrey Boam and Chip Proser's script that doesn't work at all has Quaid temporarily transfered through the flimsiest of devices into Ryan's body and discovering she's pregnant, but otherwise, writers and directors have honed the material expertly for maximum entertainment

Technical aspects all have the expected Spielberg-ILM expertise.

Mon., Nov. 10, 1986

Inside Out

(Drama — Color)

A Sidney Beckerman production. Produced by Beckerman. Directed by Robert Taicher. Screenplay, Taicher, Kevin Bartelme; camera (color), Jack Wallner; production design, Jack Wright III; assistant director, Andrew Davis; production manager, Jim Czarnecki (credits listed during production: official credits not provided). Reviewed at Chicago International Film Festival, Nov. 1, 1986. No MPAA rating. Running time: 87

min.
With: Elliott Gould (Jimmy Morgan), Howard
Hesseman, Jennifer Tilly, Beah Richards,
Nicole Norman, John Bleifer, Dana Elcar.

Chicago - An interesting idea a psychological study of an agoraphobic in present-day New York City — is brought down by a stilted script and heavy-handed direction in "Inside Out."

Elliott Gould plays the hermit, Jimmy Morgan, who hasn't ventured out of his high-rise apartment in several years. He leaves the running of the business to the partner of his late father, spends his time with his daughter (from an earlier divorce) in the apartment, relies on an escort service to supply him with his sexual conquests and even has a drug dealer who makes housecalls.

Surrounded by the luxuries of life, including what seems like a remote control for everything but the toilet, Gould protects himself, screening his calls and checking out guests on his tv screen with a closed-circuit picture from the building's vestibule.

The danger of this lazy existence begins to dawn on Gould when in rapid succession, he realizes that he's blown all of his money market on losing sports bets, senses some impropriety in the business and learns from his ex-wife that she and their daughter are moving to Chica-

Meanwhile Gould is having trouble hiding his problem from old friend Howard Hesseman, who is on vacation from California. Hesseman keeps asking Gould to go out with him and finally becomes suspicious after a series of rejections.

The other major supporting performer is Jennifer Tilly (Meg's sister), the woman sent over by the escort service. In a pleasant, affecting performance, Tilly's Amy is a California girl oblivious to Jimmy's problems and her unquestioning affection brings him out of his doldrums until, finally, even she can't

The film winds up with Jimmy facing up to his illness - and the disaster that his life has become because of it.

But before it progresses that far,

the pace of the picture is ruined by terrible dialog and the romantic scenes with Gould and Tilly never really take off because they're not given anything credible to say to one another.

As a director, Robert Taicher has another, more peculiar problem: he can't seem to find enough interesting things with which to fill the screen.

There are way too many tv shots, including a few seconds from a football game with a voiceover that, if meant to be an approximation of Howard Cossell, is a poor one. Pic also features the millionth picture of a station's sign-off with the playing of the national anthem.

By the end of the film, Taicher's extended blackouts — some lasting two-three seconds — become annoying.

Gould, for the first time in a long while, is interesting. He's been phoning in his performances in recent years, but here makes an effort to create a fully-rounded character.

Ultimately, though, he can't decide exactly how he wants to play Jimmy; in most of the scenes he's the same kind of cynical off-thecuff character he played in "MASH" or "California Split," but in other, more sober scenes, he becomes almost a manic depressive, physically shaken by the idea of venturing outside.

The only warning the crowd has to these mood swings are Taicher's melodramatic excesses — violins rising to crescendo as Gould opens a patio door — so that any tension the viewer might have felt are sabotaged long before the film's climax.

Camb.

Thurs., March 26, 1987

Instant Justice MARINE ISSUE (Gibraltar — Color)

A Warner Bros. presentation of a Mulloway Ltd./Craig T. Rumar production. Executive producer, lan Charles Serra. Produced and written by Rumar. Directed by Denis Amar (uncredited). Camera (Fotofilm Color), Douglas F. O'Neons; editor-associate producer, Pieter Bergema; music, David Kurtz; sound (Dolby), George Stephenson; art direction-set design, Luis Vazquez; assistand director, Yousaf Bokhari; production manager, Francisco Ariza; second-unit car action, Alain Petit; casting, Ross Brown and Mary Webb (U.S.), Ellen Van Den Beld (Europe). Reviewed on Warner Home Video vidcassette, N.Y., March 1, 1987. MPAA rating: R. Running time: 101 min.

Scott Youngblood....... Michael Pare

Scott Youngblood Michael Pare
Virginia Tawny Kitaen
Jake Peter Crook
Major Davis Charles Napier
Silke Eddie Avoth
Dutch Scott Del Amo
Kim Lynda Bridges
Ambassador Gordon Lionel A. Ephraim
Shelton Maurice E. Aronow
Lt. Juan Munoz Aldo Sanbrell

New York — "Instant Justice" is among that new breed of feature films — competently made but not quite ready for theatrical release. Bearing a Gibraltar copyright, filmed in Spain in 1985 and backed financially by Warner Bros. International, the actioner has been sent directly to homevideo stores by WB on the domestic front, a decision that will only displease rabid Michael Pare fans.

Pic's director credit is garbled: on screen a fictitious "Christopher Bentley" is listed, while the press kit and cassette packaging give the nod to writer-producer Craig T. Rumar. Pic was actually directed, under the better title "Marine Issue," by French helmer Denis Amar (whose prison thriller "L'Addition" was released Stateside by New World), whose name has been removed for unspecified reasons.

Film opens with Pare receiving a

"Colt 45 Marine issue" gun as a present for saving the life of the U.S. Ambassador in Paris while jogging one morning. That also describes his character, a standard, loyal, gung-ho grunt who whips into one-man revenge action when his sister (played by Lynda Bridges) is murdered in Madrid.

To the cops there (led by Italian Western vet Aldo Sanbrell), it's a closed case, but Pare resigns his Marine post and sets out to clear his sister's name. Some good two-fisted action and car chases ensue.

Though well-made, pic lacks the spark to lift it from the rut of a million B-actioners. Pare is physically right though a bit too laidback for the role, functioning sort of in the manly but passive mode of Joe Dallesandro during his European sojourn. Heroine Tawny Kitaen, as a sort-of-prostitute who teams up reluctantly with Pare (in a fashion right out of a "Man From Uncle" tv episode), looks great but has a nothing role. Charles Napier gets to be a nice guy Marine officer while sidekick Peter Crook makes a good impression as a B-pic version of John Malkovich. Lor.

Fri., Nov. 14, 1986

I Lagens Namn IN THE NAME OF THE LAW (Swedish — Color)

A Sandrews release of Sprice Filmproduktion production with the Swedish Film Institute, Sandrew Film, SR/TV-2. Produced by Hans Iveberg. Directed by Kjell Sundvall. Screenplay, Iveberg, Leif G.W. Persson, based on Persson's novel, "Samhallsbararna" (Pillars Of Society). Camera (Eastmancolor, Panavision), Peter Mokrosinski; sound, Klaes Engstrom, Bjorn Gunnarsson; production design, Eric Lison Johnson; editor, Ulla Lennman; music, Ulf Dageby, production management, Peter Hald. Reviewed at the Sandrews 1-2-3, Malmo, Sweden, Nov. 4, 1986. Running time: 87 min.

Police Captain
JarnebringSven Wollter
Patrolman Hall Stefan Sauk
Patrolwoman Pilstam Pia Green
Patrolman MikkelssonMarvin Yxner
Patrolman BergSven Holm
Narcotics Chief Ernst Gunther
Djurgevic Carlo Barsotti
The Greek Micke Klover
The Yugoslav Gustav Bartfay
Nabben Rolf Skoglund
Puma Jonas Granstrom

Also with Johan Ulvesson, Asko Kivisto, Sten Johan Hedman, Lennart Hjulstrom, Mathias Henrikson, Margreth Weivers-Norstrom, Niels Dybeck, Anne Petren, Jans-Erik Lindquist.

Malmo, Sweden — Whether eventually pidgeonholed as entertainment or art fare, Kjell Sundvall's "In The Name Of The Law" comes through with flying colors to stand up to the best police thriller competition from Hollywood or anywhere else. Film has raw excitement, suspense, credible characters, a plot as muddy as the genre permits, superior acting and top-notch production look, and will attract audiences wherever there is a venue for subtitled pictures.

Based on the novel "The Pillars Of Society," by sociologist and police behavior researcher Leif G.W. Persson (who also supplied the basic prose for Bo Widerberg's "The Man From Mallorca"), "Law" looks through a Panavision lens darkly at a robust slice of life in a Stockholm police precinct headquarters and in the back alleys and occasional nicer neighborhoods surrounding it.

Seen in action are a quartet of young patrolmen (one of them a woman) who like to beat up drunks and dope addicts.

They also like to march (literally, to their Walkmans' strains of a pop-

ular Swedish martial song) into battle in private vendettas against anybody they imagine to be threats to society's nobler strata.

Trying to rein in this Wild Bunch is Jarnebring (played with irony and covert humor by Sven Wollter in the Sean Connery tradition), the precinct captain.

Capt. Jarnebring is being pressured by rookie cop and top brass alike, while fumbling manfully (and with the aid of a pretty secretary (Anita Wall) in the dark of a plot involving a narcotics division chief (Ernst Gunther).

Author-researcher Persson has based his work on the fact that out of 100 cases of police brutality brought to book in Stockholm last year, 95 were dismissed, filed and forgotten.

Nationwide, the prosperous Swedish welfare state has 1000 such cases reported annually against as many of its 17,000-member police force. The escalation in police brutality is seen by Persson as being in direct proportion to the rise in drug addiction among the socially bereft.

In the film, the four vicious, uniform-defiling youngsters wind up in a jail cell, but audience is given no reason to think that they won't soon be covering their regular beat again. And if one real criminal is caught, he is probably caught only because of the manipulations of the narcotics chief.

The police captain may take another night off with his lady friend or with his trombone, which he plays mournfully in his home, but he will, of course, soon be walking those mean streets again — unprotected by anybody but his own conscience.

All this is partly Raymond Chandler territory, but it is also thoroughly modern filmmaking. Peter Mokrosinski's cinematog-

Peter Mokrosinski's cinematography is inventive but it never interferes with the flow of the action, and neither does Ulf Dageby's quietly menacing music. Kell.

Fri., March 27, 1987

Iron Warrior

(Italian — Adventure — Color)

A Trans World Entertainment release. Produced by Sam Sill (Ovidio G. Assonitis). Directed by Al Bradley (Alfonso Brescia). Screenplay, Steven Luotto, Brescia; camera (Fujicolor, Technicolor), Wally Gentleman; editor, Tom Kezner; music, Charles Scott; special effects supervisor, Mario Cassar; costume design, Dana Kwitney; casting, Joanna Lester. Reviewed at UA Twin 2 Theater, N.Y., March 21, 1987. MPAA Rating: PG-13. Running time: 82 min.

Ator Miles O'Keeffe
Janna Savina Gersak
Deeva Iris Peynado
Phoedra Elisabeth Kaza
King Tim Lane

New York — "Iron Warrior" pretends to be a fantasy adventure, but it's really just an ad for the Malta tourist board. Beautiful locations filmed on the islands of Malta and Gozo provide the backdrop for incoherent filler, shot in 1985 under the title "Echoes Of Wizardry" by producer Ovido G. Assonitis, whose name is missing from the credits crawl.

Miles O'Keeffe appears for the third time as Ator, mythical warrior given a new history here: his twin brother was kidnapped in childhood by evil witch Phoedra (Elisabeth Kaza in a red fright wig). Some 18 years later, Ator is tapped by the nice sorceress Deeva (Iris Peynado) to protect Princess Janna (Savina Gersak) against evil, in the form of his brother who wears a silver skullmask, red bandana and breathes like Darth Vader.

Ator and Janna trek around the rugged Malta rockfaces on various missions for Deeva with absolutely no continuity to the narrative and some of the worst editing ever used in a feature film.

Every couple of minutes Ator gets involved in boring swordplay with baddies and, to pad the running time, footage is inserted of another actor (who doesn't resemble O'Keeffe at all) wearing a babushka over his mouth, fighting men on a horseback with his sword. A dragon-style monster is shown on poster and ads but fails to show up during the film.

Italian potboiler director Alfonso Brescia ("you can call me Al Bradley") imitates numerous George Lucas films here, lifting equal amounts from both the "Star Wars" sagas and "Indiana Jones" films. Theme is a poor imitation of "Star Trek: The Wrath Of Kahn" music.

O'Keeffe is embarrassing, posing instead of acting and, like the rest of the cast, stuck with a funny-looking punk-influenced hairdo. Deborah Raffin-lookalike heroine Gersak at least wears seethrough gowns throughout the picture, but the editor nastily deletes her several wet T-shirt scenes. Best thing in the pic is the exotic, blue-eyed black actress Iris Peynado, previously seen in Lamberto Bava's "Monster Shark"

Pic was obviously made for homevideo and undemanding foreign markets, but it's another insult from distrib TWE to Stateside theatrical B-picture fans. Lor.

Mon., May 11, 1987

Ishtar

(Comedy - Color)

A Columbia Pictures release of a Columbia-Delphi V production. Produced by Warren Beatty. Directed and written by Elaine May. Camera (Technicolor), Vittorio Storaro; editors, Stephen A. Rotter, William Reynolds, Richard Cirincione; sound and music coordinator, John Strauss; original songs, Paul Williams, Elaine May; production design, Paul Sylbert; art directors, Bid Groom, Vicki Paul; set decorators, Steve Jordan, Alan Hicks; costumes, Anthony Powell; sound mixer, Ivan Sharrock; assistant director, Don French; associate producers, David L. MacLeod, Nigel Wooll; casting, Howard Feuer. Reviewed at Cineplex Odeon Century Plaza Theaters, Los Angeles, May 9, 1987. MPAA rating: PG-13. Running time: 107 min.

Lyle Rogers Warren Beatty
Chuck Clarke Dustin Hoffman
Shirra Assel Isabelle Adjani
Jim Harrison Charles Grodin
Marty Freed Jack Weston
Willa Tess Harper
Carol Carol Kane
Emir Yousef Aharon Ipale

"This is unbelievable," says one on-screen character of the Warren Beatty-Dustin Hoffman singing duo. Comment might readily have been addressed not only to their warblings but to the entire "Ishtar" venture, which never gets beyond a lame concept propped up by two name talents. Despite their draw and audience curiosity, pic will have a tough time making back its large nut at the boxoffice.

It's inconceivable, really, that this picture ever would have been made without the packaging of writer-director Elaine May, producer-lead Beatty and Hoffman. In what amounts to a massive leveraging of their clout, trio managed to convince Columbia Pix to ante up lots of coin to capture this farce on film. Were they really just putting everyone on to see how far they could stretch the studio system and hold one group of exex hostage to the threats of taking the project

elsewhere?

Right from the start such flip rogance is suggested as Beat Hoffman work out some awful lics not just over the opening crebut the preceding Col logo. By time they're involved much later with a blind camel in the Afridesert, one can't help but wonde the camel was the only blind cruture who had something to do w this picture.

Here's how the story goes: Bea and Hoffman are struggling a mightily untalented songwrite singers in New York. They hook with talent agent Jack Weston (v delivers a fine character perf mance) and wind up getting bool into the Chez Casablanca in Mor co.

Before leaving town, Beatt wife Tess Harper splits after sh screen time in an odd little throway part. She's out of the pic good by the time the guys hit "road" — yes, there's the obvi parallel to the Hope-Crosby film

Arrival in Africa finds Beat Hoffman stopping in the mythickingdom of Ishtar, where most plausible development of all curs. Hoffman yields his passet to Isabelle Adjani moments at she makes an impassioned app during a random encounter at airport. Sure!

Swirl of events leads Beat Hoffman into vortex of Middle E political turmoil, with Adjani fu tioning as a left-wing rebel trying overthrow the U.S.-backed Emil Ishtar.

By this point audience has be asked to believe Beatty's cast against type. He's the kind of § here who stuffs a wad of ballpc pens into the pocket of his wh tee-shirt. He's also a bit of a bur kin from Texas and doesn't qu know how to deal with the ladi Right!

Hoffman, meantime, is stronger of the two — with mostreet smarts and a bit of perso flair. His nickname is The Ha and he can be shrewd. Hoffman calso be quite funny, but certain neither he nor Beatty should sianywhere but in the shower.

Enter Charles Grodin, who t stages all involved via his savagcomical portrayal of a CIA age He provides the connecting link a series of zigzag plot points unfo because of an important map.

Grodin recruits Hoffman for I agency. Adjani supposedly wi over Beatty. Beatty-Hoffman wi up on everybody's hit list and stuble around the desert on their sig less camel.

Desert sequences provide sol of the film's high points as Bea and Hoffman finally develop sol genuine rapport under adverse ce ditions. There are also a few hila ous scenes as vultures circle an chausted Hoffman and later as he thrust into role as a translator i gunrunners and their Arab buyer

Slapdash developments le Beatty-Hoffman back to the sta for a final, painful exercise of posterior forming. When they bellow Look To Mecca," almost anyo who's stayed this long is looking the exits.

Pic featured 26 original or stadard tunes — most of them "sunaby Beatty-Hoffman. No selecti was more satisfying than Mauri Williams' own recording of "Lim Darlin," which mercifully play over the closing credits.

Fri., May 15, 1987

It's Alive III: Island Of The Alive

(Horror melodrama — Color)

A Warner Bros. presentation of a Larco roduction. Executive producer, Larry Johen. Produced by Paul Stader. Written nd directed by Cohen. Camera (Techicolor prints), Daniel Pearl; editor, David (ern; music, Laurie Johnson; "It's Alive" neme music, Bernard Herrmann; sound Ultra-Stereo), Kim Ornitz; production nanager-supervising producer, Paul Kurta; pecial makeup effects, Steve Neill; original aby design, Rick Baker; model effects, Wilam Hedge. Reviewed at Cannes Film Fesval (market), May 12, 1987. Running time: 11 min.

Steve Jarvis Mi	
Ellen Jarvis	
SallyLa	
Raiston	Gerrit Graham
Dr. Perkins	
Dr. Brewster	Neal Israel
Swenson	
Miss Morrell	
Judge Watson Ma	cdonaid Carey

Cannes — Various types of satre blend satisfyingly in "It's Alive III: Island Of The Alive," a belated followup to Larry Cohen's 1970s tales of monster babies. The first pic was a sleeper hit for WB (thanks to a clever "Rosemary's Baby"-styled campaign) while "It Lives Again" flopped. Latest entry is geared towards homevideo, where it is a safe bet to please genre fans.

Michael Moriarty has a lot of fun (and is on a long leash) in the lead role of Steve Jarvis, father of a monster child who is in court to prevent the state from executing the kid as a threat to the community.

Opening scene and clever dialog that follows establish the premise of mutated monster children as rasing issues closely akin to the current hot topics of abortion and even the AIDS epidemic (a prostie who sleeps with Jarvis is horrified he didn't warn her of his status as father to a monster), allowing Cohen to mock attitudes without hitting such hot potatoes head on.

Sympathetic Judge Watson (Macdonald Carey) sides with Jarvis and the monster babies (four in all) are sent to a remote island to be quarantined.

Five years later (no new babes have been born in civilized society) Jarvis is summoned to be part of a scientific expedition to the island. By this time the kids have already grown up and even have an infant of their own on the island.

The monsters wipe out the scientists but capture Jarvis to pilot their ship to Florida in order to meet up with Jarvis' ex-wife Ellen (Karen Black), the mother of the informal

Jarvis is set adrift by them, lands in Cuba and in one of the film's typically playful scenes is escorted by some friendly Cubans to Florida after they believe his outrageous story.

The monsters, who look like midgets with grotesquely large heads, have fights with bikers, save Ellen from a would-be masher and conk out due to a measles-type rash just before the police close in on them. Wild happy ending has the Jarvises and grandchild forming a literal nuclear family, penniless but cheerful and carefree.

Cohen pours out the black humor and though film is too talky for an actioner it remains interesting throughout. The monsters are an effective combo of stop-motion animation, puppets and little guys in costumes. Laurie Johnson's score captures a nice 1940's film noir feel.

Lor.

Mon., July 20, 1987

Jaws — The Revenge (Thriller — Color)

A Universal Pictures release of a Joseph Sargent production. Directed by Sargent. Screenplay by Michael de Guzman, based on character created by Peter Benchley. Camera, John McPherson; editor, Michael Brown; music, Michael Small (theme from "Jaws," John Williams); production manager, Frank Baur; art direction, Don Woodruff; set designer, Carl Aldana; costume supervisors, Marla Denise Schlom and Hugo Pena; sound, Willie Burton; special-effects supervisor, Henry Millar; assistant directors, Wes McAfee and Stephen Southard; associate producer, Baur; casting coordinator, Valerie McCaffrey. Reviewed at Hollywood Pacific Theater, July 17, 1987. MPAA Retings 1961.13 Runging time: 100 min

nating, rusio, numing time, 100 mm.
Ellen BrodyLorraine Gary
Michael Lance Guest
Jake Mario Von Peebles
CarlaKaren Young
Hoagie Michael Caine
TheaJudith Barsi
LouisaLynn Whitfield

In search of yet another chapter to the "Jaws" saga, the makers of this installment have chosen to waste some good performances on an implausible, poorly-paced story with one of the more preposterous conclusions of the genre. Film may come out of the box strong, but word of mouth should prevent it from being too long of a runner.

Director Joseph Sargent politely telegraphs all of the attack scenes, so much of the suspense for audience rests with guessing just what part of the victim's anatomy and/or accompanying boat is going to get chomped in the next ambush.

Story picks up after the Roy Scheider character of "Jaws" and "Jaws 2" has died of a heart attack. Lorraine Gary nicely reprises her role as the now-widowed Ellen Brody, living a peaceful lfie in the New England resort town of Amity. One of her sons has taken over his dad's job as deputy sherif and is killed by a shark while out in the channel on a routine complaint.

Ellen heads down to the Bahamas to be with her other son, marine bioligist Michael (Lance Guest), and his family (Karen Young makes the most out of the small role of Michael's wife; nine-year-old Judith Barsi, more than just cute, gives a nice performance), and tries to convice him to quit his job because she's sure that "it" is out to get the family. The filmmakers never make clear whether the entire shark population is after the Brodys or, as they hint, one obsessed shark made the long swim from Amity to the Bahamas to further terrorize

Guest's well-controlled Michael, a man obsessed with and haunted by sharks, is the pivotal character in the film and his scenes with both Gary and Young are compelling.

Less successful are sequences with research partner Jake (Mario Von Peebles). Von Peebles is better here than in "Heartbreak Ridge," but his characterization is pretty much limited to wearing dreadlocks and saying "mon" a lot.

Oscar-winner Michael Caine, the '80s hardest-working man in show-business, is Ellen's delightfully irresponsible suitor, but doesn't get enough screen time to really develop the character, and the romance is dropped to make way for the silly turn of events that lead to the conclusion.

After the shark practially walks up to the beach to get a bite out of the third generation Brody (Barsi), Ellen goes out after "it" by herself. Things quickly get ridiculous, with Caine, Guest and Van Peebles landing a plane a few feet away from the

boat just in time for the ludicrous conclusion which, in one theater on opening day, earned derisive catcalls from audience members.

Sargent's pacing leaves a lot to be desired and the moment-of-attack sequences, full of jagged cuts and a great deal of noise, more closely resemble the view from inside a washing machine. While several scenes are appropriately grisly, story's lack of credibility stunts cumulative effect (in one scene, the shark draws blood from a boat).

Screenplay aside, some of the performances stand out. This installment didn't need Roy Scheider so much as original "Jaws" scripters Peter Benchley and Carl Gottleib.

Camb.

Fri., Feb. 27, 1987

Jim & Piraterna Blom JIM & THE PIRATES (Swedish — Color)

A SF (Svensk Filmindustri) release and production with Stugan. Produced by Waldemar Bergendal. Directed by Hans Alfredson. Screenplay by Alfredson and Stellan Skarsgard. Camera (Eastmancolor), Ralph Evers, Bertil Rosengren; editor, Jan Persson; music, Stefan Nilsson; sound, Christer Furubrand; production design, Stig Boquist; costumes, Cecilia Lagergren, Gunilla Alfredson; assistant director, Daniel Alfredson; production management, Ann Collenberg, Eva Ivarsson. Reviewed as competition entry in 16th Berlin Children's Film Festival within the 37th Berlin International Film Festival at the Urania, West Berlin, Feb. 21, 1987. Running time: 91 min.

Jim	.Johan Akerblom
His mother	Ewa Froling
His late father	Stellan Skarsgard
Mother's suitor	Jan Malmsjo
Mr. Kick-The-Bucket	Hans Alfredson
Potato Al	Stig Olin
The teacher	Carl Billquist
Inez	Lena T. Hansson
Bruno	.Kenneth Milldorf
Eskil Blom Je	esper Danielsson/
	Sten Hellstrom

Rolf Adolfsson Also with My Skarsgard, Sam Skarsgard, Licka Sjoman, Dora Soderberg, Borje Norrman, Mats Bergman, Vanja Rodefeldt, Jim

Adam Blom . . . Christina Schultzberg/

West Berlin — With "Jim & The Pirates" (actually "Jim & The Family Blom Pirates," in an allusion to Steve Canyon's "Terry" cartoon strip, director-writer-actor Hans Alfredson plunges daringly, and successfully, into a combination Hans Christian Andersen, Astrid Lindgren and Lewis Carroll territory. "Jim & The Pirates" would seem destined to find all kinds of venues worldwide.

For its running length and intended audience, "Jim & The Pirates" may be a bit too episodic, but the errant story line, with its obvious lack of narrative drive and psychological depth, still has plenty of other qualities of sly wit, good old-fashioned pratfalls plus food for mellow thought to redeem it. Acting is vigorous in most parts.

Death is actually what pic is all about. In reaching for the spheres of Andersen and Lindgren, Alfredson comes a little short of attaining such lofty goals.

Physical suspense eludes him and so does gut appeal to anybody's emotions when he tells about a preteenage boy's making up in Walter Mitty'ish dreams of glory for the loss of his father, a small-town restaurateur-cum-chef who comes back to encourage his son by teaching him how to chop onions; how to conquer his jealousy when faced with his mother's new suitor; and how to turn a rather dreary birthday party into a dream of a pirates' adventures at high seas.

Here again, quaint inventions of scenery and makeup do the trick

where dramatic substance fails. The Alice in Wonderland touch is yielding rich results in the Blom Family of Pirates with two actors combining for rich comical effect behind each mask.

Elsewhere, a provincial town street parade has kids taking over as adults while adults are clowning rather pitifully around made up as children.

Hans Alfredson himself turns up now and again as a kind of Death's messenger riding a delivery tricycle and whispering allegoric wisdom. For each such turn and twist, comic relief is provided by having some other adult getting his feet - or much more — wet. Screenplay cowriter Stellan Skarsgard (lead player in Alfredson's very adult thrillers "False As Water" and "The Simple-Minded Murderer") puts a mute on his acting as befits a ghost, while Ewa Froling (also the mother in Bergman's "Fanny & Alexander") as the young vivacious widow and Johan Akerblom as her son Jim are all sweetness and light without a single digression into the cute.

Tues., Jan. 27, 1987

Jocks

(Comedy — Color)

A Crown International Pictures release of a Mt. Olympus Prods. presentation of an Ahmet Yasa production. Produced by Yasa. Directed by Steve Carver. Screenplay, Michael Lanahan, David Oas; camera (Deluxe Color). Adam Greenberg; supervising editor, Richard Halsey; editor, Tom Silter; music, David McHugh; sound, Mark Ulano; production manager-associate producer, John Broderick; art direction, Randy Ser; set decoration, Greg Melton; casting, Mary Ann Barton, Michael Greer. Reviewed at RKO Warner 1 Theater, N.Y., Jan. 23, 1987. MPAA Rating: R. Running time: 91 min.

The Kid	Scott Strader
Jeff	Perry Lang
Nicole	Mariska Hargitay
Chip Williams	Richard Roundtree
Coach Beetleborn.	R.G. Armstrong
President White	Christopher Lee
Andy	Stoney Jackson
Tex	Adam Mills
Chito	Trinidad Silva
Ripper	Don Gibb
Julie	Katherine Kelly Lang
Chris	Tom Shadyac
Tony	Christopher Murphy

New York — "Jocks" is a formula teen comedy that shows flashes of life in some humorous scenes of psyching on the tennis court, but the package is sunk by warmed-over cliches. Pic was filmed at the end of 1984 (and foolishly has onscreen signs throughout tie-ing it in with a 1984 tournament) under the title "Road Trip" and finally comes off the shelf after shifting distributors.

Lame premise has the six-man tennis team of L.A. College trekking to Las Vegas for the championships, under the tutelage of Coach Chip Williams (Richard Roundtree).

Trying to sabotage their efforts is the school's athletic director (R.G. Armstrong camping it up in a poorly fitting wig), who wants tennis scratched from the roster since it's a 'pansy sport,' as well as the Dallas team and its girl friends, who are up to dirty tricks. The college president (Christopher Lee, in an atypically hammy performance) wants victory to impress the alumni.

Of course, the boys carouse in Vegas, with the same old wet t-shirt contest, assignation with call girls and other corny gags of the teengenre sex.

Film finally picks up on the court, where the antics of the team's animal, named Ripper (Don Gibb, with a linebacker's physique), are hilarious. Stoney Jack-

son is also quite funny pretending to be a gay blade out to psyche his opponent. Even here, director Steve Carver (known for his action pictures) goes to the well too often and the tennis hijinks become repetitious.

Lead players Scott Strader and Perry Lang are bland while heroine Mariska Hargitay reveals her resemblance (the eyes) to mom Jayne Mansfield, but is once again stuck with a crummy role. Smaller roles, including the requisite topless girls and a funny transvestite, are uncredited.

Lor.

Fri., Jan. 23, 1987

John And The Missus (Drama — Canadian — Color)

A Peter O'Brian/Independent Pictures production. Produced by O'Brian, John Hunter. Executive producer, O'Brian. Coexecutive producer, S. Howard Rosen. Written, directed by Gordon Pinsent, based on his novel. Stars Pinsent, Jackie Burroughs. Camera (Medallion Film Labs color), Frank Tidy; editor, Bruce Nyznik; music, Michael Conway Baker; art direction, Earl Preston; set decoration, Jeanie M. Staple; costume design, Olga Dimitrov; sound, Rob Young; assistant director, William Spahic; associate producer, Gabriella Martinelli; casting. Deirdre Bowen. Reviewed at the U.S. Film Festival, Park City, Utah, Jan. 21, 1987. No MPAA Rating. Running time: 100 min.

John Munn	Gordon Pinsent
Missus	Jackie Burroughs
Matt	Randy Follett
Faith	Jessica Steen
Fred Budgell	Roland Hewgill
Denny Boland	. Timothy Webber
Tom Noble	Neil Munro
Sid Peddigrew	Michael Wade
Alf Sheppard	Jerry Doyle

Park City, Utah — Beautifully made and nobly intended, "John And The Missus" is a very decent film about a very decent man whose sense of family and personal heritage pits him against his government and the sweep of history. Leading Canadian actor Gordon Pinsent, working from his own 1973 novel, makes an impressive feature film directorial debut here, even if the pacing ultimately renders the picture too slow to generate much excitement. Boxoffice prospects are iffy Stateside.

What could have been made into an impassioned political tract about insensitive officials not playing straight with innocent citizens has instead been made into an intensely human close-up look at the effect uprooting has on a small community.

Premise is simple enough. Set in economically depressed Newfoundland in 1962, action sees many copper miners being laid off until finally, after an underground accident, the mine is closed and the locals are asked to resettle in another town.

Most of the seacoast villagers go along with the plan, which includes some financial compensation, but not so John Munn, as solid, responsible and likable a man as one could want to meet, but a stubborn one too. John was born in the town, as was his father, and he simply will not be moved.

Despite the confrontational situation, most of the running time is not occupied with political stand-offs. Rather, film closely details the dayto-day progression of the community's deterioration and depopulation, and shows John as he confronts crises big and small, domestic and social.

Film starts very well, but before the mid-way point becomes somewhat becalmed dramatically despite the rising tensions. John's ultimate decision about what to do is dallied over for too long, although his solution, when it comes, is both poetic and satisfying. Emotional range is also limited, falling between genial humor and restrained turmoil.

Film's quality is mainly to be found in its precise, loving look at a dying community, but an enormous amount of its appeal comes from Gordon Pinsent's persona. Affable even in distress and always spontaneous to the situation at hand, he's both as soft as a stuffed animal and hard as a rock. A fine actor with a career dating back 20 years, he now becomes a director to watch.

Visually, film is outstanding, and cinematographer Frank Tidy must receive much of the credit for this, along with the spectacular land and seascapes, which resemble Ireland in their rugged beauty. Also notable is the subtle, most effective score by Michael Conway Baker.

As the Missus, Jackie Burroughs is a strong match for Pinsent, and all supporting performances are warmly observed. Cart.

Thurs., Aug. 27, 1987

John Huston & The Dubliners (Docu-Color 16m)

A Liffey Films presentation. (Sales, Gray City Inc.) Executive producers, Chris Sievernich, Wieland Schulz-Keil. Produced, directec by Lilyan Sievernich. Camera (Foto-Kerr color, 16m), Lisa Rinzler; editor, Miroslav Janek; music, Alex North; sound, Don Sanders, Walt Martin, Margaret Duke. Reviewed at Broadway screening room, N.Y., Aug. 21, 1987. (No MPAA Rating.) Running time: 60 min.

time: 60 min.
With: John Huston, Anjelica Huston, Tony
Huston, Roberto Silvi, Tom Shaw, Donal
McCann, Rachael Dowling, Helena Carroll,
Cathleen Delany, Ingrid Craigie, Dan O'Herlihy, Marie Kean, Donal Donnelly, Katherine
O'Toole, Sean McClory, Frank Patterson.

New York — "John Huston & The Dubliners" is a perceptive documentary on legendary director John Huston and his working methods, shot on the set of his latest film, "The Dead," early this year:

Documaker Lilyan Sievernich (whose husband Chris Sievernich is executive producer of "The Dead") succeeds in revealing, by interviews with Huston, his cast and crew members, plus verite footage of scenes being filmed and rehearsed, how Huston gets exactly what he wants by gentle suggestions, cajoling and simply doing things until they come out right. As one of the Irish actresses comments: "I've heard he's a tough director. When you're pleasing him, he's lovely."

At first looking frail and tired, fitted with tubes to a respirator throughout the filming, Huston is shown by Sievernich to be in absolute control of his set and material. He knows the James Joyce story and screenplay by his son Tony Huston backwards and forwards and watches his tv monitor like a hawk looking for improvements on the blocking, timing and readings of each take that's filmed.

An actress notes: "He expects you to come prepared. You're allowed to contribute. Obviously he's getting exactly what he wants, but you feel you're doing it."

Huston comments: "I don't do storyboards. I very often let a scene develop. Each scene, within the emotional frame of the picture, is allowed to breathe."

When Sievernich presses Huston with a leading question, or threatens to become overly analytical towards his work, he smoothly scoffs at such notions and sets the discussion back on track in self-effacing fashion. As his film editor Roberto Silvi says: "He's one of the last gentlemen in this industry."

Docu gives glimpses of some moving scenes from "The Dead," including 78-year-old actress Cathleen Delany singing a song, coached by Irish tenor Frank Patterson, who's also in the cast.

Huston and others joke that the breaking of a wishbone after the film's centerpiece dinner constitutes the most action that occurs in "The Dead," but Huston points out:

"My idea of action isn't the conventional car chase. Action can be in people's minds and thoughts — as long as they race, that constitutes action."

Pic would have benefitted from superimposed titles identifying the interviewees. As is, it is an effective portrait of Huston at work, with nontheatrical and tv use indicated, as well as in conjunction with retrospectives of Huston's films.

Thurs., Oct. 9, 1986

Jumpin' Jack Flash (Comedy — Color)

A Twentieth Century Fox release. Produced by Lawrence Gordon, Joel Silver. Directed by Penny Marshall. Screenplay by David H. Franzoni, J.W. Melville & Patricia Irving, Christopher Thompson. Story by Franzoni. Camera (DeLuxe Color), Matthew F. Leonetti; editor, Mark Goldblatt; music, Thomas Newman; production design, Robert Boyle; art director, Frank Richwood; set decorator, Donald Remacle; sound (Dolby Stereo), Jerry Jost; assistant director, Beau E.L. Marks; associate producers, Richard Marks, George Bowers, Elaine K. Thompson; casting, Nancy Klopper. Reviewed at Zanuck Theater, Twentieth Century Fox, Century City, Oct. 7, 1986. MPAA rating: R. Running time: 100 min.

Terry Doollittle Whoopi Goldberg Marty Phillips

"Jumpin' Jack Flash" is not a gas, it's a bore. A weak idea and muddled plot that's poorly executed, not surprisingly, results in a tedious film with only a few brief comic interludes from Whoopi Goldberg to redeem it. Pic may open on its title and star but won't stick around very long.

Anyone who has been longing for a film in which a black office worker talks dirty to a computer terminal (and almost anyone else in earshot) should find "Jumpin" Jack Flash" just what they've been waiting for.

Goldberg is Terry Doolittle, sort of a second-rate Pee wee Herman with toy animals on her desk and funky clothes on her back and an apartment that looks like a novelty-shop showroom. Working along-side of bimbo Carol Kane and hounded by boss Peter Michael Goetz, it's a set-up worthy of any good sitcom.

And just when her life is looking most bleak along comes Jack. He's a British spy trapped somewhere behind the Iron Curtain who somehow, someway, taps into Goldberg's computer terminal and asks for help to escape.

Goldberg is plunged into a web of intrigue involving a sinister repairman (Jim Belushi) who conveniently disappears, a crippled diplomat (Roscoe Lee Browne) and another spy (Jereon Krabbe), who winds up floating face down in the East River

It really doesn't make much sense and is never sufficiently explained. But even more deadly, it never succeeds in hooking the audience. There is about as much menace to these goings on as a soft-drink commercial. Director Penny Marshall fails to generate the least bit of sus-

pense, partially because the screenplay credited to no fewer than four writers is trying to do too many things at once.

Goldberg may be cute but she's not dangerous, and talking to Jack through the computer is hardly involving. A number of supporting players pass in and out of the action, but even an actor the caliber of John Wood, as a KGB mole in the British consulate, can do nothing to save the day.

day.

It is also questionable whether Goldberg can carry a film on her own. Occasionally, there are amusing bits and pieces, as when she attends a dress ball at the consulate disguised as Diana Ross, or is dancing around her apartment to the Stones' title song. But more often the humor is too self-conscious and seems to be missing only a laugh track.

Other scenes are equally overstated for effect, as when a slowmoving cab is totally upended when it taps another car, or a phone booth with Goldberg in it is picked up by a tow truck and dragged down the avenue.

Tech credits are fine but the film's a mess.

Jagr.

Wed., Nov. 19, 1986

Kamikaze Hearts

(U.S. — Color)

A Legler/Bashore production. Produced by Heinz Legler. Directed by Juliet Bashore. Features Tigr Mennett and Sharon Mitchell. Written and conceived by Bashore and Mennett; camera, David Golia; art-set direction, Hans Fuss, Miriam Tinguely; music, Paul M. Young, Walt Fowler; sound, Leslie Schatz; editor, John Knoop; coproducers, Sharon Hennessey, Bob Rivkin. Reviewed at San Francisco Film Arts Festival, Roxie Theater, Nov. 8, 1986. Running time: 87 min.

San Francisco — "Kamikaze Hearts" sold out two performances at the second annual S.F. Film Arts Festival, a three-day affair for indies which grossed \$8386 for 11 programs at the 275-seat Roxie. Picture, X-genre story of lesbian lovers working in the porn industry in Frisco, was billed as a "conceptualized" docudrama based on real-life experiences of performers involved.

The film-within-a-film yarn, much of it with verite dialog and plenty of frontal nudity, grows quickly tiresome because neither of the principals, Sharon Mitchell as the porn star and Tigr Mennett as her lover, is particularly interesting or has much to say worth noting.

Occasionally, some of the fringe characters have some insightful comments to make about their line of work; an overview of pornpic production might have made for a revealing docu, but "Hearts" lacks the soul for that chore.

Much of the effort smacks of conceit, a trait rendering picture unlikely fodder for wide pornhouse distribution and over-all a bit to harsh for any other kind of playoff.

Technicals are acceptable in face of low-budgeting. Herb.

Mon., June 29, 1987

Keeping Track (Canadian — Color)

A Shapiro Entertainment release of a Telescene (Keeping Track) Prods. production, with the participation of Telefilm Canada. Executive producer, Neil Leger. Produced by Robin Spry, Jamie Brown; line producer, Bob Presner. Directed by Spry. Stars Michael Sarrazin, Margot Kidder. Screenplay, Brown, from story by Spry, Brown; camera (Sonolab Color), Ron Stannett; editor, Diann Ilnicki; music; Ben Low; sound, Don Cohen; production design, Michel Prouk; production manager, Peter Bray; stunt coordinator, Dave Rigby; casting, Elite-Prods., Nadia Rona. Reviewed on Charter Entertainment vidcassette, N.Y., June 11, 1987. MPAA Rating: R. Running

time: 102 min.

Daniel Hawkins... Michael Sarrazin
Claire Tremayne... Margot Kidder
Royle Wishert... Alan Scarle
Capt. McCullough... Ken Pogue
Double Agent... John Boylan
Chuck... Vlasta Vrana
Covington... Donald Pilon
Shanks... James D. Morris

New York — Robin Spry's "Keeping Track" is a fast-paced, engrossing little thriller, head and shoulders above comparable pictures made recently. Benefitting from the comfortable teaming of Margot Kidder and Michael Sarrazin, pic is a treat, though relegated to the now-standard limited theatrical release ahead of homevideo distribution.

Sarrazin portrays a cocksure Montreal tv anchorman thrust into an adventure straight out of "The 39 Steps" when he and banking analyst Kidder witness a murder on a train headed for New York. Soon not only the killers are after them but also the bank, police, and government.

Sarrazin is determined to get to the bottom of the matter, but it is being covered up due to national security implications, as the KGB is involved with stealing U.S. technology. Film's Maguffin is a computer chip what will create a cyborg with artificial intelligence and possibly upset the balance of power depending upon who gets possession of it.

Spry and his writer-coproducer

Spry and his writer-coproducer Jamie Brown maintain a breathless pace, with the usual mechanical transition footage and extraneous filler left out of an action picture for a change. The stars, particularly Kidder in a followup Disney "Trench-coat"-type role, are bright and breezy and tech credits are solid down the line.

Lor.

Fri., May 22, 1987

Kidnapped

(Action thriller - Color)

A Hickmar production. (World sales, Fries Entertainment.) Produced by Marlene Schmidt. Written and directed by Howard Avedis. Stars David Naughton. Camera (DeLuxe Color), Tom De Nove; editors, Michael Luciano, Lloyd Nelson; music, Ron Jones; sound, Bayard Carey; assistant director, John Woodward. Reviewed at Cannes Film Festival (market), May 11, 1987. Running time: 98 mins

Det. Vince McCarthy.	 David Naughton
Bonnie B	arbara Crampton
Victor Nardi	Lance LeGault
Tony	Chick Vennera
Debbie	Kim Evenson
Porno shop clerk	Jimmie Walker
Buster	Kin Shriner
Marsha	Michelle Rossi
Cart	Robert Dryer
Frank Nardi	Gary Wood
Police lieutenant	Charles Napier

Cannes — Boasting a solid cast, "Kidnapped" is a routine action thriller done well. It's not special enough to make any noise theatrically, but is good programming fodder for other media.

Barbara Crampton and Kim Evenson are blond sisters on the town in L.A. who get mixed up with a photographer (Chick Vennera) trying to pick them up on the street. He has Evenson kidnaped and delivered to gangster Lance LeGault, who drugs her in preparation for starring her in a porn film.

Crampton teams up with sympatico cop David Naughton to track Evenson down and their rather klutzy approach (which causes many a headache to his police superior, Charles Napier) hits a funny nadir when the duo pose as porno thesps and are mighty embarrassed when Gary Wood (as the gangster's brother) has them audition for a porn flick. A happy ending ensues, but not before Evenson gets manhandled considerably.

With an effective sense of humor pic gets by with some seamy mate rial, covering the same ground as Paul Schrader's "Hardcore" bu with a different point-of-view Film's softcore scenes are suitably exploitative, and writer-director Avedis makes a sharp distinction that it is underground "teenage" porn, not the mainstream porn industry, that constitutes the heavies of this story.

Naughton and Crampton are attractive leads, Evenson a stunning pinup (a mite old to be playing sweet 16) and LeGault a cookeavy. Wood is excellent as the self-righteous pornographer and remaining cast is fine. Tech credits are good, though Avedis largely substitutes cheapo foot chases for more elaborate action stagings. Lor.

Fri., Jan. 9, 1987

The Kindred (Horror — Color)

A F/M Entertainment release. Produce by Jeffrey Obrow. Executive producer Joe Freeman. Coproducer Stacey Giachinc Directed by Obrow, Scott Carpenter Screenplay by Carpenter & Obrow, John Penney & Earl Ghaffari, Joseph Stefano Camera (Technicolor), Carpenter; editor Penney, Ghaffari; music, David Newman production design, Chris Hopkins; art director, Becky Block; set decorator, Susai Emshwiller; costumes, Lynne A. Holmes special creatures created by Michael John Mc Cracken; assistant director, David Householter; associate producer, Diana Nabatoff; casting, Janet Hirshenson, Jan Jenkins; Denise Chamian. Reviewed a Four Star Theater, Los Angeles, Calif., Jan 7, 1986. MPAA rating: R. Running time: 9 min.

John Hollins	. David Allen Brooks
Dr. Phillip Lloyd	Rod Steiger
Melissa Leftridge	Amanda Pays
Sharon Raymond .	Talia Balsam
Amanda Hollins	Kim Hunter-
Hart Phillips	Timothy Gobbs
Brad Baxter	Peter Frechette
	Julia Montgomery
Nell Valentine	Bunki Ż
	

"The Kindred" is another example of a film that puts its energy in the wrong place. A team of young filmmakers, rather than using their talents to create something personal or original, have turned out what they believe will be commercial. Ironically, "The Kindred" is such a poor imitation of "Aliens" and other supernatural sci-fi that an audience will find little reason to see it.

Problem is not that the film doesn't look good. In fact, production values are emphasized at the expense of story and character. Codirectors Jeffrey Obrow and Steven Carpenter, who also take producer and cinematographer credits, respectively, have left little of the fun of '50s sci-fi pix and seem to take this nonsense as seriously as if they were directing "Citizen Kane."

No fewer than five writers, including Obrow and Carpenter, have put their heads together to come up with the story of a female scientist (Kim Hunter) who dies and leaves her son (David Allen Brooks), also a scientist, to destroy her controversial genetic experiments that have created some dangerous semihuman life forms.

Along for the ride are a merry band of nitwits disguised as scientists who try to help Brooks sort out the mess at his mother's country house that looks something like the house Norman Bates used to live in with his mother:

And wouldn't you know that a mysterious woman (Amanda Pays) and an evil scientist (Rod Steiger) are on the scene to help the monster. Pays turns into an amphibian

(really) and Steiger is slimed to death by the creature, which is unfortunate since Pays is far too attractive and intriguing and Steiger too talented to be wasting their time on this foolishness.

Filmmakers have failed to capture either the playful campiness of films like "Creature From The Black Lagoon" or the suspenseful thrills and chills of "Aliens." In shooting for flashy special effects (creatures were designed by Michael John Mc Cracken), they neglected the human context that gives the horror its edge, as it did in "Aliens."

Acting is too wooden to win any sympathy for these people and dialog is so weak that the most memorable lines are the squealing of the creature.

Jagr.

Mon., Dec. 22, 1986

King Kong Lives (Adventure-Color)

A De Laurentiis Entertainment Group release. Produced by Martha Schumacher. Executive producer, Ronald Shusett. Directed by John Guillermin. Screenplay, Shusett and Steven Pressfield. Camera (Technicolor), Alec Mills; editor, Malcolm Cooke; music, John Scott; production designer, Peter Murton; art director, Fred Carter, Tony Reading, John Wood; set decorators, Hugh Scaife, Tantar LeViseur; costume designer, Clifford Capone; sound mixer (Dolby), David Stephenson; creatures' creation and construction, Carlo Rambaldi; special visual effects supervisor, Barry Nolan; assistant director, Brian Cooke; casting, Donna Isaacson, John Lyons; Reviewed at the Holly wood Pacific Theater, Dec. 19, 1986, MPAA Rating: PG-13. Running time: 105 min.

King Kong......Peter Elliot
Lady Kong.....George Yiasomi
Hank Mitchell....Brian Kerwin
Amy Franklin....Linda Hamilton
Or. Ingersoll....Peter Michael Goetz
Dr. Benson Hughes...Frank Maraden

King Kong's revival after a decade serves as little more than a sequel in service to a possible sequel. Story and acting are too weak to outdo the 1976 remake and it will take more than curiosity over updated mechanics and special effects to deliver anything but modest business.

Film leads off with the previous pic's closing footage of Kong being slain atop the World Trade Center in N.Y. as Jessica Lange weeps. Advancing to the present, we learn that the giant ape has been kept alive by the marvels of recent medical technology.

Kong is stunningly revealed to be breathing via life support systems, with Linda Hamilton heading a surgical team preparing to give him an artificial heart. The visual scope of this oversized medical environment — with cranes delivering a seven-foot artificial heart — provides an early high point that is never quite matched.

While Hamilton declares it will take nothing short of a miracle to save Kong, Brian Kerwin enters from far off Borneo, where he has stumbled onto a female Kong. He strikes a purely mercenary deal to deliver her to the Hamilton group so her blood can be used for the heart transplant operation.

In portraying an Indiana Jonestype figure — there's even a direct on-screen comment about the likeness — Kerwin strains for plausibility and film swiftly begins to lose some early credibility. His tough jungle ways are unconvincingly transformed into sensitive concern for both animals — apparently, and presumably insincerely, because of his attraction to Hamilton.

Meantime, the proximity of the two Kongs prompts these primates to seek what comes naturally. The pyrotechnics, machine gun barrages and stomping of cars begins in earnest as Kong frees the female from her entrapment before the pair escape together into the woods. This would prove to be the moment when director John Guillermin loses all control of the pic.

Mindless chase then proceeds pell mell for the rest of the film, with the army in hot pursuit. While John Ashton turns in a fine performance as a crazed colonel (a la Capt. Ahab's pursuit), his seeming carte blanche to slaughter Kong is devoid of rationale.

The Kongs do manage one night together on "Honeymoon Ridge," with Hamilton and Kerwin paralleling the coupling as supposedly the only two people alive who care for the apes. What fails here and throughout is creation of empathy for them or the Kongs.

Action sequences do serve to highlight excellent Kong torso movements thanks to latest work by Academy Award winner Carlo Rambaldi. Facial gestures are wonderfully precise here as they are when the Kongs are exchanging affections.

However intriguing such elements may be, story by now has so deteriorated that there's really no logic to its progression at all.

Before the bloody ordeal of the inevitable kill, however, it's revealed that Lady Kong is pregnant. In a shamelessly melodramatic bit of climactic hokum, Kong is brought down just as his mate is delivering the offspring.

As Kong slumps to his death after touching his youngster, one finally understands that his 10-year medical trauma and this film update may have been little more than a setup for a "Son Of Kong" sequel. Otherwise, why resurrect the big guy and then so brutally ravage him again? The King is dead. Long live the King. Tege.

Thurs., May 14, 1987

The Kitchen Toto (British — Color)

A Cannon Group release of a British Screen-Film Four International presentation of a Skreba Film. Executive producers, Menahem Golan, Yoram Globus. Produced by Ann Skinner. Directed by Harry Hook. Screenplay, Hook. Camera (color), Roger Deakins; editor, Tom Priestley; music, John Keane; production design, Jamie Leonard; costumes, Barbara Kidd; sound, Christian Wangler; production manager, Ted Morley; assistant director, Guy Travers; casting, Anne Henderson. Reviewed at Cannes Film Festival (market), May 9, 1987. Running time: 95 mins.

John Graham Bob Peck
Janet Graham Phyllis Logan
Mwangi Edwin Mahinda
Mary Kirsten Hughes
D.C. Robert Urquhart
Mugo Nicholas Chase
With: Job Seda, Leo Wringer.

Cannes — Handsomely filmed on location in Kenya, and inherited by Cannon from Screen Entertainment, "The Kitchen Toto" is an intriguing, well-mounted pic with an awkward title and lethargic pacing. This is not a film for action markets but could go the art house route and, with thoughtful handling, find modest returns.

Pic unfolds in 1950, when the British were facing attacks from a Kikuyu terrorist group known as Mau Mau. Bob Peck plays a regional police officer, in charge of a small force of native Africans, who lives with his frustrated wife (Phyllis Logan) and son; he's having a secret affair with the niece (Kirsten Hughes) of a neighbor. When Mau Mau murder a black priest who's

condemned them from his pulpit, Peck agrees to take in the dead man's young son (Edwin Mahinda) as his "kitchen toto," or houseboy.

Story unfolds from the perspective of this alert, intelligent youngster who's torn between his tribal feelings on the one hand and the loyalties he has both to his murdered father and to the British who, despite their unthinking and ingrained racism, have been kind to him.

After a strong opening, establishing the patronizing ways in which the white settlers behave, and the murder, tension is allowed to slacken in the lengthy scenes establishing the young black's experiences in the policeman's home. Depiction of the daily routine is well handled, but audiences are likely to fidget after a while.

The climax, when it comes, is strong stuff, with Mau Mau invading the house one day while Peck is off with his mistress, and attempting to kidnap the wife; trying to rescue his mother, her son accidentally shoots and kills her.

During the '50s, two pix dealt with the Mau Mau emergency to good effect (the British "Simba" and Richard Brooks' "Something Of Value"); writer-director Harry Hook returns to the subject matter from a different perspective, but fails to establish the frightening vulnerability of a handful of whites lording it in a black country.

Peck is solid as the cop, Logan suitably tight-lipped as his repressed wife, and young Edwin Mahinda excellent as the troubled, tragic hero, torn between two sides in an ugly conflict. Roger Deakins' location photography is extremely beautiful, and there's a subtle music score by John Keane. Strat.

Mon., May 18, 1987

La Bamba

(Musical biopic — Color)

A Columbia release of a New Visions production. Produced by Taylor Hackford, Bill Borden. Executive producer, Stuart Benjamin. Directed, written by Luis Valdez. Camera (Deluxe color), Adam Greenberg; editors, Sheldon Kahn, Don Brochu; original music, Carlos Santana, Miles Goodman; Ritchie Valens' music performed by Los Lobos; executive music producer, Joel Sill; production design, Vince Cresciman; set decoration, Rosemary Brandenburg; cos tume design, Sylvia Vega-Vasquez; sound (Dolby), Susumu Tokunow; associate prolucer, Daniel Valdez; assistant director, Stephen J. Fisher; second unit camera, Chuck Colwell; casting, Junie Lowry. Reviewed at the Egyptian Theater, Seattle Film Festival, May 14, 1987. MPAA Rating: PG-13. Running time: 108 min.

Ritchie
Valens.....Lou Diamond Phillips
Bob Morales.....Esai Morales
Connie

Valenzuela.....Rosana De Soto Rosie Morales.....Elizabeth Pena Donna

Ludwig. Danielle von Zerneck Bob Keene. Joe Pantoliano Ted Quinlin Rick Dees Buddy Holly Marshall Crenshaw.

Wilson ... Howard Huntsberry
Eddie Cochran ... Brian Setzer
Lelo ... Daniel Valdez

Seattle. - There haven't been too many people who died at age 17 who have warranted the biopic treatment, but 1950s rock 'n roller Ritchie Valens proves a worthy exception in "La Bamba." World premiered Thursday (two months ahead of its national release) as the opening-night attracting at the 12th Seattle International Film Festival, pic is aesthetically conventional but inspires substantial interest due to Valens' extreme vouth and unusual cultural background. If given a good push with youthful audiences heretofore unfamiliar with the singer, Summer b.o. should be solid.

Known primarily for his three top-10 tunes, "Come On Let's Go," "Donna" and the title cut, Valens was killed — just eight months after signing his first recording contract — in the 1959 private plane crash that also took the lives of Buddy Holly and the Big Bopper, and thus attained instant legendhood.

For anyone to achieve their dreams by 17 is close to miraculous. But it was even moreso for Valens who, less than two years before his death, was a Mexican-American fruitpicker named Ricardo Valenzuela living in a tent with his family in Northern California. Family later moved to Pacoima in the San Fernando Valley.

As shown here, the teenager's great love for his mother, brother and sisters was possibly surpassed by his passion for rock 'n roll. He carried his guitar everywhere, even to the school classes he attended with decreasing frequency, and it wasn't long before smalltime gigs, and then ultra-cheap recordings sessions, were coming his way.

Backgrounding this, however, was tremendous emotional turbulance created mostly by Valens' half-brother Bob. An ex-con who rides a motorcycle, deals drugs and makes his entrance here by returning after a long absence and blithely deflowering Valens' teen sweetheart, Bob embodies everything negative about Latin machismo and causes no end of pain for those around him, even ruining Valens' headliner debut by leading his biker buddies in a drunken brawl.

Nevertheless, Valens continues his rapid rise to stardom with tv appearances, a slot in one of Alan Freed's rock 'n roll extravaganzas and, finally, his fateful tour with Holly and Big Bopper.

In fact, compared with many of the tales of struggle and hardship that have been told about aspiring artists, Valens' brief life story seems remarkably free of obstacles and setbacks. The only difficulty he encounters outside his family is the opposition to him expressed by WASPy father of Donna, the blonde he fell for who inspired his famous teen lament.

In the teenpix of the 1950s, even the most cleancut rockers were subject to the outraged moralizing of their elders, but here, even the biker riot at an American Legion hall provokes no repercussions.

Culturally, film is somewhat provocative for its presentation of Valens' denial of his roots and total buy-in to American dream, especially given writer-director Luis Valdez's background with "Zoot Suit" and as a grapeworkers' strike activist.

The song "La Bamba" not withstanding, Valens says several times in the picture that he doesn't speak Spanish, and his idols are clearly Elvis and other white performers. As well, his mother is a hard-driving work-ethic type who would have been completely at home in an MGM film of the 1930s.

Although many of the plot developments are pro forma for the genre, "La Bamba" is engrossing throughout and can-boast of numerous fine performances. In Lou Diamond Phillips' sympathetic turn, Valens comes across as a very fine young man, caring for those who mean something to him and not overawed by his success. Rosana De Soto scores as his tireless mother, and Elizabeth Pena has numerous dramatic moments as Bob's dis-

traught mate.

But most of the fireworks are Bob's, and Esai Morales makes the most of his opportunities. Remembered as Sean Penn's opponent in "Bad Boys," thesp commands the screen whenever he's around, and makes the tormented brother a genuinely complex figure.

Musically, Valens' tunes have been outstandingly covered by the contempo band Los Lobos. Lots of other period music fills out the soundtrack, and concert highlight is provided by Howard Huntsberry's electrifying impersonations of Jackie Wilson singing "Lonely Teardrops."

Film could have benefitted from increased attention to Valens' subjective view of things, showing his excitement at being included in the Freed show and the like. But Valdez has done a good, workmanlike job of getting the kid's story onto the screen sympathetically. Cart.

Fri., Feb. 20, 1987

La Ley Del Deseo THE LAW OF DESIRE (Spanish — Color)

An El Deseo S.A. and Laurenfilm S.A. production. Exec producer, Miguel A. Perez Campos. Associate producer, Agustin Almodovar. Written and directed by Pedro Almodovar. Camera (Eastmancolor), Angel Luis Fernandez; editor, Jose Salcedo; costumes, Jose M. Cossio; sets, Javier Fernandez; sound, James Willis. Reviewed at Cine Madrid, Feb. 11, '87. Running time: 101 min.

Pedro Quintero.....Eusebio Poncela Tina Quintero......Carmen Maura Antonio Benitez...Antonio Banderas Juan Bermudez......Miguel Molina Also: Manuel Velasco, Bibi Andersen, Fernando Guillen, Nacho Martinez, Helga Line, Fernando G. Cuervo, German Cobos, Maruchi Leon, Marta Fernandez Muro et al.

Madrid — Spain's master of pop and pastiche, Pedro Almodovar, turns his talents here to a gay love triangle, with extraneous touches of fantasy farce and camp humor, in a film that will please his fans (especially the gay community) but may turn off wider audiences. In its Madrid release, pic is drawing hefty attendance, because Almodovar's films are always an "in" event here and arouse considerable curiosity.

More than the thin plot, it is the touches of slangy humor and droll but unlikely situations that Almodovar comes up with that catch the audience's fancy; pic also has a certain outrageous "look" to it which makes the antics more palatable.

Convoluted story concerns a famous film director, Pablo, and his way-out sister, Tina. Pablo is madly in love with Juan, who works in an outdoor bar in Andalucia. The third part of the triangle, Antonio, falls deeply in love with the director, and ultimately decides to get rid of his competitor, Juan, by pushing him off a cliff.

Tina, the "sister," turns out to have changed her sex, and lives with her director-brother as well as a 10-year-old girl, who's a model. The model's mother is played by a well-known Spanish transvestite, Bibi Andersen (no relation to the Swedish thesp).

Buoying pic are some of Almodovar's clowning touches, such as having a kind of ornate chapel in Pablo's apartment to which Tina and the kid offer mocking prayers, or two mock-heroic detectives investigating Miguel's death.

But some audiences may fail to empathize with the many gay sex sequences, an integral part of the film from the first to last frame. Many a lingering homosexual kiss, interspersed through the length of the film, and frequent sniffing of cocaine form part of Almodovar's swinging Madrid scene, and are certainly not for the straitlaced.

Eusebio Poncela puts in good performance as the putative director; Antonio Banderas is the squareiawed, hulky lover and Carmen Maura provides the zany touch as the unpredictable sister. Technical credits are up to crack.

Pick could generate interest in select international markets where earlier films by Almodovar such as "What Have I Done To Deserve This?" garnered attention. Besa.

Thurs., April 9, 1987

Les Patterson Saves The World

(Australian — Comedy — Color)

A Hoyts (Australia) release of a Humpstead (Barry Humphries-Diane Millstead) production. Executive producer, Diane Mill stead. Produced by Sue Milliken. Directed by George Miller. Stars Barry Humphries, Pamela Stephenson. Screenplay, Humphries, Millstead; camera (Eastmancolor, Panavision), David Connell; editor, Tim Wellburn; music, Tim Finn; production design, Graham (Grace) Walker; costumes, Anna Senior; sound, Syd Butterworth; production manager, Tony Winley; assistant director, Brian Giddens; casting, Liz Mullinar; special effects makeup, Bob McCarron; special effects coordinator, Brian Cox Reviewed at Hoyts Center, Sydney, April 6, 1987. running time: 95 min. Sir Les Patterson/

Dame Edna Everage. Barry Humphries Veronique Crudite.Pamela Stephenson Col. Richard Godowni.....Thaao Penghlis Neville Thonge Andrew Clarke Dr. Charles Herpes/

.. Henri Szeps Desiree. Inspector Farouk... Hugh Keays-Byrne Nancy Borovansky...Elizabeth Melvor Mustafa Toul... ... Garth Meade General Evans.....Arthur Sherman ...Josef Drewnaak Mossolov. U.S. President.... .Joan Rivers

Also: Esben Storm (Russian scientist). Joy Westmore (Lady Gwen Patterson), Connie Hobbs (Madge Allsop), Paul Jennings (Australian Prime Minister), Graham Kennedy (Brian Lannigan), John Clarke (Mike Rooke), David Whitney (Barry Mollison), Sally Tayler (Rhonda), Peter Collingwood (Jeremy Williams).

Sydney — Barry Humphries is an immensely gifted entertainer with a malicious style of comedy who has entertained audiences in Australia and Britain for more than 20 years with his one-man stage performances and television shows. In the early '70s, he also starred in two films, both directed by Bruce Beresford, based around his characters of Barry Mackenzie and Dame Edna Everage. Now he's back with a lavishly produced slapstick feature with its eye firmly on the international market so successfully tapped by "Crocodile Dundee," though this time the focus of attention is on one of Humphries' less appealing creations, Sir Les Patterson, a grossly crude and overweight member of Australia's diplomatic

Pic opens with Sir Les disgracing himself at the United Nations where he's making a speech. As a result of drinking too much vodka and eating too many baked beans, he has an extreme attack of flatulence just at moment that a fellow diplomat is lighting his pipe: the result is a fiery conflagration that incinerates the robes of an Arab oil sheik.

As punishment, the disgraced Sir Les is sent to run Australia's diplomatic mission in Abu Niveah, arriving just at the moment when the Sheik is overthrown in a military coup by Col. Godowni, who saves Sir Les from a fate worse than death.

Ensuing plot involves the corpulent Ambassador, with an apparently insatiable need for liquor, attempting to find booze in a country where it's banned, and also on the lookout for a meaningful extramarital experience.

Matters are complicated by the fact that Godowni is intent on destabilizing the West via a horrendous sexual disease, HELP, and is exporting contaminated toilet seats to the U.S. for this purpose. (Cue for some gruesome, "Evil Dead"style special effects makeup by Bob McCarron). His tame French scientist, Dr. Herpes, has invented an antidote to HELP which will be worth billions once the disease has

From the above it will be seen that "Les Patterson Saves The World" is not a charming, old-style entertainment like "Crocodile Dundee"; Humphries has always confronted audiences with his often outrageously Rabelaisian sense of humor, and lavatory jokes, sexual encounters, gays and lesbians abound. The film is cheerfully racist and sexist, with puns based on the fact that one character is called "Herpes" repeated ad infini-

Halfway through, Dame Edna also played by Humphries, of course - makes a welcome appearance, ostensibly leading a group of Australian women ("Possums for Peace") on a tour of Abu Niveah, but actually is a CIA agent. 'She' steals the film, and scenes in which Edna and Sir Les appear together-

Screenplay by Humphries and his wife, Diane Millstead, has some good jokes and some bad ones. It suffers from repetition and a determination to put the crude before the subtle at all costs. Director George ("Man From Snowy River," "The Aviator'') Miller carries out his chores in a functional manner, showing modest aptitude for comedy pacing; as a result, pic seems longer than its 95 minutes.

Graham (Grace) Walker's production design is outstanding, with an Arab town convincingly recreated on a Sydney backlot, and a magnificent set of revolving New York skyscraper restaurants providing the film's climax (when, inevitably, it goes out of control after a koala jams the works). Other technical credits are pro, and producer Sue Milliken has done a topnotch job.

Commercial chances are hard to predict. Critics are likely to be down on the film, but they were down on the Barry Mackenzie films, too, and that didn't stop them doing great biz in Australia and Britain. Same may happen again, though Sir Les is not an easy character to like; yet he may appeal to younger audiences. Safe to predict, though, that Paul Hogan's boxoffice crown remains secure.

Mon., March 2, 1987

Lethal Weapon (Actioner — Color)

Warner Bros. release. Produced by Richard Donner, Joel Silver. Directed by Donner. Screenplay, Shane Black. Camera (Technicolor), Stephen Goldblatt; editor, Stuart Baird; music, Michael Kamen, Eric Clapton; production design, J. Michael Riva; set decorator, Marvin March; art director. Eva Bohn, Virginia L. Randolph; sound (Dolby stereo), Bill Nelson; costumes, Mary Ma-lin; assistant director, Benjamin Rosenberg; associate producer, Jennie Lew, casting, Marion Dougherty. Reviewed at Lorimar Telepictures screening room, Culver City, Calif., Feb. 20, 1987. MPAA rating: R. Running time: 110 min.

Martin Riggs	Mel Gibson
Roger Murtaugh	Danny Glover
Joshua	Gary Busey
The General	Mitchell Ryan
Michael Hunsaker	Tom Atkins
Trish Murtaugh	Darlene Love
Rianne Murtaugh	Traci Wolfe
Amanda Hunsaker	Jackie Swanson
Nick Murtaugh	Damon Hines
Carrie Murtaugh	Ebonie Smith

"Lethal Weapon" is one part "Rambo Comes Home" and one part "48 Hours." It's a film teetering on the brink of absurdity when it gets serious, but thanks to its unrelenting energy and insistent drive, it never quite falls. Picture is slick enough to conceal some disturbing attitudes about heroes and violence in America and satisfy action fans out for a good time.

Screenwriter Shane Black has stacked the deck with bits of Vietnam, the generation gap, male bonding and the joys of family life, and director Richard Donner plays his hand well, but in the end it's bluff.

Donner wants it both ways. He wants a tough picture but with sensitivity and the two strains simply don't graft well here. First half is devoted to male-bonding rituals before it becomes an old-fashioned shoot-out filled with frontier morality about holding one's ground and fighting fire with fire.

Danny Glover is a family-man detective who gets an unwanted partner in the possibly psychotic Mel Gibson. Story is on the backburner as the two men square off against each other, more as adversaries than partners. Although it's near impossible to tell where the story is going, Donner keeps the heat up and the action on the edge through intense closeups and rapidfire cutting.

Gibson is all live wires and still carries Vietnam 20 years after the fact. He's caught in the '60s. Though he's 15 years his senior and also a Vietnam vet, Glover is meant to be a sensitive man of the '80s.

Donner tries to super-charge their exchange but mostly it's fake dynamics. Gibson simmers while Glover worries about his pension.

While the film is trying to establish its emotional underpinnings, a plot slowly unfolds involving a massive drug-smuggling operation headed by the lethal Vietnam vet Joshua (Gary Busey).

Ultimately the common ground for Glover and Gibson is staying alive as the film attempts to shift its buddy story to the battlefields of L.A. Pic tries to humanize the brutality and introduce some all-American values into the battle, going so far as to have Glover's teenage daughter (Traci Wolfe) kidnapped by the bad guys.

Gibson, in one of his better performances, holds the fascination of someone who may truly be dangerous, but it is difficult to swallow the film's premise that he is a true blue American hero when there is really little heroic or admirable about the

He is a trained killer just like the drug smugglers and admits he has never been good at anything else. He is part of a chain of revenge that can only lead to more killing and violence, despite the film's suggestion that once he's completed his mission, he can return to the warmth of Glover's family.

It's a rather cowardly conclusion since, unlike "Taxi Driver," it tails to recognize and accept the volatile violence that's walking the streets and can erupt at any time. "Lethal Weapon" wants it both ways - a killer who can be compassionate, too. But it just doesn't wash.

Even so, as long as the film is bounding along at a brisk pace one can roll with the punches and suspend judgment and ignore holes in the plot and faulty logic that has the two cops launching a seemingly independent and unsupervised war.

As the arch villain, Busey is the kind of character with ice in his veins and, with his unnatural white hair, he's a true angel of death. Gibson is supposed to be sympathetic character based on his grieving for his dead wife, and here, as in "Mad Max," he can project a certain untarnished virtue.

But it's a tough character to buy and when the script tries to give him mythic proportions, he looks foolish as often as not.

Glover, too, is likable and so is Darlene Love as his wife, but he and Gibson come from two different worlds that the film never really reconciles.

"Lethal Weapon" is a piece of bravado filmmaking and tech credits are first-rate throughout. Stephen Goldblatt's photography manages to be gritty and glamorous at once. And perhaps that's the film's fatal flaw. It's style masquerading as content. Jagr.

Tues., June 2, 1987

Let's Get Harry

(Action Drama — Color)

A Tri-Star Pictures release from Tri-Star-Delphi IV & V Prods. Produced by Daniel H. Blatt, Robert Singer. Directed by "Alan Smithee" (Stuart Rosenberg). Screenplay, Charles Robert Carner, from story by Mark Feldberg, Samuel Fuller; camera (Metrocolor), James A. Contner; editor, Ralph E. Winters, Rick R. Sparr; music, Brad Fiedel; sound (Dolby), Don Johnson; art direction, Mort Rabinowitz, Agustin Ituarte (Mexico); costume supervisor, Gilda Texter; stunt coordinator, Bobby Bass; special-effects coordinator, Eddie Surkin; production manager, David S. Hamburger; assistant director, Benjamin Rosenberg; casting, Judith Holstra. Marcia Ross; associate producers, eldberg, Hamburger. Reviewed on HBO/Cannon Video vidcassette, N.Y., May 24, 1987. MPAA rating: R. Running time:

Corey Burke	. Michael Schoeffling
	Tom Wilson
	Glen Frey
	Gary Busey
	Robert Duvall
	Rick Rossovich
	Ben Johnson
	Matt Clark
	Gregory Sierra
	Elpidia Carrillo
	Mark Harmon
	Bruce Gray
	Guillermo Rios

New York - "Let's Get Harry'' is a well-made but utterly routine action picture, briefly released by Tri-Star last October ahead of its current homevideo status. Pic is worth catching for two excellent (as usual) support performances by Robert Duvall and Gary Busey. Director Stuart Rosenberg took his name off the credits, reportedly due to mishap during postproduction (pic was lensed in Mexico and Illinois in 1985).

Film project was originally planned by Samuel Fuller, writing and directing, in 1981; he is credited with cowriting the story. It's the trite tale (almost identical to another current release, Vestron's "Nightforce") of a group of young guys, led by Michael Schoeffling, deciding to take matters in their own hands and go to Colombia to rescue Schoeffling's brother Harry (Mark Harmon), kidnapped along with the U.S. ambassador (Bruce Gray) by terrorists. These "terrorists" are actually drug dealers, holding the twosome hostage until their fellow dealers are released from prison.

Picture follows rigidly the cliches of this mini-genre: the old hand mercenary (Robert Duvall) who takes the youngsters under his wing; the hands-are-tied government officials ("We don't negotiate with terrorists under any circumstances") and stereotyped bad guys. There's even a totally illogical female role written in, played by Elpidia Carrillo, who is cast in virtually every South-of-the-border Hollywood opus.

Fortunately, film is redeemed somewhat by Duvall, with shaved head and authoritative thesping, as a gung ho medal-of-honor winner shaded differently than his similar characters in "Apocalypse Now" and "The Great Santini."

Busey is also delightful as a smooth-talking car dealer who agrees to bankroll the mission if he can come along for a "hunting trip." Unfortunately, both Duvall and Busey are eventually written out of the scenario, and film dies without them.

Lead roles are colorless, with Schoeffling doing an okay job but singing star Glenn Frey making little impression as one of his pals. Rugged he-man Rick Rossovich is cast against type as the wimp of the

Mon., Feb. 2, 1987

Light Of Day

(Rock drama — Color)

A Tri-Star Pictures release of a Taft Entertainment Pictures/Keith Barish Productions presentation. Produced by Rob Cohen, Keith Barish. Executive producer, Doug Claybourne, Directed by Paul Schrader, Screenplay by Schrader. Camera (Astro Laboratories Inc. Color), John Bailey; editor, Jacqueline Cambas; music, Thomas Newman; production design, Jeannine Claudia Oppewall; set decorator, Lisa Fischer; sound (Dolby), J. Paul Oddo, Bill Pellak; costumes, Jodie Tillen; assistant director, Mark Radcliff; associate producer, Alan Mark Poul; casting, Bonnie Timmermann. Reviewed at Lorimar Telepictures screening room, Culver City, Jan. 27, 1987. MPAA Rat ing: PG-13. Running time: 107 min.

Joe Rasnick......Michael J. Fox Jeanette Rasnick....Gina Rowlands Patti Rasnick..... Joan Jett Bu Montgomery Michael McKeanThomas G. Waites Cindy Montgomery Cherry Jones Gene Bodine Michael Dolan Billy Tettore Paul J. Harkins Benji RasnickBilly Sullivan Benjamin Rasnick.... .Jason Miller

Directors haven't had much luck in transfering the energy and emotion of rock 'n roll to film and Paul Schrader is the latest to fail. Visceral power of rock simply doesn't stand up to the literal expression Schrader attempts in "Light Of Day." After much huffing and puffing about the meaning of the music, film finally connects towards the end but will likely lose most of its audience along the way.

"Light Of Day," like many of Schrader's films, probably looked a lot better on paper than it does on the screen. Director has the tendency to write characters as representations of ideas rather than flesh-andblood people. Consequently, action seems schematic and stilted rather than spontaneous.

This time out Schrader has taken his search for redemption to Cleveland, the legendary heartland of rock. At heart, "Light Of Day" is a tortured family melodrama with a rock 'n roll beat.

Renegade daughter Patti Rasnick (Joan Jett) and her younger brother Joe (Michael J. Fox) play in the Barbusters, a talented but routine bar band that performs in taverns around Ohio.

Schrader, who also wrote the screenplay, has spread enough guilt around this family to fill a book.

Jett has a 4-year-old son (Billy Sullivan) but she won't tell anyone who the father is. She hates her mother (Gena Rowlands) despite mom's attempts to show her God's way. With the passive father (Jason Miller) and the dutiful son (Fox), this could be anyfamily U.S.A. as written by Eugene O'Neill.

Everyone wears their emotions on their sleeve, except Jett, who wears hers on her shoulder. Escape hatch from all this backbiting is supposed to be rock 'n roll, but when one talks too much about the saving grace of music, as Jett does, it tends to come out as childish and silly.

The proof that "music is all that matters" should be in the doing and although Schrader has peppered the soundtrack with lots of good cuts and Jett gets to perform a number of tunes herself, the music is basically dull and lifeless.

There is no joy to the sound and with her excursions into petty theft and heavy metal, Jett just becomes a rather distasteful character.

It is only late in the film, when Rowlands suffers the mandatory fatal illness, that Jett shows her true feelings and brings some life to the character. Deathbed reconciliation between Jett and Rowlands is an exquisitely written and extremely moving scene. If only Schrader had packed the earlier scenes with as much feeling.

Despite the over-the edge quality of her character, Rowlands makes even the most ludicrous lines seem feasible. It's a fine and controlled performance. Also winning is young Sullivan as Benji, a born crowdpleaser who can even play a toy guitar.

Fox is basically miscast as the good-natured brother who idolizes his sister and tries to cover for her. He's a likable actor but out of his element as a tortured urban rocker by night and factory worker by day.

His lack of intensity punctures the film's attack. Jett looks the part and even manages to hit the mark from time to time, but for every hit there's a miss.

Visually, "Light Of Day" is a return to the grittiness of Schrader's first picture "Blue Collar." John Bailey's photography manages to capture the poetry of smokestacks and dinginess of dead-end bars.

Title tune by Bruce Springsteen, performed over the end credits by Jett and Fox, is probably the strongest song in the film but still far from the unifying anthem called for

Other tech credits are individually fine but overall the film has an "almost real" look. So much has been written and said about the liberating power of rock and the purity of the working class that it's a thin line between the real and the romanticized. Unfortunately, Schrader has gone the wrong way. Jagr.

Mon., Oct. 6, 1986

Link (Horror — Color)

A Cannon release. Produced, directed by Richard Franklin. Executive producer, Verity Lambert. Coproducer, Rick McCallum. Screenplay, Everett DeRoche, based on a story by Lee Zlotoff, Tom Ackerman. Camera (Technicolor, Rank prints), Mike Malloy; editor, Andrew London; music, Jerry Goldsmith; production design, Norman Garwood; art direction, Keith Pain; costume design, Terry Smith; sound (Dolby), David Stephenson; assistant director, Chris Rose; ape trainer, Ray Berwick; second-unit camera, Gale Tattersall (England), Mike Proudot (Scotland); casting, Pricilla John (London), Jackie Burch (Los Angeles). Reviewed at the Hollywood Pacific, L.A., Oct. 3, 1986:

IPAA Rating: R. Running time: 103 min.	
Dr. Steven Phillip	Terence Stamp
Jane Chase	Elisabeth Shue
David	Steven Pinner
Dennis	Richard Garnett
Tom	David O'Hara
Bailey	Kevin Lloyd
Link	Locke
	_

What is missing from "Link" is a reason to see it. When Cannon acquired Thorn/EMI, this was part of the package — and a worthless one at that. Boxoffice prospects look bleak, even in the vidcassette market.

Right off, the film is in trouble when the chimpanzees outperform their human counterparts.

Credit here goes to animal trainer Ray Berwick for getting a full range of expressions out of the primates that director Richard Franklin couldn't get out of the actors. But then, he didn't have much material in the way of a story to work with.

Film takes nearly one entire evolutionary phase to get started, plodding along for nearly an hour at an isolated English coastal manor house where preeminent primatologist Dr. Steven Phillip (Terence Stamp) conducts rudimentary experiments on a handful of chimps with the help of his fresh-faced student assistant, Jane Chase (Elisabeth Shue).

The chimp's malevolent ringleader, Link (Locke), takes over the lead from the first time he is seen as the tuxedoed butler — even though he never utters a word.

Stamp is so wooden, he appears somnambulant. No wonder that when he disappears, it takes a while to even miss him.

Presumably, when it is revealed that Link is not the dutiful, cigarsmoking house servant, things are supposed to get scary. "Link" is being billed as a horror film, after all

Alas, the chimps are too cute and cuddly and Shue too unfazed and unscared by the deaths that are occurring around her; when she finally finds herself trapped in the house with Link, even the thunderstorms and heavy drum scoring by Jerry Goldsmith can't make things spooky.

Brit.

Brit.

Thurs., Aug. 20, 1987

Lionheart

(Period adventure — Color)

An Orion Pictures release of a Taliafilm If production. Produced by Stanley O'Toole, Talia Shire. Executive producers, Francis Coppola, Jack Schwartzmann. Directed by Franklin J. Shaffner. Screenplay, Menno Meyjes, Richard Outten from a story by Meyjes. Camera (color), Alec Mills; music, Jerry Goldsmith; editor, David Bretherton, Richard Haines; production designer, Gil Parrondo; costumes, Nana Cecchi; assistant director, Gary Daigler. Reviewed at Cineplex Odeon Canada Square Theater, Toronto, Aug. 18, 1987. MPAA Rating: PG. Running time: 104 min.

Robert Nerra	Eric Stoltz
The Black Prince	Gabriel Byrne
Blanche	Nicola Cowper
Michael	Dexter Fletcher
Mathilda	eborah Barrymore
Charles de Montfort.	Nicholas Clay
Simon Nerra	Bruce Purchase
King Richard	Neil Dickson

Toronto — The Children's Crusades of the 12th century is the subject of Franklin J. Schaffner's "Lionheart," a flaccid, limp kiddie adventure yarn with little of its intended grand, epic sweep realized. Pic will be quite iffy at the boxoffice and should head straight for the homevideo shelves. Orion release opened here Aug. 14.

Based partly on myth, partly on historical accounts, the story concerns bands of medieval tykes who set out to search for the elusive King Richard II on his quest to recapture the Holy Land from the Moslems.

Young knight Robert Nerra (Eric Stoltz) rides off disillusioned from his first battle and meets up with mystical Blanche (pretty Nicola Cowper) and her brother Michael (Dexter Fletcher), two teen circus performers who convince him to travel to Paris and join King Richard's crusade. Along the way the trio enlists limping con artist tyke Odo, blonde thief Baptista, and the king's falconer, Hugo.

But the dark threat of the Black Prince looms overhead in all corners of the misty forest. Gabriel Byrne plays him like an ennuistricken Darth Vadar. His goal is to recruit all the kids and sell them into slavery. The youngsters also have adventures in the secret underground world of orphans in 12th century Paris.

The whole ragtag band, under Stoltz' disjointed leadership, has the ultimate confrontation with the Black Prince at an impressively recreated medieval castle by the sea at the pic's finale.

Menno Meyjes' ('The Color Purple'') and Richard Outten's script is full of high ideals that never gel. It's very nice to protect the downtrodden and innocent, but these kids just don't seem to have what it takes.

There's unintentional hilarity in the lines too. When the group meets up with Mathilda (Roger Moore's daughter, Deborah Barrymore), who reveals her female identity after winning a tough jousting contest, her Lord/Dad pouts, "I don't want you to bring me honor. I want you to bring me a son-in-law."

Schaffner shot the pic in Hungary and Portugal and recruited hundreds of Slavic kids to play the orphans. They do about as well as the leads, with Stoltz sleepwalking through his role and Cowper all pouty and teary-eyed at life's injustices. But there's spirit in Fletcher's dreamy Michael and Chris Pitt's sneaky Odo.

Locations in medieval fortresses and scenes of Middle Ages entertainment and large feasts (including four and 20 doves flying out of a pie) re-create the period well, in spite of the choppy editing and surfeit of solid dialog.

Dava

Mon., Dec. 8, 1986

Little Shop Of Horrors (Musical — Color)

A Warner Bros. release of a Geffen Company production. Produced by David Geffen. Directed by Frank Oz. Screenplay by Howard Ashman, based on the musical stage play, book and lyrics by Ashman, music by Alan Menken. Camera (Technicolor), Robert Paynter; editor, John Jympson; music, Menken; lyrics, Ashman; score, Miles Goodman; production design, Roy Walker, art director, Stephen Spence; set decorator, Tessa Davies; costumes, Marit Allen; special effects, Bran Ferren; "Audrey II" created by Lyle Conway; assistant director, Dusty Symonds; associate producer, David Orton, Denis Holt; casting, Margery Simkin. Reviewed at Disney Screening Room, Burbank, Calif., Dec. 2, 1986. MPAA rating: PG-13. Running time: 88 min.

m	in.	
	Seymour Krelborn.	Rick Moranis
	Audrey	Ellen Greene
	Mushnik	Vincent Gardenia
-	Orin Scrivello	Steve Martin
	Crystal	Tichina Arnold
-	Chiffon	Tisha Campbell
	Ronette	Michelle Weeks
	Patrick Martin	Jim Belushi
,	Wink Wilkinson	John Candy
	First customer	.Christopher Guest
	Arthur Denton	Bill Murray
	Voice of Audrev	Levi Stubbs

"Little Shop Of Horrors" is a fractured, funny production transported rather reluctantly from the stage to the screen. Kooky songs about a boy, a girl and a maneating plant may have been swell entertainment in the theater but come up a bit soft on the screen. Nonetheless, production is offbeat enough to win a cult audience and perhaps a bit of crossover from the mainstream.

Almost nothing is left besides the setting and story outline from the 1961 Roger Corman film that inspired the stage musical. Tone, intent and execution are miles apart. Where the original was sinister, low budget and shot in a flash, the musical is lush, lovable and elaborate, with shooting dragging on for some seven months. But the comparison is really one of apples and oranges.

While some musicals have made the jump effectively to film, book here by Howard Ashman, who also wrote the film's screenplay, is a narrow bridge between the show's amusing songs by Alan Menken. On film the numbers are impressive set pieces, imaginatively staged with wonderful sets, but a film's requirements are not the same as a play's.

In musical theater one is accustomed to show-stopping numbers and the more the better. In film, story and character development are the key ingredients of a cinematic experience. Too many set pieces only slow down the pace and that's what happens here.

Individually, "Little Shop Of Horrors" is filled with many memorable moments. It is the cumulative effect that is rather slight.

Film opens splendidly on Roy Walker's skid row set as the three-woman Greek chorus named after '60s girl groups, Crystal (Tichina Arnold), Chiffon (Tisha Campbell) and Ronette (Michelle Weeks), introduce the down-and-out denizens of this part of town. Walker's street includes a grand elevated subway as artificial as anything in '50s musicals.

Living a rather mundane life, working in Mushnik's flower shop are Seymour (Rick Moranis) and Audrey (Ellen Greene), that is until lightning strikes and the natural order of things is turned upside down. Through a chain of events just silly enough to be fun, Seymour becomes the proud owner of Audrey II, a rare breed of plant that makes him famous and his boss (Vincent Gardenia) prosperous.

But Audrey II develops an insatiable appetite for human flesh; since Seymour recognizes the plant as his meal ticket, he scurries about to keep it happy. As morbid as this might sound, director Frank Oz has a light enough touch to realize the absurd comedy inherent in the material.

When characters like Steve Martin's sadistic dentist gets swallowed alive, it's unlikely anyone will feel sorry for him. People are not really people here but broad caricatures and Martin's is one of the best. Riding a motorcycle, wearing black leather with hair dyed black, Martin was born to play the role of Audrey's bullying boyfriend and his number about the pleasures of delivering pain is one of the film's most delicious.

Film is full of oddball cameos, such as Bill Murray (in the role Jack Nicholson handled in the original) as Martin's masochistic patient and John Candy as a Wolfman Jack-type d.j. on skid row radio.

And Moranis and Greene are no less weird. Greene is as dipsy as they come and Moranis is a nerd to reckon with. But nothing here is stranger than the plant itself. Designed by Lyle Conway with the voice of Levi Stubbs, Audrey II is a hip soul brother disguised as a "mean green mother from outer space," in the

words of its big number.

As the plant grows and makes life miserable for Seymour and nonexistent for some others, special effects by Bran Ferren give the film a "Ghostbusters" look as it threatens to explode beyond the screen.

Other tech credits are excellent and Robert Paynter's camerawork suggests a world like no other. But then that's one of the film's problems. It's too weird to be involving. Jagr.

Tues., June 30, 1987

The Living Daylights (British — Color)

An MGM/UA distribution release from United Artists of an Eon production. Produced by Albert R. (Cubby) Broccoli, Michael G. Wilson. Directed by John Glen. Stars Timothy Dalton. Screenplay, Richard Maibaum, Wilson, from story by Ian Fleming. Camera (Panavision, Technicolor), Alec Mills; editor, John Grover, Peter Davies; music. John Barry; songs, "The Living Daylights" by a-ha, composed by Pal Waaktaar, Barry, "Where Has Every Body Gone," and "If There Was A Man," by The Pretenders, music by Barry, lyrics by Chrissie Hynder James Bond theme, Monty Norman; production design, Peter Lamont; supervising art direction, Terry Ackland-Snow; set decoration, Michael Ford; costume design, Emma Porteous; sound, Colin Miller; special effects supervisor, John Richardson; second unit director, Arthur Wooster; assistant director, Gerry Gavigan; stunts arranger, Paul Weston; driving stunts arranger, Remy Julienne; aerial stunts arranger, B. J. Worth; production supervisor, Anthony Waye; associate producers, Tom Pevsner, Barbara Broccoli; casting, Debbie McWilliams. Reviewed at the Odeon Leicester Square, London, June 29, 1987. MPAA Rating: PG. Running time: 130 min.

James Bond Timothy Dalton Kara Milovy Maryam d'Abo Gen Georgi Koskov ... Jeroen Krabbe Brad Whitaker Joe Don Baker Gen Leonid

Gen. Leonid
Pushkin. John Rhys-Davies
Kamran Shah Art Malik
Necros Andreas Wisniewski
Saunders. Thomas Wheatley
Q Desmond Llewelyn
M Robert Brown
Minister of Defence. Geoffrey Keen
General Anatol Gogol Walter Gotell
Miss Moneypenny Caroline Bliss
Felix Leiter John Terry
Also with: John Bowe, Julia T. Wal-

Also with: John Bowe, Julia T. Wallace, Kell Tyler, Catherine Rabett, Dulice Liecier, Nadim Sawalha, Alan Talbot, Carl Rigg, Tony Cyrus, Atik Mohamed.

London — "The Living Daylights" is just the ticket to mark James Bond's 25 years on the screen. The mesh of above-par story, action spectacle and virile new star gives the series a solid uplift that bodes big worldwide returns atop the near-\$750,000,000 global rentals already bagged by Bond pix. This one will be tough to top.

Timothy Dalton's a class act, be it in Shakespeare on the London stage or as the new 007. The fourth Bond registers beautifully on all key counts of charm, machismo, sensitivity and technique.

He's an actor, not just a pretty face with a dimpled chin, and in "Daylights" he's abetted by material that's a healthy cut above the series norm of superhero fantasy. If the new James Bond poses a marketing challenge going in, it won't be for long.

Pic isn't just a high-tech action replay with the usual ravishing vistas and ditto dames. Everyone seems to have tried a little harder this time, and it shows.

The Richard Maibaum-Michael Wilson scripting partnership came up not just with sustained clever excitement but with a human dimension for Bond not hitherto plumbed. There are even some relatively touching moments of romantic contact between Dalton and lead femme Maryam d'Abo as a Czech concert cellist. Belatedly, the Bond characterization has achieved appealing maturity.

There's a more mature story of its kind, too, this one about a phony KGB defector involved in gun-running and a fraternal assassination plot. Early apprehension of yet more unshaded, ho-hum Cold War shenanigans become tempered.

By the conclusion, there's even a strong hint of the new glasnost spirit — in both directions, with more than one Soviet honcho sporting a decidedly human face. It's a welcome change.

Though lengthy, pic has a good, well-utilized pace, with a nice balance of human and high-tech action. Repeat director John Glen handles it all smoothly.

Reassuringly, though, the meatier narrative is at no sacrifice to expected spectacle, on which count 'Daylights'' is a bonanza even for hardened fans. Two daredevil sequences stand out: one the pursuit of Bond's Aston-Martin across snow-covered mountain terrain, and a climactic escape by flyng transport from a shootout in the Afghanistan outback. Both are sustained corkers.

The most comically clever touch is the gizmo whereby the fake "defector" is spirited out to the West in a capsule via the trans-Siberian natural gas pipeline.
As ever with this series, pic is a

stunning paean to stunting (arranged by Paul Weston) and the arts of modelmaking and playful special effects. The craft tricks are as socko as any coproducer Albert Broccoli has presided over since his personal annuity got started with "Dr. No."

D'Abo, in a part meant to be something more than that of window-dressed mannequin, handles her chores acceptably. Able support is turned in by Joe Don Baker as a nutcase arms seller, Jeroen Krabbe and John Rhys-Davis as respective KGB bad and good types (a little less arch than the usual types), and Art Malik as an Oxford-educated (this is fantasy) Afghan freedom fighter.

Also superb are Robert Brown as M and Caroline Bliss as the new Miss Moneypenny. Hers is the usual quickie, but she makes it a good one and warrants the role's lease.

As a typical exercise in megabuck travelog, the 25th anni Bond locationed in Gibraltar, Austria, Morocco, the U.S. and Italy, as well as homebase England and the Pinewood lot.

The usual massive Eon Prods. credit list is justified by way of spreading merited honors, not least the second-unit crews, yeoman editing, John Barry's basic score (unassertively enhancing), and the inimitable main titles of Maurice Binder. Everyone seemed up for this one, and it shows.

Thurs., Jan. 22, 1987

Living On Tokyo Time (Romantic comedy - Color)

A Farallon Films production. Produced by Lynn O'Donnell, Dennis Hayashi. Directed by Steven Okazaki. Screenplay, John McCormick, Okazaki. Stars Minako Ohashi, Ken Nakagawa. Camera (Monaco Labs Color), Okazaki, Zand Gee; editor, Okazaki; sound, Giovanni Di Simone, Sara Chin; assistant director, Judith Nihei. Reviewed at the U.S. Film Festival, Park City, Utah, Jan. 18, 1987. No MPAA rating. Running time: 83

Nyoko
KenKen Nakagawa
MimiMitzie Abe
CarlBill Bonham
Michelle Brenda Aoki
LanaKate Connell
RichieJohn McCormick
Nina Sue Matthews
JimboJim Cranna
Warren Alex Herschlag
Lambert Keith Choy

..Judi Nihei Lane Nishikawa

Park City, Utah - A slight but charmingly offbeat look at a culturally mismatched couple, "Living On Tokyo Time" represents another promising regional film by and about a minority culture not often depicted on the big screen. First fictional feature from Bay Area-based Steven Okazaki, an Oscar nominee for his docu "Unfinished Business," displays a droll sensibility at work despite occasional awkwardnesses and slow spots. This could do some business in carefully nurtured specialized situations.

Setting is San Francisco, and attractive young Japanese woman Kyoko has decided to stay on in the United States to get over a broken engagement and to prove to her family that she can make it on her own. With very little English and no particular prospects, she works in a restaurant and lives at the YWCA while writing home that things will

In desperate need of a green-card, Kyoko is set up with a young Japanese-American named Ken, a bland lad who speaks no Japanese and works as a janitor while harboring dreams of becoming a rock 'n' roll star. Latter eventuality is unlikely given his staggering lack of talent, so Ken has little to offer Kyoko except legal status.

But that's enough for Kyoko, who enters into marriage on a strictly businesslike basis. Ken accepts this at first, but gradually the dull-witted fool comes alive, falls in love with her and tries to really make her his wife

Unfortunately, while Ken comes out of his shell, Kyoko remains within hers, instinctively refusing to Americanize herself or to sentimentally fall for Ken's embryonic display of romanticism. Ultimately, she comes to the astute realization that, if she stays much longer, she won't be able to go home again.

As presented by Okazaki, Ken's Japanese ancestry counts for very little where Kyoko is concerned and, in fact, Ken's thoroughly Americanized sister gets along with her white husband much better than Ken could ever hope to do with Kyoko. Pic is fully of brassy, loud Japanese-American women to whom Kyoko represents a sharp contrast.

Okazaki loads film with sardonic comments about cultural differences, but it's all quite light, never trenchant, and he has fun with the brief scenes in which Ken's rock band attempts to get it together under the leadership fo John McCormick, cowriter of the pic's screenplay.

Despite the agreeable pleasures offered up, however, film is diminished by extreme uncommunicativeness of the two leads, as well as a frequent slackness to the story telling. As colorful as many of the secondary characters may be, there is only so far you can go with obviously amateur performers, and a little more urgency in both the pacing and the important point-making would have helped a lot.

Minako Ohashi makes for a lovely. if thoroughly enigmatic, leading lady, while Ken Nakagawa's klutziness is amusing and frustrating by

Shot by the director, along with Zand Gee, and edited by Okazaki as well, pic looks good on an obviously minimal budget (supplied in part by the American Film Institute and the National Endowment for the Arts.) Lively soundtrack is comprised of numerous new-wave tunes. Cart.

Fri., July 17, 1987

The Lost Boys (Comic horror — Color)

A Warner Bros. release of a Richard Donner production. Produced by Harvey Bernhard, Executive producer, Donner, Coexecutive producers, Mark Damon, John Hyde. Directed by Joel Schumacher. Screenplay, Janice Fischer, James Jere-mias, Jeffrey Boam, story by Fischer, Jere-mias. Camera (Technicolor, Panavision), Michael Chapman; editor, Robert Brown; music, Thomas Newman; production de sign, Bo Welch; art direction, Tom Duffield; set design, John Warnke; set decoration, Chris Westlund: costume design, Susan Becker; sound (Dolby), David Ronne; vam-pire prosthetics and effects, Gerg Cannom. assistant director, William S. Beasley; casting, Marion Dougherty; second unit director James Arnett; second unit camera, Paul Goldsmith. Reviewed at the Warner Hollywood Studios, L.A., July 7, 1987. MPAA Rat-ing: R. Running time: 92 min. Michael.....Jason Patric

Sam... ...Corey Haim Dianne Wiest Lucy .Barnard Hughes Grandpa.... Max. Kiefer Sutherland David Star Edgar Frog.Jami Gertz .Corey Feldman Alan Frog. Jamison Newlander Brooke McCarter
.....Billy Wirth
.Alexander Winter Paul Dwayne Marko Laddie .Chance Michael Corbitt

"The Lost Boys" is a horrifically dreadful vampire teensploitation entry that daringly advances the theory that all those missing children pictured on grocery bags and milk cartons are actually the victims of bloodsucking bikers. Blatantly pitched at the lowest common denominator of the adolescent audience, unholy brew qualifies as undoubtedly the dumbest Summer release to date, but may have enough saleable "elements" to rack up good grosses for a few

Arriving in a Santa Cruz-like community that is dominated by a huge amusement park and is described as the "murder capital of the world," Dianne Wiest and her sons check in at grandpa's creepy house, and the boys quickly fall in with the wrong crowd.

Latter includes some unhealthy looking punks, led by Kiefer Sutherland, who take older brother Jason Patric back to their lair and. through the foxy but wasted Jami Gertz, tempt him into the ways of the undead.

Getting wind of the vampire problem, little brother Corey Haim teams up with two pint-sized Rambos to combat the plague on their houses, and it all ends in a colossal battle with bats, punks, froth, spears and blood flying through the air in a frenzy of nonsensical ac-

Pic could go over with undiscriminating audiences due to its combination of wild effects, hip kids, rock music and gruesome prosthetics, but film panders to the basest instincts and is hokey even on its own ludicrous terms. At 92 minutes, it still seems to last all night long.

Fri., July 31, 1987

Maid To Order (Comedy — Color)

A New Century/Vista Film Co, release of a Vista Organization production. Produced by Herb Jaffe, Mort Engelberg. Directed by Amy Jones. Stars Ally Sheedy. Screenplay, Jones, Perry Howze, Randy Howze. Cam-era (DeLuxe Color), Shelly Johnson; editor, Sidney Wolinsky; production designer, Jeffrey Townsend; costume designer, Lisa Jensen; music, Georges Delerue; sound (Ul-tra Stereo), Rick Waddell; assistant director, Kristine Peterson; second-unit director, Jeffrey Townsend; casting, Nina Axelrod. Reviewed at New Century/Vista screening room, Los Angeles, July 21, 1987. MPAA rating: PG. Running time: 96 min.
Jessie Montgomery.....Ally Sheedy

Jessie Montgomery....

Stella	Michael Ontkean
Stan Starkey	Tom Skerritt Merry Clayton

"Maid To Order" is fantasy, actually Cinderella in reverse. This skewed fairy tale adaptation finds Ally Sheedy as a poor little rich girl forced to work as a maid, who in the process learns humility, sensitivity and diligence. There's a fairy godmother to guide her and a prince to adore her. Occasionally funny, sometimes clever, but mostly it's cute — just the sort of pic a reader of "Tiger Beat" would love.

Ally Sheedy doesn't know how not to be cute, even when she's supposed to be an insufferable brat. She's a party girl from Beverly Hills who grew up without a mother but has a decent, if indulgent, father (Tom Skerritt).

Cuteness only goes so far and even "Daddy" has a threshold, that being when Sheedy parties a little too hearty and lands in jail for speeding and cocaine possession.

In exasperation, Skerritt wishes upon a star his girl had never been born and, voila, his wish is granted.

Enter Beverly D'Angelo as the '80s fairy godmother, meeting up with Sheedy in jail and reappearing later to find her homeless and swilling cheap liquor with a park-bench resident.

At first she dismisses D'Angelo as a raving nut, but comes to learn, as the audience does with her intermittent appearances, that she's her conscience

Meanwhile, Sheedy's desperate for food after a whole one night on her own and lands a job with a toohip Malibu couple (Dick Shawn, Valerie Perrine) who want a white maid (as in Anglo), since they already have a Latina (Begona Plaza), a black (Merry Clayton) and a scruffy mechanic-chauffeur (Michael Ontkean).

Unlike the heroine of Charles Perrault's classic tale, Sheedy's character, Jessie, totally lacks any domestic talents and doesn't have any particular desire to learn them. either. That doesn't sit too well with the resentful Salvadoran maid, played with authority by Plaza, or with the cook, a good role for the earthy Clayton.

Likability aside, subtlety is not the operative word here, since most folks surrounding Sheedy are drawn without shading or complexity. Plaza gleefully sends money back home, Clayton can sing with gusto, cook and ooze love for her family and Ontkean is an all-around decent hunk

The watered-down evil roles go to Shawn and Perrine, whose "do" Hollywood schtick is milked to the nth degree. What is initially mildly amusing obnoxious behavior runs thin after a while.

Shawn's a dealmaker looking for a charity gig to hype his latest star, in this case the real life Starlight Foundation that gets more plugs than are used in his character's hair transplant. She recycles tin foil and newspapers, uses hotel soap for guests and generally is a good, voluptuous housewife with horse sense and no taste.

Sight gags of malfunctioning vacuums, backfiring limos and burnt clothes work only once and, fortunately, they are kept to a minimum. That leaves the personalities to carry the comedy, but a few times on screen, the audience

knows all about them and the fun is gone. Essentially, the "down-stairs" folks have more talent than the "upstairs" folks in the talent business.

As soon as Sheedy gets a handle on how to clean and who she's dealing with, pic falls into the realm of sappy predictability. She transforms from a sourpuss to a sweety pie, gets her prince and her Daddy back and everyone lives happily ever after.

With no sex, little nudity, no profanity, a PG rating and morals to boot, "Maid To Order" might well have been written by a subversive couple for their wayward kids. Brit.

Thurs., March 19, 1987

Making Mr. Right (Romantic comedy — Color)

An Orion Pictures release of a Barry & Enright production. Executive producers, Susan Seidelman, Dan Enright; producer, Mike Wise, Joel Tuber. Directed by Susan Seidelman. Screenplay, Floyd Byars, Laurie Frank. Camera (DeLuxe Color), Edward Lachman; editor/associate producer, Andrew Mondshein; music Chaz Jankel; art director, Jack Blackman; set decorators, Scott Jacobson, Jimmy Robinson II; visual effects, Bran Ferren; costume design, Rudy Dillon, Adelle Lutz; casting, Risa Bramon, Billy Hopkins. Reviewed March 17, 1987 at Orion Pictures screening room. MPAA Rating: PG-13. Running time: 95 min.

Jeff Peters/ Ulysses . . John Malkovich Frankie Stone... .Ann Magnuson .Glenne Headly Trish. Steve Marcus Ben Masters Sandy...... Estelle Stone... Laurie Metcalf . . Polly Bergen Harsh Nayya Dr. Ramdas...

Susan Seidelman has taken nearly every wrong turn in "Making Mr. Right," a desperately unfunny romance between an android and a New Wave "image consultant." Orion shouldn't expect to land much coin with this

The director must like the mistaken identity theme, which she so charmingly employed in "Desperately Seeking Susan," but mishandles here.

Instead of Seidelman getting animated performances in a funny, screwball comedy, her "Mr. Right" is just screwy. The actors nearly suffocate delivering stiff dialog, jokes that are bad or vulgar (or both) in scenes that reek of contrivance.

Sharing in the blame should be scripters Floyd Byars and Laurie Frank, who have taken Frankenstein and turned him into Frankie Stone (Ann Magnuson).

Her world is Melrose Avenue Miami-style, where she's a very unlikely whiz-bang publicist with a punk hairdo and very ordinary sensibilities, who practically moves in with an android and his creator (John Malkovich in both roles) to get the best handle on how to sell the invention to the American public before he's launched into space.

This client will sure be a needed change from her last one, a straightlaced congressman (Ben Masters) who also happens to be her boyfriend.

She's supposed to be teaching the android, Ulysses, social graces, but he ends up learning emotions instead - thereby negating much of the sophisticated programming his alter-ego, Dr. Jeff Peters, worked so hard to perfect.

Malkovich takes to his role of Ulysses very earnestly, considering he has to utter such gooey lines as 'Why do people fall in love?'' and suffer mutterings from Magnuson. and her horny girlfriend (Glenne Headly) about his anatomical correctness.

As Dr. Peters, the actor doesn't have to stretch much, playing the role to type as the nerdy, bumbling indignant scientist pushed out of shape that he has to suffer the commercialization of Ulysses at the hands of a disorganized dame.

Whatever women's lib theme ran through "Desperately Seeking Susan" is totally wiped away in this confused effort.

Magnuson portrays a dingy girl concerned more with making sure she has lipstick on than whether she's violating every professional ethic publicists have worked to create.

The action follows her while she races around at a frenetic pace between the Chemtech lab and her apartment (both miraculously decorated in terribly trendy '50s style), trying to corral Ulysses.

About the only two bright spots in the film are outside this context, with Ulysses caught buying expensive jewelry for a lovesick coworker, Sandy (Laurie Metcalf), and chasing after Magnuson at her sister's tacky wedding.

These scenes are supposed to build sexual tension between the android and his "image creator," but it isn't until nearly the last five minutes of the film that Magnuson shows even a twinge of desire for the robot.

Why, just minutes before she was totally disgusted at the idea that her girlfriend found him very well endowed indeed and a fantastic lover (even if he short circuited afterwards).

Then, at the wedding, she seemed all but about ready to agree to marrying her congressman — that is, after he shaved his mustache off to please her.

Finally, film ends in a ridiculous climax stretching the story's incredibility into outer space.

Filmmakers seemed a little confused on the technical side also. Continuity is often off (a tie knotted one second and loosened the next) and the overall look seems very low-budget, even if this was probably the highest-budgeted pic Seidelman has made.

Brit.

Mon., May 4, 1987

Malone

(Thriller — Color)

An Orion Pictures release. Produced by Leo L. Fuchs. Directed by Harley Cokliss. Screenplay, Christopher Frank, from the novel "Shotgun," by William Wingate. Camera (DeLuxe Color), Gerald Hirschfeld. Production designer, Graeme Murray; editor, Todd Ramsay; casting, Joseph D'Agosta, Carole Kenneally; music, David Newman; associate producers, Gerard Croce, Mary Eilts; stunt coordinator, Bud Davis; first assistant director, Brad Turner; sound mixer, Richard Van Dyke; set decorator, Barry Brolly; costume designer, Norman Salling; casting (Vancouver), Trish Robinson. Reviewed at the Hollywood Pacific Theater, May 1, 1987. MPAA Rating: R. Running time: 92 min.

Malone **Burt Reynolds** Delanev Cliff Robertson Kenneth McMillan Hawkins Cynthia Gibb Paul Barlow Scott Wilson Jamie Lauren Hutton Philip Anglim Harvey Calvin Bollard Tracey Walter Dan Bollard Dennis Burkley

"Malone" is a surprisingly well-acted thriller, with Burt Reynolds giving a magnetic, likeable performance as a disillusioned CIA hit man who thinks his killing days are behind him. Director Harley Cokliss has toned down some of the excesses from his first American feature, "Black Moon Rising," showing a bit more control in his direction while setting the table for some

above-average action sequences. Boxoffice prospects seem only so-so.

Film starts off unconvincingly; unless, that is, you think CIA is ordering assassinations in broad daylight in major U.S. cities. Man assigned to pull the trigger, alias Richard Malone (Reynolds), can't come across this time and tells love interest and fellow deep-cover agent Jamie (Lauren Hutton, in a nicely-played small part) that he wants out.

Malone seeks refuge in the Pacific northwest, stopping in a small Oregon town when his beloved '69 Mustang breaks down. He pushes it to a small gas station, owned and operated by Vietnam vet Paul Barlow (Scott Wilson) and his teenage daughter Jo (Cynthia Gibb).

At this point, plot turns start borrowing so much from Clint Eastwood's "Shane"-rewrite "Pale Rider" as to become almost obnoxious. Throw in Cary Snodgress and a little more religious imagery and you could have a sequel, a century later.

It turns out that the tiny town of Comstock is being systematically taken over by millionaire Charles Delaney (Cliff Robertson), who is buying land at 10 times its value, running people out of town, and building the headquarters for a reactionary paramilitary empire that is slowly spreading its influence throughout the country.

Several incidents show Malone protecting Barlow, who has rejected land offers, and increasingly lovestruck daughter from repeated harassment by Delaney's goons. One of them, obligatory big ugly guy (Dennis Burkley) makes some pointed sexual remarks at Jo in presence of Malone, who dutifully pounds him into submission.

Big ugly guy's drunk brother (played with about as much depth as the description) then seeks revenge, but is blown away himself in the murder attempt.

This puts Malone in trouble with the Comstock sheriff (Kenneth Mc-Millan), who is owned lock, stock and rifle by the paranoid Delaney, who thinks Malone has been sent up to kill him. They face off for the first time in a wonderfully taut scene at the police station, which leaves Delaney with an almost obsessive respect for his new enemy.

Police department's request for more information about "Richard Malone" pricks ears of CIA headquarters in Langley, whence Jamie is sent back to Oregon to kill her man.

She's almost too late, though, since Delaney has already dispatched two hired hands from New York to do him in. Malone is injured while killing the first two gunners, but recovers in time to seduce Jamie, who can't bring herself to poison him.

Delaney's local hoods get to Jamie, though, while Malone is out retrieving his car and the final confrontation is thus set. This, also, plays like "Pale Rider," with seemingly invincible (and invisible) Malone wiping out all of Delaney's hired hands before facing off with the leader himself.

Cokliss has a knack for good angles and builds well to some nice action scenes. But he has no subtlety when it comes to music, and the too-obvious, too-loud scoring detracts from a few quieter scenes (the worst has violins competing with tender heart-to-heart between Malone and the smitten Jo, obscuring a nicely controlled performance from

Gibb

Overall effect is positive, however, with Reynolds, in his 43d film, constructing a serious character with a believable story, and playing it straight and true throughout.

Mon., Feb. 9, 1987

Mannequin (Romantic comedy — Color)

A Twentieth Century Fox release of a Gladden Entertainment picture. Executive producers, Edward Rugoff, Joseph Farrell. Produced by Art Levinson. Associate producer, Catherine Paura. Directed by Michael Gottlieb. Screenplay, Gottlieb, Rugoff. Camera (Du Art Color, Deluxe prints), Tim Suhrstedt; editor, Richard Halsey; art director, Richard Amend; set decorator, Elise Rowland; music, Sylvester Levay; costume designer, Lisa Jensen; sound, Jan Brodin; assistant director, Michael Haley; casting, Marci Liroff. Reviewed Feb. 6, 1987, 20th Century Fox, Culver City. MPAA Rating: PG. Running time: 89 min.

Jonathan Switcher Andrew McCarthy Emmy. Kim Cattrall Claire. Estelle Getty Felix G.W. Bailey Richards. James Spader Hollywood Meshach Taylor Roxie Carole Davis

"Mannequin" is as stiff and spiritless as its title suggests. The animated performances of the leading characters try to inject life into what fertile ground there is, but under the weight of a wooden script and leaden direction, their efforts suffocate. Boxoffice should prove equally lifeless.

"Mannequin" seems to be made in the mold of "Splash," where the engaging relationship of the hopeless lovers makes audience want to suspend disbeliefs so that they can be together.

Instead of a mermaid, it's a mannequin (Kim Cattrall) as the latest reincarnation of an Egyptian princess who has known Christopher Columbus and Michelangelo in her journey through time. Instead of a food broker, Andrew McCarthy is an aspiring artist and working as a model-maker and creator of a mannequin which has the likeness of a woman he could easily love — if only she were real.

He dances with her, caresses her, talks to her, and may even have a slightly unnatural attraction to her that is strange, to be sure, but not perverted in any sense.

While McCarthy is a charming n'er do well and ripe with enough personality to venture down any number of quirky, unexpected paths, scripters never let him stray from a most uninvolving course.

After losing his position as a mannequin-maker and then a succession of other, more menial, jobs — as the result of which his girlfriend (Carol Davis) drops him cold — the despondent McCarthy is out in the rain on his motorcycle one night and spots his beloved mannequin in the window of the staid Prince department store.

The next day, he ventures back to visit his mute friend and manages to land a job as a stock clerk after saving the store owner (Estelle Getty) from getting hit in the head as a sign is being hoisted over the store's entrance.

Night work makes strange bedfellows of McCarthy and Hollywood (Meshach Taylor), the flamboyant near-transvestite who dresses the store windows, and of McCarthy and Emmy (Cattrall), his mannequin. She comes alive when they're alone together, but reverts back to her cold self if anyone else appears.

With all the improbability of this set up, scripters Michael Gottlieb, who also makes his debut as a director here, and Edward Rugoff

don't make much of this duo's unique arrangement.

McCarthy and Cattrall certainly are an attractive couple — when she's alive — but they don't get to do much more than kiss and dance around the store after hours — playing dress-up in the various departments — before time draws nigh and she has to be back at the window.

What is supposed to liven up the proceedings is the friction between McCarthy and the store's insufferably preppy manager, Richards (James Spader).

McCarthy and Cattrall are creating phenomenal window displays and bringing needed business back to Prince, the old grey lady of department stores.

This really goads Spader, the perfectly unctuous assistant to Getty, because he's also working as a double agent for Illustra, a glitzier store, where he's promised a piece of the action if Prince goes belly up.

Material is too thin to carry interest for the length of time it takes to peel away the surface of an interesting story, when there's only more surface material underneath.

Comic development is given over to the secondary characters (Taylor, Spader and the night watchman, G.W. Bailey), leaving few humorous moments for the lovers.

It should be funny to see McCarthy and Cattrall entwined in each others' arms when she suddenly turns into a stiff at a third person's unexpected appearance.

Maybe if they were outside the store among real people in real situations, the excitement of being exposed would heighten the humor. But the only ones who ever come close to discovering them are Taylor, a little kinky himself, and a moronic night watchman (Bailey) on the prowl with his stupid pooch.

Gottlieb can be excused for his first-time effort, but only this once.

Brit.

Wed., Dec. 17, 1986

Manon Des Sources MANON OF THE SPRINGS (French — Color)

AMLF release of a Renn Prod./Films A2/RAI2/DD Prods. coproduction. Executive producer, Claude Berri. Produced by Pierre Grunstein, Associate producer, Alain Poire, Stars Yves Montand and Daniel Auteuil. Directed by Claude Berri. Screenplay, Berri and Gerard Brach, based on the novel by Marcel Pagnol. Camera (Eastmancolor-Technovision), Bruno Nuytten; art direction, Bernard Vezat; editors, Genevieve Louveau and Herve de Luze; sound (Dolby), Pierre Gamet and Dominique Hennequin; costumes, Sylvie Gautrelet; makeup, Michele Deruelle and Jean-Pierre Eychenne; music. Jean-Claude Lepit (theme adapted from Verdi's "The Force Of Destiny"); production administrator, Colette Suder; assistant director, Xavier Castano; casting, Marie-Christine Lafosse. Reviewed at the Marignan Concorde-Pathe Cinema, Paris. Dec. 4, 1986. Running time: 113 min.

Cesar Soubeyran

Paris — "Manon Des Sources" is the poignant, but more dramatically wobbly followup to "Jean De Florette," producer-director Claude Berri's risky two-film adaptation of a novel by Marcel Pagnol, who, unsatisfied with his own next-to-last feature in 1952, later expanded it as a two-part novel.

When Pagnol filmed his own "Manon Des Sources" nearly a quarter of a century ago, he came up with a picture running just under four hours. As producer-writer-director with his own home-spun "repertory" acting troupe, he

could indulge his digressively prolix theory of cinema (though his distrib, Gaumont, obliged him to cut the film, destroying some of the rhythms Pagnol instinctively built into his superb peasant yarn).

Berri and his coscripter, Gerard Brach, had only a relatively compact novel to tackle when they prepared "Jean De Florette," which recounts the events leading up to "Manon Des Sources," both film and book.

But with "Manon," Berri met the more complex challenge of a casually-paced motion picture transferred into a literary work with a more tragic dimension. Berri had the obligation of squeezing this more diffuse material into a conventional feature-length span—hence the feeling of haste and cut corners of this new "Manon Des Sources," which, though based on the print reworking, cannot escape the inevitable remake comparisons.

"Manon" takes place some 10 years after the action off "Jean De Florette," which dealt with the plot of an arrogant village elder and his nephew (Yves Montand and Daniel Auteuil) to buy up the land of a hunchbacked city slicker (Gerard Depardieu), who, kept deliberately ignorant of the secret spring on his property, accidentally killed himself in his vain efforts to water his land.

In Film Two, Manon, the hunchback's daughter, grown into a beautiful young woman who now lives in the hills as reclusive shepherdess, learns of the treachery that brought about her father's death and exacts vengeance on Montand, Auteuil and the village by blocking up the subterannean spring that provides water to the area.

The resulting crisis bring about a public reckoning and the open accusation of Montand and Auteuil. Latter's guilt is deepened because he has fallen in love with Manon, and hangs himself when he realizes that there is no hope for forgiveness. Montand, grieved by his nephew's death, soon follows him to the grave when he learns that Depardieu was in fact his own illegitimate son.

That final revelation is what Pagnol added in his novel and Berri rushes the action along to get to these scenes, which provide Montand with some fine moments of pathos.

Auteuil is again superb as the ratty, unmalicious nephew, Ugolin, and triumphs over the sometimes cramped dramaturgy, notably in his declaration of love to Manon in the hills and the scene of the latter's public denunciation, two set pieces that made Pagnol's film memorable (thanks especially to the performance of Ugolin by an obscure Marseilles comic named Rallys).

Berri has been forced to substantially reduce the collective role of the villagers — for Pagnol an essential serio-comic choral element — and is unable to overcome the inherent feebleness of Manon chartacter, here played ineffectually by the lovely and talented Emmanuelle Beart.

In Pagnol's film the part was no better, but enjoyed more screen time (and was incarnated by the charming Jacqueline Bouvier, later to become Madame Pagnol). Another dull, unconvincing personage was that of the schoolmaster who marries Manon, here played by Hippolyte Girardot (succeeding Raymond Pellegrin in the original).

As with "Florette," tech credits are smart. All told, Berri has rendered, despite its faults and later patchiness, Pagnol's splendid yarn to the screen with the requisite emotion and psychological texture.

Len

Fri., May 22, 1987

The Marsupials: The Howling III

(Australian — Color)

A Bacannia Entertainment presentation. Produced by Charles Waterstreet, and Philippe Mora. Directed by Mora. Executive producers, Edward Simons, Steve Lane, Robert Pringle. Stars Barry Otto, Imogen Annesley. Screenplay, Mora, based on the book "Howling III," by Gary Brander. Camera (color), Louis Irving; editor, Lee Smith; music, Allan Zavod; special effects, Bob McCarron; production and costume design, Ross Major; coproducer, Gilda Baracchi; sound, Bob Clayton; assistant director, Stuart Wood; production manager, Rosslyn Abernethy; casting, Forcast. Reviewed at Cannes Film Festival (market), May 15, 1987. Running time: 94 min.

Prof. Harry Beckmeyer. Barry Otto Imogen Annesley Jerboa Olga Gorki Dasha Blahova Thylo. Max Fairchild Professor Sharp Ralph Cotterill Donny Martin Leigh Biolos Jack Citron . . U.S. President . Frank Thring Michael Pate Dame Edna Everage Barry Humphries With: Carole Skinner (Yara), Brian Adams (General Miller), Bill Collins (Doctor), Christopher Pate (security agent).

Cannes - The third "Howling" film has little in common with the first two, except for the werewolf transformations; it's a tongue-in-cheek parody of the genre, handled with lots of verve and affection by Philippe Mora, who made rather heavy weather of a straight approach to the same subject in "Howling II." The new pic, made entirely in Australia, will have a career on video, but should also please the buffs in theaters, where average-to-good biz can be expected, especially Down Under.

Barry Otto (who played the lead in "Bliss") lends the pic distinction via his role as a scientist obsessed with finding out about a species of uniquely Australian werewolves, marsupials which, like kangaroos and koalas, carry their new-born in a pouch and suckle them there.

With Ralph Cotterill as his skeptical sidekick, Otto discovers a tribe of marsupial werewolves living in the Australian bush, though one of them, the beautiful Jerboa (Imogen Annesley) wanders into Sydney and gets a job as extra on a horror film being directed by Frank Thring.

She falls for assistant director Donny Martin (Leigh Biolos), who takes her to see a horror film, which doesn't impress her. Meanwhile, three female members of her tribe come to the city dressed as nuns looking for her; when they turn into werewolves during the film's wrap party, there's consternation.

But there's another werewolf in Sydney: Olga, a Russian ballerina (played by Czech actress Dasha Blahova, who once starred in Vera Chytilova's "The Apple Game"). Olga is a traditional, European werewolf, come to Australia to mate with the leader of the marsupial werewolves (Max Fairchild). Her transformation during a pas de deux on the stage of the Sydney Opera House is one of the film's comic highlights.

Mora knows his horror films, and has fun sending them up. Audiences willing to go along will have great fun with the jokes and excesses.

Aussie audiences, especially, will enjoy the on-screen presence of ty personality Bill Collins, playing a doctor who becomes a victim of the werewolves, and Barry Humphries, in his Dame Edna Everage disguise, who makes a last-moment

appearance as the presenter at an Academy Awards-type ceremony and who's horrified when the best actress winner transforms into a werewolf before his eyes.

Michael Pate does a good turn as the U.S. President ("I'm as anti-Communist as the next man!") who isn't surprised to hear of a rare species of werewolf in Australia ("There are all sorts of natural freaks down there.") Frank Thring is outrageously campy as the director of the film within the film, justifying its excesses as "a study of pop culture."

Special effects tend toward the bizarre and comic rather than horrific, such as a surprisingly touching scene in which Annesley gives birth to a tiny creature that, as marsupial infants do, crawls up her stomach and into her pouch. Use of music is fun, too — for example, the introduction of a song, "All Fall Down," as one character plummets from a high building.

Joe Dante's original "The Howling" was a landmark horror pic. done straight. Mora's sequel was a flat reworking of the werewolf genre. Now he's sent it all up with relish, and it works. Those who want to know where Mora gets the best eggs benedict should sit through the end credits. Strat.

Fri., July 10, 1987

Masterblaster (Action — Color)

An Artist Entertainment Group release from Radiance Films International of a First American Entertainment production. (International sales, Overseas Filmgroup.) Executive producer, William Grofe. Produced by Randy Grinter, Directed by Glenn R. Wilder, Screenplay, Grinter, Wilder, Jeff Moldovan, from story by Grinter, Camera (color), Frank Pershing Flynn; editor, Angelo Ross; music, Alain Salvati; sound, Henry Lopez; stunt coordinator, Scott Wilder; second unit directorcamera, Grinter; assistant directors. Don Moody, Marty Swartz; production manager, Jon Williams; associate producers, Chuck Greenfield, Angela Greenfield, Joanna Plafsky, Richard Pitt. Reviewed on Prism Entertainment vidcassette, N.Y., July 3, 1987. MPAA rating: R. Running time: 84

Jeremy HawkJen Moldovan
SamanthaDonna Rosae
DeAngeloJoe Hess
LewisPeter Lundblad
MikeRobert Goodman
With: Richard St. George, George Gill
arleen Carey, Jim Reynolds, Julian Byrd
ion Burgs, Tracy Hutchinson, Bill Whor
nan, Ray Forchion, Lou Ann Carroll, Kar

New York — Currently in regional release ahead of its homevideo destiny, "Masterblaster" is another entry in the stillborn genre of mock-killing games that get out of hand (e.g., "TAG: The Assassination Game," "Gotcha" or "The Zero Boys").

Jeff Moldovan (who also coscripted) plays Jeremy Hawk, a Vietnam vet involved in a tournament to decide who is masterblaster, the best at a survival/fortune hunt course in which losers are shot with rod point at the bullets.

with red paint rather than bullets.
Of course, a madman is on the loose, killing the participants for real. Despite numerous red herrings, including Hawk's rumored background of war atrocities, killer's identity is fairly easy to guess, though his motives are unbelievable when finally revealed.

Low-budget actioner shot in Florida is heavy on talk. Typical of recent pictures in which stuntpersons figure prominently both behind and in front of the camera, pic's acting is flat, particularly that of taciturn lead Moldovan.

Several false endings in which characters thought to be dead turn out to be still kicking come off as

extremely hokey.

Mon., Aug. 10, 1987

Masters Of The Universe (Adventure/Fantasy — Color)

A Cannon Group Inc. release of a Golan-Globus production in association with Edward R. Pressman Film Corp. Produced by Menahem Golan and Yoram Globus. Executive producer, Edward R. Pressman. Directed by Gary Goddard. Screenplay by David Odell. Camera (Metro Color), Hanania Baer; editor, Anne V. Coates; music, Bill Conti; production design, William Stout, and director, Robert Howland; set design, Daniel Gluck and Michael Johnson; costume design, Julie Weiss; sound (Dolby), John Larson and Robert A. Rutledge; special effects, Richard Edlund; coproducer, Elliot Schick; casting, Vicki Thomas. Reviewed at UA Egyptian Theater, Hollywood, Aug. 7, 1987. MPAA Rating, PG. Running time: 106 min.

Dolph Lundgren Frank Langella He-Man Skeletor Evil-Lyn . Meg Foster Gwildor Billy Barty Julie Winston .Courteney Cox Detective Lubic .James Tolkan Sorceress Christina Pickles Kevin. Robert Duncan McNeil Man-At-Arms Jon Cypher Chelsea Field

All elements are of epic proportions in this Conan-Star Wars hybrid rip-off, based on the best-selling line of childrens' toys. Epitome of Good takes on Epitome of Evil for nothing less than the future of the universe, and the result is a colossal bore. But the tedium will be lost on 5-9 year-old "Masters" fans, who will flock to see this pic anyway.

Dolph Lundgren's He-Man is an impressive physical specimen, the ultimate warrior epitomizing all that is good and defending the honor of inhabitants of the planet Eternia, especially the Sorceress of Greyskull Castle, whose power keeps the forces of light in charge.

On the dark side is the hideously made-up Frank Langella, as Skeletor, on quite a power trip ("I must possess all ... or possess nothing"). He has captured the Sorceress, locking her in a tubular energy field and absorbing her power, which evidently comes from Eternian moonbeams.

Skeletor's minions include the four grossest-looking creatures that the Cannon makeup department could create, and they are uniformly grotesque. His infantry is made up of a thousand Darth Vader clones, none of whom seem to have eyes. This would explain why their laser aim isn't worth a damn. Typical battle scene has Lundgren taking on two or three dozen of these bad guys, deflecting or dodging all of their shots and then gunning down the whole regiment within a minute or two.

Turns out that the battle to control the future of universal power takes place at a used music store in a small town in California. Circumstances that bring main characters into this setting are too ridiculous to recount but suffice to say that He-Man and his allies are searching for a cosmic key (it resembles, more than anything, one of those cylindrical outdoor bug zappers) that will unlock the Sorceress from her nasty gravity field, help He-Man do in Skeletor and save the peaceloving Eternians until its time for a seauel.

Cosmic key is lost when He-Man and his buddies accidentally zap themselves to Earth, and are discovered by Julie Winston (Courteney Cox, she of Bruce Springsteen's "Dancing In The Dark" video fame) and her musician boyfriend, Kevin (Robert Duncan Mitchell).

Julie is getting ready to move back East to live with her aunt, since her parents have been killed in a plane crash. After paying respects at the cemetery, she and Kevin stumble upon the key, which the less-than-bright boyfriend mistakes for "one of those new Japanese synthesizers."

For the rest of the film, forces of good and evil take turns imitating the Keystone Kops, getting control of the key and then losing its again. Finally the whole cast zaps themselves back to Skeletor's big living room for the ultimate showdown and liberation of the sorceress.

While Lundgren is appealing and certainly imposing, he doesn't have enough of a character to carry the film, and the story's trite imagery ("the dark can embrace the light, but never eclipse it," says the Sorceress at one point) only highlights the lack of character development.

Billy Barty turns in his typical cuddly performance as the dwarf inventor Gwildor and Cox shows more skill than in her "Misfits Of Science" tv stint. But director Goddard doesn't spend enough time showing the stakes of the battle itself, or the goodness of He-Man's Eternian sidekicks, the wily veteran Man-At-War (Jon Cypher) and his jealous daughter Teela (Chelsea Field).

Instead audience gets transported around the galaxies by the cosmic key, watch a tedious series of laser fights and listen to Langella's rantings as the embodiment of evil. It all gets old quickly.

Make-up and costuming is universally good, special effects uninspiring. Bill Conti's soundtrack is such an obvious imitation of John Williams' "Star Wars" scores as to be laughable.

Camb.

Thurs., May 21, 1987

Matewan (Period Drama — Color)

A Cinecom International production. Produced by Peggy Rajski, Maggie Renzi. Executive producer, Amir Jacob Malin, Jerry Silva. Directed by John Sayles. Screenplay by Sayles. Camera (DuArt Color), Haskell Wexler; editor, Sonya Polonsky; music, Mason Daring; production design, Nora Chavooshian; art director, Dan Bishop; set decorator, Anamarie Michnevich, Leslie Pops; associate producer, Ira Deutchman, James Dudelson, Ned Kandel; assistant director, Matia Karrell; casting, Barbara Shapiro; costumes, Cynthia Flint. Reviewed at Cannes Film Festival (Director's Fortnight), May 18, 1987. Running time: 130 min.

.Chris Cooper

....Will Oldham

Elma Radnor Mary McDonnell
C.E. Lively Bob Gunton
"Few Clothes"
Johnson James Earl Jones
Hickey Kevin Tighe
Griggs
Mayor Testerman Josh Mostel
Sephus Purcell Ken Jenkins
Hillard Jace Alexander
Bridey Mae Nancy Motte
Ludie Gary McCleery
Sid David Strathairn
Fausto Joe Grifasi
Tolbert James Kizer
Ellix Michael Preston

Cannes — "Matewan" is a heart-felt, straight-ahead tale of labor organizing in the coal mines of West Virginia in 1920. With director John Sayles in the engineer's seat, pic runs its course like a train coming down the track. It's a beautifully mounted, if overlong, piece of work that will surely find an audience among more sophisticated filmgoers.

It's one of the ironies of the film that it will probably not be seen by the working class that it champions. It's a case of preaching to the converted without much of a possibility of reaching the uninitiated.

As a screenwriter, Sayles has not escaped the trap that most Ameri-

can political pictures fall into, that is polarizing the sides right from the start with the bad guys lacking subtlety and depth. They make forceful characters but they don't have much dimension as people.

On the other side are the decent folk who share a common spirit. Sayles makes his point eloquently and it is his commitment to the worth of these people that gives the film its power.

Among the memorable characters is Joe Kenehan (Chris Cooper), a young union organizer who comes to Matewan to buck the bosses. With his strong face and Harrison Ford good-looks, Cooper gives the film its heartbeat.

Of the townfolk, 16-year-old Danny (Will Oldham) is already a righteous preacher and a seasoned union man who has passionately taken up the working man's struggle.

Most notable of the black workers is "Few Clothes" Johnson (James Earl Jones), a burly, goodnatured man with a powerful presence and a quick smile. Jones' performance practically glows in the dark. Also a standout is Sayles veteran David Strathairn as the sheriff with quiet integrity who puts his life on the line.

Management goons are headed by Hickey (Kevin Tighe) and Griggs (Gordon Clapp), two men whose mothers probably even despised them. Once Sayles has set the conflict in motion and set up the battle lines, he introduces the factions within the union. One of the leaders, C.E. Lively (Bob Gunton), it turns out is a stooge for the bosses and tries to frame Kenehan. It's a familiar tactic in this type of picture, but, Sayles cleverly diffuses it with an impassioned sermon from

As always, Sayles has written some stunning dialog completely in character that sounds as if it could actually have been uttered by these people. He is still less adept at keeping up a film's momentum as a director and the action tends to come in spurts with the climactic scene a bit long in arriving.

But Sayles has developed considerably as a filmmaker and "Matewan" has a keener sense of visual imagery than his earlier pictures and many of the scenes pack a considerable wallop.

Undoubtedly adding to the power of the story, which is based on the real-life Matewan massacre, is Haskell Wexler's stunning camerawork. Wexler creates a dusty, dried-out and faded look, similar to what he achieved on "Bound For Glory," that stamps the town with an authentic quality.

"Matewan" is certainly Sayles best-looking, most professional film to date, with period-perfect production design from Nora Chavooshian and well-worn costumes by Cythia Flint, "Matewan" is as rich in atmosphere as any Hollywood film, and with a lot more heart.

Jagr.

Fri., Aug. 28, 1987

Maurice (British — Drama — Color)

A Cinecom Pictures release of a Merchant Ivory production, in association with Cinecom Pictures and Film Four International. Produced by Ismail Merchant Directed by James Ivory, Screenplay, Kit Hesketh-Harvey, Ivory, from E.M. Forster's novel; camera (Technicolor), Pierre Lhomme: editor. Katherine Wenning; music, Richard Robbins sound (Dolby), Mike Shoring; production design. Brian Ackland-Snow; art direction, Peter James; costume design, Jenny Beavan, John Bright, William Pierce; production supervisor, Raymond Day, assistant director, Michaei

Zimbrich; casting, Celestia Fox; associate producer, Paul Bradley. Reviewed at Magno Review 1 screening room, N.Y., July 28, 1987. (In Montreal World Film Festival and Venice Film Festival.) No MPAA Rating. Running time: 140 min.

ning time: 140 min. Maurice Hall... Clive Durham... . Hugh Grant Rupert Graves
Denholm Elliott Alec Scudder Dr. Barry. Mr. Ducie Simon Callow Mrs. Hall. Billie Whitelaw Ben Kingsley Lasker-Jones Mrs. Durham Anne Durham . Phoebe Nicholls Risley... Ada Hall ... Mark Tandy . Helena Michell Kitty Hall Kitty Aldridge Patrick Godfrey Simcox Archie...... Dean Cornwallis Michael Jenn . Barry Foster Peter Eyre Kate Rabett Mr. Borenius. Pippa Durham Young Maurice. Orlando Wells Lady at cricket match Helena Bonham Carter

New York — "Maurice," based on a posthumously published novel by E.M. Forster, is a well-crafted, worthy successor by the team that scored a critical and commercial hit with Forster's "A Room With A View" last year. Theme of homosexuality, handled tastefully but with explicitness, will prove no barrier to the pic's arthouse acceptance in the wake of "My Beautiful Laundrette" and "Prick Up Your Ears," but presents a formidable marketing challenge for distributor Cinecom's quest for crossover audiences.

Penned in 1914 but not allowed to be published until 1971 (a year after Forster's death) because of its subject matter, "Maurice" is not ranked among Forster's best work. Thematically it fits very comfortably in D.H. Lawrence territory, with many echoes of such works as "Women In Love" and the class-conscious "The Virgin And The Gypsy" and "Lady Chatterley's Lover."

Director James Ivory, who coscripted with Kit Hesketh-Harvey, carefully uses abruptly edited vignettes to set the stage for developing the titular hero's crisis of sexual identity. Key opening scene has Maurice (pronounced "Morris," British-style) as a schoolboy on a beach-side outing being lectured by his teacher (Simon Callow), in comically fastidious fashion, on the changes that will soon occur in his body with the onset of puberty.

Maurice (James Wilby) is next seen grown up and attending Cambridge where, through contact with uppity aristocrat Risley (Mark Tandy), he meets handsome Clive Durham (Hugh Grant). Durham falls in love with him and though resisting at first, Maurice later reciprocates, all on a platonic level.

Duo's lengthy affair is interrupted when Maurice is expelled from Cambridge and relationship is later strained due to a highly publicized trial for seducing a guardsman that sends Risley to prison, with Durham feeling guilty for not having given character testimony on his former school chum's behalf.

Durham, under pressure from his mother (Judy Parfitt), gets married to a naive girl (Phoebe Nicholls) while Maurice finally physically consummates his homosexual inclination with Durham's young gamekeeper Alec Scudder (Rupert Graves). Despite blackmail attempts by Scudder, Maurice eventually commits himself to the gamekeepr while Durham literally closes the door on his earlier phase of sexual experimentation.

With melodramatic elements taking hold in later reels, "Maurice" nonetheless conforms to the urbane, literate approach typical of Ismail Merchant/James Ivory films and is technically immaculate. Pierre Lhomme's visuals are sharp, with hard-edged lighting and none of the soft-focus sense engendered in many period pieces.

Wilby as Maurice gives a workmanlike performance, adequate to the role but never soaring. He is far outshadowed by a superlative supporting cast. Notable is Grant's shaded turn as Durham (actor played a similar aristocrat in the Oxford-set film "Privileged" and is currently appearing as Lord Byron in the feature "Rowing With The Wind") and "Room With A View" alumnus Graves' earthy portrayal of the gamekeeper.

High comedy is provided (with very witty lines to match) by Ben Kingsley as a goofy hypnotist with a hilarious American accent who tries to help Maurice; Callow as the dense, supercilious teacher; Nicholls (a memorable child star, then named Sarah Nicholls, in Ken Russell's film of "Women In Love") as Durham's gullible wife; Billie Whitelaw as Maurice's equally naive mother; plummy-voiced Helena Mitchell as Maurice's look-alike sister and Denholm Elliott as Maurice's no-nonsense doctor.

"Room With A View" star Helena Bonham Carter pops up uncredited and costumed as if she just stepped out of the previous film as a lady watching the principals eagerly at a cricket match.

A beautifully handled final scene virtually mirrors the finale of Lawrence's "Women In Love" and the film of same, the main difference being the state of awareness by the protagonist's wife. For the record, Forster wrote "Maurice" in 1914, Lawrence did his first draft of "Women In Love" in 1913, completing it in 1917 and publishing it in 1920.

Lor.

Thurs., March 12, 1987

Means And Ends (Drama — Color)

A Progressive Film production. Produced by Mark Israel. Coproducer, Chuck Duncombe. Directed by Gerald Michenaud. Written, edited by Israel, Michenaud. Camera (United Color Lab Color), Israel; art direction, Dave Dann; music, Michenaud; costume design, Karen Keech; sound, Bernie Kriegel; associate producer, Michael Mahler; assistant director, Beth Palmier. Reviewed at the American Film Institute (AFI Fest), L.A., March 5, 1987, No MPAA rating. Running time: 105 min.

Jeff	Cyril O'Reilly
Paul	Ken Michelman
Ryan	Reed Birney
Burt	.William Windom
Kelly	Lori Lethin
Tommy Watkins	Doyle Baker
Bill Henderson	John Randolph
Mr. Taylor	Michael Greene
Stewart	Jack Fletcher

Although earnestly intended and beautifully shot, "Means And Ends" is a mostly laborious commentary on the lack of social consciences among commercial filmmakers. Points made here about young cinema hustlers' utter self-absorption and unscrupulousness are well taken, but pic meanders in all sorts of directions and could have said all it has on its mind in half the time. Boxoffice prospects are gloomy. Film preems today at the AFI Fest.

Premise is promising, as an aspiring producer, director and screenwriter arrive in a sleepy Illinois town to shoot a teen sexploitation

All for the production because of the loot it will bring in, civic leaders have actually been bamboozled as to the true content of the feature and hit the ceiling when they discover that the promised "Charlie Chaplin-like comedy" is actually a t&a spectacular. City fathers insist that the team clean up the script, and the tension over what to do tears the three friends apart. The writer is inclined to act in a honest, responsible manner, the director is only concerned about the ramifications for his career, and the producer, natch, simply seeks the most expedient solutions and doesn't give a hoot about what the locals think.

Elements are here for a good comedy, but debuting producer-director-writer-lenser-editing-music team of Mark Israel and Gerald Michenaud take themselves rather too seriously and don't know how to structure the story for effective dramatic impact. Points are hammered home in redundant and fartoo-explicit fashion, and none of the true pressure and excitement of onlocation filmmaking is put across.

Israel's cinematography is truly elegant, although the long, languid takes further slow down the pace and make it difficult, if not impossible, to cut to move things along. Many shots are held far too long, and filmmakers' failure to bring things to a head more quickly becomes terribly exasperating.

Technically, Israel and Michenaud have put together an impressive production on \$400,000, shooting mostly in California and doing post-production in Paris. Acting is uniformly good.

Cart.

Mon., May 18, 1987

Meatballs III

(Comedy — Color)

The Movie Store release of a Dunning/Link/ Carmody production. Produced by Don Carmody and John Dunning. Directed by George Mendeluk. Screenplay, Michael Paseornek, Bradley Kesden; camera (Panaflex, Panavision Canada), Peter Benison; music, Paul Zaza; executive producers, Andre Link, Lawrence Nesis; editor, Debra Karen; casting, Barbara Claman, Lucinda Sill, Michael Wener, Ginette D'Amico, Chantal Condor; sound, David Lee. Reviewed at the Fox Theater, Hollywood, May 15, 1987. MPAA Rating: R. Running time: 94 min.

Hoxy Du Jour	Sally Kellerman
Rudy	Patrick Dempsey
Saint Peter	Al Waxman
Wendy	. Isabelle Mejias
The Love Goddess	Shannon Tweed
Rita	Jan Taylor
Mean Gene	George Buza

Number one among the myriad problems with this mindless sexploitation pic is that the people who wrote, produced and directed it have evidently forgotten what teenagers — specifically teenagers in heat — act like. Boxoffice prospects dim.

Film unintentionally insults the intelligence of anyone who's ever been young and in lust: none of the characters' speech, actions, reactions, sexual behavior, humor, attitudes, relationships or thought processes are even remotely believable. Combine the blatantly unfunny handling of the subject with a less-than-adroit director — about half the close-ups are of female breasts — and what emerges is simply a terrible movie.

Struggling valiantly against the confines of this disaster is Sally Kellerman, who gives an affecting turn as aging porn queen Roxy Du Jour, who dies while filming a particularly heated scene. She is denied the gates of heaven because she's never done a good deed, but given a reprieve: she's got two weeks to become somebody's good samaritan.

Her project turns out to be a hopeless class nerd named Rudy (Patrick Dempsey), who goes to Summer camp determined to lose his virginity. She must play the Patron Saint of Sexual Conquest and help Rudy achieve his simple goal.

Roxy's counseling (when it comes to women, "no means yes") and supernatural powers alternately get Rudy into and out of trouble as she follows him through a series of sexual near-misses. She finally gets him to change his clothes and image, and in doing so, she changes his character; Dempsey must go from being unbelievably dorky to being unbelievably stupid and insensitive.

Throughout the film, he rejects the amorous advances of Wendy (Isabelle Mejias), whose Cyndi Lauper-on-hallucinogenics wardrobe turns him off. While the existence of her character telegraphs the film's happily-ever-after ending, credibility is once again strained by her behavior. The only thing more unfathomable than this pretty girl being attracted to Rudy-the-Nerd is his character's constant denial of her interest. Mejias plays the small and thankless part well, while wearing hideous white and black lipstick.

Film's finish, involving a woman named "The Love Goddess," a bull, a band of boaters who like Hell's Angels on water and two brain-dead teens trying to make a quick buck is too stupid and complicated to recount, but no one could possibly still be interested by the time director George Mendeluk brings things to a screeching, yet boring, conclusion.

Ultimately, one is left wondering what could have happened if Kellerman's sexual guardian angel character was given a story with wit and cleverness. It isn't here and so she, along with a competent Dempsey, are lost in yet another film about 17-year-olds that only thick-headed 12-year-olds would find funny.

Fri., April 24, 1987

The Messenger (Action melodrama — U.S.Italian — Color)

A Snizzlefritz release of a Realta Cinematografic-Po' Boy production. Produced by Fred Williamson and Pier Luigi Circiaci. Directed by Williamson. Screenplay, Brian Johnson, Conchita Lee, Anthony Wisdom, based on a story by Williamson; camera (Fujicolor), Giancarlo Ferrando, Craig Greene; editor, Meuller; score, William Stuckey; casting, Jaki Baskow; no other credits provided. Reviewed at the Woods Theater, Chicago, April 23, 1987. MPAA Rating: R. Running time: 92 min.

Sebastian TurnerFred Williamson
SabrinaSandy Cummings
ClarkVal Avery
Emerson Michael Dante
FBI Agent ParkerChris Connelly
Police Capt.
Carter Cameron Mitchell
HarrisPeter Turner
RicoJoe Spinell

Chicago — Fred Williamson, that aging blaxploitation smoothy, is back again with this muddled actioner, the only interesting point of which is how the money was packaged to get the thing made. B.o. prospects are poor in all but the most product-hungry overseas markets.

Incoherently-told plot has Williamson toplining as a former Green Beret/musical prodigy from Chicago who spends three years in an Italian slammer as a gentleman cat burglar. That's touching all bases.

Williamson is reunited with his svelte wife (Sandy Cummings) who's bumped off eight minutes into the picture — not before appearing in a nude love scene showing more of Williamson — because she's involved in an international drug ring. Williamson becomes the

"messenger of death" avenging the wife by knocking off white dudes and mobsters in Italy (where much of the pic was lensed), Chicago, Las Vegas and Los Angeles.

Williamson, pushing 50, is getting a bit long in the tooth for this stuff. He appears out of shape trying to resuscitate the bad black stud of his blaxploitation heyday nearly two decades ago. Fight scenes are listlessly, and briefly, staged, with Williamson showing signs of fatigue. He still strokes an ample mustache, however, and smokes a mean cigar.

As a director, Williamson is strictly laissez faire, permitting the cast to do what it pleases. Results are sporadically amusing.

Cameron Mitchell as a cigarchomping police captain appears to ad lib much of his dialog. He seems to be acting in another film. Newcomer Cummings as the wife looks good. Joe Spinell puts in another pleasant turn as an unctuous mobster, although his tries at fear and desperation provoke unintended laughs.

Technical credits are generally poor. Pic is an Italo-American coprocution involving Williamson's Po' Boy concern and Italy's Realta Cinematografica.

Sege.

Fri., June 12, 1987

Million Dollar Mystery (Mystery-comedy — Color)

	Ludio Deezell
Lollie	Wendy Sherman
Stuart Briggs	Rick Overton
Barbara Briggs	Mona Lyden
	Douglas Emerson
	Royce D. Applegate
	Pam Matteson
	Daniel McDonald
	Penny Baker
	Tawny Fere
	LaGena Hart
	Tom Bosley
	Mack Dryden
	Jamie Alcroft
	Rich Hall
	Gail Neely
	Kevin Pollak
	H.B. Hagerty
	Bob Schott

As a promotional gimmick, "Million Dollar Mystery" is cynically inspired: offer people enough money and they'll do a lot of things, including watch a bad film over and over again. Story line is so loose that this is less of a film that a series of unrelated physical humor sketches. The krazy komedy hijinks of "Mystery" wear thin real fast, but that won't stop this picture from doing fair-to-good boxoffice business, thanks to the sweepstakes hook.

Hunt starts when on-the-lam con man Sidney Preston (Tom Bosley) takes a fatal bowl of chili at side-of-the-road diner somewhere in Arizona. During one of the longest, worst-acted, least believable dying scenes in recent memory, Preston utters the first clue to finding four different stashes of \$1,000,000 each, "Start at the City of the Bridge ..."

Over the next 90 minutes, band of cardboard characters assembled at the diner go in madcap search for lost loot, picking up another full batch of treasure hunters along the

way. This could have been handled cleverly, but it's all lame stuff here, as group pursues clues that are alternately obvious and far-fetched, with everybody fanning out for the search, then all arriving at each critical spot at the same time.

Consistent with the low-level intelligence of the characters herein is the fate of the first \$3,000,000, which gets accidentally dropped off a bridge, sucked into a paper shredder and dropped out of a hot-air balloon in million-dollar increments. Some lucky member of the audience, of course, gets to find the other million, with clues supplied in the film and in accompanying literature.

While making a million bucks has rarely been this dull, a few of the young comedians used to flesh out the cast provide a bit of levity. The best is Rich Hall, as Slaughter, a bumbling Vietnam vet who's "worn out his Rambo tape."

Hall has a nice sense of timing, provides the film's best physical humor and has the funniest line (when told he's on the trail of \$4,000,000, he ponders, wide-eyed, "You know how many lottery tickets that would buy?").

Siblings Tugger (Royce D. Applegate) and Dotty (Pam Matteson) are the only pair that seems believably connected, and they team with each other and Hall for some of the film's better scenes. Impressionist Kevin Pollak, who does a good Dudley Moore, so-so Woody Allen and too much Peter Falk, also breathes life into a couple of bits.

Some of the action sequences here are terrific, especially the landing of a twin-prop Beechcraft on a street in heavy traffic. But none of the events or stunts particularly connected; film has no momentum, no thrust, no continuity and, ultimately, nothing to recommend it other than the possible payoff.

Camb.

Tues., March 10, 1987

Le Miracule

THE MIRACLE HEALING (French — Comedy — Color)

Cannon France release of an Initial Groupe/Koala Films/FR3 Films coproduction. Stars Michel Serrault, Jean Poiret and Jeanne Moreau. Executive producers, Jean Cazes and Denis Freyd. Directed by Jean-Pierre Mocky. Screenplay, Mocky, Jean-Claude Romer, Patrick Granier. Camera (Fujicolor), Marcel Combes; art directors, Patrice Renault, Jean-Claude Sevenet, Etienne Mery; editor, Mocky; sound, Philippe Combes; music, Jorge Arriagada; production manager, Bernard Bourgade. Reviewed at the UGC Biarritz cinema. Paris, Feb. 15, 1987. Running time: 85 min.

Papu Jean Poiret
Ronald Fox Terrier Michel Serrault
Sabine Jeanne Moreau
Angelica Sophie Moyse
Monseigneur Jean Rougerie
Mme Fox Terrier Sylvie Joly
Plombie Roland Blanche
Abbe Humus Marc Maury

Paris — "Le Miracule" is a botched one-joke comedy about a phony invalid en route for Lourdes pursued by an observant but mute insurance inspector. Dunked into the healing pond of the holy grotto, the shammer finds himself genuinely handicapped, while the insurance man miraculously recovers his voice, albeit in a foreign tongue.

Returning to the mainstream fold after a number of offbeat ill-made personal films, director Jean-Pierre Mocky belabors obvious satiric targets in this slapdash production salvaged at moments by its starring trio of Jean Poiret, Michel Serrault and Jeanne Moreau.

Pic's irreverent bad-taste humor

may boost commercial prospects, especially if official Catholic outrage helps it along with unplanned publicity, as happened with Jean-Luc Godard's "Hail, Mary."

Domestically, one of film's main attractions should be reteaming of Serrault and Poiret, a one-time top comedy duo whose careers peaked in the Paris production of Poiret's "La Cages Aux Folles."

Their reunion under Mocky (who directed both in several of his 1960s commercial comedies) is not exploited to the fullest, however.

Poiret in particular, who excels in sophisticated comic parts, doesn't shine in the principal role of a seedy lowlife who claims disability insurance after being knocked down by a car and is subsequently carted off by wheelchair to a Lourdes pilgrimage by his (platonic) girlfriend (Moreau), a secular sister of mercy on the fringes of Paris.

Serrault, a farceur with a broader low-comedy range, is more at home in the vulgar antics imagined by Mocky and his cowriters, Jean-Claude Romer and Patrick Granier.

As the devout but speechless insurance agent bent on exposing Poiret's charade, Serrault revives a gesticulating form of Harpo Marxist shenanigans, which often seem more improvised than planned in Mocky's overly casual (and often downright inept) stagings.

"Le Miracule" is a good spoof idea sloppily executed, constantly falling back on the most obvious barbs and particularly weak in integrating its gallery of secondary characters into the main storyline. Apart from its principals, acting suffers from a lack of firm directorial harmonizing. Tech credits are mediocre.

Thurs., Dec. 4, 1986

Modern Girls

(Teen melodrama — Color)

An Atlantic Releasing Corp. release. Produced by Gary Goetzman. Executive producers, Thomas Coleman, Michael Rosenblatt. Directed by Jerry Kramer. Screenplay by Laurie Craig. Camera (United Color Labs), Karen Grossman; editor, Mitchell Sinoway; music, Jay Levy, Ed Arkin; production design, Laurence Bennett; art direction, Joel Lang; set decorator, Jill Ungar; sound, Steve Nelson; costurnes, Beverly Klein; choreographer, Sarah Elgart; assistant director, Mary Ellen Woods; casting, Paul Ventura. Reviewed at Atlantic screening room, L.A., Nov. 18, 1986. MPAA rating: PG-13. Running time: 84 min.

Margo Daphne Zuniga
Kelly Virginia Madsen
Cece Cynthia Gibb
Clifford/Bruno X Clayton Rohner
Ray Chris Nash

Teen pix can be amusing, clever, cute, endearing, lively, sappy and, occasionally, memorable. Alas, no such qualities can be found in 84 minutes of "Modern Girls," a picture so innocuous, even its target audience will find it dull. Boxoffice looks weak.

Drawn-out story revolves around a one-night adventure of three comely teenage girls out for a good time in the downtown L.A. club scene.

There's vulnerable Kelly (Virginia Madsen), starry-eyed Cece (Cynthia Gibb) and pragmatic Margo (Daphne Zuniga,), roommates whose collective credo is: "We never pay for parking. We never carry cash. We never pay for drinks. We never stand in line."

With standards like these, why do mothers worry?

Dialog doesn't rise much above this kind of idiom and most of the time, is considerably less alliterative.

One evening while Madsen's out

panting after a disk jockey who will pant after anything, along comes Clifford (Clayton Rohner), the date she's stood up. The perennial nice guy, Rohner gets suckered into chauffeuring her two buddies around to their favorite hotspots — finding himself listening to Zuniga's woes about men and Gibb's obsession with a British punker, Bruno X (also played by Rohner).

"Modern Girls" works against its purpose of entertaining teenagers by depicting how truly boring those years can be.

The girls fill viewers', and Rohner's, ears with silly talk about nothing meaningful, surrounded by other dull teenagers on the prowl for more empty experiences in successive scenes.

Story reaches bottom with Madsen, the kind of blond beauty boys dream about, sprawled on a pool table all drugged out talking about the parents she never knew to a dozen lecherous middle-aged men who are itching to pounce on her.

Despite the winsomeness of the cast, none of the actors is particularly distinguishable, although Rohner does a credible job in a dual role as the push-over, smitten suitor and as a low-class British rocker with a most unique accent.

On the plus side, the rock 'n roll score is kept under control. The music is constant, but it doesn't overpower the action — a rarity for such films.

Brit.

Mon., Nov. 10, 1986

Monster Shark RED OCEAN

(Italian-French — Color)

A Cinema Shares release of a Filmes International-Nuovo Dania-National Cinematografica (Rome)/Les Filmes du Griffon coproduction. Produced by Mino Loy (uncredited). Directed by "John Old Jr." (Lamberto Bava). Screenplay, Gianfranco, Clerici, others, from story by "Lewis Coates" (Luigi Cozzi), Don Lewis, "Martin Dolman" (Sergio Martino); camera (Telecolor), "John McFerrand" (Giancarlo Ferrando); editor, Bob Wheeler; music, Antony Barrymore; assistant girectors, Gilbert Roussel, Fredy Unger; special effects, Germano Natali; production design, A.M. Geleng; monster shark creator, Ovidio Taito. Reviewed at 42d St. Liberty Theater, N.Y., Nov. 2, 1986. No MPAA Rating, Running time: 92 min. With: Michael Sopkiw (Peter), Valentine

With: Michael Sopkiw (Peter), Valentine Monnier, "John" (Gianni) Garko (Sheriff Gordon), William Berger (Dr. West), Iris Peynard, Lawrence Morgant, Dagmar Lassander (Sonja).

New York — "Monster Shark," previously titled "Red Ocean," is a poor science-fiction/horror film from Europe. Since Universal is planning a fourth "Jaws" epic, there's apparently some life left in this lame material.

Yank actor Michael Sopkiw gets involved in a hunt for a giant underwater killer off the Florida Coast when he's hired to rig up some electronic equipment for scientists studying the series of gory attacks on humans. Eventually they discover that the culprit is a 15,000,000-year-old ancestor of the shark, 40 feet long and hungry. Worse yet, the critter's individual cells are capable of reproduction, meaning that if it isn't found and destroyed soon the ocean will be filled with the beasties.

Cornball film relies once again for the usual conflict between gung ho scientists (led by William Berger) who want to save the creature for study, and practical types like the local sheriff (Gianni Garko) who want to kill it. Monster itself is a very fake-looking cross between shark and octopus, wisely shown in its entirety only briefly on screen. Cast is peppered with pretty women, but the acting is miserable, becoming downright funny during some

exaggerated death scenes or shrieking bouts.

Surprisingly for such a routine picture, five well-known Continental directors are credited in various capacities, with the Italian contingent (Lamberto Bava, the film's director, as well as Luigi Cozzi and Sergio Martino) hiding behind pseudonyms, while their French confreres, Max Pecas and Gilbert Roussel, are less shy.

Lor.

Mon., Aug. 10, 1987

The Monster Squad

(Adventure - Comedy - Color)

A Tri-Star Pictures release of a Taft Entertainment Pictures/Keith Barish Prods. film Produced by Jonathan A. Zimbert. Directed by Fred Dekker. Executive producers, Peter Hyams, Rob Cohen and Keith Barish. Screenplay, Shane Black and Fred Dekker, Camera (Metrocolor — Panavision), Bradford May; production design, Albert Brenner; coproducer, Neil A. Machlis; editor, James Mitchell; visual effects, Richard Edlund; monster design, Stan Winston; music, Bruce Broughton casting, Penny Perry; art direction. David M. Haber; first assistant director, Richard Luke Rothschild; second assistant director, Joan D. Ehrlich; sound editing, Don Lee Jorgensen, John Shouse, Steve Bushelman; costume supervisors, Michael Hoffman, Aggie Lyon. Reviewed at Tri-Star screening room. Century City, Aug. 3, 1987. MPAA Rating: PG-13. Running time: 81 min.

Sean	Andre Gower
Patrick	Robby Kiger
Del	Stephen Macht
Dracula	Duncan Regehr
Frankenstein	Tom Noonan
Horace	Brent Chalem
Rudy	Ryan Lambert
Phoebe	Ashley Bank
Eugene	Michael Faustino
Emily	Mary Ellen Trainor

Can that venerable old quartet of baddies — Count Dracula, the Wolfman, Frankenstein and the Mummy — still strike fear into the hearts of America's youth? That's the key question for makers of this brightly written, mostly well-acted kiddy thriller. While serious problems with pacing blunt effectiveness, pic is still clever and satisfying. It's anybody's guess, though, whether video-age kids will turn out to see these vintage villains.

Film takes place in the present with Count Dracula resurrected to round up the usual nefarious characters — plus one, Gill Man, whose sole purpose in the film seems to be as a special effect; he's totally out of place with the other 'classic' monsters. The group heads for Small Town, U.S.A., to retrieve an ancient amulet that controls the balance between good and evil.

But this very same small town contains a group of pre- and midadolescent kids who have formed a club devoted to monsters, and they stumble onto the amulet's secret also. Because this self-appointed "Monster Squad" is the only group that believes monsters might be real, they're the only ones who can do what's necessary to save the world.

Group is led by the terrific Andre Gower, as Sean, giving a performance that belies his age of 14. His main cohorts are Patrick (the likeable, low-key Robby Kiger, who will remind many of "E.T.'s" Henry Thomas), and the obligatory fat kid who gets scared easily (Brent Chalem), Horace.

Director Fred Dekker and Shane Black cowrote the screenplay, and they give the young actors dialog that is usually credible and a lot sharper than the norm for children's films.

Screenplay's incongruity comes with the kids themselves, who are forced to play younger characters than their speech, actions and personas would indicate. Thus they

still harbor a belief in monsters and, except for the slightly older Rudy (Ryan Lambert), virtually ignore the female of the species.

Other major problem is pacing, with most of the action occurring in the last five minutes, as Dekker and Black set up a showdown at predetermined crucial moment in history, much like "Back To The Future."

But while the trip to that climax seems overlong, it is for the most part pleasant, with the ensemble of childhood actors showing real chemistry, while the largely one-dimensional adults (subplot about marital friction among Sean's parents goes nowhere) are relegated to limited screen time.

It's not likely that many teen viewers will be scared by the goings-on. Only Duncan Regehr's Count Dracula generates any real venom, with Tom Noonan's Frankenstein playing as an oversized buffoon with an artificial heart of gold, befriending a little girl and eventually helping to do in the other monsters.

Still, for all of its muted horror elements and lagging storyline, this film does have the crisp dialog and Gower's magnetic performance going for it, and anyone under the age of 13 is liable to enjoy the film immensely. Unfortunately, pic is rated PG-13, so it might not find its audience until it hits the homevid racks.

Tues., May 5, 1987

A Month In The Country ((British — Color)

An Orion Classics release (U.S.) of a Euston Films production. Produced by Kenith Trodd. Executive producers, Johnny Goodman, John Hambley. Directed by Pat O'Connor. Screenplay, Simon Gray, from the novel by J.L. Carr; camera (color) Kenneth Macmillan; music, Howard Blake; sound, Tony Daws; production design, Leo Austin; assistant director, Bill Craske; costumes, Judy Moorcroft; casting; Michelle Guish; associate producer, Dominic Fulford. Reviewed at Metro Cinema, London, April 27, 1987. (In the Un Certain Regard Section, Cannes Film Festival.) MPAA Rating: PG. Running time: 96 min.

Birkin. Colin Firth
Moon. Kenneth Branagh
Mrs. Keach Natasha Richardson
Rev. Keach Patrick Malahide
Douthwaite Tony Haygarth
Ellerback Jim Carter
Col. Hebron Richard Vernon

London — "A Month In The Country" is a gentle, moving pic about two men recovering from the horrors of World War I during an idyllic summer in remote rolling English countryside. Pic has the feel of plush period drama done so well by the British. Articulate writing, deft acting, and talented direction place it apart from similar tales of the genre, and offshore b.o. potential could be good if handled properly.

Director Pat O'Connor (whose last pic was Warner's "Cal") shows considerable sensitivity handling dilemmas of the two troubled soldiers. He also shoots with great dexterity, showing off the English countryside in Summertime to its best advantage.

Pic opens with Birkin (Colin Firth) arriving at the remote Yorkshire village of Oxgodby to uncover a medieval wall-painting in the local church. There he meets Moon (Kenneth Branagh), who is excavating a grave outside the churchyard.

Both are tormented by their war experiences, but during a beautiful month they experience the tranquility of the idyllic community that gradually helps them to come to terms with their problems.

"A Month In The Country" is beautifully filmed, and kudos

should go to cinematographer Kenneth Macmillan for stunning work, and to Simon Gray for a sensitive adaption of J.L. Carr's book. Other technical credits are all excellent.

Firth and Branagh are talented young actors to watch in the future — especially Branagh who has great screen presence.

Natasha Richardson looks slightly uncomfortable in a very understated role as Birkin's romantic interest, while Richard Vernon as a doddery old colonel is a joy in his few scenes, bringing welcome comic relief.

Their restrained love affair, and the tribulations of the two men are elegantly handled, and alongside the picturesque Yorkshire countryside make for a gently rounded pic.

Fri., Feb. 13, 1987

Morgan Stewart's Coming Home (Comedy — Color)

A New Century/Vista release of a Kings Road production. Produced by Stephen Friedman. Directed by Alan Smithee (a nom de plume). Screenplay, Ken Hixon, David Titcher. Camera (DeLuxe Color), Richard Brooks; editor, Bob Letterman; music, Peter Bernstein; production design, Charles Bennett; set decorator, Victor Kempster; sound, Danny Michael; assistant director, Lewis Gould; associate producer, Patrick McCormick; costumes, Molly Maginnis. Reviewed at ABC screening room, Century City, Calif., Feb. 11, 1987. MPAA rating: PG-13. Running time: 96 min.

Morgan Stewart ... Jon Cryer Nancy Stewart ... Lynn Redgrave Tom Stewart ... Nicholas Pryor Emily ... Viveka Davis Jay Sprinsteen ... Paul Gleason General Fenton ... Andrew Duncan Ivan ... Savely Kramorov Garrett ... John David Cullum

Shot in 1985 as "Homefront," with Paul Aaron succeeding the original director Terry Winsor, pic is finally being released as "Morgan Stewart's Coming Home" with the fictitious Alan Smithee receiving directorial credit. Not surprisingly, the wait wasn't worth it.

wasn't worth it.

As it stands, "Morgan Stewart's Coming Home" is a lifeless comedy about a kid brought home from boarding school to be a political ploy in his father's Senate campaign. Poor execution and one-dimensional characters make this one a sure loser at the boxoffice.

Possibly the only thing to recommend is the performance by Jon Cryer as the 17-year-old in search of a family, but not quite. Cryer is a likable enough actor but in this case it's too much of a good thing. He is the only remotely interesting person, but scriptwriters Ken Hixon and David Titcher fail him too, as they do all the other collected cartoon characters.

There is absolutely nothing going on except what's on screen and a more contrived, hackneyed treatment would be hard to come up with.

Cryer is a typical teen with a fondness for monster films and junk food. Lynn Redgrave is his no-nonsense mother who doesn't believe parents should be pals with their kids. She has little patience with Morgan and even less understanding. Delivering lines as if she were leading an elocution class, Redgrave is too extreme to laugh at.

Nicholas Pryor as the Senator father is a bit more sympathetic but again too ineffectual to side with. This is a family without soul and no amount of tomfoolery is going to give it to them.

Plot, such as it is, involves a corrupt aide (Paul Gleason) who hatches a scheme to incriminate the poli-

tician and allow his opponent to win the election. But since the good guys are so marginally interesting, it's a hollow victory when they foil the fix.

Along the way Cryer picks up a girlfriend (Viveka Davis), a charming kid who also likes horror films, but that's about all there is to their relationship which is so inexplicably chaste that they shower with their underwear on.

Direction fails to develop a consistent tone for the picture, ranging from broad slapstick to sappy. Realism and caricature collide continually. Production values are undistinguished and all the while there is an insipid score insisting that all this must be great fun.

This is the kind of film that gives families a bad name.

Jagr.

Fri., Dec. 19, 1986

The Morning After (Drama — Color)

A 20th Century Fox release of a Lorimar presentation of an American Filmworks production. Produced by Bruce Gilbert. Executive producer, Faye Schwab. Directed by Sidney Lumet. Stars Jane Fonda, Jeff Bridges, Raul Julia. Screenplay, James Hicks. Camera (DeLuxe Color), Andrzej Bartkowiak; editor, Joel Goodman; music, Paul Chihara; production design, Albert Brenner; art direction; Kandy Stern; set decoration, Lee Poll; costume design, Ann Roth; sound, David Ronne; associate producers, Wolfgang Glattes, Lois Bonfiglio; assistant director, Glattes; casting, Nanc Klopper. Reviewed at the Samuel Goldwyn Theater, Beverly Hills, Dec. 12, 1986. MPAA Rating: R. Running time: 103 min.

Overwrought and implausible, "The Morning After" is a dramatic situation in search of a thriller plot. Jane Fonda stars as a boozy, washed-up actress who wakes up one morning next to a man with a dagger in his heart, and her efforts to cope with the dilemma are neither terribly suspenseful nor entertaining. This Fox release won't prove to be too many filmgoers' idea of what to rush out and see over the holidays.

days.

When Fonda awakens to find the bloody remains of her sleazy one-night stand cold and stiff in bed, she honestly can't remember how she ended up there, and is not even entirely certain that she didn't kill the man.

She therefore removes any trace that she was ever present at the fellow's place, doesn't call the cops and heads for the airport, where, instead of catching a plane, she hooks up with friendly redneck Jeff Bridges, who begins by driving her around and gradually insinuates himself into her life.

Along the way, Fonda battles the bottle, succumbs to Bridges' charms and is forced into a divorce by estranged hubby but good chum Raul Julia, an outrageously successful BevHills hairdresser who now wants to marry a Bel Air heiress.

While attempting to build up tension. Fonda and director Sidney Lumet more often succeed in creating hysteria. Brittle, suspicious and high-strung, Fonda's former smalltime star is a potentially interesting character, a woman with her prime well past her who must aggressively pick herself up by the bootstraps if she's not going to spend the rest of her days just wasting away.

Unfortunately, unlike Fonda's Oscar-winning "Klute," to which this bears certain superficial resemblances, "The Morning After" doesn't reveal the hearts of its characters, and therefore emerges as both a failed character study and a failed thriller.

Fonda never revealingly explores or confronts her drinking problem, and the interesting age difference between her and Bridges is never commented upon. There are ways to make light of this humorously, or in passing, without making a big deal out of it, but not mentioning it seems like an unrealistic avoidance and detracts from the dramatic urgency of the ending.

A handful of the scenes between Fonda and Bridges legitimately engage the interest, and things pick up a bit whenever the actor is on the scene. But this one won't go down as either of their major credits.

Pic will also deserve the status of no more than a footnote in Lumet's career, and that only because it marks the first of the New York-based director's 33 films to be shot on location in Los Angeles. He and lenser Andrzej Bartkowiak have made use of some boldly colorful backdrops to try to jazz up the bland material, but to little avail. Cart.

Thurs., April 9, 1987

Mosca Addio MOSCOW FAREWELL (Italian — Drama — Color)

An Istituto Luce-Italnoleggio release of a Roseo film production, in cooperation with RAI-TV Channel I. Directed by Mauro Bolognini. Stars Liv Ullmann. Screenplay, Enrico Roseo, Marcello Andrei; camera (Cinecitta Color), Ennio Guarnieri; editor, Nino Baragli; music, Ennio Morricone. Reviewed at Rialto

Cinema, Rome, March 14, 1987. Running time: 102 min.

Ida Nudel Liv Ullmann Yuli Daniel Olbrychski Elena Aurore Clement With: Francesca Ciardi, Carmen Scarpitta, Nino Fuscagni, Saverio Vallone.

Rome — Director Mauro Bolognini tackles the anguishing problem of Jewish dissidents in the Soviet Union in "Moscow Farewell." With the fervor of crusaders (pic's plea of "Don't forget us" reechoes from first frame to last) Bolognini and star Liv Ullmann create a powerful and moving condemnation of anti-Semitic Soviet immigration policy, and the labor camps. "Moscow" should find markets in the West, thanks to Ullmann's emotionally charged performance.

'Moscow'' handles its subject with more passion than sensitivity, painting the non-Jewish characters (who are all police and officials) in such black colors it leaves itself open to charges of being an anti-Russian caricature. Had the same theme been treated in a Soviet picture (and that day hasn't arrived yet), it would be the toast of festivals and a victory of glasnost; in an Italian film, full of inaccurate details and stolen super-8m footage of Moscow exteriors, the political overtones take away from pic's genuine protest.

Story must qualify as one of the most chilling of our time, all the more depressing because it's based on the unhappy life of a real person, Ida Nudel, a Jewish dissident still living in the U.S.S.R. As the curtain rises she is a respected astronomer in Moscow, looking forward to the day when her lover Yuli (Daniel Olbrychski) will be released from a work camp.

Return he does, but after police break up a peaceful candlelight

vigil during a Jewish holiday, Yuli, Ida and her sister Elena (Aurore Clement) decide to immigrate. The papers are granted to Yuli and Elena, but — for no apparent reason — not to Ida. With an act of great self-sacrifice and love, she pretends all is okay and accompanies the pair on the train to Vienna, leaping out just as they near the border.

Back in Moscow, Ida begins taking part in demonstrations (the time is 1980) and is incarcerated in a mental asylum for her trouble This is only a mild warning, however, compared to what happens after her "second offense"—a long trip to the icy regions of Siberia.

Bolognini transcribes the most horrifying scenes of Alexander Solzhenitsyn's "A Day In The Life Of Ivan Denisovich" to the screen, adding to it the unbelievable twist that a sadistic bureaucrat has assigned Ida to an all-male camp, where she has to fend off hourly rape attempts.

ially transferred to a lighter woman's camp in the Artic, Ida is released at last and joyfully returns to Moscow, only to find another family lives in her apartment, Yuli has gotten married abroad, and she has been banished from the city. Wandering desolately from town to town in internal exile, she at last finds a rudimentary living situation amid nonjudgmental villagers, and recounts her story in a moving final monolog to an English reporter.

Film is shot well but badly edited in its theatrical release version (the seven-hour tv miniseries will probably fill a lot of gaps). Beginning is so jumpy that pic has a hard time establishing its characters, and it takes Ullmann another hour of screen time to emerge from bouts of above-the-lines emotion as a 3-D person worth caring about. Polish star Olbrychski is the only convincing Russian of the lot. Yung.

Mon., Nov. 17, 1986

The Mosquito Coast (Drama — Color)

A Warner Bros. release. Produced by Jerome Hellman. Executive producer, Saul Zaentz. Directed by Peter Weir. Screenplay by Paul Schrader, based on the novel by Paul Theroux. Camera (technicolor), John Seale; editor, Thom Noble; music, Maurice Jarre; production design, John Stoddart; art director, John Wingrove, Brian Nickless; set decorator, John Anderson; costumes, Gary Jones; sound (Dolby Stereo), Mark Berger; assistant director, Mark Egerton; casting, Dianne Crittenden. Reviewed at Warner Bros. screening room, Burbank, Nov. 5, 1986. MPAA rating: PG. Running time: 117 min.

Allie Fox	Harrison Ford
Mother	Helen Mirren
Charlie	River Phoenix
Jerry	Jadrien Steele
April	Hilary Gordon
Clover	Rebecca Gordon
Reverend Spellgood	Andre Gregory
Mr. Haddy	Conrad Roberts
Mr. Polski	Dick O'Neill
Emily Spellgood	
Mrs. Spellgood	. Melanie Boland
Francis Lungley	Michael Rogers

It is hard to believe that a film as beautiful as "The Mosquito Coast" can also be so bleak, but therein lies its power and undoing. A modern variation on "Swiss Family Robinson," it starts out as a film about idealism and possibilities but takes a dark turn and winds up questioning the very values it so powerful presents. Stunning performance by Harrison Ford and firstrate filmmaking by Peter Weir should induce some interest but boxoffice will be hampered by downbeat conclusion.

Ford's Allie Fox is one of those great screen characters that immediately captures an audience's imagination by sheer force of will. Described

by his neighbor as the worst kind of trouble-maker, "a know-it-all who's sometimes right," Fox is a worldclass visionary with the power to realize his vision.

He rants and raves against prepackaged, mass-consumed American culture and when he invents what he considers a major breakthrough and no one is interested, he packs up his wife and four kids and moves them lock, stock and barrel to a remote Carribean island — the Mosquito Coast.

Clearly a man of rare brilliance and talent, Fox is the kind of person other people are attracted to, his family no exception. He has the charisma to lead and his family follows unquestioningly on his mission. Wife (Helen Mirren), younger son (Jadrian Steele), twin daughters (Hilary and Rebecca Gordon) and especially his eldest son (River Phoenix), who serves as the narrator of the story, are all caught up in his glorious experiment.

Fox transforms a remote outpost on the island into a thriving community equipped with numerous Rube Goldberg-like gadgets to harness the forces of nature and make life better for the inhabitants.

For a while it's an idlyllic little utopian community, but the seeds of its downfall are present even as it thrives. Indeed, there have been enemies, both internal and external, present along the way, but with the completion of his great invention, a machine that turns fire to ice, the inherent contradictions literally explode.

Fox' nemesis is the populist polyester missionary Reverend Spellgood (Andre Gregory), a man with a world view totally antithetical to his own. More immediately responsible for the settlement's failure is the arrival of three degenerate criminal types who unleash the destructive side of Fox' imagination. It is obviously a thin line between inspiration and insanity and here Fox starts tipping over into madness and obsession.

And as Fox starts to unravel so does the film. None of the outside antagonists supplied by Paul Schrader's screenplay (based on Paul Theroux' novel) are fitting adversaries for Fox' genius. He carries his own downfall within him and his self-destructiveness ultimately outshines his creativity.

Fox is a fascinating character until his ranting takes on a bitter tinge and turns back on itself. The film stops going anywhere about two-thirds of the way through. In the end there is barely a thread of hope to take home, other than some strikingly beautiful and sad images of a man grasping for something just beyond his reach.

John Seale's photography once again illuminates Weir's vision of unfriendly cultures caught in a moment of decision. Other tech credits are equally in service of the material, including Maurice Jarre's moody score and John Stoddart's production design. Locations on Belize are engaging without being uniformly lush.

As for the rest of the cast, River Phoenix is both likable and believable as the eldest son who must carry the burden of having such a strong and contradictory personality as his father. Mirren, as the mother, is forced to maintain an unquestioning loyalty to her husband, and while that weakens her character, it is through her unwavering love and admiration that Fox is most clearly seen.

Jagr.

Munchies

(Fantasy — Color)

A Concorde Pictures release, produced by Roger Corman, coproduced by Ginny Nugent. Directed by Bettina Hirsch, screenplay, Lance Smith. Munchies created by Robert Short. Stars Harvey Korman, Charles Stratton, Nadine Van Der Velde, with Alix Elias, Charlie Phillips, Jon Stafford, Hardy Rawls. Reviewed at the Brywood Theater, Kansas City, Mo., April 15, 1987. MPAA Rating: PG. Running time: 85 min.

Kansas City — "Munchies" is an unabashed attempt to capitalize on the "Gremlins" genre by low-budgeteer Roger Corman, who tries with this production to follow in the footsteps of Joe Dante, a Corman protege and the actual maker of "Gremlins." Corman has the framework of a decent script idea, but it is poorly crafted with the budget limitations showing through. There's not much that a creature fan could sink his teeth into here.

Harvey Korman has a dual role, first as an anthropologist who discovers the cute little creature in a cave high in the Peruvian mountains. He brings it home to his small Texas town, and puts it in the care of his son, Charles Stratton, and the son's girl friend, Nadine Van Der Velde. The name "Munchies" becomes a natural for the critter as it munches on tidbits fed to it in its leather carrying pouch.

The other Korman is a dim-witted brother of the scientist, neither one in any scenes with the other. The brother tries to steal the Munchie, discovering in the process that the cute little creature can become a mean little cuss under pressure, and worse, when cut in two it can fully regenerate and become two Munchies where there was but one.

Dim-wit doesn't get the idea, continues to have them slashed apart until there is a flock. They cut a trail of violence, steal Stratton's car to begin a car chase, disrupt a motorcycle gang and leave a path of destruction in their wake.

Fortunately, Stratton finds the cure to be "God power" (lightning) of the Incas, or electricity by his interpretation. A Munchie can be turned to clay by an electric shock, and in one of the better scenes Stratton electrocutes them all as they come off a production line inadvertently set up by Dim-wit. The proceedings generally are muddled, however, because of loose-gaited script and direction.

Korman is adequate as the scientist-father, but almost a slapstick as the brother. Stratton and Van Der Velde are adequate in the boy-girl roles, but rest of the cast is called upon for little but being present. Laughs come where they should not and incongruities abound, such as a two-foot Munchie driving a car, even with help from another Munchie on the accelerator.

Concorde played the film in Kansas City week of March 27 with a showcase of five indoor theaters and two drive-ins the first week, three indoors the second week, and then into a three-dollar house for a week, apparently the only place the film has been shown. The first week's gross was about \$12,000, very thin.

Quin.

Fri., May 22, 1987

My African Adventure (U.S. — Color)

A Cannon Group release of a Golan-Globus production. Produced by Menahem Golan and Yoram Globus. Executive producer, Avi Lerner. Directed by Boaz Davidson. Screenplay, Golan. Camera (color), Joseph Wain; editors, Natan Zahavi, Bruria Davidson. Reviewed at the Cannes Film Festival (market), May 14, 1987. Running time: 93 min.

Big Bad Joe Dom De Luise
Mozambo Jimmie C. Walker
Ben David Mendenhall
Bonzo Deep Roy
Palermo Warren Berlinger
Mackintosh Herbert Lom
Ship's captain Len Sparrowhawk
Also with: Peter Elliott, Fats Dibeco, Graham Armitage, Mike Westcott, Phillip Van
Der Byl, Bobby Porter, Irene Frangs

Cannes — Cannon's familyoriented adventure comedy has all the ingredients whose passing the cinema wiseacres lament action without violence, comedy without grossness and a storyline any parent would approve their kids seeing. Trouble is, moppets don't buy the tickets these days.

"My African Adventure" is an amiably innocent piece of nonsense involving an American boy in the Dark Continent with his hysterical custodian (Dom DeLuise), a local tour guide (Jimmie C. Walker) and a chimp named Bonzo. (This latter may ring bells among the politically inclined.)

The plot involves saving Bonzo, who can talk, from a corrupt local police chief (Herbert Lom reprising his Pink Panther roles) and an acquisitive circus owner (Warren Berlinger).

It's slapsticky and rough, and there are more chuckles than yocks. but it's not short of appeal for an undemanding junior. Kids, though, seem to demand more, and 'Adventure's' closing hint of a sequel seems optimistic in the extreme. Innocence and gentle whimsy probably aren't enough. Rant.

Tues., Feb. 10, 1987

My Dark Lady (Drama — Color)

A Film Gallery release of a Frederick King Keller production. Executive producer, Keller. Produced by Carole Terranova, Stratton Rawson. Directed by Keller. Screenplay, Fred A. Keller, Gene Brook, and Frederick King Keller, from an original story by Fred A. Keller, Camera (color) Thom Marini; editor, Darren Kloomok; music, Ken Kaufman; production design, Stratton Rawson; set decoration, Gary Matwijkow; costumes, Elizabeth Haas Keller; sound, Dan Sack; assistant director, Rick Seeberg. Reviewed at the North Park Theater, Buffalo, N.Y., Feb. 5, 1987. No MPAA Rating. Run-

Sam Booth	Fred A. Keller
Lorna Dahomey	Lorna Hill
Malcolm Dahomey	Raymond Holder
Jonathan Park	John Buscaglia
Samuel T. MacMillan	Evan Perry
Sarah Teasdale	Barbara Cady
Horace Babinski	Stuart Roth
Minnie O'Hara	Tess Spangler
Terry Terranova	Steven Cooper

Buffalo, N.Y. — A fair lady lurks in the heart of "My Dark Lady," the latest product of Buffalo-area filmmaker Frederick King Keller. As in the musical version of the George Bernard Shaw tale, an elegant man of letters endeavors to improve the lifestyle of a lowlife lass through exterior behavior modification.

Fred A. Keller (the director's father) is a Shakespearean actor down to his last aside and on the lam from the law for shoplifting in a Santa Claus suit. He takes refuge as a roomer in the home of Lorna Hill, whose principal income is derived from hospitality on a shorter, one-on-one basis.

Hill's son, Raymond Holder, turns out to possess a natural bent for Shakespeare. Keller teaches him the ropes of the stage and further shows Hill how to move upscale to the higher-income brackets in her bedroom business.

Hill's higher earnings pay Holder's way into prep school but trouble ensues when Headmaster John Buscaglia learns the background of his prize minority pupil.

Hill is smashing with her elegant sensuality. Holder has a natural innocence seldom seen in child actors anywhere and seems a better Shakespearean than Keller right from the start. Headmaster Buscaglia secretes slime the way other actors secrete tears. Barbara Cady gleams in

a cameo as Holder's prep-school drama coach.

Ken Kaufman's whimsical yet romantic score ranks among the picture's greatest assets and when the dialog stops while the music and pictures take over, "My Dark Lady" flies.

One wonders throughout whether any of the characters would encounter many of these problems in real life, given the current color-blind liberality in education, and some dialog sounds downright rehearsed, scripting and delivery equally at fault.

Scenics are grand, exploiting many Western New York locations. Set details, particularly newspaper pasteups, are sloppy. Most of the comedy works but some of the slapstick seems mechanical. Most of the picture has a good sense of pace and the storyline consistently holds the tone of a modern-day fairytale of a type seldom seen any more. A modest sell with many satisfactions, particularly Hill (in her film debut) and the music.

Doug.

Mon., April 27, 1987

My Demon Lover (Horror comedy — Color)

A New Line Cinema release of a Robert Shaye production. Executive producers, Pierre David, Larry Thompson. Produced by Shaye. Directed by Charles Loventhal. Screenplay, Leslie Ray; Camera (color), Jacques Haitkin; editor, Ronald Reese; music, David Newman; production design, Brent Swift; art direction, Douglas Dick; coproducer, Sara Risher; special makeup effects, Carl Fullerton, John Caglione Jr., Neal Martz, Doug Drexler; casting, Annette Benson. Reviewed at Embassy 2 Theater, N.Y., April 24, 1987. MPAA Rating: PG-13. Running time: 86 min.

Kaz	Scott Valentine
Denny	. Michelle Little
Fixer	Arnold Johnson
Charles	. Robert Treber
Capt. Phil Janus	Alan Fudge
Sonia	Gina Gallego

New York — Horror fans going to see "My Demon Lover" will hardly be on the edge of their seats and the laughs aren't as abundant as they could be, but the pic's personable Scott Valentine (of the tv sitcom "Family Ties") and offbeat premise combine for a mildly diverting film.

The film opens on the well-cast Michelle Little as Denny — a meek girl whose long-string of bad relationships continues as she watches her current boyfriend rob her Manhattan apartment and leave her.

Kaz (Scott Valentine) is a girlcrazed streetperson who chases any woman in sight, and, when sexually aroused, transforms into a variety of demonic beings. When Kaz wakes up one day in a pile of garbage and spots Denny dining at an outdoor eatery, he talks with her until he must (literally) turn tail and run.

Women are getting killed in the city by something dubbed "the Mangler," although there is little on-screen depiction of the beast's violent crimes. One of the victims who survives is the sister of Denny's friend Sonia, a psychic who owns an antique knife store (two plot elements that figure heavily in the pic's climax).

A street psychic looks into Kaz' past and reveals that Kaz has been

"pazzassed," and that the only way to rid himself of the curse is to do something noble. The funniest scenes in the film center on Kaz' developing relationship with the relationship-hungry Denny, as he gradually makes her believe the seriousness of his sexual problems.

Unfortunately, only occasionally does "My Demon Lover" manage to capitalize on the fine line between real horror and comedy, and that unique tension is all but lost as the film barrels its way toward a convenient conclusion.

Gina Gallego as Sonia and Robert Treber as Charles are strong in their supporting roles, and the special effects range from nifty to poor.

Roy.

Mon., July 13, 1987

Mon Bel Amour, Ma Dechirure

MY TRUE LOVE, MY WOUND (French — Drama — Color)

Bac Films release of an Odessa Films/
Canal Plus Prods./Generale d'Images coproduction, with the participation of Images
Investissements and the Ministry of Culture.
Produced by Yannick Bernard. Directed by
Jose Pinheiro. Screenplay, Louis Calaferto,
Sotha, Pinheiro. Camera (color), Richard
Andry; editor, Claire Pinheiro-L'Heveder;
sound, Jean-Marcel Milan, Vincent Arnardi;
art direcctor, Theo Meurisse; music and
songs, Romano Musumarra; costumes, Delphine Bernard, Karlien Nel, Frederique
Menichetti; makeup and special effects, Reiko Kruk, Dominique Colladant; assistant
director, Bernard Bourdeix; production manager, Ilya Claisse. Reviewed at the Marignan-Concorde cinema, Paris, June 25,
1987. Running time: 107 min.

Patrick	. Stephane Ferrara
Catherine	Catherine Wilkening
The director	Vera Gregh
Clementine	Veronique Barrault
Jean-Ba	Jacques Castaldo
Julien	. Philippe Manesse
Jacky	Jacky Sigaux
Mouss	Mouss

Paris — "Mon Bel Amour, Ma Dechirure" choreographs a new tango in Paris in this hot and heavy tale of sexual passion between a ruffian and an actress. Cowriter and director Jose Pinheiro doesn't shy away from full frontal male and female nudity, and flash graphic closeups in his coarse depiction of carnal clashes. With sexy European pix enjoying something of a popular revival, Stateside especially, this could bully its way abroad, though it fails on deeper emotional and artistic levels.

Former French middleweight boxing champ Stephane Ferrara (seen in Jean-Luc Godard's "Detective") plays his first starring role as a street tough who arrives at a small cafe-theater to collect a debt from the troupe manager.

He catches sight of Catherine Wilkening, a petite, attractive, dark-eyed actress who seems both disturbed by and attracted to the strapping brute.

After the show, Ferrara accosts Wilkening in the street and unceremoniously rapes her against a car, then comes back later for a return engagement on the stage of the empty theater.

Wilkening is stunned and shaken — but she likes it, and soon can't get enough of Ferrara's animalistic lovemaking.

Their ensuing clandestine couplings — Wilkening tries to keep the liaison a secret from her fellow actors, which include her live-in boyfriend — take them out to Britanny where the troupe is touring, and back to Paris, where Wilkening lands a leading role in a major dramatic production.

The girl's deepening involvement in rehearsals leads to a predictable

cooling of her sexual desires, but by now Ferrara is more than superficially hooked on her.

When Wilkening tells him it's over between them, the jock throws her into his car and stages a spectacular Grand Guignol-esque suicide on the highway. Wilkening miraculously survives and returns to the theater, where she enjoys a personal triumph.

Wilkening and Ferrara (in his best moments a cross between Joe Dallesandro and Gerard Depardieu) generate a good deal of uninhibited intensity, though the screenplay lacks the insight and complexity to make their tragic tryst genuinely affecting.

Pic's theme of initiation and sexuality was handled with more style and finesse in Andre Techine's Cannes-laureled film "Rendezvous," in which Juliette Binoche also was an aspiring actress steeped in morbid sexual excess.

Supporting players make do with roles that seem often to have been sacrificed in the cutting room. Vera Gregh gives a vivid performance as the dictatorial writer-director in whose pretentious piece Wilkening stars, a personage ostensibly inspired by local celebrity director Ariane Mnouchkine. Len.

Mon., July 13, 1987

Nadine

(Romantic comedy - Color)

A Tri-Star Pictures release. Produced by Arlene Donovan. Executive producer, Wolfgang Glattes. Directed by Robert Benton. Screenplay, Benton. Camera (Metrocolor), Nestor Almendros; editor, Sam O'Steen; music, Howard Shore; production designer, Paul Sylbert; art director, Peter Lansdown Smith, Cary White; set decorator, Lee Poll; costumes, Albert Wolsky; sound, David Ronne; assistant director, Ron Bozman; casting, Howard Feuer. Reviewed at the Coronet Theater, Los Angeles, July 10, 1987. MPAA rating: PG. Running time: 88 min.

Vernon Hightower	Jeff Bridges
Nadine Hightower	Kim Basinger
Buford Pope	Rip Torn
Vera	Gwen Verdon
Renee Lomax	Glenne Headly
Raymond Escobar	Jerry Stiller
Dwight Estes	Jay Patterson
Boyd	. William Youmans
Floyd	

"Nadine" is an innocuous souffle from writer-director Robert Benton, so lightweight that in the end one can't help wondering where the film is. Set in Austin in 1954, Benton tries to get by on Texas charm but recipe of screwball comedy and small-town thriller fails to jell. Result is pleasant but forgettable and a distinct disappointment from a major director.

jor director.

'Nadine' is a return to the genre-bending territory Benton explored with more success in 'The Late Show' 10 years ago. Instead of Art Carney and Lily Tomlin as battling allies trying to solve a murder-mystery, Jeff Bridges and Kim Basinger are husband and wife on the verge of divorce, drawn together again by a suspicious killing.

Both characters are likable if unexceptional. As Vernon Hightower, proprietor of the unsuccessful Bluebonnet saloon, Bridges has a smile and an excuse for every mishandled situation. As Nadine, Basinger is a kvetch with a twang who gives manicures in the local beauty parlor.

Benton is obviously shooting for a quaint slice of American pie, but these people are too precious and stylized, as if they were in a museum display of life in the '50s in Texas — lots of texture but not enough soul.

"Nadine" is a character piece too

shallow to pull the murder plot. Despite some bullseye one-liners, story is too clever and neat to be believable or compelling. Every twist is convenient without being dangerous.

Things get going when Basinger witnesses the murder of two-bit photographer Raymond Escobar (Jerry Stiller), who happens to have in his possession some "art" shot of Nadine, thereby giving her a motive for the killing. But the real meat of the matter is some photos for a proposed highway that Escobar has gotten his hands on and local mobster Buford Pope (Rip Torn) wants back at any cost.

Pope is the only truly interesting character here and the film comes alive when he's on the screen. What he has that the others don't is a complex personality, and Torn is skillful in showing it. Pope is a working crook, if there is such a thing. By turns ornery, dangerous and almost courtly, he is never as mean as he means to be.

Bridges turns in his usual winning performance and Basinger, reminiscent of any number of Texas heroines, including her own from "Fool For Love," has got a Texas squeal down pat. Gwen Verdon turns up as Nadine's mother confessor at the beauty shop while Mickey Jones creates an unmistakable presence as Pope's heavy.

While it is amusing to watch a car chase in vintage automobiles, letter perfect, period detail (except for a reference to 7-Eleven, which was not yet around) almost seems painted on as the characters and story are too thin to hold the color.

Cinematography by Nestor Almendros is up to his usual high standards. Score by Howard Shore is low-key and appropriate; several relaxed moments when Vernon and Nadine ride in a car to pleading guitar strains communicate the love that is being restored. If only it meant more.

Tues., May 26, 1987

Necropolis (Horror — Color)

An Empire Picture release of a Tycin Entertainment production. Produced by Cynthia DePaula, Tim Kincaid. Written and directed by Bruce Hickey. Camera (Precision Color), Arthur D. Marks; editor, Barry Zetlin, Tom Mesherski; music, excerpted from Empire releases "Eliminators," "Trancers," "The Alchemist"; additional music, Don Great, Tom Milano; sound, Russell Fager; art direction, Ruth Lounsbury, Marina Zurkow; set design, David Morong; assistant director, Rebecca Rothbaum; production manager, Michael Spero; special makeup effects, Ed French; special effects-second unit director, Matt Vogel; choreography, Taunie Vrenon. Reviewed at 2d St. Liberty Theater, N.Y., May 23, 1987. MPAA rating: R. Running time: 76 min.

Eva.....LeeAnne Baker
Dawn...Jacquie Fitz
Billy....Michael Conte
Rev. Henry James...Willialm K. Reed
Also with: George Anthony, Jett Julian,
Nadine Hart, Anthony Gioia, Gy Mirano,
Jennifer Stall, Paul Ruben, Adrianne Lee.

New York — "Necropolis" poses the thorny question: how do Empire Pictures' exex decide which of their films will be released theatrically? This meager, N.Y.-lensed effort is far below the level of quality of several of Empire's recent direct-to-video releases, yet it popped up unannounced on 42d St. on a triple bill to bore the pants off a horrorhungry audience. Home viewers will at least have the fast-forward option.

By an unfortunate application of the Peter Principle, erstwhile bit player LeeAnne Baker graduates to a leading role here, sashaying trashily through "Necropolis" as a more than 300-year-old devil worshiper, preying upon New Yorkers to suck out their lifeforce.

It seems, according to a ludicrously cheap prologue set in New Amsterdam in 1686, that she was interrupted in a satanic ritual and must now complete it in order to obtain eternal life for herself and a grisly bunch of ghouls. Most interesting gimmick is an Ed French makeup effect giving Baker three sets of breasts with which to suckle the ghouls with the genre's requisite (ever since "Alien") daily requirement of KY jelly.

Al Pacino-lookalike Michael Conte unconvincingly plays the cop on the case, while British-accented Jacquie Fitz is a bland heroine and William K. Reed the neighborhood black reverend, ever ready with a set of wooden crosses to stake Baker and her ghouls.

Campiest material has Baker, looking hideous with short-cropped platinum blonde hairdo, eyelids covered in black, garbed in trashy black outfits emulating Vanity and Madonna, doing exotic dances by herself without warning.

Under Bruce Hickey's limp and static direction, even this isn't funny on a camp level.

Lor.

Wed., Nov. 19, 1986

Neon Maniacs (Horror — Color)

A Bedford Entertainment release of a Cimmaron production. Produced by Steven Mackler, Chris Arnold. Executive producers, H. Frank Dominguez, Bernard E. Goldberg. Directed by Joseph Mangine, Screenplay, Mark Patrick Carducci; camera (Cinema color), Mangine, Oliver Wood; editor, Timothy Snell; music, Kendall Schmidt; sound, Peter Bentley, Ed White; art direction, Katherine Vallin; special makeup effects, Makeup Effects Labs, Allan A. Apone, Douglas J. White; special effects, Image Engr.; assistant director, Linda Graeme; costume design, Joseph Porro; casting, Paul Bengston, David Cohn: associate producer-production manager, Herb Linsey; associate producers Bran Arandjelovich, Edwin Picker, Brian Leonard. Reviewed at RKO Warner 2 theater, N.Y., Nov. 14, 1986. MPAA Rating: R. Running time: 91 min.

Steven Allan Hayes
Nathalie Leilani Sarelle
Paula Donna Locke
Devin Victor Elliott Brandt

New York — Even as standards for plausibility and coherent story-telling in horror films continue to degenerate, "Neon Maniacs" represents another low in the genre. Idiotic monster film is an overlong time-killer with no redeeming features.

Nonstory concerns a polyglot group of armed monsters who kill a bunch of high schoolers out on a date one night in San Francisco. Nathalie (Leilani Sarelle) improbably survives, but the police don't believe her tale of monsters. She teams up with boyfriend Steven (Allan Hayes) and a precocious student videomaker Paula (Donna Locke) to hunt down and destroy the creatures.

Monsters here look like amateur participants in a best costume contest at a comic-book convention, ranging from a Neanderthal man to a humanoid lizard. Where they came from or why they're hanging out together is never questioned or explained. Film presents them as real, though the only logical explanation might be that the heroine had eaten a pepperoni pizza just before bedtime and dreamt them up.

It turns out that water destroys the monsters and film's only true laughs are generated by kids and cops going after them with water pistols. An anachronistic cop (Victor Elliot Brandt), who looks like he escaped from the 1940s, also provides a laugh when he holds up the final assault on the monsters' lair when he takes time out to light up his stogie.

Acting is generally poor and cinematographer-turned-director Joseph Mangine has trouble maintaining any interest in the narrative. Lead actress Leilani Sarelle goes through hell but fails miserably at portraying the least bit of being afraid.

Audience also goes through hell, being forced to listen to several rotten musical numbers at a costume party's battle of the bands staged at the local high school.

Lor.

Fri., July 24, 1987

Niagara Falls: Miracles, Myths And Magic

(Adventure — Color)

A Cinema Group presentation of a Seventh Man Films Inc. production. Produced by Nicholas Gray. Created and directed by Kieth Merrill. Written by Merrill. Camera, David Douglas (Metrocolor, in IMAX); production designer, Tony Hall; editor and sound designer, Ben Burtt; wardrobe, Sylvie Krasker; production manager, Michael Curran; assistant director, Mac Bradden; stunt coordinator, A. Tye Tykodi. No further technical credits available. Reviewed July 22, 1987, at Mitsubishi-IMAX Theater, Los Angeles. No MPAA rating. Time: 40 min.

Cast: Vanessa Boyack, Philippe Petit, Robn Sims.

Latest in the series of several dozen historic recreation films shot in IMAX, "Niagara" is a cut below the rest in all critical areas. While the Falls are an ideal subject for this kind of film, director Kieth Merrill waits until the closing credits for the several panoramic establishing shots of the entire area, and the stories that go before it are stilted and overdramatized. This one figures to play forever at the IMAX Theater next to the Falls, but other theaters around the country (mostly housed at or near museums) figure to have problems filling up their seats eight-10 times a day, as is typical for this kind of film.

The IMAX frame is 10 times the size of normal 35m film and three times the size of 70m negative stock. Horizontally pulled through the projector, the negative has 15 perforations per frame, compared to four for 35m and five for 70m stock.

Overall visual effect, when projected onto a screen that is often five stories high, is undeniably impressive. But Merrill saves his best shots for the end, concentrating instead on close-ups of the Falls and mediumrange rapid shots most of the way through.

All that would be excusable if the story itself was more gripping. Pic attempts to re-create several key moments in the history of the Falls and in doing so gives short shrift to each one. Only one professional actor is used, and it shows, as performances are uniformly overbearing, often laughable.

Least excusable gaffe is a story of a father and two kids whose powerboat breaks down in dangerous water, sending the family hurtling toward the falls. Ostensibly taking place in 1961, scene features clothing from a generation later and rescue sequences seem particularly contrived.

Other annoyance that crops up throughout is soundrack, which isn't quite synced with characters' voices.

While little of this will be noticed by the thousands of viewers who pass through museum IMAX theaters, effort is disappointing overall, especially when compared to what the medium is capable of. With such great expense involved in filming in this state-of-the-art technology, one wonders why more care wasn't given to the story being told on that impressive screen.

Camb.

Thurs., April 23, 1987

Nice Girls Don't Explode (Comedy — Color)

A New World Pictures release of the Nice Girls production. Produced by Doug Curtis, John Wells. Directed by Chuck Martinez. Screenplay, Paul Harris; camera (color), Steven Katz; editor, Wende Phifer Mate; music, Brian Banks, Anthony Marinelli; production designer, Sarina Rotstein; costumes, Belinda Wells; executive in charge of production, Bob Stein; associate producers, Jim Moores, Belinda Wells, Paul Harris; makeup, Margaret Sunshine. Reviewed at the Bannister Square theater, Kansas City, Mo., April 16, 1987. MPAA rating: PG. Running time: 92 min.

Mom	Barbara Harris
April	Michelle Meyrink
Andy	. William O'Leary
Ellen	.Wallach Shawn
Ken	. James Nardini
Little April	
Little Andy	Jonas Baugham
Dr. Stewart	William Kuhlke

Kansas City — Nice girls don't explode, but the nice girl, Michelle Meyrink, in this tight-budgeter, can cause explosions and set fires. But up against the general flow of big-screen pix today, the entertainment glow from this one amounts to little more than the pilot-light.

Meyrink's knack for keeping things hot is due to a quirky metabolism that causes a nearby plant, or tree, or car, or other item to go up in flames or burst apart when she gets near a young man, especially if there is any romantic inclination.

The curse is involuntary, a legacy given to her while still in the womb by her mother, who swallowed a toxic substance. Mom (Barbara Harris) carries on the legacy with a magnified possessive instinct, setting some fires and explosions on her own, if daughter's syndrome doesn't function.

Much of this fiery outburst focuses on William O'Leary as the childhood sweetheart grown up, who perseveres through losing his car and getting his clothes blown to tatters and his face blackened. He doesn't buy Mom's story about the metabolism, suspects Mom is the perpetrator and suggests to Michelle that they can prove it by bedding together when Mom isn't around. So it is, and Mom is forced to lay down her explosives and permit romance to have its way.

While the story idea is far out, it is no more so than a score of other current releases that go in for sci-fi and/or special effects. This one doesn't make the front burner, as director Martinez fails to get the most out of his players and scripter Paul Harris leaves too many episodes unlaced. Her role gives Barbara Harris little chance to be assertive and she comes off as a limpid little mother. Myerink is adequate as the romance-thwarted daughter. Young O'Leary puts some spirit into his assignment and probably is the best the lead roles.

Some special interest attaches to the film as much as it was produced in and around nearby Lawrence, Kan.

Costuming is neatly contemporary, and some camerawork is first-rate. Some of the sets ring true, but on too many the cardboard shows through.

The direction fails to set up the comedy lines, and a flow of would-be laughs — such as about the ping

pong scholarship to China — draw nary a snicker. Pyrotechnics are plentiful and effective. Quin.

Thurs., June 11, 1987

Nightmare At Shadow Woods

(Horror — Color)

An FCG (Film Concept Group) release of a Marianne Kanter production. Executive producer, J. W. Stanley. Produced by Kanter. Directed by John W. Grissmer. Screenplay, Richard Lamden. Camera (CFI Color) Richard E. Brooks; editor, Michael R. Miller; music, Richard Einhorn; production design, Jim Rule; special effects coordinator, Ed French; casting, Amanda Mackey. Reviewed at Metro Norwest theater, Detroit, June 1, 1987. MPAA rating: R. Running time: 84 min.

Maddy Louise Lasser
Todd/Terry Mark Soper
Dr. Berman Marianne Kanter
Karen Julie Gordon
Julie Jayne Bentzen
Brad William Fuller

Detroit — A hackneyed script, wooden acting and trite plot all conspire to turn "Nightmare At Shadow Woods" into just another jiggling teen slasher pic whose boxoffice life likely will be as short lived as its on-screen characters.

But some heavy-handed humor — particularly a campy performance by Louise Lasser — mixed with buckets of blood may provide a healthy afterlife in the non-discriminating homevid market for this three-year-old slash-and-splash film only now getting a theatrical run. (It was previously titled "Complex," "Slasher" and "Blood Rage.")

As plots go, it's all been seen before. Terry Simmons is the evil twin who sneaks out of his mother's car at a Jacksonville, Fla., drive-in with shy brother Todd and slits someone's throat. Before anyone can find him, Terry wipes blood on his brother's face and thrusts a hatchet in his hand.

Incredulous at the gory scene, Todd remains mute and is carted off to a hospital for the criminally insane. Ten years pass, and at a Thanksgiving dinner during which Lasser announces she and her boyfriend plan to wed, she gets a phone call that Todd has escaped.

That's cheery news to Terry, who's been a model son. Todd's escape means he can start killing again, which he does with great dispatch. No sooner has everyone finished dessert before Terry grabs a machete and starts slicing his way through his mother's boyfriend, his school chums, his Florida neighbors and his own girlfriend.

Audience is always three scenes ahead of the picture; no one seems to notice that Terry is a little off.

Only Lasser, experienced enough to realize the anemic script can only be played for laughs, has any screen presence as the mother who, despite being surrounded by murder and mayhem, remembers to tell her son to wear a sweater outside — "The blue one."

By the time Todd and Terry meet for an anticlimatic face-off, just about everyone in the pic is dead, and the audience is too bored to care.

Advo.

Wed., Feb. 25, 1987

A Nightmare On Elm Street 3: Dream Warriors

(Horror — Color)

New Line Cinema release of a New Line, Heron Communications and Smart Egg Pictures presentation of a Robert Shaye production. Produced by Shaye. Executive producers, Wes Craven, Stephen Diener. Coproduced by Sara Risher, line producer,

Rachel Talalay. Directed by Chuck Russell. Screenplay, Craven, Bruce Wagner, Russell, Frank Darabont, from story by Craven Wagner, based on characters created by Craven. Camera (Deluxe Color), Roy H Wagner; editor, Terry Stokes, Chuck Weiss; music, Angelo Badalamenti; song, Dokken group; additional music, Ken Harrison, Don Dokken, also Charles Bernstein (from Part 1); sound, William Fiege; art direction, Mick Strawn, C.J. Strawn; set decoration, James Barrows; special makeup effects, Mark Shostrum, Chris Biggs, Greg Cannom, Mathew Mungel; Freddy makeup, Kevin Yagher; special visual effects Dreamquest images - supervisor, Hoyt Yeatman: mechanical effects, Peter Chesney; stopmotion animation, Doug Beswick; stunt coordinator, Rick Barker; second-unit director. Dan Perri; postproduction supervisor. Joseph Fineman; casting, Annette Benson; associate producer, Niki Martin. Reviewed at Magno Preview 4 screening room, N.Y., Feb. 18, 1987. MPAA rating: R. Running

Nancy

rianoy	
Thompson He	eather Langenkamp
Kristen Parker	Patricia Arquette
Max	Larry Fishburne
Dr. Elizabeth Simm	sPriscilla Pointer
Dr. Neil Goldman.	Craig Wasson
Freddy. Krueger	Robert Englund
Elaine Parker	Brooke Bundy
Joey	Rodney Eastman
Phillip	Bradley Gregg
Will	Ira Heiden
	Ken Sagoes
	Penelope Sudrow
	Jennifer Rubin
Million, John Course	Claudan Landau Na

With: John Saxon, Clayton Landey, Nan Martin, Stacey Alden, Kristin Clayton, Sally Piper, Rozlyn Sorrell, Dick Cavett, Zsa Zsa Gabor.

New York — "A Nightmare On Elm Street 3: Dream Warriors" is a cannily conceived followup in the hit series that unfortunately tips the balance heavily toward the special-effects department, leaving the human side of the equation deficient. Fans will surely turn out in big numbers for this one and merely laugh at the plot and acting gaffes.

With input from the original's creator, Wes Craven, "3" shifts its focus away from the homely neighborhood horror to a sort of Sam Fuller "Shock Corridor" setting of seven nightmare-plagued teens under the care of medicos Priscilla Pointer (instantly hissable) and Craig Wasson (decidedly miscast).

Heather Langenkamp, young heroine of the first film in the series (who didn't show up for Part 2), returns as an intern assigned to the ward who is, natch, plenty simpatico with the teens. She's been using an experimental dream-inhibiting drug to keep her wits about her and proposes using it on the kids.

Plot quickly becomes illogical and contradictory, as Langenkamp fights with Wasson to get use of the drug, then encourages group hypnosis and shared-dream activities, all while the teens try strategems to stay awake, with various results.

While everyone is stewing in their juices, pic is mainly focused on the violent special effects outbursts of Freddy Krueger (ably limned under heavy makeup by Robert Englund), the child murderer's demon spirit who seeks revenge on Langenkamp and the other Elm St. kids for the sins of their parents.

Freddy's parentage is the subject of an elaborate subplot involving a nun (Nan Martin) who keeps popping up to bug Wasson.

Another subplot that gets in the way of the narrative (and through misguided crosscutting, interrupts the exciting action of the finale) concerns Wasson and Langenkamp's dad (John Saxon, also back from Part 1) searching for Freddy's remains in order to exorcise his spirit.

Happy ending is arbitrary and confusing, seeming to wrap up the series until the obligatory groaner of a final twist to make room for Part Four.

Debuting director Chuck Russell

elicits poor performances from most of his actors, making it difficult to differentiate between pic's comic relief and unintended howlers during even the simplest of exposition scenes.

Langenkamp, looking stunning but far too cheerful for the role, declares "my mother died in her sleep" and it's all downhill from there to campsville.

Fortunately, the legions of special effects experts working here more than deliver their goods and that component, plus an extraneous but satisfying nude scene by an uncredited actress, should be enough for the target audience.

Of special note are Doug Beswick's stopmotion animation (including a skeleton homage to the genius of Ray Harryhausen) and monster makeup by various hands, peaking in a scary sequence where a vast Freddy-headed worm starts eating heroine Patricia Arquette gradually, from the feet up.

Arquette, younger sister of Rosanna, proves to be an excellent screamer, but gets little chance to act — ditto the rest of the cast.

Poor-taste screenplay has a monster wheelchair chase down the disabled teen and has Freddy sprout 10 hypodermic needles on his fingers to give a real jolt to the ex-drug addict in the bunch. Ken Sagoes gets the biggest laughs but is saddled with a woefully stereotyped black characterization.

The very real and recognizable nightmares and fears dealt with in this film series could give rise to interesting psychological treatment, but the inspiration of Val Lewton and Jacques Tourneur has now given way to the prevailing attitude: "let the special effects guys take care of it."

Tues., May 12, 1987

Un Zoo La Nuit (NIGHT ZOO) (Canadian-Color)

A Cinema Plus release (in Canada) of a Les Prods. Oz Inc. production in association with the National Film Board. Produced by Roger Frappier, Pierre Gendron. Directed and screenplay by Jean-Claude Lauzon; camera (color), Guy Dufaux; editor, Michel Arcand; sound, Yvon Benoit; art direction, Jean-Baptiste Tard; set designer, Michele Forest; costumes, Andree Morin; music, Jean Corriveau; associate producer, Suzanne Dussault. Reviewed at Cannes Film festival (Directors Fortnight) May 8, 1987. Running time: 115 min.

Jor. Harming time. TTO Him.
AlbertRoger Le Bel
Marcel Gilles Maheu
Julie Lynne Adams
Georges Lorne Brass
Charlie Germain Houde

Cannes — "Un Zoo La Nuit" is an astonishingly mature first feature from Quebec director and scripter Jean-Claude Lauzon. Because of the violence, though no blood is shown, and depiction of homosexual rape, pic is for demanding situations and not predicted for wide release. It's bound to draw positive attention.

Pic is a continuously and gripping effort that alternates between overt toughness and tenderness — scenes of brutal sex, heterosexual and homosexual, and murder that are played off almost surrealistically. Scenes are balanced by whimsical, yet powerful reconciliation, between a son and his aging and dying father.

Lauzon, in full command of his complex story and the many layers of filmic requirements it makes, is aided by Guy Dufaux' superb camera work and Jean-Baptiste Tard's excellent, artistic but never overwhelming art direction.

Pic begins with a homosexual

scene in jail; the young man raped, while a guard watches, is freed after two years and is pursued by violent cops for whom he had been running dope. They want their cut; within the pic's first 10 minutes there is another homosexual scene, aborted between a cop and the young man who punches his way out of a seedy restaurant washroom.

Meanwhile, the man's father is shown living at the rear of another restaurant, owned by friends, but undergoing renovations that force him to squeeze further onto smaller quarters.

Pushed around by the cops and knifed by one of them on the cheek, the young man turns to brutal sex with his former girlfriend who works at a sex-peep club. And he slowly comes to terms with his father, whom, it turns out, has hidden both cocaine and a pile of cash for his return from jail.

Television sets are on in various scenes and they all show news coverage of violent events; buildings are under renovation; the young man's mother has left his father; there is rough sex (no vital parts shown) but love only between the father and his cronies and between father and son that's crystallized on a fishing trip.

With help from a homosexual former jail mate, the young man gets revenge on the cops, murdering them in a sleazy hotel. Without missing a beat, Lauzon then turns full attention on the dying father, who just wants to go on a hunting trip with his son.

But the father is hospitalized with heart trouble and his days are numbered. So, the son sneaks a film projector to his bedside, shows him a film about moose and then whisks him to a zoo at night where there is no moose but an elephant whom the father thinks he has killed with a gun the son has bought him.

The pic ends with a slightly protracted soft focus recall of a fishing trip shot from a misty distance.

Son Gilles Maheu and father Roger Le Bel are outstanding and all other actors ably assist. Production values, notably sound, are tops.

Adil.

Tues., Nov. 4, 1986

Nobody's Fool

(Romantic comedy - Color)

An Island release of an Island production in association with Katz/Denny Prods. Produced by James C. Katz, Jon S. Denny. Executive producer, Cary Brokaw. Directed by Evelyn Purcell. Screenplay, Beth Henley. Stars Rosanna Arquette, Eric Roberts. Camera (CFI Color), Mikhail Suslov; editor, Dennis Virkler; music, James Newton Howard; production design, Jackson DeGovia; art direction, John R. Jensen; set decoration, Laurie Scott; costume design, Ellen Mirojnick; sound, James Tannenbaum; assistant director, Marty Ewing; second-unit camera, James Carter; casting, Sally Dennison, Julie Selzer. Reviewed at the Century Plaza L.A., Oct. 24, 1986. MPAA Rating: PG-13. Running time: 107 min.

turining time. Tor n	
Cassie	Rosanna Arquette
Riley	Eric Roberts
	Mare Winningham
Billy	Jim Youngs
Pearl	Louise Fletcher
Shirley	Gwen Welles
	Stephen Tobolowsky
Nick	Charlie Barnett
	J.J. Hardy
Mr. Fry	Lewis Arquette

More appealing in premise and promise than accomplished in execution, "Nobody's Fool" features kookiness without real comedy, romance without magic. First original screenplay by playwright Beth Henley and directorial debut of Evelyn Purcell veers dramatically between good and bad, with

modest pleasures barely holding their own against serious lapses in storytelling and tone. This is the first Island release to be going out in a relatively wide break, which might be a good thing since critical reaction may be less enthusiastic than with most of the distrib's carefully nurtured pictures.

Basic thrust of the story is engaging, with Rosanna Arquette gamely playing a smalltown Western girl whose life has come to a premature end before ever really beginning; working as a cocktail waitress in a saloon, she attends dutifully to her burned-out mother and bratty younger brother as she tries to forget the public shame and ridicule she endured when she impulsively stabbed her old beau in a restaurant.

Her boyfriend survived the incident, but their relationship and baby, whom she gave away, did not, and she is as insecure as can be when Eric Roberts, the lighting technician with a visiting theatrical troupe, begins quietly noticing her.

Too ashamed of her past to have any self-worth, Arquette keeps Roberts at bay but joins an acting workshop and continues playing footsie with her former lover, who is now married but not disinclined toward a little outside activity with his voluptuous ex.

Convincing Arquette that he's just as "bad" as she is, Roberts finally breaks the ice romantically, and his looming departure stands as a threshhold for her as to whether she will leave the past behind or remain burdened with it.

Familiarity and predictability of the plot's progress handicap matters considerably, particularly when Purcell attempts to milk "suspense" out of the question of Arquette's leaving or not.

Numerous scenes designed to emphasize the character's alternating indecisiveness and impetuousness are more exasperating than charmingly illuminating, and numerous effects undoubtedly don't come off as intended.

Nevertheless, certain sequences, notably a car ride in which the two leads first connect with one another, and a visit by Arquette to the depressing suburban home of a mentally sick friend, stand out for the precision of their writing and performance, and lead one to realize that the full potential of material has not been fulfilled.

Arquette's performance, like the film, features hits and misses, yet there is something frequently moving about the character's scattershot approach to emotional salvation that is highly unusual and memorable. Roberts, more subdued than usual, effectively registers the impulses of a young man who tries to subdue the rough edges of his personality and thinks he can save Arquette from her prospective dismal fate.

Well-chosen supporting players make sharp impressions with relatively brief opportunities, and the Prescott, Ariz., area has provided backdrops both beautiful and depressingly bland. Lensing is unaccountably on the plain side. Cart.

Mon., Dec. 15, 1986

No Mercy

(Action-drama — Color)

A Tri-Star Release of a Tri-Star-Delphi IV and V production. Produced by D. Constantine Conte. Directed by Richard Pearce. Written and coproduced by Jim Carabatsos. Executive producer, Michael Hausman. Camera (Metrocolor), Michel Brault; editors, Jerry Greenberg, Bill Yahraus; music, Alan Silvestri; art direction, Doug Kraner; sound, Lon E. Bender, Wylie Stateman; assistant

director, Ned Dowd; casting, Howard Feuer. Reviewed at the Lorimar Theater, Culver City, Dec. 9, 1986, MPAA Raing: R. Running time: 105 min.

Eddie Jillette	Hichard Gere
Michel Duval	Kim Basinger
Losado	Jeroen Krabbe
Captain Stemkowski.	. George Dzundza
Joe Collins	Gary Basaraba
Alian Deveneux	William Atherton
Paul Deveneux	Terry Kinney
Lt. Hall	Bruce McGill
Angles Ryan	Ray Sharkey
Alice Collins	Marita Geraghty
Cara	Aleta Mitchell

Despite some graphically brutal violence and a fair bit of "toocool" police jargon, "No Mercy" turns out to be a step above most other films of this blooming genre of lone-cop-turned-vigilante stories. Considering the big-name leads and stylish directing, film should see a good life in theaters.

Basically, pic starts out as a takeoff of "Beverly Hills Cop," this time displacing a tough Chicago cop, Eddie Jillette (Richard Gere) into the seamy world of New Orleans.

Jillette and his partner, Joe Collins (Gary Basaraba) get wind of a contract to kill a Louisiana crime overlord. They go undercover as the hit men, but find they are dealing with a much bigger, much deadlier fish as Collins is brutally murdered along with the man who had attempted to hire them, Paul Deveneux (Terry Kinney).

Jillette, who barely escapes, has only one lead in tracking his partner's murderer, a mysterious blonde (Kim Basinger) who had accompanied Deveneux. This lead takes Jillette down to New Orleans, where tough tactics and an uncanny ability to dodge bullets enable him to find the blonde, Michel Duval (Basinger).

He subsequently abducts her from beneath the nose of the evil kingpin, Losado (Jeroen Krabbe) and hauls her through the Louisiana swamplands, intent on taking her in for arrest. Of course, Losado is hot in pursuit.

Through two-thirds of the film, the story remains unpredictable and maintains a highly-charged atmost phere. Unfortunately, when Gere's character turns to finish off Losado the film quickly falls into predicta bility.

Director Richard Pearce ("Heart land," "Country") and cinematog rapher Michel Brault, who previously worked with Pearce on "Thresh old," get the credit for making "No Mercy" work. From the native, wild beauty of the Louisiana swamp lands to the steamy, colorful French quarter of New Orleans, the film is a tightly-woven piece, also thanks to editors Jerry Greenberg and Bil Yahraus, that is a delight to watch.

Credit also goes to Gere, now sporting a noticeably older, grayer look, who manages to bring tha maturity to his often typecast roles of the angry, young man. Some gray notwithstanding, he still is a sexy screen persona.

Basinger, too, has something about her that probably best could be described as a mysterious, enigmatic screen presence.

The bad guy, played by Krabbe might steal the acting honors in thi trio though, for he manages to bring depth to an otherwise one-dimen sional role. One of Holland's leading actors, Krabbe is a magnetileading-man-type who nonetheles does a good job playing second fiddle to Gere.

"No Mercy," while falling into much-worn genre, does turn out to have some surprises thanks to screen writer Jim Carabatsos, whos previous films include "Heroes" and the recently released "Heart

break Ridge."

Carabatsos shows a knack for going for the unobvious and building to exciting climaxes. He needs to leave behind a lot of the hip jargon though, especially by these cops, from whose mouths it comes off as stilted and silly.

Teen.

Wed., Aug. 12, 1987

North Shore (Surfploitation — Color)

A Universal Pictures release of a Randal Kleiser production in association with the Finnegan Pinchuk Company. Produced by William Finnegan. Executive producer, Randal Kleiser. Directed by William Phelps. Screenplay, Tim McCanlies, Phelps, from a story by Phelps, Kleiser. Camera (DuArt Color), Peter Smokler; editor, Robert Gordor, music, Richard Stone; production design, Mark Balet; set decorator, Wally White; sound (Dolby stereo), Tim Himes; costumes, Kathe James; assistant director, Bruce Shurley; associate producer, McCanlies, Gregory Hinton; casting, Lisa Clarkson. Reviewed at Universal Studios screening room, Universal City. Aug. 11, 1987. MPAA rating: PG. Running time: 96 min.

mickmait Adier
ChandlerGregory Harrison
KianiNia Peeples
TurtleJohn Philbin
VinceGerry Lopez
Lance Burkhart Laird Hamilton
Alex Rogers
Occy
Professor John Parragon

"North Shore" is an entertaining, light-hearted bit of hokum set amidst the surfing scene in Hawaii. It's a fantasy land of waves, videos and girls where hardly anyone over 20 soils the pristine beaches. Clearly geared for a young teen audience, pic is everything Summer escapism should be and could win some fans before the school bells sound.

Unlike many surfing pix, "North Shore" treats its subject seriously without playing for camp value. In fact, film attempts a kind of documentary rendering of the surfing life along Oahu's north shore. It's an adolescent's view of the world to be sure, but not without its charm.

Story is sort of a surfing variation on "The Karate Kid" in which an innocent from the mainland comes to the island to surf and is confronted with a strange culture. Script by Tim McCanlies and director William Phelps is pretty tame stuff, but its very simplicity backed by swell action footage make it unthreatening painless fun.

Young Rick Kane (Matt Adler) is the Candide in question who journeys to the north shore on his winnings from a surf tank competition in his native Arizona. But in Hawaii the waves are bigger and the people tougher than anything he has encountered before.

Rick learns the ways of this world from surfboard designer Chandler (Gregory Harrison) and comes to understand the value of native culture and even gets a local girlfriend (Nia Peeples) as his reward. The choices and conflict are obvious but not without some power.

not without some power.

What keeps the film from sinking are the lightweight and unassuming characters, particularly Adler's wide-eyed performance. As silly as the romance is, Adler and Peeples make an attractive couple and Harrison does a good job suggesting his affection for his young protege.

affection for his young protege.

And then there's the ever-present wall of water, impressively photographed from a variety of angles by Peter Smokler. Phelps gives the film a nice breezy tone and other tech credits, especially Tim Himes' sound mix, add to the realism of the milieu.

Soundtrack, pandering to the teen audience, features a collection of

nondescript rock tunes, seemingly all the same, that trivialize the action, a burden that the film can ill afford.

Jagr.

Tues., Aug. 11, 1987

No Way Out (Thriller — Color)

An Orion Pictures release of a Neufeld/Ziskin/Garland production. Executive producer, Mace Neufeld. Produced by Laura Ziskin, Robert Garland. Directed by Roger Donaldson. Stars Kevin Costner, Gene Hackman. Screenplay and screen story, Garland, based on Kenneth Fearing's novel "The Big Clock"; camera (Metrocolor, Deluxe prints), John Alcott; editor, Neil Travis; music, Maurice Jarre; sound (Dolby), Jack Solomon; production design, Dennis Washington; art direction, Anthony Brockiss; set design, Dick McKenzie, Henry Alberti, Gerald Sigmon; set decoration, Bruce Gibeson; assistant director, Herb Adelman, Tim Coddington (New Zealand); production manager, Mel Dollar, William Grieve (N.Z.); stunt coordinator, Richard Diamond Farnsworth, Peter Bell (N.Z.) postproduction supervisor, Tony Di Marco; camera (N.Z.), Alun Bollinger; associate producer, Glenn Neufeld; casting, Ilene Starger. Reviewed at Orion screening room, N.Y., July 15, 1987. MPAA rating; R. Running time: 116 min.

T F	Marria Ocean
Tom Farrell	Kevin Costner
David Brice	Gene Hackman
Susan Atwell	Sean Young
Scott Pritchard	Will Patton
Sen. Duvail	Howard Duff
Sam Hesselman	George Dzundza
Major Donovan	Jason Bernard
Nina Beka	Iman
Marshall Fred	Dalton Thompson
With: Leon Russom,	Dennis Burkley, Mar-
hall Bell, Chris D., Mid	chael Shillo, Nicholas
Vorth, Leo Geter, Mat	thew Barry.

Orion's "No Way Out" is an effective updating and revamping of the 1948 film noir classic "The Big Clock," also based on Kenneth Fearing's novel of that title. The surefire plot devices and twists still work well, though Robert Garland's adaptation introduces a surprise ending (presskit asks reviewers not to reveal the final twist) that departs radically from Fearing's concept and is hard to swallow. Boxoffice prospects loom as good, especially riding on the coattails of star Kevin Costner's much-publicized Eliot Ness role recently in the hit "The Untouchables."

Fearing's book, stylishly filmed for Paramount by John Farrow in 1948, revolved around a magazine empire (reputedly based on Henry Luce's Time Inc.) tyrannically run by Charles Laughton, the headquarters of which (including a symbolic clock tower) served as the setting for a climactic chase.

"No Way Out" is set primarily in the Pentagon, with heroic Costner cast as a Lt. Commander assigned to the Secretary of Defense (Gene Hackman), acting as liaison to the CIA under Hackman's right-hand man, Will Patton.

Costner has a torrid love affair with good-time girl Sean Young that's ended when she is murdered by her other lover, Hackman. Key plot gimmick unravels as follows: Young has Costner rush out of her apartment when she sees Hackman arriving outside: Costner recognizes his boss in the shadows, but Hackman sees only an unidentified figure leaving; after killing Young in a jealous rage, Hackman is convinced by Patton to cover up the scandalous event by launching a hurry-up investigation to find the unidentified man he saw leaving the apartment, thought to be the Soviet agent, Yuri, they're already searching for; Costner is put in charge of the top-security investigation to catch himself.

Film's pace and suspense pick up at this point, especially as an eyewitness who saw Costner and Young on a weekend outing spots Costner in the Pentagon, leading to the climax of the entire Pentagon thoroughly searched room by room to have two witnesses finger the spy and "killer" Yuri.

Costner races to escape detection while nominally in charge of the search, a perfect nailbiter. One excellent touch in this update has a computer simulation program, run by Costner's buddy, George Dzundza, displayed on tv terminals everywhere, gradually forming Costner's distinctive facial features as the search continues.

Main changes from the original "Big Clock" comes in streamlining: Costner has no wife in this version (no Maureen O'Sullivan role), he is not the crime-solving investigative whiz Ray Milland was, and colorful minor characters such as Elsa Lanchester are omitted.

With director Roger Donaldson tightening the screws, new version is far more explicit in sexual and violent matters, with Patton in George Macready's role verbally identified as homosexual in place of the ambiguity regarding such types in '40s thrillers. Final two twists are surprising but wildly implausible.

As in 'The Untouchables,' Costner is extremely low-key in his acting, even in the most pressure-packed scenes, thus conforming to the '40s heroes model (e.g., Robert Mitchum, Mark Stevens). Hackman glides through his role, avoiding the delightful but tipoff malignancy of Charles Laughton in the original, while Patton dominates his scenes, overplaying his villainous hand.

Young is extremely alluring, replete with nude scene, as the heroine, and former model Iman rebounds after her disastrous starring debut in Otto Preminger's "The Human Factor" to turn in a sympathetic performance as Young's roommate.

Technical credits are top-flight, with razor-sharp, fluid lensing by the late John Alcott in his final feature assignment. Two Paul Anka songs are satisfying in their own right, but are injected for romantic interludes that interrupt and unnecessarily distend the action.

Lor.

Fri., May 8, 1987

Number One With A Bullet (Police drama — Color)

A Cannon Films release of a Golan-Globus production of a Jack Smight film. Produced by Menahem Golan and Yoram Globus. Directed by Jack Smight. Screenplay, Gail Morgan Hickman, Andrew Kurtzman, Rob Riley, James Belushi, from a story by Hickman; camera (color), Alex Phillips; editor, Michael J. Duthie; music, Alf Clausen; production design, Norm Baron; production supervisor, Rony Yacov; casting, Robert MacDonald, Perry Bullington; stunt coordinator, Fred Lerner; aerial coordinator, James Gavin; assistant director, Gerald Walsh; associate producer, Hickman. Reviewed at Cine Harris Theater, N.Y., May 7, 1987. MPAA Rating: R. Running time: 101 min.

Berzak	Robert Carradine
Hazeltine	Billy Dee Williams
Teresa Berzak	Valerie Bertinelli
Capt. Ferris	Peter Graves
Mrs. Berzak	Doris Roberts
Malcolm	Bobby DiCicco
Lt. Kaminski	Ray Girardin
Dacosta	Barry Sattels
Casey	Mykel T. Williamson

New York — "Number One With A Bullet" is a character-heavy, but story-light film. Though the chemistry between the suave Billy Dee Williams and intense Robert Carradine, paired as L.A. detectives, is at times humorous, the hackneyed plot keeps the film from ever getting off the ground.

Carradine is Det. Berzak, nicknamed "Berserk" because of his unorthodox police tactics. He is obsessed with busting the Mr. Big of L.A. drug dealers, the problem being the bigtime dealer, Dacosta, is a wealthy, respectable pillar of the community.

Billy Dee Williams is the opposite of his partner — smooth, lucky with the ladies, expressive and a great musician on the side.

The relationship between the two and their personal lives are mapped out in great detail. Both Carradine and Williams notch fine performances in the roles, but they're not enough.

In place of original plot turns there are exotic locations for stylized action sequences. Occasional nice touches, such as Carradine using a kid to keep tabs on his ex-wife, are all but lost in the overwhelming predictability of the script.

The overall effect is a lack of tension, a malaise that increases as the film chugs to its tired conclusion. Director Jack Smight does his best with the weak material — keeping the deflated ball rolling with some nifty camera work and getting good performances from his two leads — but it too is not enough.

The act of slapping a snappy title on a dull piece of merchandise is symptomatic of this film's problems. Shame is that Carradine and Williams could have been a delight in well-tuned vehicle. Roy.

Tues., Nov. 25, 1986

The Nutcracker: The Motion Picture

(Ballet drama/fantasy — Color)

An Atlantic Releasing Corp. release of a Thomas Coleman and Michael Rosenblatt presentation of a Hyperion/Kushner-Locke production. Produced by Willard Carroll, Donald Kushner, Peter Locke, Thomas L. Wilhite. Executive producers, Coleman, Rosenblatt. Directed by Carroll Ballard. Conceived by Kent Stowell, Maurice Sendak from the story by E.T.A. Hoffman. Camera (MGM), Stephen M. Burum; production, costume design, Sendak; choreography, staging, Stowell; music, Peter Ilyich Tchaikovsky; editors, John Nutt, Michael Silvers; first assistant director, Eugene Mazzola; art director, Peter Horne; visual film adaptation, Henry Selick; models and miniatures, Rick Heinrichs; additional photography, Hiro Narita; sound, Ben Burtt. Reviewed at Laird Studios, Culver City, Calif., Nov. 21, 1986. MPAA Rating; G. Running time: 84 min.

Herr Drosselmeier ... Hugh Bigney
Young Clara ... Vanessa Sharp
Dream Clara ... Patricia Barker
Nutcracker ... Wade Walthall
With: Dancers from the Pacific Northwest
Ballet Company.

Despite some moments of disarray, "The Nutcracker: The Motion Picture" is a wonderfully expressive and fanciful film that surely will become a holiday classic for both children and adults.

This production of the timeless ballet is not only a beautiful version of the dance, but it also incorporates much of the dark-natured story of E.T.A. Hoffman's original fairytale, "The Nutcracker And The Mouse King" — that of a young girl on the threshhold of maturity who confronts many of her fears and hopes through a dream about a sinister controller of the universe, Pasha, and her nutcracker prince.

Whereas live performances have often underplayed the sensitive storyline in preference to the dance, the film intricately and subtly delves into the story. The whimsical tale then becomes an outpouring of the young girl's confusion and at the same time exuberance of what is yet to be.

The ballet was first created in Russia in 1890. It was performed by the Imperial Ballet to the newly written score by Tchaikovsky. Since that time, the work has become a holiday favorite with many ballet companies.

Bringing it to film obviously had some drawbacks, yet director Carroll Ballard ("The Black Stallion," "Never Cry Wolf") has adeptly incorporated special effects within the staged piece to bring about a finely-tuned creation. There are no heavy-handed film effects nor is there just a standard dance production.

This version of "The Nutcrack-

This version of "The Nutcracker" was first presented by the Pacific Northwest Ballet in 1983. The company's artistic director, Kent Stowell; his wife, Francia Russell, and Maurice Sendak decided to veer from the often-pat sugar plum ballets to a more darkly, intense version that was more true to the Hoffman fairytale.

This film version is also very much their creation, too, with Stowell as choreographer and Sendak credited with production and costume designs.

The filmmakers obviously were intent on bringing out the undertones of the story in this magical setting and they have accomplished it. The only time when this film begins to lose its adept handling of the dance is during the fight scene between the toy soldiers and the mice. In the erupting chaos, the beauty of the dance is lost in a blur of images.

Yet, without a doubt, the film is an enchanting adventure that will delight audiences for years to come.

Teen.

Mon., July 13, 1987

O.C. And Stiggs (Comedy — Color)

An MGM/UA release. Produced by Robert Altman, Peter Newman. Executive producer, Lewis Allen. Directed by Altman. Screenplay by Donald Cantrell, Ted Mann from a story by Tod Carroll, Mann, based on a story from National Lampoon Magazine. Camera (Metrocolor), Pierre Mignot; editor, Elizabeth Kling; special music, King Sunny Ade & His African Beats; production design, Scott Bushnell; art director, David Gropman; set decorator, John Hay: sound, John Pritchett; assistant director, Stephen P. Dunn, Paul Mazur; associate producer, Scott Bushnell. Reviewed at FilmLand screening room, Culver City, Calif., July 10, 1987. MPAA rating: R. Running time: 109

O.C	Daniel H. Jenkins
Stiggs	Neill Barry
Randall Schwab.	Paul Dooley
Elinore Schwab	Jane Curtin
Randall Schwab Jr	Jon Cryer
Gramps	Ray Walston
Garth Sloan	Louis Nye
Forence Beaugere	auxTina Louise
Pat Coletti	Martin Mull
Sponson	Dennis Hopper
Wino Bob	Melvin Van Peebles
Jack Stiggs	Donald May
Stella Stiggs	Carla Borelli
Michelle	Cynthia Nixon

After three years on the shelf, MGM has decided to clean house and give Robert Altman's "O.C. And Stiggs" a test run in several cities. While film is no worse than many of the mindless youth romps foisted on the public and offers a few vintage Altman touches, most of the director's techniques now seem halfhearted and dated. Audience should be limited to fans of the director and the unsuspecting.

Loosely based on a story in the National Lampoon, pic is an anarchistic jab at the insurance business and any other American institution that happens to be handy. In his best work, such as "Nashville" and "MASH," Altman was able to weave together an array of sights and sounds into a distinctive social commentary. In "O.C. And Stiggs," the structure comes apart and what's left is mostly random silliness.

Plot, such as it is, has something to do with O.C. (Daniel H. Jenkins)

and Stiggs' (Neill Barry) efforts to extract a pound of flesh from Arizona insurance magnate Randall Schwab (Paul Dooley) in revenge for cancelling the old-age insurance of O.C.'s grandfather (Ray Walston). But screenplay by Donald Cantrell and Ted Mann is mostly a scattershot attack on middle American hypocrisies and foibles.

Along for the ride through the desert heartland is Schwab's drunken wife (Jane Curtin), Stiggs' lecherous father (Donald May) and bird-brained mother (Carla Borelli), a shell-shocked Vietnam vet (Dennis Hopper) and a horny high-school nurse (Tina Louise), to name just a few.

Instead of creating a revealing portrait of American life through peripheral people, action is too broad to hit its mark and deteriorates into overblown set pieces and incoherent asides, including a visit from Sonny Ade & His African Beats.

In spite of the shortcomings and tedium of the production, there are moments when it is evident that there is a vision and talent behind all the nonsense. Performances are uniformly good, with Dennis Hopper once again excelling as a madman. Production design by Scott Bushnell is rich, creating a sort of suburban Disneyland for the Schwab house. Tech credits, too, are better than average.

Unlike most contemporary comedies, "O.C. And Stiggs" fails not from too little ambition, but too much.

Jagr.

Fri., July 10, 1987

Omega Syndrome (Action — Color)

Jack Corbett Ken Wahl
Phil George DiCenzo
Jessie Nicole Eggert
Det. Milnor Dough McClure
With: Xander Berkeley, Ron Kuhlman, Bill
Morey, Robert Gray, Colm Meaney, Bob
Tzudiker, Al White, Patti Tippo, Robert Kim,
George Fisher, Christopher Doyle.

New York — "Omega Syndrom" is a low-effort example of an action film backed by European producers to be sold on the world market as an American product. Pic is U.S.-made but lacks the energy and diverting elements to be a credible theatrical release. New World has had several bookings this year but has rushed it out on its video label soon after

soon after.

Ken Wahl plays a journalist who's down on his luck, hitting the booze. He whips into action when his 13-year-old daughter (cute Nicole Eggert) is kidnapped during a liquor store robbery.

The L.A. police, led by Doug McClure, are portrayed as particularly lame here, so Wahl teams up with his ex-Vietnam buddy George DiCenzo to find the kidnappers and rescue Eggert. It turns out that she's in the hands of a group of neo-Nazi terrorists, identifiable by their omega symbol wrist tattoos.

Boring film consists mainly of Wahl and DiCenzo interviewing

people for clues, punctuated by perfunctory action scenes and explosions. In very cornball fashion, a one-night stand with Patti Tippo is written in for Wahl — that went out with Screenwriting 101.

Elsewhere, John Sharkey's clutzy dialog is ridiculous, right down to the imitation James Bond/Schwarzenegger throwaway quip, as Di-Cenzo exclaims: "Say goodnight, Gracie" before wasting a heavy.

Tues., June 2, 1987

Opposing Force (Action drama — Color)

An Orion Pictures release of a Glaser & Berk production, in association with Eros International Film Prods., Jeff Wald & Associates. Produced by Daniel Jay Berk, Tamar E. Glaser. Executive producers, Jeff Wald, Peter Nevile. Directed by Eric Karson. Screenplay, Gil Cowan; camera (DeLuxe Color), Michael A. Jones; editor, Mark Cone; music, Marc Donohue; sound, Carey Lindley (Philippines), Barry Thomas (Miami); production design, Art Dicdao; art direction, Janice Flating, production manager. Ted Adams Swanson; Jean Higgins (L.A.); assistant director, Jerry D'Hara (Philippines), Jerry Grandy (Miami); stunt coodinator. Ray Lykins (Philippines), Ricou Browning (Miami); associate producers, Hugh Corcoran, Brad Smart; casting, Al Onorato, Jerold Franks; Maria Metcalfe (Philippines). Reviewed on HBO/Cannon Video vidcassette, N.Y., May 25, 1987. MPAA rating: R. Running time: 97 min.

Major Logan Tom Skerritt
Lt. Casey Lisa Eichhorn
Becker Anthony Zerbe
Sgt. Stafford Richard Roundtree
Betts Robert Wightman
Gen. McGowan John Considine
Tuan George Kee Cheung
Also with: Dan Hamilton, Paul Joynt,
Jay Lauden, Ken Wright, Michael
James, Warren MacLean, John Melch-

er, Scott Sanders, Jerald Williams,

New York — "Opposing Force" is a strong, fascinating film about over-zealous military training techniques that unfortunately lacks a third act, concluding most unsatisfactorily. As a result, pic, previously titled "Clay Pigeons" and "Hell Camp," received only a test booking by Orion last August in San Antonio, ahead of its current homevideo availability.

Tom Skerritt toplines as a major who enrolls in a special escape and evasion training program in order to prepare for a return to active duty as a pilot after years on a desk job. The training is run by Anthony Zerbe, who has become sadistic in his post, meting out both physical and psychological torture to the mainly young soldiers, as administered by his basically goodguy aide Richard Roundtree.

The catalyst to a showdown is the presence of Lisa Eichhorn as a femme lieutenant, the first of her sex to be accepted into the program, even though women have yet to be authorized for combat.

When she arrives, Zerbe goes off the deep end and, in addition to the usual physical abuse (which the soldiers accept begrudgingly as part of their expected rigorous training), he rapes her, in order to "prepare her for what the enemy would do." Finding out that Eichhorn has been raped by the commandant, Skerritt drops his cool demeanor and goes on the warpath, organizing an escape and setting up a violent showdown with the authorities.

For most of its length, picture doesn't pull any punches, depicting a gruelling, war games-style environment to test and weed out the soldiers. Gil Cowan's script, forcefully directed by Eric Karson, raises many serious issues, including the limits to which training can or should simulate actual combat, the danger of adopting the enemy's

inhuman tactics in order to compete and the difficulties in attempting to treat women as equals in a military situation. Final reel, however, degenerates into melodramatics and shootouts, with a terrible, abrupt freeze frame/voiceover ending that unsuccessfully shifts from an objective presentation to the Eichhorn character's subjective, wishywashy point-of-view.

Cast cannot be faulted, punching home the drama forcefully. Zerbe offers a finely shaded performance to what might have been a monster role, even delivering somewhat convincing arguments to justify his brutal behavior. Skerritt is solid as the hero forced to take action, while Roundtree brings out the duality of his pivotal role, the enforcer who nevertheless has a moral code. Eichhorn is outstanding in handling an unglamorized, both physically and emotionally demanding assignment.

Tech credits, including atmospheric lensing on Filipino and Miami locations, are top-notch. Too bad an organic ending synthesizing the material did not round off this sleeper.

Lor.

Fri., July 17, 1987

The Oracle (Horror — Color)

A Reeltime Distributing release of a Laurel Films production. (Sales, JER Pictures.) Produced by Walter E. Sear. Directed by Roberta Findlay. Screenplay, R. Allen Leider. Camera (Cineffects Color), Findlay; editor, Findlay; music, Sear, Michael Litovsky; sound, Steven Rogers; assitant director, Rafael Guadalupe; production manager. Sear; special effects, Horrorefx; makeup, Jean Carballo; set decoration, Cecilla Holzman; stunt coordinator, Webster Whinery; second-unit camera, Steve Kaman. Reviewed on U.S.A. Home Video vidcassette, N.Y., July 11, 1987. MPAA Rating: R. Runing time: 94 min.

Jennifer...... Caroline Capers Powers

Jennifer Caroline Capers Powers
Ray Roger Neil
Farkas Pam LaTesta
Dorothy Graham Victoria Dryden
Pappas Chris Maria DeKoron
Tom Varney Dan Lutzky
Cindy Stacey Graves
Ben G. Gordon Cronce

New York — "The Oracle" covers familiar horror ground with a supernatural tale of a dead spirit contacting the living to enact posthumous revenge. Pic was made in New York in 1984, released regionally last year and is now in video stores.

Plotline is similar to the subsequent hit "Witchboard": heroine Jennifer (Caroline Capers Powers) finds an old crate containing a planchette (generic form of an Ouija board, made of a sculpted hand and quill pen). At a Christmas dinner party, she and husband Ray (Roger Neil) plus another couple try out the instruments, but no one except Jennifer believes the resulting spirit messages it traces.

Ghost is businessman William Graham, murdered but covered up by his wife Dorothy (Victoria Dryden) as a suicide. Jennifer starts "seeing" the actual murder, and when she contacts Dorothy, she is targeted as the next hushup victim.

Though the monster and gore effects are unsatisfactory in this low-budgeter, it sports one neat twist: Dorothy's chief henchman turns out to be a large, chubby woman.

As portrayed by Pam LaTesta, this thug is filmmaker Roberta Findlay's main point of interest, styled mannishly (an updated version of the late Madame Spivy), she is androgynous for the first few reels, picking up a prostitute whom she bloodily slashes when mocked

for being unable (natch) to "perform."

It turns out to be a fresh approach both to the slasher cliche and the horror genre's fondness for transvestite villains. Rest of the cast is unimpressive.

Lor.

Tues., Jan. 20, 1987

Outrageous Fortune (Comedy — Color)

A Buena Vista release of a Touchstone Pictures presentation of an Interscope production. Produced by Ted Field, Robert Cort. Coproduced by Peter V. Herald, Scott Kroopf, Martin Mickelson. Directed by Arthur Hiller. Screenplay by Leslie Dixon. Camera (DeLuxe Color), David M. Walsh; editor, Tom Rolf; music, Alan Silvestri; production design, James D. Vance; set decorator, Rick T. Gentz; art director, Sandy Veneziano; set designer, Danile Maltese; sound (Dolby stereo), Gerald Jost; costumes, Gloria Greshar, assistant director, Jim Van Wyck; casting, Lynn Stalmaster, Mally Finn. Reviewed at General Cinema, Sherman Oaks, Calif. Jan. 16, 1987. MPAA rating: R. Running time: 100 min.

Lauren	Shelley Long
Sandy	Bette Midler
Michael	Peter Coyote
Stanislov Korenowski	Robert Prosky
Atkins	John Schuck
Frank	.George Carlin
Weldon	.Anthony Heald
Cab Driver	Ji-Tu Cumbuka

"Outrageous Fortune" is the third comedy to bear the stamp of the new Disney production team and, like the others, it's a well-crafted, old-fashioned entertainment that takes some conventional elements, shines them up and repackages them as something new and contemporary. For the most part, it's a formula that works with a few curve balls from Leslie Dixon's clever script and winning performances from Bette Midler and Shelley Long, "Outrageous Fortune" should be another hit for the studio.

Although it has somehow picked up an R rating, "Outrageous Fortune" is really a risque film for a conservative audience. It's a traditional male buddy film but the twist here is that it has substituted women and the main plot device is that the two heroes are sleeping with the same man.

Dixon's script plays off the triedand-true formula of two disparate personalities thrown together under adverse conditions who must learn to cooperate and wind up liking each other. From the start Midler and Long are like the North and South poles, so different are they in style, background, goals and attitude. But sure enough they learn that they share more than they think.

For starters they share the same lover. Michael (Peter Coyote) is the find of the century, a nice eligible elementry school teacher with a heart of gold, or is he?

Midler and Long collide even before their affections do in an acting class given by the eminent Russian director Stanislov Korenowski (Robert Prosky). Long is a wealthy, spoiled dilettante while Midler last starred in "Ninja Vixens."

Director Arthur Hill makes the most of the conflicting styles of the two women. Long is sleek in silk and speaks in an upper Eastside purr while Midler wears an electric blue vinyl raincoat and talks like a truck driver.

There's no way these two are going to get along and when the audience learns that they're sharing the same man before they do it's a delicious moment complete with one image-shattering sight gag.

Now that Dixon has them in the same bed she turns up the heat and the film takes off as a chase picture with the girls following Coyote to New Mexico to demand a decision.

But they're not the only ones looking for him and it seems the CIA, as well as the KGB, are hot on his trail. And to top things off, it turns out Korenowski is a Russian agent first and a director second.

Along the way the students get to practice their acting and in one marvelous role reversal, Long, playing a cop, barks at some heavies to move against the wall or she'll blow 'em away.

It may be a bit disillusioning to learn that Coyote is really an immoral swine, but not improbable since the actor carries a dark side almost like a five o'clock shadow. But it's really the Midler and Long show and even when Dixon's script sags and becomes a bit repetitious in the long New Mexico chase section, they are never less than fun to watch.

Midler is an accomplished comedienne who has successfully blended elements of Mae West and Marilyn Monroe into an audacious style all her own. As for Long, her character is not unlike Diane on "Cheers," but she carries off some rough-house action with aplomb and remains charming even when her character is a pain. Together, they make an inspired pair.

Supporting cast, unfortunately, has a few rough spots. Prosky never seems to click as the agent/actor and George Carlin, as a spaced out hippie leftover in the New Mexico desert, is a little to bizarre to get a handle on. John Schuck is amusing as the bumbling CIA functionary. Tech credits are first-rate throughout.

Still, there is something a bit disturbing in a film where the good guys are the government agents, the Russians are pattently evil and the Coyote's flamboyant individualism is discredited. It is no wonder Carlin can't seem to find his way around.

Jag

Thurs., Feb. 12, 1987

Over The Top (Melodrama — Color)

A Warner Bros. release of a Cannon Group/Golan-Globus production. Produced by Menahem Golan, Yoram Globus. Executive producer, James D. Brubaker. Directed by Golan. Stars Sylvester Stallone. Screenplay, Stirling Silliphant, Stallone, story by Gary Conway, David C. Engelbach. Camera (Metrocolor, Panavision), David Gurfinkel; editors, Don Zimmerman, James Symons; music, Giorgio Moroder; production design, James Schoppe; art direction, William Skinner; set design, Roland E. Hill Jr., Ross Gallichotte; set decoration, Cloudia; costume design, Tom Bronson; sound (Dolby). Charles M. Wilborn; associate producer, Tony Munafo; assistant director, Tom Davies; casting, Ron Surma. Reviewed at the Warner Hollywood Studios, L.A., Feb. 6, 1987. MPAA Rating: PG. Running time: 93 min. Lincoln Hawk. Sylvester Stallone

Lincoln Hawk Sylvester Stallone
Jason Cutler Robert Loggia
Christina Hawk Susan Blakely
Bob (Bull) Hurley Rick Zumwalt
Michael Cutler David Mendenhall
Tim Salanger Chris McCarty
Ruker Terry Funk

Having bested all challengers in the ring and Southeast Asia, among other arenas, Sylvester Stallone muscles his way to the top of the heap in the beefy world of armwrestling in "Over The Top." Routinely made in every respect, melodrama concerns itself as much with a man's effort to win the love of his son as it does with macho athletics, and will probably fall in the middle range of Stallone grossers.

Star and cowriter's plotline is as simple and straightforward as always and, almost as if in counterbalance to the roughness of "Rambo" and

"Cobra," seems conspicuously designed to emphasize the lovable, big puppydog side of the actor that came out in "Rocky."

At the outset, Stallone, as a downon-his-luck trucker named Lincoln Hawk, appears out of the blue to fetch his son when the latter graduates from a military academy. Absent from both the kid's and mama Susan Blakely's lives for years, for reasons he repeatedly refers to but never explains (a longer-than-usual stint in 'Nam remains a possibility), Stallone proposes a get-to-knowyou truck ride back home to Los Angeles, much to the annoyance of Blakely's possessive, filthy rich father, Robert Loggia.

Little Michael, played by David Mendenhall, doesn't make things especially easy for his papa, his military rigidity and formality, along with his understandable resentment, providing a formidable barrier. But at truckstops along the way, Stallone introduces his son to the thrills of armwrestling, and, after taking a spin behind the wheel of a heavy diesel, Michael's transformation from spoiled intellectual snot to future regular guy is well underway.

Loggia grabs the kid back when Blakely suddenly dies in surgery and, after a term in the slammer for ramming his semi through the front door of Loggia's mansion (recognizable as the one from "The Beverly Hillbillies"), Stallone heads for Las Vegas and the world armwrestling championships.

Just as he has always seemed a bit overmatched physically in his "Rocky" bouts, so does Stallone stack up as a decided underdog here. for his competitors are some of the meanest, ugliest, nastiest Neanderthals assembled since the cast party for "Night Of The Living Dead." Such is the suspense over whether or not Sly will beat his beastly opponent, the 6'5", 360-pound Rick Zumwalt, that it would be unthinkable to give it away, but little Michael proves resourceful enough to slip out of grandpa's clutches and make his way to Vegas for the main

Menahem ("Where Does He Find The Time?") Golan pushes all the buttons for both sentiment and action payoff, and it is possible that audiences will go for this hokum despite its utter predictability.

Stallone is sincere and soulful as a "father who messed up pretty bad" and just wants his kid back, David Mendenhall is a likeable tyke, and justice is served in the end. There have been a lot worse films in the last year or two.

Giorgio Moroder's score is subdued by his standards but, just the same, makes sure the film doesn't sag for a moment. Cart.

Thurs., July 23, 1987

El Dueno Del Sol

THE OWNER OF THE SUN (Argentine — Color)

A Luz Comunicaciones production. Written and directed by Rodolfo Mortola. Camera (color) and art direction, Anibal Di Salvo; editor, Jorge Pappalardo; music, Mario Ferre; sets, Miguel Angel Lumaldo, Enrique Bordolin. Reviewed at the Vigo screening room, Buenos Aires, April 21, 1987. Rating in Argentina: forbidden for under 18s. Running time: 101 mins.

Father									. Alfredo Alcon
Juan .									Luis Luque
Ana									Noemi Frenkel
Maria.							,		.Emilia Mazer
Martin								G	ustavo Belatti

Buenos Aires — This is as serious and well-crafted but overloaded allegory by first-time director Rodolfo Mortola.

Plot is a hothouse overgrowth of theatrical tragedy themes. Two sons and two daughters compete for the favor of a dying landowner who gets his kicks by playing each against the others, drawing forth an overextended catalog of lusts and cupidities.

The title refers to a type of bogeyman found in regional folklore. The father figure acts as such, but one of the characters wisely warns that overthrowing one bogeyman only risks replacing him with another, because there is one lurking inside each person — a statement with obvious political implications in dictator-prone lands.

The father may represent Argentina, and his children — dreamers, graspers, overly stubborn workhorses, agitators, victims — may stand for the inhabitants of a country which toys with them and repays their efforts (some sincere, some not) with cruel hoaxes, empty words, real promises, fake promises, repression, liberation.

It is a well-intentioned film, and Mortola, who has worked in the Argentine cinema since 1969 for top helmsmen like Leopoldo Torre Nilsson and Leonardo Favio, clearly knows his way around a set. But on this occasion, he has turned that set into too much of a pressure cooker. Whirling around in the overheated atmosphere are conscious or unconscious echoes of Greek and Freudian themes, such as the father-son rivalry over the use of farmland found in "Hud," or the currying of favor with a dying man found in the play 'Volpone.

Still, there is undeniable, though morbid, fascination in the spectacle of this power play — and of a generation destroying itself by fire.

By the time of release, the "El Dueno Del Sol" theme was able to announce the film had been selected for screening by the British Film Institute and at the Figueira Da Foz festival in Portugal. Olas.

Tues., June 9, 1987

The Perfect Match (Romantic comedy — Color)

An Airtight production. Produced and directed by Mark Deimel. Coproducer, Bob Torrance. Screenplay, Nick Duretta, David Burr, Deimel; camera (color), Torrance; editor, Craig Colton; music, Tim Torrance; production design, Maxine Shepard; sound, Rob Janiger; associate producers, Daniel Carlson, George Vaughan. Reviewed at Seattle International Film Festival, Egyptian Theater, June 1, 1987. No MPAA Rating. Running time: 92 min.

Tim Wainwright. Marc McClure
Nancy Bryant Jennifer Edwards
Vicki Diane Stilwell
John Wainwright Rob Paulsen

Seattle — "The Perfect Match" is the first film from Airtight Prods. and also marks the theatrical feature debut of producer-director Mark Deimel. Despite its highly predictable outcome, romantic comedy has genuinely funny material and two lead characters who often take the opportunity to go beyond formula to deliver solid performances.

Love story revolves around two insecure 29-year-olds who lack the necessary skills to be single in the city and are searching for the perfect companion in order to avoid a lifetime alone.

They meet through a newspaper ad placed by Tim, a classic nerd who drinks Coke, watches basketball and who lies in the ad about his various athletic and cultural interests. He meets Nancy Bryant, a career student, vegetarian and classic wallflower — his exact opposite in personal interests. She, however, also lies about herself. She says she'a college professor with natural

athletic abilities.

Like many independent productions, this is a low-budget affair. However, strong performances by Marc McClure (best known for his recurring role as Jimmy Olsen in the "Superman" films) and Jennifer Edwards (daughter of Blake Edwards who has appeared in several of her dad's pictures), coupled with Deimel's apparent talent as a director overcome any inadequacies in production.

Magg.

Thurs., April 2, 1987

Personal Services (British — Color)

A UIP release (Vestron in U.S.) of a Zenith production. Produced by Tim Bevan. Directed by Terry Jones. Screenplay, David Leland; camera (Eastmancolor), Roger Deakins; editor, George Akers; production design, Hugo Luczyc-Wyhowski; art director, Jane Coleman; sound, Garth Marshall; costumes, Shuna Harwood; casting, Debbie McWilliams. Reviewed at Curzon Shaftesbury Avenue, London, March 8, 1987. Running time: 105 min.

Christine Painter.....Julie Walters

Wing Commander
Morton Alec McCowen
Shirley Shirley Stelfox
Dolly Danny Schiller
Rose Victoria Hardcastle
Timms Tim Woodward
Sydney Dave Atkins
Mr. Popozogolou Leon Lissek

London — For a pic about sex, "Personal Services" is remarkably unerotic. It deals with society's two-faced attitude toward sex-for-sale in a humorous but essentially sad way, and is excellently acted and directed. Offshore prospects could prove sharp.

Pic received substantial U.K. publicity thanks to a recent court case involving a madam on whose activities the film is based and who became a household name as a result of the trial. Pic is also very much about English sexual hangups, though most characters come across as affectionate and genial types, albeit kinky as well.

Film's director, Terry Jones, made his name as part of the Monty Python comedy team, and went on to direct "Monty Python & The Holy Grail," "The Life Of Brian," and "The Meaning Of Life."

In this, his first non-Python pic, he keeps the plot bubbling along with a fine eye for detail and sense of irony

Pic tells the story of the transition of Christine Painter (a dominating performance by Julie Walters) from waitress to madam of Britain's most pleasant brothel, where the perversions are served up with a cooked breakfast and a cup of tea to follow.

She looks after the aged and infirm along with eminent clients, none of whom have a yen her girls can't cater to.

Julie Walters plays Christine as a charmingly vulgar yet benign madam, whose brothel-keeping career seemingly comes to an end when the police raid her London house during a Christmas party. But at her trial she recognizes the judge as one of her regular clients.

Writer David Leland (who cowrote "Mona Lisa") has crafted a script that pokes fun at sexual manners, but also cleverly examines British attitudes while instilling the whole affair with deep-rooted romanticism. Jones directs adroitly, never letting the pic become vulgar.

Technical credits are strong, with production design by Hugo Luczyc-Wyhowski especially good. Cast is fine, with Julie Walters in fine "Educating Rita" form after two so-so films.

Alec McCowen is excellent as her friend and business partner, a former pilot who proudly boasts of a World War II record of 207 missions over enemy territory in "bra and panties."

Adam.

Thurs., Feb. 19, 1987

Peter Von Scholten

(Danish — Drama — Color)

A Metronome release of Metronome Film (Bent Fabricius-Bjerre) and Crone Film production with the Danish Film Institute (consulting producer, Claes Kastholm Hansen). Produced by Nina Crone. Associate producer (Virgin Islands locations), Jorgen Hinsch, Coproducer (for Metronome), Tivi Magnusson. Directed by Palle Kjarulff-Schmidt. Screenplay, Sven Holm; camera, (Eastmancolor), Mikael Salomon; editor, Kasper Schyberg; music, Bent Fabricius-Bjerre; production design, Soren Krag Sorensen; sound, Stig Sparre-Ulrich; costumes, Lotte Dandanell, assistant director, Ake Sandgren. Reviewed at the Dagmar Bio-1, Copenhagen, Feb. 1, 1987. Running time: 112 min.

Peter von Scholten Ole Ernst Anna Heegaard Etta Cameron Frederik

von Scholten... Jesper Langberg Edvard Heilbuth . . . Preben Kristensen Organist Pram. Olaf Ussing Mrs. Holten Bodil Udsen Torben Jensen Kunzen Buddhoe . Dale Smith Soren Pilmark Lt. Irminger Frederik Oxholm Preben Neergaard Katka. Leonard Malone King Frederik VI. Henning Moritzen Mrs. Peter von

Scholten......Karen-Lise Mynster With: Arne Hansen, Lars Lunoe, Raymond Adjavon, Bodil Lassen, Guido Paevatalu, Dick Kaysoe, Torben Jetsmark, Anna Adair, Hans Henrik Krause, Edwin Donoghue, Birgit Conradi, Hans Chr. Agidius, Fritze Hedemann, John Larsen, Henning Jensen, others.

Copenhagen — "Peter Von Scholten" is the story of one white man's fight for black emancipation in the 19th century Virgin Islands, despite his faraway government's commercial maneuverings and lack of local insight. Pic should easily gain access to specialized situations worldwide.

Peter von Scholten (played with Brando-like strength and originality, but without the Method excess, by Ole Ernst) was the real-life governor of the formerly Danish (now U.S.) Virgin Islands. He set up regular schools for his "children," the slaves' offspring, to prepare them to handle eventual emancipation, hoping to forestall such bloodshed as occurred in the surrounding British and French colonies when freedom was precipitately sprung on totally illiterate blacks.

Von Scholten actually declared emancipation as law in defiance of his King and a government that was ready to grant their black subjects freedom only 12 years hence, and even then only to the newborn and not their parents — because cheap labor was required to keep the sugar plantations profitable.

Hewing close to historical and biographical facts, film sees von Scholten as a complex man, larger than life among petty political dwarfs, but also as a voluptuary who likes the rich life and is not above taking his cuts out of local trade and customs duties.

He also has a loving wife at home in Denmark and a loving black live-in mistress in the Islands. Neither of the women seems to mind for that matter, since the man's charm is considerable.

Increased scheming among local government officials plus the stance of back-home government force von Scholten to shout his emancipation declaration to a crowd of finally belligerent blacks.

All this is the stuff of the largescale epic plus intimate portraiture. Shot on actual historical locations, film is rich in close-ups of men and women engaged in high-minded political infighting and in the weighing of one set of morals against another, and, in this "The Mission" is often called to mind.

Director Palle Kjarulff-Schmidt, an expert in polishing the dramatic nuance of plot and dialog, works here with a wondrous cast of actors, with glowing vignette portraits of colonial whites supplied by Jesper Langberg, Torben Jensen and Bodil Udsen, and of stay-at-home Danes by Karen-Lise Mynster (as Mrs. von Scholten) and Henning Moritzen (as Denmark's last absolute monarch).

Film also has rich cinematography by Mikael Salomon, who has simultaneously lit all interiors (done in Denmark) in beautiful harmony with tropical exteriors.

Sven Holm's screenplay might have displayed greater punch and immediacy; too often it leaves episodes dangling. For want of the truly big-budget money, both director and cinematographer have been forced to forego sweeping camera shots that would have clarified some of the exterior action toward which all the inner tensions have been built.

Even with such shortcomings, Kjarulff-Schmidt has worked chamber dramatics effectively into his historical meller fabric. He has also avoided drowning out his story's essential psychological finesse in genre thunder.

Mon., Dec. 15, 1986

The Pink Chiquitas (Canadian — Color)

A Shapiro Entertainment release of a Mt. Pleasant production. Executive producer, Syd Cappe. Produced by Nicholas Stiliadis. Written and directed by Anthony Currie. Camera (color), Stiliadis; editor, Stephen F. Withrow; music, Paul J. Zaza; art director, Danny Addario; visual effects, Films Effects/David Stipes Prods.; associate producers, George Flak, Carl Zittrer. Reviewed at Mt. Pleasant Theater, Toronto, Dec. 2, 1986. MPAA Rating: PG-13. Running time: 86 min.

Tony Mareda Jr. Frank Stallone Mayon Ernie John Hemphill Barney Don Lake Clip Bacardi Bruce Pirrie Marianne. Elizabeth Edwards Claudia Udy Nurse Trudy Jones. McKinley Robinson Cindy Valentine Dwight Wright... Voice of meteorite Gerald Isaac Ertha Kitt

Toronto — Frank Stallone bows in his first feature role as slick-suited Tony Mareda Jr., America's toughest private eye, in "The Pink Chiquitas," a Canadian-made 1950s sci-fi spoof. While there's titillation value and some goofy situations, the giggles are too sporadic for a full 1-2 punch at the b.o. Big brother Sly doesn't have to sweat out the cinematic rivalry here, as pic would fit in much more comfortably as drivein fare or a homevid offering.

After Mareda attends the funeral service of his famous detective dad, he hops into his flashy white convertible, complete with giant tusk on the hood, and picks up a nubile hitchhiker in a tight yellow tube top on a bleak midwestern highway. She's going to Beansville, U.S.A., and off they drive to a Peter Gunn soundtrack, all the while being attacked by a Mafia-type gang who keep shooting at Mareda.

The arrive at a drive-in, where "Zombie Beach Party III" is playing, and the pursuit is still on. Stallone, still impeccable in his white suit, kills his two adversaries.

Meanwhile, at the drive-in, local tv meteorologist Clip (Second City's Bruce Pirrie) is on a date with his librarian g.f. Marianne (Liz Edwards), who had decided to run for mayor of the town. As soon as she asks him if he believes there's life in outer space, a flaming pink meteor falls to earth.

The town abandons the film to hunt for the meteor. The girls run to the site and mysteriously start disrobing and rubbing their bodies, oohing and aahing about the need to be satisfied. The pink meteorite transforms the women into sexual nymphs, the pink chiquitas.

Rest of plot revolves around the chiquitas capturing Mareda in an all-out effort to entrap and enslave the men of the world through their new erotic powers.

The girls walk around like zombies from "Night Of The Living Dead" until they become the militant gun-toting Amazonian sex masters.

Ernie, the current mayor of Beansville, played with wild abandon by John Hemphill, is trying to keep a lid on this disaster until after the election. Mareda is on the case, and often recalls the words of his famous dad in gauzy "Godfather" flashbacks. He's given a number of daredevil tricks to display his inherited gumshoe talents, notably firing a gun while water-skiing.

There are some classic dialog sendups that do work, but many of the other supposedly ridiculous setups are just that. On the plus side, writer-director Anthony Currie has fun with a lot of the plot elements and allows the cast to exploit the cardboard parameters of their absurd characters.

But too much is watered down. The special effects are so-so, and even the molten lava love meteorite Betty (voice of Eartha Kitt) is silly. Of course, the ending finds Stallone saving the day by pushing the meteor into water, causing the girls to lose their powers.

But the pink chiquitas in the underground cave gyrating in bras and panties in front of the pink mamma meteorite, the running gag of a transvestite chiquita, and a host of other science-fiction jokes might be campy enough to make this a cult feature pic.

Devo.

Tues., Dec. 2, 1986

Platoon

(Vietnam War drama - Color)

An Orion release of a Hemdale Film Corp. presentation of an Arnold Kopelson produc tion. Produced by Kopelson. Coproducer, A. Kitman Ho. Executive producers, John Daly, Derek Gibson. Production executive, Pierre David. Directed, written by Oliver Stone. Stars Tom Berenger, Willem Dafoe, Charlie Sheen. Camera (CFI Color), Robert Richardson; editor, Claire Simpson; music, Georges Delerue; production design, Bruno Rubeo; art direction, Rodel Cruz, Doris Sherman Williams; special effects supervisor, Yves de Bono; special makeup effects, visual continuity, Gordon J. Smith; sound (Dolby), Simon Kaye; assistant director, H. Gordon Boos; second unit camera, Tom Sigel; casting, Pat Golden, Bob Morones, Warren McLean. Reviewed at the Samuel Goldwyn Theater, Beverly Hills, Nov. 18, 1986. MPAA Rating: R. Running time: 120 min.

Sergeant Barnes	Tom Berenger
Sergeant Elias	Willem Dafoe
Chris	Charlie Sheen
Big Harold	Forest Whitaker
Rhah	Francesco Quinn
Sergeant O'Neill	John C. McGinley
Sal	Richard Edson
Bunny	Kevin Dillon
Junior	
King	Keith David
Lerner	
Tex	David Neidorf

"Platoon" is an intense but artistically distanced study of infantry life during the Vietnam War. Writer-director Oliver Stone seeks to totally immerse the audience in the nightmare of the United States' misguided adven-

ture, and manages to do so in a number of very effective scenes. But his set of dual impulses — to stun the viewer with a brutal immediacy on the one hand, and to assert a reflective sense of artistic hindsight on the other — dilutes whatever the film was meant to say, and takes the edge off its power. Commercial prospects look okay, better than that if it reaps some strong critical notices.

A Vietnam vet himself, Stone obviously had urgent personal reasons for making this picture, a fact that emerges instantly as green volunteer Charlie Sheen is plunged into the thick of action along the Cambodian border in late 1967.

Unit with which he's placed is broken down into three rough categories of men: the macho, might-isright tough guys, led by heavily scarred Sergeant Tom Berenger; the marginally more intelligent potheads whose ostensible figurehead is doubting war veteran Willem Dafoe, and assorted loners who just hope to get by watching out for their own skins.

Sheen is soon adopted by the dopers, and the long periods of waiting for action are fraught with dissension among the groups, a conflict epitomized by the rivalry between Berenger, the unreflective man of action, and Dafoe, a man of conscience who learns from experience.

Most traumatic sequence, which will shock many viewers through its depiction of shameful and unprovoked American brutality, has the unit taking a tiny village where local farmers are suspected of hiding and aiding the Vietcong.

The G.I.'s mercilessly kill a young man, terrorize the entire populace, and gang rape a young girl—treatment that provokes a complete split between the group's two main factions and paves the way for further senselessness and tragedy.

Also striking is a long scene of the men at play, drinking, getting high and dancing, that nicely points up the unnatural aspects of this enforced all-male society, as well as the climatic, nocturnal battle which becomes a hideous slaughter.

However, where Stone's previous effort, "Salvador," was hot and explosive, despite its flaws, "Platoon" is cool and never goes quite as far as one imagines it will.

All of the images in the earlier film seemed caught on the run under extreme pressure, while all the beautiful and undoubtedly difficult moving camera shots here express a sense of grace and precision that removes the visceral quality from the

One is forcibly reminded of "Apocalypse Now" throughout because of the presence centerscreen of Charlie Sheen, who bears a remarkable resemblance here to his father, star of Francis Coppola's epic.

Otherwise, however, "Platoon" in form resembles the taut, close-up army unit films of the 1950s such as Anthony Mann's "Men In War," Robert Aldrich's "Attack!" and Samuel Fuller's "The Steel Helmet" and "Fixed Bayonets."

Despite its violence and barrage of realistically dirty language, "Platoon" could have used some of those films' ferociousness, starkness and unpretentiousness; the artistic veneer Stone applies, along with the simpy narration provided for Sheen in the way of letters to his grandmother, detract significantly from the work's immediacy.

Nevertheless, there is plenty of good work to be found here, and pic certainly grabs the viewer by the collar in a way not found everyday in contemporary films.

Working on an undoubtedly modest budget in the Philippines (lensing started just as President Aquino was replacing Marcos), team has mounted an impressive-looking production in all respects, although cinematographer Robert Richardson overdoes the filters at times. Georges Delerue's plaintive score consists largely of a new arrangement of Samuel Barber's "Adagio For Strings."

Willem Dafoe comes close to stealing the picture as the sympathetic sergeant whose drugged state may even heighten his sensitivity to the insanity around him, and each of the other members of the young cast all have their moments to shine.

Stone implicitly suggests that the U.S. lost the war because of divisions within its own ranks and an unwillingness to go all the way, which leaves one with the tragic result that all the suffering and trauma was for nothing. Unfortunately, the analysis here goes no further than that; better if Stone had stuck to combat basic. Cart.

Mon., April 6, 1987

Police Academy 4: Citizens On Patrol

(Youth comedy - Color)

A Warner Bros. release. Produced by Paul Maslansky. Directed by Jim Drake. Screenplay, Gene Quintano based on characters created by Neal Israel, Pat Proft. Camera (Medallion Labs Color), Robert Saad; editor, David Rawlins; music, Robert Folk; production design, Trevor Williams; art director, Rhiley Fuller; set decorator, Steve Shewchuk; sound, Ingrid M. Cusiel; costumes, Aleida MacDonald; assistant director, Michael Zenon; associate producer, Donald West; casting, Fern Champion, Pamela Basker. Reviewed at Mann's Chinese Theater, Hollywood, Calif., April 3, 1987. MPAA Rating: PG. Running time: 87

Mahoney	. Steve Guttenberg
Hightower	Bubba Smith
Jones	Michael Winslow
Tackleberry	David Graf
Sweetchuck	Tim Kazurinsky
Claire Mattson	Sharon Stone
Callahan	. Leslie Easterbrook
Hooks	Marion Ramsey
Proctor	Lance Kinsey
Captain Harris	G.W. Bailey
Zed	Bobcat Goldthwait
Commandant	
Lassard	George Gaynes
Mrs. Feldman	Billie Bird

The boobs in blue are back and "Police Academy 4: Citizens On Patrol" carries the banner of tasteless humor raised in the first three installments to new heights of insipidness. As the films have gotten worse since their raunchy origins in 1984, the boxoffice has declined and "4" should continue the trend

Although there is the usual assortment of food jokes, pratfalls, etc., this is basically material that has run out of steam. The humor is simply perfunctory now and one laughs at what the characters might be rather than what they are. What they have become is a safe bunch of cuddily cops an audience can both root for and make fun of at the same time.

As usual Steve Guttenberg leads the proceedings as Mahoney, the cute cop. But by now his act has become so mannered that instead of just resembling a puppy dog, he actually imitates one at one point.

Most of the regulars are back, with Bobcat Goldthwait assuming a larger role as the moronic cop Zed, who spends most of his time chasing the birdlike Officer Sweetchuck

(Tim Kazurinsky). Bubba Smith growls his way through a few scenes and Leslie Easterbrook as the statuesque Officer Callahan gets to show off her talents as well.

Plot, such as it is, has something to do with Commandant Lassard's (George Gaynes) Citizens on Patrol program and attempts by arch rival Captain Harris (G.W. Bailey) to make him look bad, a truly difficult task since collectively this police force barely has a triple digit I.Q.

Gene Quintano's script is merely a collection of gags tied together by the slightest suggestion of a story. Unfortunately, most of the bits fall flat as director Jim Drake has failed to find the inherent humor in any of the set-ups.

Attempt to pump new life into the pic at the end with a chase in hot air ballons and vintage aircraft is too little to late. By then most of the audience will have dozed off.

Jagr

Wed., June 10, 1987 Predator

(Action - Color

A Twentieth Century Fox release of a Gordon-Silver-Davis production. Produced by Lawrence Gordon, Joel Silver and John Davis. Directed by John McTiernan. Screenplay by Jim Thomas and John Thomas. Camera, Donald McAlpine (DeLuxe Color); production designer, John Vallone; editors, John F. Link, Mark Helfrich; casting, Jackie Burch; music, Alan Silvestri; executive producers, Laurence P. Pereira, Jim Thomas; associate producers, Beau E. L. Marks, Vallone; art directors, Frank Richwood, Jorge Saenz. Reviewed at Darryl F. Zanuck Theater, Century City, June 8, 1987. MPAA Rating: R. Running time: 107 min

DutchArnold Schwarzenegger	r
Dillon Carl Weathers	ŝ
AnnaElpidia Carrillo	,
Mac Bill Duke	è
Blain Jesse Ventura	ı
Billy Sonny Landham	
Poncho Richard Chaves	,
General Phillips R.G. Armstrong	ı
HawkinsShane Black	Ĺ

The Terminator's on the other foot this time, with Arnold Schwarzenegger playing the prey rather than the hunter. "Predator" is a slightly above-average actioner that tries to compensate for tissue-thin plot with evermore-grisly death sequences and impressive special effects. Telegraphed story line slows pace though, as audience spends most of film waiting for the inevitable ultimate confrontation. Schwarzenegger's reliable appeal, plus word-of-mouth from genre fans, should make this a boxoffice suc-

Schwarzenegger plays Dutch, the leader of a vaguely defined military rescue team that works for allied governments. Called into a U.S. hot spot somewhere in South America, he encounters old buddy Dillon (Carl Weathers), who now works for CIA.

It is made clear early on that Dutch is not just your everyday mindless killer, but one with a conscience. When Dillon asks him why he didn't take part in the U.S. raid on Libya, he says, "We're a rescue team, not assassins." Minutes later, he sheds a tear moments before slaughtering a guerilla unit in an unsuccessful rescue attempt.

On the way out of the jungle, unit starts to get decimated in increasingly garish fashion by the otherworldly Predator. The enemy is a nasty, formidable foe with laser powers, but his creation was obviously a committee decision: at various times, the alien creature resembles a wild boar turned inside out, a camouflaged FTD florist, Reddy Kilowatt and Road Warrior From Hell.

While some of the action sequences are imaginative, film moves slowly to conclusion, as Predator wastes the band of warriors one by one. By the time the showdown does begin, pic has lost whatever momentum it had, and battle between Dutch and the Predator carries none of the emotional baggage of what has gone on before.

Schwarzenegger, while undeniably appealing, still has a character who's not quite real. He plays film's first half looking and acting like Clint Eastwood's Tom Highway in "Heartbreak Ridge."

While the painted face, cigar, vertical hair and horizontal eyes are all there, none of the humanity gets on the screen, partly because of the sparse dialog. Last section of film has Schwarzenegger covered in mud and blood, resorting to use of bow-and-arrow, a la Rambo.

Supporting cast is mostly adequate but hardly great. Weathers can't breathe any life into the card-board character of Dillon, who goes from being unbelievably cynical to being unbelievably heroic in about five minutes.

Among the rest, Sonny Landham goes beyond his stereotyped character, which amounts to a modern-day Tonto, and Bill Duke plays overthe-edge soldier Mac with a delicious sense of doom.

Director John McTiernan tries to lay a thin sheen of moral righteousness on the proceedings (Dutch fights fair), but the unreal situation and the almost nonexistent script detract from the message.

While Donald McAlpine's lensing is mostly sharp, some of the jungle greenery is obviously artificial and McTiernan relies a bit too much on holography, in looking through the Predator's eyes, while trying to build tension before blood starts to fly.

Camb.

Thurs., March 26, 1987

Prettykill

(Thriller — Color)

A Spectrafilm release of a Sandy Howard presentation of a Dax Avant production, Executive producer, Howard. Produced by John R. Bowey, Martin Walters. Directed by George Kaczender. Screenplay, Sandra K. Bailey. Camera (color), Joao Fernandes; editor, Tom Merchant; music, Robert O. Ragland; sound, Daniel Latour; art direction, Andris Hausmanis; set decoration, Jeff Cutler; assistant director, Richard Flower; second-unit camera, Yuri Neyman; additional photography, Peter Lyons Collister; associate producers, David Witz, Michael Masciarelli; casting, Paul Bengston, David Cohn; additional casting, Anne Tait, Diane Polley. Reviewed at Magno Preview 9 screening room, N.Y., March 25, 1987. MPAA rating: R. Running time: 95 min.

Sgt. Larry Turner David Birney Heather Todd. Season Hubley Toni... Susannah York Yaphet Kotto Francie Suzanne Snyder Jacques Mercier. Germaine Houde Carrie. . Lenore Zann Also with: Marsha Moreau, Sarah Polley O.L. Duke, Heather Smith, Erik King, Richard Fitzpatrick, Ron White, Gary Majchrizak, Louis Turenne, Philip Akin.

New York — "Pretty Kill," originally titled "Tomorrow's A Killer," is a tame exploitation film from Sandy Howard, revisiting once again the thematic territory of his 1982 pic "Vice Squad." Film is notable mainly as the vehicle by which former Canadian-U.S. art film distributor Spectrafilm gets its feet wet with grindhouse product.

Three parallel stories intertwine unconvincingly in Sandra K. Bailey's far-fetched script: David Birney is a cop tortured with guilt for killing a guy in the line of duty. His problems keep mounting as he gets in

hot water with his superior, Yaphet Kotto; his girlfriend, Season Hubley (star of "Vice Squad" too) is a \$500-a-pop callgirl fed up with her life but unwilling to wed Birney; and Suzanne Snyder is a pretty blond dancer who Hubley takes under her wing to show her the ropes of prostitution.

A key subplot involves Hubley's mentor, an older prostie now working as a madam (Susannah York), who is having problems as her young daughters (raised in the same house where her group of prostitutes work) find out about her line of work and are ostracized at school. This material is played sentimentally and doesn't work.

The drug bust case Birney's working on curiously links up with an investigation of a serial killer of prostitutes, with Birney's conflict of interests leading him to protect York and foolishly punch out Kotto, spelling the end of the line for him as a New York City policeman.

Hubley becomes fed up with hooking and decides to quit. Main plot element, however, is revelation (already given away by the film's attractive one-sheet of Snyder in lingerie holding a knife) that Snyder is a schizo, taking on her incestuous father's personality and killing hookers.

Main entertainment value of this plodding film comes in some of the campiest scenes since "Mommie Dearest" as Snyder changes voices and behavior back and forth between her lip-smacking, southern-fried daddy and her own ever-smiling (replete with Raggedy Ann doll plaything) little girl personality. Pic climaxes with her made up and styled as a doppleganger for Hubley, taking on daddy's voice and trying to kill her. Sudden happy ending is preposterous.

Birney is miscast as a film noir antihero while Hubley is far too cool (one almost starts sympathizing with her sleazy johns when she is so unfriendly to them) for the role. Both Kotto and York maintain their professional standards and Snyder is a hoot — her performance is ready-made for midnight screenings. Supporting cast is stuck with stereotypes.

Film is professionally lensed, but low on action for a policier. One can infer from the end credits (which list gallery credits under "additional photography unit") that a very sleazy sequence set in an art gallery, including the film's only nude footage, was shot and added as an afterthought, typical of exploitation features. Though set in New York, film was made primarily in Toronto.

Thurs., Feb. 26, 1987

Prick Up Your Ears (British — Drama — Color)

A Civilhand/Zenith production. Produced by Andrew Brown. Directed by Stephen Frears. Screenplay, Alan Bennett, based on the biography, "Prick Up Your Ears," by John Lahr. Camera (Eastmancolor), Oliver Stapleton; editor, Mick Audsley; music, Stanley Myers; production design, Hugo Luczyc-Wyhowski; art director, Philip Elton; sound, Tony Jackson; costumes, Bob Ringwood; assistant director, Michael Zimbrich; casting, Debbie McWilliams. Reviewed at Bijou Preview Theater, London, Feb. 12, 1987. Running time: 108 min.

Gary Oldman Peggy Ramsay ... Vanessa Redgrave John Lahr Wallace Shawn ...Julie Walters Fisie Orton William Orton. Leonie Orton. James Grant Frances Barber Anthea Lahr Lindsay Duncan Mrs. Sugden Janet Dale Dave Atkins Mr. Sugden . . .

London — Director Stephen Frears has made a fine film with "Prick Up Your Ears," but it gives little insight into the daring comic skills of British playwright Joe Orton, and thus may leave audiences wondering what made him popular at all. Acting and script are excellent, but a question mark must hang over pic's prospects in the foreign markets.

Though selling itself as a biography of the controversial young British playwright, who was murdered in 1967, "Ears" actually says very little about Orton the author but deals almost totally with his relationship with Kenneth Halliwell, his lover and killer.

Film appears to have been a pet subject for Frears, who seems to delight in taking every opportunity of mocking the British Midlands city of Leicester, the hometown of both himself and Orton.

But, set in the '50s and '60s, pic lacks a sense of the passing of years, and Orton's transition from tonguetied Leicester youth to confident writer seems too sudden.

Halliwell hammered to death the sleeping Orton in their small London flat, then took an overdose of barbituates, and it is at that point that the film begins, following biographer John Lahr's attempts to trace the life of the playwright.

Orton and Halliwell met at the Royal Academy of Dramatic Art, where both were training to be actors. The inarticulate Orton fell for the seemingly sophisticated Halliwell, and for a while the pic dwells on Orton's promiscuity, mainly in public toilets, at a time when homosexuality was still illegal in the U.K.

The two write together, and suddenly after years of obscurity, Orton becomes an overnight success with his "Entertaining Mr. Sloane."

Halliwell's resentment at Orton's success increases, and even a carefree and promiscuous holiday in Tangiers cannot ease the tension.

Frears and screenwriter Alan Bennett, with seven tv collaborations to their credit, display an easy chemistry. The script is witty, the direction fluid, with one of the homosexual orgy scenes in a public toilet almost balletic, and the depiction of the lovers' life in their flat suitably claustrophobic.

Gary Oldman (so good in "Sid And Nancy") is excellent as Orton, right down to remarkable resemblance, while Alfred Molina creates both an amusing and tormented Halli-

Vanessa Redgrave takes top honors, though, as Orton's compassionate and benign agent. Julie Walters appears briefly as Orton's mother, but plays it for high comedy, which doesn't really work.

Technical credits are all fine, though the lack of a feeling of passing of time sometimes grates. "Prick Up Your Ears" is thoughtfully stylized, and as a study of the capricious Orton it succeeds. But as an insight into Orton the irreverent playwright it leaves something to be

Adam.

Mon., April 27, 1987

The Princess Academy (Teen comedy — Color)

An Empire Pictures release. Executive producer, Fred Weintraub. Produced by Sandra Weintraub. Directed by Bruce Block. Screenplay, Sandra Weintraub, from an idea by Fred Weintraub. Camera (uncredited color), Kent Wakeford; editor, Martin Cohen; sound, M. Curtis Price, Gregory H. Watkins, Leonard Peterson; music, Roger Bellon; Eva Gabor's wardrobe, Nolan Miller;

casting, Myrna Mefh (U.S.), Paul Defreitas (Yugoslavia). Reviewed April 24, 1987, at Empire Pictures, Los Angeles. MPAA rating: R. Running time: 90 min.

Countess Eva Gabor Cindy Lar Park Lincoln Fraulein

Stickenschmidt Lu Leonard
Drago Richard Paul
Sonia Carole Davis
Sarah Badar Howar
Izzie Barbara Rovsek
Pamela Yolande Palfrey
Lulu Britt Helfer

It would be more fun to kiss a frog than to sit through "The Princess Academy." Film has no redeeming social values and it's not even rated X — even though filmmakers tried very hard to insert as many lines as possible about virginity, reaching sexual ecstasy and how to fake "it" (and mostly when the pretty young things are parading around in lacy corsets).

At the critics' screening, no one bothered to wake up one viewer who had fallen asleep and was snoring — presumably they were acting on humanitarian grounds.

Each of the teenage lovelies in this picture represents a different nationality with a couple of things in common — they want to meet a rich guy (hopefully titled) and, etc. Only holdout is Cindy (Lar Park Lincoln), winner of the first scholarship to the prestigious Swiss Von Pupsin Academy, who is a really sweet but easily influenced juvenile delinquent.

Lincoln becomes the fall gal when the other girls' antics get out of hand at the local brothel. That's where they've arranged a secret rendezvous for two lovesick virgins, one from the girls' school and one from the boys' school.

The Von Pupsin Academy's taskmaster, Fraulein Stickenschmidt (Lu Leonard in her classic butch character) busts in and breaks up the festivities. The girls then blackmail her for her lascivious ways with the school's spineless administrator (Richard Paul).

One wonders what the target audience is for such drivel, except maybe preteenage boys who don't care a whit about dialog and just want to see girls' bodies in any shape, way or form.

Executive producer Fred Weintraub ("Enter The Dragon," "Outlaw Blues") would be wise to rethink what direction he intends to follow as an indie filmmaker if he wants to salvage his reputation. Ditto his daughter, Sandra Weintraub, who is producer and screenwriter.

Brit.

Fri., June 5, 1987

Private Investigations (Action drama — Color)

An MGM/UA Communications release of a PolyGram Movies production. Produced by Steven Golin, Sigurjon Sighvatsson. Exec producers, Michael Kuhn, David Hockman. Directed by Nigel Dick. Screenplay by John Dahl, David Warfield. Camera, David Bridges; editor, Scott Chestnut; original score, Murray Munro; production designer, Piers Plowden; art director, Nick Rafter; sound mixer (Dolby). Bob Dreebin; assistant director, associate producer, David Warfield; casting, Jeff Gerrard. Reviewed at MGM/UA screening room, June 4, 1987. MPAA Rating: R. Running time: 91 min.

Joey Bradley Clayton Rohner
Ryan Ray Sharkey
Lt. Wexler Paul LeMat
Jenny Fox Talia Balsam
Eddie Gordon Phil Morris
Cliff Dowling Martin Balsam
Charles Bradley Anthony Zerbe
Kim Robert Ito
Detective North Vernon Wells
Larry Anthony Geary

"Private Investigations" is little more than a serviceable, tightly packaged cops-as-crooks actioner. Its furious intensity cannot overcome the mostly sterile and empty characters. Since one can see just about the same material on "Miami Vice" for free, it's unlikely limited openings will generate enough interest to justify a wide rollout.

Yarn opens in San Francisco as newspaper editor Anthony Zerbe plans a meeting with an informant who will unload on an L.A.-based police ring that is selling drugs confiscated during their busts. Phone call is tapped; details of rendezvous are passed on to the bad guys; and Zerbe's son in L.A. (Clayton Rohner) is unwittingly sucked into the turmoil.

Events catapult at a stupendous pace as a private investigator is murdered at Rohner's apartment. Simplistically enough, it turns out that the homicide cops are the same ones who may be ratted on by Zerbe's contact. Detective (Ray Sharkey) supposedly assigned to protect Rohner instead tries to kill him.

Gratuitous violence escalates as Sharkey's pursuit moves to the streets. Plot jerks in a new direction when Rohner is hit by a car. Driver Talia Balsam takes him to her place where early signs of future coupling surface.

Film's low point follows as events lead Rohner to the Baldwin Hills oil fields, which become the site of some especially pointless brutality.

While an album-for-sale sound-track pulsates on and on, Rohner winds up back in town — only to be chased some more by Sharkey. Rohner sure covers a lot of ground in L.A. without a car and somehow manages to make his way back to Balsam's apartment.

Lovers at last on their second encounter, Rohner-Balsam's morning afterglow becomes the crucible for figuring out crucial details just in time to show up for the secret sesh between Zerbe and the informer.

It's held at a visually clever location — an abandoned Western town film set. Confrontation there with the cops, however, leads to a predictable conclusion that only reminds how much the whole outing is like a tv show.

Zerbe's involvement at the end and in earlier scenes lacks spark, while Martin Balsam's is flat during his couple of scenes.

Production values and tech credits are up to par. Tege.

Mon., April 27, 1987

Programmed To Kill (Action adventure — Color)

Samira Sandahl Bergman
Brock James Booth
Blake Alex Courtney
Jason Paul W. Walker
Sharon Louise Caire Clark
Donovan Peter Bromilow
Mike George Fisher
Chris Jim Turner

"Programmed To Kill" (original title: "The Retaliator") is a tired rewrite of "The Terminator," with a female cyborg responsible for most of the destruction this time around. This film doesn't have any of the crackle or

inventiveness of James Cameron's thriller, and quickly reveals itself to be a third-rate action pic with no tension at all. Leads Robert Ginty and Sandahl Bergman are OK, but never get a chance to distinguish themselves because of a poor screenplay that seems to consist entirely of cliches. B.o. prospects are dismal.

Weak story begins with Samira (Bergman), a member of "a PLO splinter group" (can things get any more vague than that?), joining internationally known terrorist Hassim (Arnon Tzador) and his buddies in blowing away a market full of innocent shoppers in Greece.

Two American children, evidently too dumb or panicked to notice that she's carrying a machine gun, run right into her arms and are kidnapped.

This heist is "a big one," so the CIA can't trust its regular operatives with the rescue mission. Instead, the call goes out to weary mercenary Eric Mathews (Ginty).

Mathews' band overruns the headquarters of terrorists, who promptly become the gang that can't shoot straight. He rescues the children and captures Samira.

Back in the States, Mathews wants to question Samira, but finds that the CIA has taken the nearly brain-dead terrorist away. Their evil plan: perform complex neural surgery that programs her into a fighting machine for the U.S.

The operation is performed — by a team of surgeons that looks like it just left the frat house — and Samira is sent back to the Middle East, where she slaughters Hassim and the rest of his group.

But then this preprogrammed Rambette starts having some serious flashbacks, realizes she's just laid waste to all her loved ones, and decides to get revenge on everyone involved with her capture.

She heads back to America and goes on a killing spree, sole purpose of which seems to be proving that even a half-human killing machine can still look good in a leather miniskirt.

Ultimate showdown takes place on a military airfield, with Mathews just lucky enough to stumble on to a revved-up bulldozer at the critical moment.

Besides the lame script and mostly bad acting, production credits range from mediocre to atrocious, with fluttery soundtrack (occasionally out of sync with lip movements) and muddy photography a frequent distraction. Camb.

Fri., April 10, 1987

Project X (Drama — Color)

A 20th Century Fox release of a Parkes/
Lasker production in association with Amercent Films and American Entertainment
Partners L.P. Produced by Walter F. Parkes,
Lawrence Lasker. Executive producer, C.O.
Erickson. Directed by Jonathan Kaplan.
Stars Matthew Broderick. Screenplay, Stanley Weiser. Story by Weiser, Lasker. Camera (Deluxe Color), Dean Cundey; editor, O.
Nicholas Brown; film editor, Brent Schoenfeld; music, James Horner; production design, Lawrence G. Paull; set design, Joseph
Pacelli, Lynn Christopher; set decoration,
Rick Simpson; costume design, Mary Vogt;
sound (Dolby), Petur Hliddal; visual effects
supervisor, Michael Fink; animal coordinator, Hubert Wells; assistant director, Albert
Shapiro; casting, Jackie Burch. Reviewed at
the 20th Century Fox Studios, L.A., April 8,
1987. MPAA Rating: PG. Running time: 108
min.

IIII I.	
Jimmy Garrett	Matthew Broderick
Teri	Helen Hunt
Dr. Carroll	Bill Sadler
Robertson	Johnny Ray McGhee
Sgt. Krieger	Jonathan Stark
Col. Niles	Robin Gammel
Watts	Stephen Lang
Dr. Criswell	Jean Smar
General Claybourn	ne Chuck Bennet

Chimps: Willie (Virgil), Okko (Goofy), Karanja (Goliath), Luke (Bluebeard).

If nothing else, "Project X" is the ultimate film for monkey-lovers. Some quite endearing chimpanzees share centerstage with Matthew Broderick for nearly two hours here, and while they, and he, are engaging enough to watch, picture lets its manipulative strings show too clearly. Commercial prospects depend entirely upon how receptive the public is to accepting chimps in the roles normally played in recent years by cuddly aliens.

Broderick plays a wayward Air Force pilot who, as punishment, is sent to play zookeeper at the Strategic Weapons Research Center, where intelligent chimps are trained for top-secret and, it transpires, fatal experiments involving the effects of radiation.

Brightest of the little hairy ones is Virgil, an orphan who was taught sign language under a university program before being recruited by the armed services.

Willie, the chimp who plays Virgil, is extremely appealing and intelligent-looking, and with a costar like this, film guarantees itself a certain entertainment value no matter what course the story might take.

In any event, it's a mixed bag, as some passable interest and suspense is generated as Virgil and other chimps are put through flight simulation, then faced with certain death when they are exposed to radiation in the interests of finding out how long pilots might be able to fly after nuclear explosions.

Film makes sympathetic points about the intelligence of chimps and the abuse they suffer in lab confinement, but beyond this, doesn't seem to be about anything. Done with a measure of taste and talent, it still doesn't transcend the relatively mundane limits of its story and characters

Director Jonathan Kaplan keeps the proceedings amiable enough, and has covered the monkeys.' actions with loving care and skillful attention, which cannot have been easy.

Broderick is rightly more subdued here than in some recent performances, and supporting cast is discreetly effective. Some colorful, impressive computer animation for the flight simulations highlights the generally first-rate technical contributions.

But it's mostly the monkeys' show, and major credit should go to animal coordinator Hubert Wells, who replaced the late Ron Oxley just before shooting commenced.

Cart.

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Psycho Girls (Canadian Color)

A Cannon International release of a Lightshow Communications production. Produced by Michael Bockner. Directed by Gerard Ciccoritti. Screenplay, Bockner, Ciccoritti. Camera (Film House Color), Robert Bergman; editor, Bergman; music, Joel Rosenbaum; sound-associate producer, Peter Boboras; art direction, Craig Richards; assistant director, Leo Faragalli; production manager, Salvatore Greco. Reviewed on MGM/UA Home Video vidcassette, N.Y., June 17, 1987. MPAA Rating: R. Running time: 92 min.

Richard Foster John Haslett Cuff
Sarah Darlene Mignacco
Victoria Agi Gallus
Also with: Rose Graham, Silvio Oliviero,

Also with: Rose Graham, Silvio Oliviero, Pier Giorgio Dicicco, Michael Hoole, Dan Rose, Kim Cayer, Dorin Ferber, Frank Procopio, Fernn Kane, Michael Bockner, Maria Cortese, Nikki Pezaro, Gerard Ciccoritti.

New York — "Psycho Girls" is a Toronto-made horror thriller that self-destructs. Shot at the end of 1984, it was marginally released last Summer by Cannon and is now a homevideo title.

Pic begins quite promisingly with pulp detective story writer Richard Foster (John Haslett Cuff) pounding away at his typewriter and narrating a tale with colorful quips like "What is money anyway, but paper with germs on it?" Unfortunately, the tall tale he relates soon switches from suspense to sadistic Grand Guignol horror of little interest.

Tale begins in 1966 when young parents are murdered by their daughter Sarah on their anniversary with a poisoned meal. Fifteen years later, Sarah's an inmate of Lakeview Asylum who escapes to revenge herself on older sister Victoria, who predictably was the real murderer, though Sarah took the rap.

Victoria is working as Foster's cook, and Sarah shows up as her replacement after offing her sister. She drugs the food at an anniversary dinner party thrown by Foster and his wife Diana, and then, aided by two crazy henchmen, proceeds to torture and murder them one by one. Punchline of how the humble narrator-writer is mixed up in this mayhem is lifted from Billy Wilder's "Sunset Boulevard."

With the promised gore mainly occuring off-screen, resulting film is neither fish nor fowl, with little to recommend it to the target grossout audience. Pity that filmmaker Gerard Ciccoritti (who shows up on screen in a cameo looking a lot like Judd Nelsen as a pizza delivery boy) couldn't have stuck to hardboiled fiction with dialog to match.

Cast is weak, hampered by very artificial post-synched dialog (with other folks' voices in some cases, according to the end credits). *Lor.*

Thurs., March 12, 1987

The Puppetoon Movie (Animated compilation — Color)

A Leibovit production. Produced, written, edited by Arnold Leibovit. Associate producer, Fantasy II. Prolog, new animation sequences, animated by Peter Kleinow; animation director, Gene Warren Jr.; voice director, Leibovit; camera (United Color Lab Color), Warren; music, Buddy Baker; art direction, Warren, Michael Minor; sound (Ultra Stereo), John (Doc) Wilk nson; additional camera, John Huneck. Reviewed at the American Film Institute (AFI Fest), L.A., Feb. 9, 1987. No MPAA rating. Running time: 80

"The Puppetoon Movie" is a straight compilation of 10 George Pal puppetoon shorts, accompanied by clips from 10 of the late filmmaker's other animated efforts and all framed by some new work featuring Gumby, Pokey and Arnie the Dinosaur. While it's nice to know that Pal's work has been so brilliantly preserved, trying to digest it all in one sitting is akin to overstaying a visit to the candy store. These films were never meant to be consumed all at once, so it's hard to figure what audiences will have the patience for this even at its relatively brief 80-minute running time. Pic bows tonight at the AFI Fest.

Arnold Leibovit last year made "The Fantasy Film Worlds Of George Pal," a documentary feature about the Oscar-winning animator and director, and in the opening sequence here has his contemporary puppets explain why Pal was so important.

The glimpse of Pal's initial Dutch work proves instructive, but pic quickly becomes just one short laid end-to-end with another. With prolonged exposure, the early-era roundish wooden figures with painted features begin to look ugly and unappealing, and after a half-dozen featurettes, the bucolic, gingerbread-house world repeatedly on view gets very tiresome, as do the square renditions of Latin and Hawaiian melodies. Overall effect is that of a vast overdose.

On the other hand, jazzman Charlie Barnet is to be heard in "Jasper In A Jam," which also features Peggy Lee warbling "Old Man Mose." Print, color and sound quality throughout is impeccable.

Other shorts presented in their entirety are "Hoola Boola," "John Henry And The Inky Poo," "Together In The Weather," "Tubby The Tuba," "Tulips Shall Grow," "The Sleeping Beauty," "Philips Cavalcade," "Philips Broadcast Of 1938" and "South Sea Sweethearts," all spanning the 1937-1947 era.

Mon., March 16, 1987

Queen City Rocker (New Zealand — Color)

A Spectrafilm release (U.S.) of a Mirage Films presentation. Produced by Larry Parr. Directed by Bruce Morrison. Screenplay, Bill Baer. Camera (color), Kevin Hayward; editor, Michael Hacking; music, David McCartney; production design, Mike Becroft; sound, George Lyle. Reviewed at Westend theater, Auckland, Feb. 24, 1987. Running time: 89 min.

Ska	Matthew Hunter
Andrew	Mark Pilisi
Sniper	Ricky Bribiesca
	Kim Willoughby
	Rebecca Saunders
Ryder	Peter Bland

Auckland — "Queen City Rocker" is an unabashed Kiwi attempt to genre-grab in that category of Hollywood adolescentangst films made popular by Emilio Estevez and friends in the early 1980s.

It cuts some corners, for plus and minus points, gets close to real drama only to back away, and finally emerges as just a hint of that distinctive slice-of-life street kids' film it might have been.

Marvelously shot in and around Auckland city (camera, Kevin Hayward), the story centers on gang leader Ska (Matthew Hunter) and his growing disillusionment with the life of violence and petty larcency in which he is enmeshed.

It takes the death of his best friend Andrew (Mark Pilisi), in gangland retribution for the kids' destruction of a sleazy nightclub where Ska's sister Fran (Rebecca Saunders) reluctantly works, and the love of Stacy (Kim Willoughby) from the moneyed side of town, to impel a breakthrough.

While the script evokes the S.E. Hinton novels adapted to film ("The Outsiders," "That Was Then . . . This Is Now"), it lacks their credibility and gift in creating teenagers that ring true.

Too often action for the sake of action displaces scenes necessary to build audience understanding and involvement with the main protagnoists. Director Bruce Morrison captures well the three-stepsback explosive expression of streetkid life, but cannot seem to handle the closeups that would reveal individual motivation for the behavior and which are crucial for the human drama taking place.

As a result, the largely inexperienced young cast is given little to breathe life into. Their uncertainties show. Only Pilisi, who had a notable debut opposite Lisa Harrow in John Laing's "Other Halves," has the natural ability to break through the ineptness of much of the dialog.

The minor gangland figures fare better, but even an able trouper like Peter Bland (as the nightclub owner Ryder) falls into some disarray during a confused denouement.

Throughout, there are moments in "Queen City Rocker" which suggest something rather more. The opening sequences placing Ska and Andrew in their close-to-the-edge-of-crime environment are immaculately achieved.

The suggested responsibilities of Ska and Fran in bringing up their younger siblings are tantalizing, if undeveloped. Dave McCartney's rock music is a bonus, with the city of Auckland (as it did in "Other Halves") again emerging as a superb natural urban location for filmmaking.

Nic.

Mon., Nov. 10, 1986

Quiet Cool (Drama — color)

New Line Cinema release of a Robert Shaye production. Executive producers, Pierre David, Arthur Sarkissian, Larry Thompson. Produced by Robert Shaye and Gerald T. Olson. Directed by Clay Borris. Associate producer, Sara Risher. Written by Borris and Susan Vercellino. Film editor, Bob Brady; director of photography, Jacques Haitkin; music score, Jay Ferguson; casting, Annette Benson. Color by DeLuxe. Reviewed at Mann's Hollywood, Hollywood, Calif., Oct. 7, 1986. MPAA Rating: R. Running time: 80 min.

"Quiet Cool" is a brutal, sensationalistic story about a twoman war waged against a band of ruthless marijuana growers that often is predictable, yet manages to hold a good amount of tension throughout. Pic will probably draw its fare share of "Rambo" lovers to the boxoffice.

The story opens up in New York City with police officer Joe Dillon, played with an offbeat type of cool macho by James Remar.

Dillon is the type of cop who obviously does not play by the rules as he throws a purse-snatcher into the Hudson Bay. Yet he is a dedicated policeman, so when a former girlfriend living in Northern California calls for help, he drops everything and goes.

The former girlfriend, a forgettable performance by Daphne Ashbrook, is an environmentalist who lives in a tiny town in the heart of the Emerald Triangle, the mountainous northwestern area of California nicknamed that for its large percentage of marijuana fields. Her brother's family also lives in this remote town and they have disappeared.

The audience at this point already knows that the brother and his wife have been viciously killed by the marijuana growers and their son, Joshua Greer (admirable performance by Adam Coleman Howard), has been thrown off a cliff and left to die.

As the story progresses, the New York cop and the son team up to fight the savage marijuana growers, using a guerrilla-type warfare, that ultimately ends with a western-style shoot-out on the main street of this tiny town.

Obviously the last person to get his comeuppance is the mysterious person who masterminds the whole operation. That is supposed to be the surprise ending, but it's obvious who "Mr. Big" is within the first 10 minutes of the film.

The story is nothing new, it just substitutes marijuana growers as the bad guys. Yet the performances by the two leads, Remar and Howard, are unusual and captivating enough to carry through the film.

The bad guys in the film are mostly forgettable except for Nick Cassavetes as the black-haired Valence. He doesn't have much to say, yet he brings a cold, scary ominousness to the character.

The one big problem with this film is that it is trying to ride on the coattails of recent news stories about drug-enforcement activities in Northern California, more specifically the activities of Campaign Against Marijuana Planting. Last year, CAMP confiscated 800,000 pounds of high-grade marijuana.

CAMP even has published a warning guide for tourists and hikers who may accidentally happen upon a marijuana farm.

Yet from this, the producers of this pic have put together a sensationalistic film that really does little to reveal the actual problem. Other than the bad guys getting high a few times, the subject of marijuana is hardly ever brought up. In fact, these guys are not bad because they are growers, they are bad because they are killers. The true nature of the Emerald Triangle never comes into play.

Director Clay Borris (who also cowrote the script with Susan Vercellino), in his first major screen feature in the United States, has done a good job of creating a fast-paced action film with a lot of tension. The story and dialog are minimal, yet for the type of film it is, it is entertaining.

Teen.

Fri., Jan. 23, 1987

Radio Days (Comedy — Color)

Joe . . . Mother Seth Green Julie Kavne Abe . . . Father . Josh Mostel Michael Tucker Bea. Dianne Wiest Masked Avenger Latin bandleader . Wallace Shawn Danny Aiello Rocco.. Rocco's mother ...Gina DeAngelisJeff Daniels Kitty Carlisle Hart Biff Baxter.. Radio singer. ... Tony RobertsJulie Kurnitz .David Warrilow "Silver Dollar Irene Roger..... New Year's singer . Diane Keaton

Although lacking the bite and depth of his best work, "Radio Days" is one of Woody Allen's most purely entertaining pictures. It's a visual monolog of bits and pieces from the glory days of radio and the people who were tuned in. "Radio Days" will undoubtedly be a special treat for those who were listening at the time and despite its very specific setting, film is so sweet and inviting that Allen fans should have little trouble recognizing the territory. As usual, nonconverts may be baffled by the fuss.

Territory in question is Rockaway Beach, a thin strip of land on the outskirts of New York City,

where young Joe (Seth Green) and his family live in not-so splendid harmony and for entertainment and escape listen to the radio.

Set at the start of World War II, it's a world of aunts and uncles all living on top of each other and the magical events and people, real and imagined, that forever shape ones young imagination.

Expanding the vignette structure of "Zelig" and the peek-behind-the-curtain-of-reality approach of "The Purple Rose Of Cairo," "Radio Days" is able to penetrate the familial world of Rockaway and the glamorous whirl of New York night life.

Allen is not looking for realism, but a reality filtered through memory so that it glows like a sepia-toned photograph. Not surprisingly, "Radio Days" is a splendid visual achievement, from Carlo Di Palma's evocative photography to Santo Loquasto's period-perfect production design.

But unlike other New York period comedies, such as "Brighton Beach Memoirs," most recently, "Radio Days" is not simply about nostalgia, but the quality of memory and how what one remembers informs ones present life. And what could be a more appropriate vehicle than radio since as a medium it is totally dependent on the mind's eye to fill in the spaces?

Although Allen wrote the screenplay and narrates the film, and many of the family incidents must be taken from his own experience, it would be too narrow to interpret "Radio Days" as straight autobiography any more than Alvy Singer in "Annie Hall" is Woody Allen.

Allen has always been a literaryminded director and the narrator here, the grown-up voice of the young Joe, is omnipotent, taking long amusing looks at the denizens of Broadway and his own block at the same time.

To keep the narrative whole, he weaves together running commentary on some half-dozen odd characters. Susan F. Morse's editing is a key to keeping the action crisp and coherent.

As kooky and eccentric here as she was in "Hannah And Her Sisters," Dianne Wiest is delicious as an aunt who is desperate to find a husband but somehow keeps meeting Mr. Wrong. Julie Kavner and Michael Tucker are the mother and father who ponder whether they could have made better choices. But this doesn't stop Tucker from coming up with numerous hair-brained schemes to make a quick buck.

Also on hand in the neighborhood is Uncle Abe (Josh Mostel) who is never seen without a fish in hand, which he gets from friends at Sheepshead Bay. And what would any neighborhood be like without communist sympathizers, a teenage girl dating a black musician (gasp!), provocative women and homely kids who somehow imagine themselves as budding Clark Gables?

Where the film is most successful is in conveying the link between the mundane lives of the ordinary folk and the glamorous doings of New York's hoity-toities, which when examined under such a fine lense are not that very different. Both celebrate New Year's Eve together, although in Rockaway they toast with Hoffman's ginger ale, not champagne as at the Stork Club.

But things are not always what they seem and the robust Masked Avenger is, in real life, the diminutive Wallace Shawn. Mia Farrow is a none-too-bright cigarette girl with a yen for stardom who magically transforms her life. David Warrilow and Julie Kurnitz are a Dorothy and Dick Kilgallen morning team who do more than cover the openings when they're out reporting.

One of the joys of "Radio Days" is picking out Allen's stock players in bit parts throughout the picture. Tony Roberts turns up as a quizshow emcee and Danny Aiello as a Mafia hit man with a soft spot for Farrow.

And a real sentimental treat at the end of the film is Diane Keaton as a lounge singer warbling, appropriately on New Year's Eve, Cole Porter's "You'd Be So Nice To Come Home To."

Music, in fact, is a delightful addition to the action and Dick Hyman has assembled a fabulous group of period tunes, some even performed live. Tito Puente does a great turn as an Xavier Cugat-type club act.

Other vignettes played through Joe's adult sensibilities take on absurd proportions, such as an extreme working of "The Monty Stratton Story," in which a baseball player continues competing after losing one limb after another.

What Allen sees as he surveys a past "slowly growing dimmer with each new year" is a loving place full of grotesque people who are not always virtuous and admirable but never less than human.

Jagr.

Thurs., April 2, 1987

Radium City

(Docu - U.S. - Color)

Carole Langer Prods. film. Produced and directed by Langer. Camera (color), Luke Sacher; editor, Langer; music, Tim Cappello. Reviewed at Kabuki Theater, San Francisco, March 28, 1987. No MPAA rating. Running time: 120 min.

San Francisco — All the ingredients for documentation of a remarkable story, a seminal study of the effects of one toxic, radium, on one American city, Ottawa, Ill., are implicit in "Radium City." But this overlong, rampantly repetitive pic is so poorly sourced and reported that it comes off as pure polemic.

Two versions of the pic were screened at the Frisco fest; the media unspooling ran 100 minutes, version reviewed here, which was print at public showing, is 120 endless minutes. Yarn could have been told effectively, and intelligently, in 90 and been fit fodder for commercial booking at selected venues.

The powerhouse nub of the tale is that a good number of women who worked painting numbers in radium onto clock dials in Ottawa from 1922 on died in untimely fashion, and that the intrusion of radium into the community via two plant sites lingers still. This is strong stuff that must be documented with clarity, precision and reliable attribution if it is to be compelling and convincing.

But producer-director-editor Carole Langer ignores reportage for knee-jerk, frequently mawkish and numbingly undistilled footage of interviews with survivors and contemporary victims. Many interviews play far too long, several are digressive. And there is no real attempt at seeking balance — even if it's just an on-film "no comment" from the manufacturers and Feds.

It's clear there's a preponderance of evidence on the side of the victims. And on behalf of the environmentalists in Ottawa today. But their (and Langer's) case is not argued properly.

The lack of narration tends to make facts inaccessible as Langer tries to have the people of Ottawa guide us through the history of the tragedy. But the people tend to be vague, redundant and uninformative.

One of them says that the county in which Ottawa sits has the highest per capita incidence of cancer in the U.S. True? Who knows? There's no secondary sourcing.

A story title card tells us "over 40" women died from the effects of wetting radium-tipped brushes with their tongues. But this is as specific as the pic gets about the death toll. A little investigative browsing through medical records and death reports would have been helpful and to the point.

Langer, in comments after the screening, said she "worked through" the Harvard School of Public Health in researching the material. Whatever the case, docu leaves one with far more questions than answers — questions one suspects are answerable.

Credits list Angelika Films as export agents for "Radium City." Pic played at 1986 Cork film fest. Herb.

Thurs., Oct. 30, 1986

Rage

(Italian-Spanish — Color)

A Tiber International (Rome)/Arco Film (Madrid) coproduction. World sales, Gel International Produced by Paolo Ferrara. Directed by Anthony Richmond (Tonino Ricci). Stars Conrad Nichols. Screenplay, Jaime Comas Gil, Eugenie Benito; camera (Luciano Vittori color), Gianni Bergamini; editor, Vincenzo Tomassi; music, Stelvie Cipriani; production manager, Maurizie Mattei; assistant director, Giancarlo Bastianoni; stunt coordinator, Roland Zamperla; set design, Javier Fernandez. Reviewed at 42d St. Liberty Theater, N.Y., Oct. 25, 1986. No. MPAA Rating. Running time: 91 min.

With: Conrad Nichols (Rage), Stelie Candelli, Werner Pochat, Taida Urruzola, Chris Huerta.

New York — "Rage" is a tedious 1984 followup film to the modest sci-fi opus "Rush," featuring the same director and star. As with the original, pic is a cheap mishmash of leftover costumes and vehicles from World War II actioner.

Opening montage of nuclear explosions stock footage sets tale after World War III. Star Conrad Nichols, a beefy Sylvester Stallone type, is assigned to head up a mission to find Alpha Base, from which a persistent radio signal has alerted the holocaust survivors that the base still exists, with a treasure trove there of technical info and needed uranium reserves

Nichols (who is known by the nickname "Rage") takes along an old army chum (Werner Pochat), a beautiful girl (who insists on wearing short-shorts and revealing top during the dangerous mission) and an electronics/weapons expert. They visit an evil warlord named Slash (though his facial scar is a victim of continuity sloppiness) to get a map to Alpha Base and spend the rest of the film playing cat and mouse with Slash's violent henchmen and henchwomen. Boring pic climaxes with a lengthy battle chase involving a locomotive.

Pic's plot ends up like "On The Beach," with the base found to be deserted, its signal being automatic. There's no uranium for power, but our heroes do bring back an elegant edition of the Bible, just the ticket to rebuild Western Civilization.

Dubbing is poor, as are technical credits

Wed., March 4, 1987

Rage Of Honor

(Action — Color)

A Trans World Entertainment release of a Rage production. Executive producers, Moshe Diamant, Moshe Barkat, Sunil R. Shah. Produced by Don Van Atta. Directed by Gordon Hessler, Screenplay, Robert Short, Wallace Bennett, from story by Short; camera (Technicolor, Cinecolor), Julio Bragado; editor, Robert Gordon; music (Dolby stereo), Stelvio Cipriani; production design Adrian Gorton; art direction, Kirk Demusiak (Arizona), Abel Fagellio (Argentina); specialeffects supervisor, Paul Staples; martial-arts choreography-special weapons design. Kosugi; second unit director, Van Atta; postproduction supervisor, Barry Parnell; casting, Barbara Hanley, Kathy Henderson. Reviewed at UA Twin 2 theater, N.Y., Feb. 28, 1987. MPAA rating: R. Running time: 91

With: Sho Kosugi (Shiro Tanaka), Lewis Van Bergen, Robin Evans, Gerry Gibson, Chip Lucia, Richard Wiley, Carlos Estrada, Alan Amiel.

New York — "Rage Of Honor" is a substandard action vehicle for martial-arts star Sho Kosugi, who gets the chance to choreograph the fight scenes and introduce gadgety weapons but is otherwise sunk by pointless writing and limp direction.

Kosugi plays Shiro Tanaka, a Phoenix-based U.S. narcotics investigator who gets in a tizzy when his assistant is tortured and murdered. He quits his job, hops a plane to Buenos Aires seeking revenge (improbably taking along his blond girl friend on the trip) and there ensues a boring series of fights and double crosses until nearly the entire cast is wiped out.

Besides being at least two reels too long, film doesn't work because Kosugi is never in any real danger and all incidents are merely functional devices to get a fight scene going.

The ease with which Kosugi dispatches at least 100 adversaries robs the fights of excitement. Nadir occurs in the Argentine jungle, where Indians attack and Kosugi, not content with wiping out baddies, massacres dozens of Indians in situational self-defense.

Kosugi's difficulty in delivering English dialog is still a hindrance and the supporting cast here is exceedingly bland.

The main villain (character roles are not identified in the credits) seems to be auditioning for a career as Harrison Ford's stunt double. Tech credits are acceptable but Gordon Hessler's direction seems phoned in.

Lor.

Wed., Feb. 25, 1987

Raising Arizona (Comedy — Color)

A Twentieth Century Fox release of a Circle Films presentation of a Ted and Jim Pedas/ Ben Berenholtz production. Produced by Ethan Coen. Executive producer, James Jacks. Coproducer, Mark Silverman. Directed by Joel Coen. Screenplay by Ethan and Joel Coen. Camera (DuArt Color), Barry Sonnenfeld; editor, Michael R. Miller; music, Carter Burwell; production design, Jane Musky: art director, Harold Thrasher; set decorator, Robert Kracik; costumes, Richard Hornung; assistant director, Deborah Reinisch, Kelly Van Horn; sound, Allan Byer: associate producer. Deborah Reinisch, casting, Donna Isaacson, John Lyons. Reviewed at Twentieth Century Fox screening room, Feb. 23, 1987. MPAA rating: PG-13. Running time: 94 min.

Nicholas Cage Holly Hunter Nathan Arizona Sr. Trey Wilson John Goodman Evelle William Forsythe Glen. . Sam McMurray Frances McDormand Leonard Randall "Tex" Cobb Smalls Nathan Jr. .T.J. Kuhn Florence Arizona Lynne Dumin Kitei Prison Counselor Peter Benedek

There are not many films in which a man is blown up by a hand-grenade for comic effect, but "Raising Arizona" is just such a film. Pic is the Coen Brothers'

twisted view of family rearing in the American heartlands and although different in style and tone from their debut effort, "Blood Simple," it is full of the same quirky humor and off-the-wall situations. "Raising Arizona" may not be everyone's cup of tea but it's fresh enough to find a faithful following with the right handling.

Quite possibly there has never been another film like "Raising Arizona," with "Repo Man" and "True Stories" perhaps coming closest to its generous look at the denizens of society's underbelly.

As written by Joel and Ethan Coen, directed by Joel and produced by Ethan, the film captures the surrealism of everyday life. Characters are so strange here that they seem to have stepped out of late-night television, tabloid newspapers, talk radio and a vivid imagination.

Nicholas Cage and Holly Hunter are the off-center couple at the center of the doings. As H.I. McDonnough, Cage is a well-meaning petty crook with a fondness for knocking off convenience stores. Edwina is the cop who checks him into prison so often that a romance develops.

But H.I. and Ed soon learn that marriage is "no Ozzie & Harriet Show" and when she learns that she can't have kids or adopt them, they do the next logical thing — steal one.

Target is furniture magnate Nathan Arizona (Trey Wilson) and his wife (Lynne Dumin Kitei), who have just been blessed with much publicized quints.

Once H.I. and Ed have the child things don't get any easier, as they are confronted by several models of the "family unit."

One neighboring couple is intent on wife-swapping while H.I.'s crazed prison buddies, Gale (John Goodman) and Evelle (William Forsythe), who beat a path to his door after tunneling out of the joint, are another alternative. And the generically named Arizonas are yet another possible direction for the new family.

Loosely structured around a voiceover narration by Cage, "Raising Arizona" is as leisurely and disconnected as "Blood Simple" was taut and economical. While film is filled with many splendid touches and plenty of yocks, it often doesn't hold together as a coherent story.

Plowing right through the middle of the story is the mad motorcyclist of the apocalypse (Randall "Tex" Cobb), who is the enemy of all families. As the film's central villain, he's a weak and unfocused creation, with Cobb's performance lacking the teeth to make the character stick.

While Cage and Hunter are fine as the couple at sea in the desert, "Raising Arizona" sports at least one outstanding performance from John Goodman as the con brother who wants a family too.

Here, as in "True Stories," Goodman is a rarity on the screen, an actor who can communicate friendliness and goodwill in spite of his foolishness. Consequently, scenes with the two brothers are the most animated and entertaining of the picture.

As a director Coen demonstrates an assured technical touch (though perhaps a bit too much low angle framing) and camerawork by Barry Sonnenfeld is richly colored and adds to the suprareal texture of Jane Musky's sets.

But when all is said and done, it is hard to tell where "Raising Arizona" stands on family matters beyond its own cleverness.

For all its weirdness it ends up with a rather conventional and conservative view on the family unit, but even here one suspects that the Coen Brothers have their tongues planted firmly in their cheeks. Or could the boys really be warped traditionalists at heart?

Jagr.

Wed., Oct. 8, 1986

Ratboy

(Fable — Color)

A Warner Bros. release of a Malpaso production. Produced by Fritz Manes. Directed by Sondra Locke. Screenplay, Rob Thompson. Camera (Technicolor), Bruce Surtees; editor, Joel Cox; music, Lennie Niehaus; production design, Edward Carfagno; set design, Bob Sessa; set decoration, Cloudia; Ratboy design, Rick Baker; sound, C. Darin Knight; associate producers, David Valdes, Rob Thompson; assistant director, Valdes; casting, Phyllis Huffman. Reviewed at The Burbank Studios, Burbank, Sept. 30, 1986. MPAA Rating: PG-13. Running time: 104

Nikki Morrison Sondra Locke Manny Acting Coach . Robert TownsendChristopher Hewett Jewell Dial-A-Prayer . Larry Hankin Sydney Lassick .Gerrit Graham Billy Morrison Louie Anderson Omer Morrison Ratboy . S.L. Baird Ratboy's Voice . . Gordon Anderson

Yet another picture about how a semi-human, quasi-alien being just can't fit in among earthlings, 'Ratboy'' can boast of some modest virtues but is simply too mild on all counts to carry much impact. Oddball first feature from Sondra Locke, who also stars, deals with eccentric, desperate individuals but in a rather straightforward, unobsessed manner. Pic's gentleness and lack of big names will require Warner Bros. to work hard to cultivate an audience for this one, advisedly through exclusive openings in carefully selected theaters in key cities.

From "E.T." to "The Elephant Man" and dozens of others, recent pix have almost relentlessly focused upon the plight of an alien, or outsider, in society.

In the case of "Ratboy," the origins of the title character are never investigated or explained; indeed, after the terrified little bugger is trapped by some transients, he is just blithely manipulated and used by a succession of hustlers who can't put their greed and selfinterests on hold long enough to even inquire where the tiny one came from or how he got that way.

First and foremost of these careerists is Locke, an out-of-work journalist whose natural talent for promotion, revealed once she's found Ratboy, would indicate she missed her calling by not going into

Within hours of taking charge of the half-rodent, she has a meeting with a big producer, makes the scene at a power party, appears on "The Mery Griffin Show" (before it went off the air) and garners banner headlines due to a crazed press conference from which Ratboy makes his dash for freedom.

Also looking for a piece of the acon is Robert Townsend, a goodnatured black hipster who takes Ratboy off Locke's hands for awhile but ultimately proves too distracted to be an effective protec-

One problem is that Ratboy can hardly speak. He does manage to squeak out a few words from time to time, mainly to the effect that he likes and wants Locke, but most of the time he is simply running around in a panic because he (correctly) views everyone he meets as

Played by actress S.L. Baird in effective makeup devised by Rick Baker that makes the character look disconcertingly like Roman Polanski at certain moments, a distressed little creature such as this should be an easy bet for audience sympathy, but Locke the director doesn't particularly tilt the film that way.

Instead, she concentrates more on the inability of any of the characters to behave in either a rational or productive way in the face of making contact with this unique being.

Despite the appealing touch in evidence in numerous scenes, Rob Thompson's script offers little in the way of fresh insights into a familiar subject. Some quick pacing can't compensate for an overall feel of slowness, which is due to some aimless scenes and a puzzling stretch when Ratboy becomes inexplicably separated from Locke for a long

An amusing continuity problem that will be apparent to Hollywoodsters has Townsend driving Ratboy west through town; hitch is that shots of Townsend in the front seat position him on Hollywood Blvd., while glimpses of Ratboy reveal Sunset Blvd. in the b.g.

Locals might also get a laugh out of Locke staging her lavish press conference at the Million Dollar Theater, which is actually a downtown Spanish-language grind house.

Acting tends to the broad side, and Ratboy's nose twitching is cute. Tech contributions are pro. Cart.

Fri., March 27, 1987

RawHeadRex

(Horror — Color)

An Empire Pictures release. Executive producers, Al Burgess, Paul Gwynn. Produced by Kevin Attew, Dcn Hawkins. Directed by George Pablou. Screenplay, Clive Barker. Camera (Rank Laboratories Color), John Metcalfe; editor, Andy Horvitch; art direction, Len Huntingford; creature effects, Peter Litten; sound, Pat Hayes; assistant director, Martin O'Malley; casting, Michael McLean/Diane Dimeo & Associates. Reviewed March 26, 1987 at Empire Pictures, Los Angeles, Calif. MPAA rating: R. Run-

noward nationibeck David Dukes
Elaine HallenbeckKelly Piper
Declan O'Brien Ronan Wilmot
Reverend Coot
RawHeadRexHenrich Vcn Schellendorf
Det. Insp. Isaac
011

Gissing.....Niall O'Brien

"RawHeadRex" is as gooey as an open sore and about as painful to look at. For such an ugly monster, he sure is boring. Ennui is a sure bet at the b.o. too.

'RawHeadRex'' is a derivative of every bad low-budget creature film ever made.

Out of nowhere, the monster materializes to wreak havoc on a tiny, Irish town. It turns out, he's the devil incarnate with the local vicar's assistant (Ronan Wilmot) his mortal aide.

Along come an American historian (David Dukes) and his family to do a little ancestral digging in the parish records. Duke's timed it just right to be a party to RawHeadRex' rampage.

It takes practically forever for RawHead to bite into his first victim, a poor country farmer. It's when he hits on Dukes' snot-nosed son, that their paths cross and the blood begins to flow freely.

Screenwriter Clive Barker strings out the monster's attacks with some very dreary dialog between Dukes and his oversexed wife (Kelly Piper) and with the deranged Wilmot character.

Bad acting abounds. If it isn't

Dukes telling his wife she has "dirty eyes" (pant, pant), it's Wilmot trying his best Marty Feldman imitation to appear real evil without being laughable.

Even the monster has zero personality. He's big and lumbering and constantly dripping red liquid from his gorilla mouth, but looks too fake to be really threatening.

Being that this is a U.K. production, pic does have a few saving graces, like the rolling green hills that provide the setting and the lilting Irish brougue of the cast mem-

This is the first of five films that Barker is scripting for Pablou from his "Books Of Blood," a collection of horror fiction stories. Hopefully, the rest will be better.

Tech credits are average for this genre. The sound doesn't synch sometimes, but John Metcalfe's camera work is above par.

Mon., Oct. 20, 1986

Recruits

(Comedy—Color)

A Concorde release of a Concorde/ Maurice Smith production. Produced by Smith. Directed by Rafal Zielinski. Screenplay, Charles Wiener, B.K. Roderick. Camera (color), Peter Czerski; editor, Stephan Fanfara; music, Steve Parsons; art direction, Craig Richards; set decoration, Nick White; costume design, Eva Gord; sound, Urmas John Rosin; assistant director, Rob Malensant; second unit director, Randy Bradshaw, Reviewed at the Egyptian Thea ter, L.A., Oct. 17, 1986. MPAA Rating: R. Running time: 82 min.

Steve	Steve Osmond
Mike	Doug Annear
Howie	Alan Deveau
Winston	John Terrell
Susan	Lolita David
Brazil	Tracey Tanner
Tanya	Annie McAuley
Stonewall	Tony Travis
Magruder	Mike McDonald
Sgt. S	Colleen Karney
Mayor Bagley	Jason Logan
Mrs. Bagley	Caroline Tweedle
Clint	Mark Blutman
Thunderhead	Thor

"Recruits" is a non-name brand "Police Academy." Only marginally sillier and less funny than the real thing, pic was even shot near Toronto, where most of the successful Warner Bros. series entries were lensed. Sole differences are that "Recruits" looks a lot cheaper and will make a tiny fraction of the amount at

Produced by Maurice Smith and directed by Rafal Zielinski, same team responsible for last year's "Loose Screws," this concoction reeks of familiarity from the outset, as a group of goofballs is put together by a scheming police department in order to discredit the local mayor and get him booted out of of-

About an hour is taken up with the familiar shenanigans stemming from training camp mishaps, confrontations with local thugs and the occasional comic sex scenes, in which women's tops come flying off as if connected to wires.

After having stumbled through one mud puddle after another, affable gang finally shapes up and redeems itself, although final reel feels like padding added to stretch matters out to feature length

Performances and staging assume cartoon-like proportions in this harmless but profoundly frivolous farce. One debit is the unattractive lensing, which makes everyone look pasty. Cart.

Wed., Oct. 29, 1986

Red-Headed Stranger

(Melodrama — Color)

An Alive Films release. Produced by Willie

Nelson and William Wittliff. Written and directed by Wittliff. Camera (color), Neil Roach, Reviewed at Denver Int. Film Festival, Oct. 18, 1986. MPAA Rating: R. Run-

ning time: 105 min. With: Willie Nelson, Morgan Fairchild, Katharine Ross, Royal Dano.

Denver - Willie Nelson made Red-Headed Stranger'' two years ago, but only now has its first public screening occurred. Changes for subsequent showings are doubtful because of excessively cliched and unconvincing characters. More than Nelson's vast popularity would be required to lift this melodrama into acceptance.

Nelson plays a parson who travels from Philadelphia to Driscoll, Mont., to take over a church, taking with him his glittery bride Raysha, played by Morgan Fairchild in plastic fashion. The town turns cut to be in thralldom to Larn Claver, played by Royal Dano, and his four roughneck bully sons, who have closed down the town well and forced citizens to get their water at the town bar.

Parson Shay decides to contest these water controls, but it is a long Winter before he succeeds. Meantime, Raysha runs away with her Philadelphia lover, and in his fury Shay finds them in the next town and shoots them.

On a rampage after this, he leaves the church, and shoots anyone who gets in his way, until he meets Laurie, played by Katharine Ross, who ranches with her son after she has sent her lazy husband packing. Shay works the ranch and finds the peace of mind to enable him to return to put down the Claver klan.

Nelson sings frequently but not enough to alter the dull tone of the action. There is an effort to frame the narrative in a ballad but it does not work. The film is an outgrowth of Nelson's 1975 album of the same

Nelson has taken on a character of great intensity, but the direction William Wittliff and his acting fail to measure up to the challenge. His brooding manner doesn't help the film along.

Morgan Fairchild is the classic Hollywood heroine in the wilds, lavishly gowned and made up to perfection - and always unbeliev-

Tues., May 5, 1987

Pokayaniye REPENTANCE

(Soviet — Color)

A Studio Gruzia Film (Tblisi) production. World sales: Sovexport. Screenplay by Tengiz Abuladze, Rezo Kveselava, Nana Ozhanelidze. Directed by Abuladze; camera (Orwo-color) Mikhail Agranovitj, editor, uncredited; production design, Georgi Mikel adze; music score selector, Dzhanelidze. Reviewed at private screening, Malmo, Sweden, April 26, 1987. (In competition at the Cannes Film Festival.) Running time: Variam Aravidze (father) and Abel

Aravidze (son). Avtandil Makharadze ...lja Ninidze

Guliko. Merab Ninidze Tornike Ketevan Barateli... . Zejnab Botsvadze Ketevan Abuladze Nino Barateli Sandro Barateli. . Edisher Giorgobiani Mikhail Korisheli... . Kahki Kavsadze Nino Zakariadze Abel (child)......Dato Kemkhadze

Malmo — As an unexpected export item, Tengiz Abuladze's Georgian-language feature film "Repentance" is the fairest child yet (its production year is 1984) of the current glasnost policy of artistic freedom and is sure to be received with huzzahs everywhere. Picture is, however, hardly a shoo-in beyond the art exhibition circuit.

'Repentance'' is a continuous tragedy-cum-farce, constantly unsettling in its effects, some of which are special indeed - highly entertaining, too - even if slightly overburdened with dialog (in Georgian, the production coming out of Stalin's home state) and engrossingly dramatic and striking in its visual values. Kafkaesque moods and Bunuel imagery are obvious inspirations throughout.

A late dictator's grave is being violated repeatedly by a woman with a grievance, and she now stands before the judges of a state that is never pinpointed in time or fashion: the judges wear wigs, as in a British court; the prisoners, dressed in modern clothes, are taken away in medieval horse-drawn wagons, etc. What makes the woman's acts especially alarming is that the dead man now keeps popping up to give trouble like Hitchcock's "Harry."

The dictator's son, himself a high official with vested interests, would like his father to remain buried, and one day slaps his own son for being too inquisitive about the old man's deeds. The result is that the youngster literally shoulders the burdens of his grandfather's sins and commits suicide.

The sins in question include the old tyrant's dealing with a friend, a

He woos the painter to win him over for his cause, but the painter refuses him and is then exiled to Siberia. Later he is tortured and crucified upside down in an old church, now converted into a science lab. Symbolism and allegory need no learned keys to deciphering anywhere in Abuladze's film, yet the club of sanctimonious propaganda is never yielded.

The gist of picture's moral is that art and individual freedom will prevail. When the painter is crucified, the walls of the church instantly catch fire. The artist's wife, not knowing about his destiny, goes down to the river in the hope of finding his name or a message from him carved in the timber coming from the North. She finds nothing, but another woman on a similar errand does, and is seen embracing the dead wood, talking to it and finally kissing it like it was truly the mouth of her loved one.

All acting (with Avtandil Makharadze doing a cunning job of playing both the grotesque dictator figure and dictator's son struggling with his conscience) is subjugated neatly to story's natural flow, but Makharadze is likely to strike everybody as their own heart's Mr. Everyman when, towards film's end, he makes sure the dictator stays dead by exhuming him once more, this time throwing him down the mountain slope to be eaten by crows.

A more Christian message comes through in picture's final frames, when the painter's daughter is in her kitchen decorating a cake with small crosses. Through the window, an old woman asks about the road to the church. There is no church, she is told. Why then, she persists, is the road still there?

It would appear relevant to add that Tengiz Abuladze is no flash-inthe-pan. He was born in 1924, is a graduate of the Moscow Film School and has done at least eight feature films. Even to Cannes, he is no newcomer. He won a prize there in 1956 for his short film "Magdan's Donkey."

Wed., Jan. 14, 1987

Return To Horror High (Horror — Color)

A New World Pictures release in associa tion with Balcor Film Investors of a Greg H. Sims production. Executive producer, Sims. Produced by Mark Lisson. Directed by Bill Froehlich. Screenplay, Froehlich, Lisson, Dana Escalante, Sims; camera (color), Roy Wagner: editor, Nancy Forner; music, Stacy Widelitz; production design, Greta Grigorian; costumes, Marcy Grace Froehlich; associate producers, Jason Hoffs, Joan Baribeault; casting, Linda Francis; assistant director, Rachel Tallay. Reviewed at Cineplex Odeon Eaton Center, Toronto, Jan. 9, 1987. MPAA Rating: R. Running

..Lori Lethin Steven Blake Brendan Hughes Harry Sleerik. Josh Forbes. Alex Rocco Scott Jacoby Principal Kastleman. .Andy Romano Arthur Lyman Richard Brestoff .Pepper Martin Chief Devner. . . Maureen McCormick Richard Birnbaum... . Vince Edwards

Toronto — With opening credits that announce "Starring (in pieces)," the laughs come faster than the frights, which makes 'Return To Horror High'' not quite the slasher pic the target audience might hope for. Its crude special effects and lack of thrills will propel it quickly to videostore shelves.

Producer Mark Lisson and director Bill Froehlich have set up a film within a film. A production crew goes to Crippen High School, where five years earlier a rash of murders occurred. Natch, the killer is still lurking about somewhere.

At top of pic, there is a barrage of police cars at the school, bloodied bodies strewn everywhere, and one survivor - the screenwriter - who relates the debacle of the making of the film.

Seems that during the production, crew members keep disappearing, stage blood gets mixed with real blood, and the white-masked killer stalks the halls again. Because of the dropout rate, actors have to triple up on roles. Even real highschool teachers are asked to re-create their roles in the new pic, including Vince Edwards as a lecherous biology teacher and Andy Romano as the depraved principal.

The love interest, police officer Steven Blake (Brendan Hughes), who plays one of the original h.s. students, and actress Callie (Lori Lethin), join forces to find the killer lurking in the basement of the school.

Special effects are less than startling: gushing blood and severed limbs just don't have the cachet they used to.

(Before pic opened in Toronto, the Ontario Film Review Board made two cuts of a "knife cutting a torso, ripping out of heart, and placing heart in mouth" and one of graphic decapitation.)

In one scene, Edwards is nailed to the ground while the killer dissects him, but it's more for laughs.

Pic is more an in-joke for the industry about the making of a lowbudget film. An actor with a hatchet through his head asks the harried director (Scott Jacoby) what's his motivation. An ultra-sleazoid producer (Alex Rocco) orders a gofer to get him a pastrami sandwich but not from the truck.

The confusing technique of firstperson recollection, flashbacks to the making of the pic, all cut with real killer scenes is just that - confusing.

Script is slack on the bellylaughs, with much of the humor merely lame and crude. Uninspired camerawork follows the victims as they walk down the hall, against an ominous soundtrack, and meet up with the black-shrouded murderer.

The plot twist at the end is just plain twisted. The decimated crew turns out to be just "playing dead," thanks to the genius of their makeup man. It's a publicity stunt to ensure the picture makes b.o. bingo. But it also means the door is wide open for another return to Horror High. Devo.

Mon., July 13, 1987

Revenge Of The Nerds II: Nerds In Paradise

(Comedy — Color)

A 20th Century Fox Film Corp. release of an Interscope Communications production in association with Amercent Films and American Entertainment Partners L.P. Produced by Ted Field, Robert Cort, Peter Bart. Exec producer and director, Joe Roth. Screenplay by Dan Guntzelman, Steve Marshall. Based on characters created by Tim Metcalfe, Miguel Tejada-Flores, Steve Zacharias, Jeff Buhai. Camera (DeLuxe Color), Charles Correll; editor. Richard Chew: music written by Mark Mothersbaugh, Gerald V. Casale, and per formed by Devo; production designer, Trevo Williams; costume designer, Jeffrey Kurland; sound mixer (Dolby), Jack Dalton; assistant director, Jim Chory; associate producers, Richard Chew, Paul Schiff; casting, Pam Dixon. Reviewed at Zanuck Theater, 20th Century Fox, L.A., July 9, 1987. MPAA rating: PG-13. Running time: 92 min.

Lewis
Booger Curtis Armstrong
Lamar Larry B. Scott
PoindexterTimothy Busfield
SunnyCourtney Thorne-Smith
WormserAndrew Cassese
OgreDonald Gibb
RogerBradley Whitford
BuzzEd Lauter
Stewart Barry Sobel

The nerds are back on the big screen with some goofy hijinks that aren't worth the price of admission. Even the Summer escapist urge may barely be satisfied here since there are too few laughs. As a sequel, however, pic may tap presold audience and do modest business.

Setting is Ft. Lauderdale at a supposed national fraternity conference, where the nerds' contingent is repping its college after prevailing over mainstream frat brothers in initial film. Once again on the outside looking in, the nerds fight back when ostracized by the unlikeable, archetypal Greeks.

However outlandishly the nerds are portrayed in struggle for individual identity amidst conformist pressures, they are seen so sympathetically that only a curmudgeon would root for those nasty fraternity types. Alas, latter are doomed to suffer a justified comeuppance by the end of the proceedings.

In winding his way through this simple yarn, director Joe Roth relies heavily on the ongoing sight gag of the Nerds, their attire and quirky mannerisms. Back for the sequel are: Lewis Skolnick (Robert Carradine), Arnold Poindexter (Timothy Busfield), Wormser (Andrew Cassese), Dudley (Booger) Dawson (Curtis Armstrong) and Lamar Latrelle (Larry B. Scott). They go together like charter members of the nation's first college computer club.

Joining the group is the newest nerd, Stewart Lipsey (ably portrayed by Barry Sobel). Also on hand is hotel desk clerk Sunny Carstairs (Courtney Thorne-Smith), who counters the cinematic stereotype of a beautiful woman and sides with the nerds.

A high point of the antics comes midway with a nerd rap tune — "No On Fifteen" - which denounces a fraternity conference resolution requiring physical prowess as a condition for membership. Tune itself and staging of the number are tops.

Pic's theme, "Back To Paradise,"

by 38 Special, has all the earmarkings of a top-40 winner — especially if this sequel stirs the cult-like following of the original.

Wed., Feb. 18, 1987

The Right Hand Man (Australian — Drama — Color)

A New World (in U.S., Greater Union in Australia) release of a UAA presentation of a Yarraman production, Produced by Steven Grives, Tom Oliver, Basil Appleby. Executive producer, David Thomas. Directed by Di Drew. Stars Rupert Everett, Hugo Weaving. Screenplay, Helen Hodgman, from the book, "The Right Hand Man," by Kathleen Peyton. Camera (Eastmancolor), Peter James: editor, Don Saunders; music, Allan Zavod; sound, Syd Butterworth; production design, Neil Angwin; costumes, Graham Purcell; production manager, Renate Wilson; assistant director, Phil Rich; casting, Liz Mullinar. Reviewed at Mosman screening room, Sydney, Feb. 10, 1987. Running time: 100 min.

Harry Ironminster.... Ned Rowlands..... Hugo Weaving

Redbridge . . . Catherine McClements
Dr. Redbridge Arthur Dignam
Lady Ironminster Jennifer Claire

Sydney - "The Right Hand Man" is a beautiful, but only fitfully engrossing melodrama of the type the Gainsborough Studios used to make in Britain in the '40s: James Mason and Stewart Granger would have been ideal casting for the principal male roles here.

Story concerns the sickly, diabetes-suffering young aristocrat Harry Ironminster (well played by British actor Rupert Everett) who's inadvertently the cause of his father's death in a coaching accident; injuries Harry sustains at the time result, eventually, in the amputation of his right arm (an unnecessarily graphic sequence).

Unable to ride his beloved horses, Harry becomes morose and even his pretty girlfriend, Sarah (Catherine McClements), scientifically inclined daughter of the local doctor (Arthur Dignam) can't help him.

Harry's temporary salvation turns out to be Ned Rowlands (Hugo Weaving), the dashing driver of the Leviathon, a giant stagecoach that thunders down the rough roads to Sydney every week.

Realizing that coaches will soon give way to steamtrains, Ned agrees to come to work for Harry, and even enters into a bizarre relationship with Sarah.

It's at this point that Helen Hodgman's screenplay, adapted from Kathleen Peyton's novel, goes off the rails: it's just beyond the realm of possibility that the sensible Sarah (beautifully played by newcomer McClements) would agree to sleep with Ned, however charmingly Weaving plays him, in the way she does here. Pic suffers a major credibility gap at this point.

Otherwise, it's an impressive effort. Di Drew, directing her first feature after winning prizes for her short films, does a fine job of direction, and works very well indeed with the actors.

Cinematographer Peter James provides outstandingly beautiful images, often evoking the delicate lighting of "Barry Lyndon," which is high praise; production design of Neil Angwin is also a major plus, and indeed the film is worth seeing for its looks alone.

Trouble is, audiences aren't motivated solely by visuals, and, as indicated, the plotting here leaves something to be desired.

As compensation, there are a couple of finely staged action scenes, including the initial accident that triggers the plot and a breathtaking sequence in which the fast-moving Leviathon almost collides with another, smaller, coach on the highway. Special tribute should be paid to actor Weaving, who obviously did most of his own driving under clearly difficult conditions.

Thurs., April 9, 1987

Rimini Rimini

(Italian — Comedy — Color)

A Medusa release of Scena Film production. Produced by Augusto Caminito. Directed by Sergio Corbucci. Screenplay, Bernardino Zapponi, Corbucci, Bruno Corbucci, Mario Amendola, Marco Risi, Gianni Romoli, Massimo Franciosa; camera (Eastman-color), Danilo Desideri; editor, Tatiana Casini Morigi: art director, Marco Dentici. Reviewed at Adriano Cinema, Rome, March 1987. Running time: 116 min.

....Paolo Villaggio Gildo Lola Serena Grandi Eleonora Brigliadori
Laura Antonelli Rich womanJerry Cala

With: Gigi & Andrea, Paolo Bonacelli, Maurizio Micheli, Sylva Koscina, Elvire

Rome - A down-market vacation on the Adriatic is spending your holidays on the overcrowded, overdeveloped beaches of Rimini, a haven for German tourists that has been nobilized by being Federico Fellini's hometown. If for Fellini the symbol of the place is its gaudy Grand Hotel, director-coscripter Sergio Corbucci finds its quintessence in a squalid merry-go-round of singles on the make. This open-air bedroom farce has opened well domestically, thanks to the appeal of its comedy-star cast.

In the style of the genre, a number of stories overlap without intertwining; the only thing that links them is they all take place in Rimini and they share a tone of lascivious vulgarity.

Paolo Villaggio lends his talents to portraying Gildo, a prurient magistrate famous for closing down red-light shows. His sexual hangups are forced into the open by the aggressive attentions lavished on him by extra-large sex symbol Serena Grandi, who frequently appears in the nude. In a pitiful send up of "91/2 Weeks," complete with the Joe Cocker song, she forces Gildo to go to a disco in drag while a paparazzi-accomplice lies in wait to ruin his career.

Laura Antonelli cameos in a garbled tale of a rich woman who thinks her lover has drowned. Her three fat brothers try to console her with violins and a stand-up comic, until her Ulysses staggers out of the sea and proceeds to make up for lost

Milanese comic Jerry Cala appears in a trite tale of an aspiring wheeler-dealer who hires a prostitute to pose as his wife and seduce a millionaire.

TV star Eleanora Brigliadori turns up as a recently separated beauty. Her would-be lovers include a body-builder afraid of AIDS, an impotent gigolo, and a rapacious 10-year-old boy. Only number 3 is consummated.

For good measure, Andrea Roncati is a priest in shorts who is forced to suck the jellyfish stings on the body of a nun who is topless.

Film is technically unexceptional.

Wed., March 4, 1987

Rita, Sue And Bob Too (British — Comedy — Color)

An Orion Classics release (in U.S.) of a Film Four International-Umbrella Entertain-

ment production, in association with British reen: Executive producer, Oscar Lewen-in. Produced by Sandy Leiberson. Directed by Alan Clarke, Screenplay, Andrea Dunbar, based on her plays "The Arbor" and "Rita, Sue And Bob Too"; camera (Eastmancolor), Ivan Strasburg; editor, Stephen Singleton; music, Michael Kamen; sound, ike McDuffie; production supervisor, Garth Thomas; coproducer, Patsy Pollock, Reed at Berlin Film Fest (Market), March

Rita. Siobhan Finneran George Costigan
Lesley Sharp
Willie Ross
Patti Nicholls Sue's father Sue's mother

West Berlin - Britain's Film Four has come up with another winner in the "Letter To Brezh-nev," "My Beautiful Laundrette" tradition with "Rita, Sue And Bob Too," a sad-funny comedy about sex and life in the York-shire city of Bradford. Orion Classics should have another hit with this gem, if they can avoid an X rating.

Rita and Sue are two schoolgirls who sometimes babysit for a welloff couple, Bob and Michelle. In film's opening sequence, the odious vet somehow charming Bob, a realestate agent, gives the girls a lift home, but stops off first on the moors above the city and, without preliminaries, proposes sex with them. Rita and Sue are agreeable.

Immediately, screenwriter Andrea Dunbar injects a completely convincing mixture of raunchy comedy and yet sadness.

The girls continue to meet secretly with Bob until Michelle gets suspicious after finding packet of condoms in her husband's trousers. Bob denies any wrongdoing, and the girls express innocence, but when one of Michelle's friends spots the three dancing together at a local disco, Michelle's patience is at an end (the ensuing row amusingly involves the entire neighborhood).

Rita and Sue, spendidly played by Siobhan Finneran and Michelle Holmes, are pathetic figures as they trip along in their tight miniskirts, but they're alive and lively and funny. George Costigan makes Bob a charming character, despite his ingrained seediness.

Director Alan Clarke, who made 'Scum' some years ago, directs with skill, and cameraman Ivan Strasburg ensures the film is fluidly shot with fine use of Stedicam. The score is another asset, and technically pic is fine.

The dialog is relentlessly raunchy, with constant use of four-letter words and a completely uninhibited attitude to all things sexual, though nudity is almost nonexistent. Though at first audiences may find the occasional use of slang a problem, it will soon become obvious what "having a jump" means.

Pic is in the finest tradition of British realist cinema, and is a credit to all concerned. It won't be a film for everyone, but it should pack in discriminating audiences, given the right handling.

Tues., April 28, 1987

Robert Wilson And The Civil Wars

(U.S.-W. German - Docu - Color)

A Unisphere release of an Aspekt Teleflim, Hamburg/Unisphere Pictures, N.Y. production. Produced by Markas Trebitsch, Orin Wechsberg, Howard Brookner. Directed and narration written by Brookner. Camera (color), Ira Brenner, Bob Chappell, Tom Di Cillo: editor, Michelle Bahlke, Reviewed as part of Global Village Documentary Festival, Global Village, N.Y., April 20, 1987. No

New York — The title of Howard Brookner's docu, "Robert Wilson And The Civil Wars," explains everything. The first part of the film is an attempt to delve into the life and work of one of the world's most controversial theatrical artists, Robert Wilson, while the second half concerns his fight to create and mount the monumental project "The Civil Wars," with production set for the 1984 Olympic Games.

Known for the unconventional stagings of his operas, the creator of "Einstein On The Beach" and "The Life And Times Of Sigmund Freud" had a unique and epic concept for this projected overall new work. The piece, based on the theme of the U.S. Civil War, would be simultaneously created in six countries using six different composers.

Each participating country developed segments of the work, which were first performed separately in the country of origin. The resulting complete nine-hour version of the work, slated for the L.A. Olympics, was to have united and interrelated all of the casts and crews into a multi-disciplined masterpiece of staging and world theater.

Unfortunately, this dream, which began in 1979, was never realized and this film only documents Wilson's personal battles concerning "The Wars."

The major problem is financing. The Olympics Committee would put up matching funds, but Wilson and his supporters needed first to raise around \$1,500,000, which they tried to do through pledges and a series of exhibits selling the artist's designs and drawings from the work.

In a race against time to prepare the piece and raise needed capital, Wilson is seen traveling around the world working with the various casts, beginning in Rotterdam, Cologne, Tokyo, Minneapolis, Marseille and finally Rome, where an unexpected electricians' strike threatens to shut down the entire operation.

Although Wilson's work tends to be static, there is high drama behind the scenes. The mounting of this piece, so dependent on the precise coordination of its disparate parts, builds in tension as the final cut-off day approaches. Wilson tears himself between the twin tasks of director to six separate productions around the globe and chief fundraiser, manning telephones and trying to drum up support.

The 90-minute theatrical release of this docu re-edited in West Germany by Michelle Bahlke, differs greatly from the two-part two-hour version of the film prepared for British tv.

The first section, concerning the man and his work, uses minimum narration and relies on a series of talking-head comments about the artist by collaborators (Phillip Glass, Gavin Bryers, Heiner Muller, etc.), family and friends.

Their statements are cut with scenes from Wilson's past work — "Deafman Glance," "Letter For Queen Victoria," "Einstein On The Beach," etc. — and also to an exploration of his early years growing up in Waco, Tex, and his first New York job working with braindamaged children.

Editing tends to be circular, showing the man through a multisided approach. All clues to help us understand Wilson's fascinating and dense work. The second part, which concentrates on "The Wars," only offers the audience a hint of what promised to be an impressive monumental major work. Its sense of urgency as impending failure looms on the horizon carries the audience along to an eventual anticlimax.

The poignancy of Howard Brookner's docu is that this film is the closest record thast remains of "The Wars." Through it, various glimpses of the overall work are shown and one can only imagine what might have been.

Lent.

Wed., July 8, 1987

Robocop

(Fantasy adventure — Color)

An Orion Pictures release. Produced by Arne Schmidt. Directed by Paul Verhoeven. Executive producer, Jon Davison. Screenplay, Edward Neumeier, Michael Miner. Camera (DuArt Film Laboratories color, DeLuxe prints), Jost Vacano; editor, Frank J. Urioste; music, Basil Poledouris; production designer, William Sandell; art director, Gayle Simon; set decorator, Robert Gould; set designer, James Tocci; Robocop designed, created by Rob Bottin; ED-209 designed, created by Craig Davies, Peter Ronzani; special effects, Dale Martin; costume design, Erica Edell Phillips; sound, Robert Wald; assistant director, Mark Goldblatt; second-unit director, Mark Goldblatt; second-unit camera, Rick Anderson; casting, Sally Dennison, Julie Selzer. Reviewed at the Samuel Goldwyn Theater, Beverly Hills, June 30, 1987. MPAA Rating: R. Running time: 103 min.

Robocop, Murphy...... Peter Weller

Robocop, Murphy Peter Weller
Lewis Nancy Allen
Jones Ronny Cox
Clarence Kurtwood Smith
Morton Miguel Ferrer
Sgt. Reed Robert DoQui
Old Man Dar iel O'Herlihy

"Robocop" is a comic book film that's definitely not for kids. Even so, the welding of extreme violence with four-letter words is tempered with enough gut-level humor and technical wizardry to create the kind of talked-about film that is sure to forge a wide swath at the Summer b.o. for Orion.

Pic was originally rated X, then cut to an R, but there is so much spilling of guts, raw firepower and visually assaulting scenes remaining that even the most hardened viewer will be jolted.

If there is anything that says this is the work of Dutch director Paul Verhoeven, it is the theme he has employed in his other films such as "Soldier Of Orange" and "Spetters" — that life is expendable.

Otherwise, there is nothing that suggests this is Verhoeven's first American film. "Robocop" is as much a Hollywood picture as "Rambo," "Dawn Of The Dead," "The Terminator" and "Blade Runner," from which screenwriters Michael Miner and Edward Neumeier have derived several of their ideas, with a nod to the Aussie production "Mad Max" as well.

Verhoeven has deftly managed to incorporate the best elements of these films and still create a fantasy that has an identity all its own.

Roller coaster ride begins with the near dismemberment of police officer, Murphy (Peter Weller), recently transferred to the southern precinct of the Detroit Police Dept. in year of the not-too-distant future.

As could be said today, in the words of the pic's ole-line corporate establishment, "Detroit has a cancer, and the cancer is crime."

But except for a couple of oneliners referring to the Henry Ford Memorial Hospital and Lee Iacocca Elementary School, setting could be any decayed city run over by corruption. Backdrops are largely futuristic matte paintings where the figures are superimposed, interior shots on the highest floors of any skyscraper and exterior shots of rusted out factories.

There are three organizations inextricably wound into Detroit's anarchical society — the police, a band of sadistic hoodlums and a multinational conglomerate that has a contract with the city to run the force.

It's a bleak world they inhabit, one where there's a thin line between lawfulness and lawlessness. Nearly everyone depicted here, anyway, exhibits a certain out-fornumber-one mentality, be he cop or crook.

Weller is blown to bits just at the time an ambitious junior exec at the multinational is ready to develop a prototype cyborg — half man, half machine programmed to be an indestructible cop. Thus Weller becomes Robocop, unleashed to fell the human scum he encounters, not the least among them his killers.

It is hard to tell from among the 100-plus names listed in the credits who is to be lauded the most in creating this very original piece of filmmaking, cold-blooded though it is.

Work is so compelling technically, the sight of watching human lives being wasted becomes almost secondary. Nearly every scene contains some amazing stunts or camera work and the best is seeing the world from Robocop's point of view.

Robocop himself is a fascinating creation. How he works and analyzes things and what he is capable of doing is what keeps this adventure at full throttle from the time he walks on screen to the last brutal moment.

True to form for the other cartoon characters come-to-life, those he interacts with are largely one-dimensional. As sicko sadists go, Kurtwood Smith is a well-cast adversary. Nancy Allen as Weller's partner provides the only warmth in the film, wanting and encouraging Robocop to listen to some of the human spirit that survived inside him.

Inventiveness shows up in other ways, too. Screenwriters Neumeier and Miner keep things going at a frenetic pace, yet allowing for a certain amount of silliness and dumb jokes to give the audience a breather and remind them not to take it all too seriously.

"Robocop" is as tightly worked as a film can be, not a moment or line wasted. Even Leeza Gibbons and Mario Machado's coanchor spot announcing the news, which is usually throw-away expository stuff, was worked out down to the letter.

Robocop designer and creator Rob Bottin deserves special mention. How he worked out that Weller's human face could be attached to an all-metal exposed brain is completely mesmerizing.

Jost Vacano's photographic eye has also managed the amazing — giving a clean look to chaos. *Brit*.

Wed., May 13, 1987

The Rosary Murders

(U.S. — Color)

A Samuel Goldwyn presentation. Executive producers, Robert G. Laurel, Michael Mihalich. Directed by Fred Walton. Screenplay, Elmore Leonard and Fred Walton. Camera (color), David Golia; editor, Sam Vialle; music, Bobby Laurel, Don Sebesky; associate producer, Chris Coles. Reviewed at Cannes Film Festival (Market), May 9, 1987. No MPAA. Running time: 105 min.

Father Koesler ... Donald Sutherland Father Nabors ... Charles Durning Lt. Koznicki ... Josef Sommer

Pat Lennon.........Belinda Bauer Also with James Murtaugh, John Danelle, Addison Powell, Kathleen Tolan, Tom Mardirosian, Anita Barone.

Cannes — Neither as a thriller nor as a psychological drama concerning the dilemmas of a Catholic priest's confessional secrets does this film make the grade. Pic might do okay in initial playoffs using a splash release on basis of advertising of murder and church theme, with Sutherland as an additional drawing card, but is unlikely to have durable legs.

A string of murders committed by someone with a grudge against the Catholic Church, his victims being nuns and priests in a Detroit parish, are lacking suspense or dramatic buildup, and what should have been the final climactic sequences are as flat as a holy wafer.

Pic revolves mostly around a priest, Father Koesler, who sets about trying to solve the murders while the police seem to be twiddling their thumbs.

The priest turns sleuth after the murderer drops a few clues to him during a confessional box session. As a man of the cloth, latter can't tip off the police or probable vic-

Little by little, the priest unveils the story of a girl in the parochial school attached to his church who committed suicide three years ago.

But with each step of his investigation, and with each murder committed, the suspense seems to decrease instead of build up. Even a fleeting face-to-face encounter in the girl's home between priest and the girl's killer father is anticlimactic and over in a matter of seconds.

When the priest, with a little help from the police, finally catches the assassin, the criminal's motivations for the multi-killings are rather weak and unconvincing.

Yarn is rather lamely padded out with a subplot about a femme reporter from a local paper who falls in love with the priest during the early part of the investigation.

The romance comes to nothing, and about halfway through the film the girl drops out of the story, though she returns to stand in a doorway of the priest's office when the crime is solved. To say "hello" to Father Koesler, or to lure him away from the priesthood, maybe? We're never told.

Sutherland puts in a good performance as the liberal-minded investigating priest, and Charles Durning is fine as the hard-line father superior. Production has a handsome look to it and technical credits are good, as are dialog and direction.

Tues., June 9, 1987

Roxanne

(Romantic comedy — Color)

A Columbia Pictures release. Produced by Michael Rachmil, Daniel Melnick. Executive producer, Steve Martin. Directed by Fred Schepisi. Screenplay by Steve Martin, from the play "Cyrano De Bergerac," by Edmond Rostand. Camera (DeLuxe Color), Ian Baker; editor, John Scott; music, Bruce Smeaton; production design, Jack DeGovia; art director, David Fischer; set decorator, Kimberly Richardson; sound (Dolby stereo), Rob Young; assistant director, Michael Steele; casting, Pennie du Pont. Reviewed at Samuel Goldwyn Theater, Academy of Motion Picture Arts & Sciences, Beverly Hills, June 4, 1987. MPAA rating: PG. Running time: 107 min.*

MPAA rating: PG. Running time: 107 min.«
C.D. Bales Steve Martin
Roxanne Daryl Hannah
Chris Rick Rossovich
Dixie Shelley Duvall
Chuck: John Kapelos
Mayor Deebs Fred Willard
Dean Max Alexander
Andy Michael J. Pollard

"Roxanne" has enough laughs

for a five-minute stand-up routine and that way audiences would be spared the inconvenience of sitting through the other 102 minutes. As a reworking of Rostand's "Cyrano De Bergerac," the only reason to see the film is for a few bits of inspired nonsense by Steve Martin as the nosey lover. This, however, may not be a big enough draw and boxoffice outlook is limited.

Martin wrote script to suit his special talent for sight-gags, but sacrifices much of the poetry and poignancy of the original. This Cyrano, called C.B. here, is just a wild and crazy guy with a big nose and a gift for gab.

Of course, the central plot device of the play, in which a true love writes letters to help another suitor win the same woman he doesn't love as much, has been used in numerous set-ups and here it's adapted to a small ski community in Washington where Martin is the fire chief.

The film is barely underway when Roxanne (Daryl Hannah) is out of her clothes and locked out of her house. When C.B. comes to the rescue, it's love at first sight but his enlarged proboscis disqualifies him as a serious suitor, or so he thinks.

Instead, Roxanne turns her attentions to Chris (Rick Rossovich), a new recruit on the fire department who is all but rendered dumb in front of women.

Eventually, Roxanne learns that Rossovich is only after her body and realizes that Martin loves her truly. This being Hollywood, the two lovers are united in a happy ending (unlike the play where Roxanne learns the truth too late).

Although Martin makes good use of the opportunity to duel with tennis rackets and verbally joust with buffoons in the local watering hole and is generally likable, Hannah is a wimpy and unconvincing Roxanne. As an astronomy student searching the skies for an as-yet undiscovered comet, she is indeed beautiful but lacks the spirit to make Martin's passion believable.

One can sympathize with C.B.'s longing but since the object of his desire is such an airhead, the whole force of the film floats away. For anyone who has been moved by the Rostand play, this lack of depth will indeed be disappointing. But even for a general audience that has never heard of Cyrano, there is not much to get excited about here.

Action away from the romance is often amusing, with the inept fire fighters supplying most of it. Headed by Michael J. Pollard, crew of volunteers are really the gang that couldn't squirt straight.

As the would-be lover who finds greener pastures with a local waitress, Rossovich is a likable hulk without much personality. Shelley Duvall handles the thankless role of C.B.'s friend and confessor with as much elan as the hapless part will allow.

Aussie director Fred Schepisi, who has elsewhere handled much rougher material, does a professional job of creating a breezy atmosphere, but in the end, its hopelessly sappy stuff.

Tech credits are commendable, with Jack DeGovia's production design and Ian Baker's cinematography creating a small-town wonderland suitable for a fairy tale like "Roxanne."

Fri., March 6, 1987

La Rumba THE RUMBA

(French — Color)

A Hachette Premiere/UIP release of a Progefi/TF 1 Films/Hachette Premiere coproduction. Executive producer, Christine Gouze-Renal. Directed by Roger Hanin. Screenplay, Hanin, Jean Curtelin. Camera (color), Je. Nenzer; editor, Youcef Tobni; music, Claude Bolling; production designer, Bernard Evein; sound, Daniel Brisseau; makeup, Monique Huylebroeck; costumes, Laurence Brignon; assistant director, Michel Picard; production manager, Philippe Verro; casting, Shula Siegfried. Reviewed at the UGC Normandie Theater, Paris, Feb. 20, 1987. Running time: 92 min.

Beppo Manzoni	noger namm
Malleville	Michel Piccoli
Zavier Detaix	Niels Arestrup
Ma Pomme	Guy Marchand
Madam Meyrals	Patachou
Regina	Corinne Touzet
Valentine	. Sophie Michaud
Puppie Ziegler	. Stephane Jobert
Gino Motta	Karim Allaoui
Josephine Baker	Vivian Reed
Jusephine Daker	
Nono Gozlan	

Paris — "La Rumba," a '30s thriller set against the backdrop of encroaching European fascism, oozes production gloss with some of the swankiest sets, costumes and model cars in local memory since the Jean-Paul Belmondo pix "Borsalino" and "Stavisky."

Imposing wallflower, however, is the script by Jean Curtelin and director-star Roger Hanin, a studied and uninspired assembly of genre cliches and stereotypes, heavily dosed with "Cabaret"-style decadence and irony.

Hanin is the protagonist, Beppo Manzoni, one of the kingpins of 1938 Parisian night life with a string of classy cabarets, gambling dens and restaurants and close ties to the Underworld. He's also a secret crusader against fascism, saving Italian refugees, plotting the assassinations of fascist bigwigs and foiling the villainies of a corrupt police inspector in cahoots with the extreme right-wing factions.

There's no complexity or nuance in this confrontation between noble patriot gangsters and dastardly blackshirts and Nazis who clash in a familiar choreography of bullets, broads and booze.

Hanin's direction lacks flamboyance and excitement and guides himself and his prestigious cast through the proceedings with overly self-conscious and tight-lipped gravity.

The heavies are played heavily by Niels Arestrup, as the treacherous cop, and Michel Piccoli, as a fascist ringleader, both of whom get their comeuppance from Hanin, his taxi boy-gigolo accomplices and the Paris underworld lead by cameo guest star Lino Ventura at his most monolithically authoritative.

Only actor to exude the breeziness and style the filmmaking lacks is Guy Marchand, who, as the top attraction of Hanin's glitzy cabaret, gives a standout rendition of an old '30s standard a la Maurice Chevalier.

Vivian Reed also steps in to impersonate Josephine Baker out on the town warbling a few bars of "Mes Deux Amours," while veteran chanteuse Patachou hangs about on the sidelines in a nonsinging supporting silhouette."

Finally, the real stars of "La Rumba" are art director Bernard Evein (who last year designed the austerely beautiful "Therese"), lenser Jean Penzer, costume designer Laurence Brignon, and composerarranger Claude Bolling, who have been given the means to make the production a sumptuous feast for eyes and ears. Unfortunately "La Rumba" doesn't rumble with melodramatic tension and surprises.

Mon., April 13, 1987

Rumpelstiltskin (Fairy Tale — Color)

A Cannon Group release. Executive producer, Itzik Kol. Producers, Menahem Golan, Yoram Globus. Associate producer, Patricia Ruben. Directed by David Irving from a screenplay by Irving. Camera (Rank Color), David Gurfinkel; editor, Tova Neeman; production designer, Marek Dobrowolski; set decorator, Albert Segal; music, Max Robert; costume designer, Debbie Leon; sound, Eli Yarkoni; casting (London), Wendy Murray, (Israel) Hadassa Degani. Reviewed March 10, 1987 at Mann Westwood Theater, Los Angeles, Calif. MPAA Rating: G. Running time: 84 min.

Katie Amy Irv	ing
RumpelstiltskinBilly Ba	arty
King MezzerClive Re	llive
Queen GrizeldaPriscilla Poir	iter
PrinceJohn Moulder-Bro	wn
EmilyYael Uzi	iely
Victor Robert Symon	nds

Rumpelstiltskin, the fairy tale, is now "Rumpelstiltskin" the motion picture, the first of Cannon's "Movie Tales" to be released. The Cannon folks must believe the money is to be made in video, because this effort is already scheduled to be in the stores by June. It appears their hunch is right, since it's unlikely that any child much over five is going to find this spellbinding entertainment.

Kids probably won't notice that a dusty grove of eucalyptus trees isn't exactly the Black Forest (pic was shot in Israel) or that this mythical lands' inhabitants speak English with a variety of accents.

The King (Clive Revill) has a British accent, his Queen (Priscilla Pointer) an American one, their son the Prince (John Moulder-Brown) a British one and the loyal subjects are Israelis.

The important thing is, Amy Irving is innocent enough as the miller's daughter and Billy Barty nasty enough as Rumpelstiltskin.

Film isn't terribly inventive nor is it just a retelling of an oft-told tale. Competently directed and scripted by Irving's brother, David, the overall work is generally an above par dramatization of a Brothers Grimm favorite.

To stretch a simple story of a poor maiden's success at spinning straw into gold so that she can marry her handsome prince, filmmakers inserted a few songs and embellished upon the characters.

While it's not surprising that Irving and Barty take to their parts with ease, it is surprising to find out how good they are warbling silly little ditties. The songs were dubbed, but it's their voices.

Quality of the dialog fluctuates from the very clever to the truly awful. Barty gets to speak all of his in rhymes, which is fun. Mostly, though, it's on the level of "See Sally Spin."

Show's highlight is Irving's musical number, where she desperately tries to guess Rumpelstiltskin's name. Scenes with Revill and Pointer, both whom greatly overact, really drag.

Production values are satisfactory for low-budget chidlren's fare, but Cannon could have saved a lot of money and shot the interiors at Disneyland. Sets look like rooms in Sleeping Beauty's Castle washed in pink and purple and having windows with animatronic birds perched on the sills.

Brit.

Wed., March 18, 1987

Salvation! Have You Said Your Prayers Today?

(U.S. — Color)

A B Movies production. Executive producer, Ned Richardson. Produced by Beth B.,

Michael H. Shomberg. Directed by Beth B. Screenplay, Beth B, Tom Robinson; camera (color), Francis Kenny; editor, Elizabeth Kling; music, New Order, Cabaret Voltaire, The Hood, Arthur Baker; production design, Lester Cohen; sound, Lee Orloff. Reviewed at Berlin Film Festival, Feb. 24, 1987. (No MPAA Rating). Running time: 85 min.

Randall Stephen McHattie
Lenore Dominique Davalos
Rhonda Exene Cervenka
Jerome Stample Viggo Moretensen
Also with: Billy Bastiani, Rockets Redglare.

West Berlin — Even at its best, "Salvation" is cold and can rarely cut deep, but pic manages some amusing jabs at hypocrisy, i.e., born-again but cash in advance.

Rev. Randall (Stephen McHattie) is an electronic evangelist with his own successful tv program — half-charlatan, half-sincere. One dark night the stunning young blond Lenore (Dominique Davalos) raps upon his chamber door, pretending to be having a car emergency, but intent on seducing him. Fearful of blackmail, Randall admits Lenore reluctantly. Is she an emissary of Satan? Ranting religious rhetoric, Randall beats and rapes Lenore — but he needn't have, she was willing.

At that moment, Lenore's brotherin-law, Jerome, breaks into the house. He beats Randall and drags him to the nearby surf to drown him. Lenore regains consciousness and races to the rescue. Much of this is directed and acted with considerable skill, although far from the intended comedy. Jerome's two thugs, Stan and Ollie, also terrorize Randall.

Almost immediately, Randall agrees to cohost a bigger religious show, with Rhonda, Jerome's wife and sister of Lenore. Randall and Rhonda become big-business cynics, warning the nation against the poison of secular humanism. They share an enormous income, their lawyers negotiating the details of their hustle, including who has what rights to recording sales and t-shirts.

McHattie as Randall captures the right Southern accent and cadence and evangelical fervor, mixing jingoistic patriotism and Biblical allusions, laced with homespun charm.

"Salvation" ends in a musicvideo equivalent of a revivalist orgy, the "Destroy All Evil" finale, with lots of fast cuts of elaborately costumed dancers, gyrating, singing and shouting. Dramatic logic you don't get in "Salvation." Nonstop action, yes, but strong plot and motivation are lacking. Characterizations are shallow, featuring types, not personages.

"Salvation" satisfies as fast series of comic set-pieces much of the time. It is rather like musicvideo, at which producer-director Beth B has excelled — it's flashy but lacks substance.

Hitch.

Mon., March 30, 1987

Saturday Night At The Palace

(Drama — South African — Color)

A Davnic production. Produced, directed, camera (Irene Film Lab color), Robert Davies. Stars Bill Flynn, John Kani, Paul Slabolepszy. Screenplay, Paul Slabolepszy, Bill Flynn, based on Slabolepszy's play; ediors, Lena Farugia, Carla Sandrock; music, Johnny Cleff; art direction, Wayne Attrill, Sandy Attrill; sound, Humphrey Weale; associate producer, Lena Farugia. Reviewed at the Los Feliz Theater (AFI Fest), L.A., March 26, 1987. No MPAA rating. Running

Forsie Bill Flynn
September John Kani
Vince Paul Slabolepszy

Adapted from Paul Slabolepszy's stage play that has had successful runs in its native South

Africa as well as London and other European cities, "Saturday Night At The Palace" is a symbolic representation of racial tensions in the home of apartheid that probably seems more controversial than it actually is. Often effectively dramatic but also rather predictable in its plot trajectory, pic is of interest as an example of the sort of political material that can actually be produced in South Africa, but would undoubtedly run into trouble in commercial situations from censorious types who believe that nothing from that country should be heard or seen regardless of its point-of-view.

Drama is highly reminiscent of the numerous American theater pieces of the 1960s, from "Dutchman" to "When You Comin' Back, Red Ryder?" in which class and racial conflicts were displayed in microcosm through a handful of sociologically opposed characters.

Invariably in such works, it's only a matter of time (and enough booze) until the more hateful and explosive of these characters show their true colors and betray the oppressive nature of the dominant ruling class through bigotted and violent behavior.

Situation here opposes Vince, a white, out-of-work, roughneck former soccer player, and September, a hard-working, proper black man who has saved up enough money to return to see his wife and family in the Zulu homeland for the first time in two years.

For the initial half-hour, firsttime director Robert Davies intercuts between September and Vince as the latter displays his wildman tendencies and racial prejudice. As he tells his chubby, inexperienced pal Forsie, with whom he attends a late-night drunken party, he refuses to work with or for blacks. "I'd rather maintain my dignity. Stay unemployed," he snaps.

On the way home from the party, Vince and Forsie stop at Rocco's Burger Palace, where September is about to close up. Stage origins show vividly from here on, as Vince launches a one-man terrorist attack upon both the dignified black man and the establishment.

September is humiliated and victimized, the mild-mannered Forsie is brought to the breaking point, and all ends tragically in a manner designed to illustrate the self-destructiveness of the South African official policy toward blacks.

Schematic approach of the play grows tiresome after awhile, but potent performances, particularly that of playwright Slabolepszy as the possessed firecracker, Vince, hold the attention.

On-location lensing in the Johannesburg area lends a strong sense of time and place, although sometimes thick accents require strict concentration.

Cart.

Wed., Oct. 22, 1986

Saxophone Colossus (Docu — Color)

A Mug-Shot production. Produced, written, and directed by Robert Mugge. Camera (color), Lawrence McConkey. Shown at Denver Center Cinema during Denver International Film Fesitval, Oct. 19, 1986. Runging time: 101 min.

ning time: 101 min.

Cast: Sonny Rollins, Lucille Rollins, Heikki Sarmanto, Gary Giddins, Ira Gitler,
Frances Davis, and Yomiuri Nippon Symphony Orchestra.

Denver — As a documentary of a supreme jazz artist and man of artistic integrity, Robert Mugge's "Saxophone Colossus," an electrifying record of an artist at work. Scenes at Opus 40 Festival near Saugerties in upstate New York, in New York City, and in Tokyo present varied backgrounds for rousing music-making.

Central event in the film is the premiere of a concerto for tenor saxophone, product of a collaboration between Rollins and Finnish musician, Heikki Sarmanto, for a Tokyo concert. Twelve previous concert tours by Rollins proved he had the audience that would come.

Rollins' intelligence and relaxed conversational manner make him an ideal subject, both lucid and knowledgeable. In performance he plays with inexhaustible power matched by a vivid musical imagination, and tells how "I learn the material, then blot out my mind, then try to relax and let it come by itself."

Concert is a remarkable work of seven movements, of which five are done intact. Cocomposer and conducter Sarmanto is shown as intense and creative. For each of the used movements, director Mugge devised specific visual motifs, taking the camera outside the hall for shots of Tokyo streets, spectacular neon lights, and views of the people.

In all, Rollins remains the center of interest, and the wonder of the concerto is that, despite the huge orchestra with its many musicians fiddling away, he never loses his position at the center of the work.

Rollins is heard in his lengthy "G-Man" composition at the start of the film, and subsequently plays a great set of improvisations on "Over The Rainbow," "How Are Things In Glocca Morra" and "Peer Gynt." He also plays part of the extended piece, "Don't Stop The Carnival."

In the improvised set, Rollins suddenly jumps from the seven-foot-high stage to the ground, chipping his heel as he lands, and lies on his back to play for 30 minutes — though not all this is filmed.

Observations by three critics, Garry Giddins, Ira Gitler, and Frances Davis, put Rollins in perspective through their incisively expressed thoughts. Throughout, the taste and judgment and appreciation of writer-director-producer Mugge are shown as keen and sensitive.

In the scheduled "sneak preview," "Saxophone Colossus" was shown on the final night of the Denver International Film Festival. Its world premiere is set for the London Film Festival, on Nov. 14. It is subject to very minor alterations in film titles prior to that event. Young.

Mon., Dec. 8, 1986

Scorpion

(Action melodrama — Color)

A Crown International release of a Summons Ltd.-William Riead production. Produced, directed and written by Riead. Executive producer, John R. Burrows Jr. Stars Tonny Tulleners. Camera (color), Bill Philbin; editor, Gigi Coello; music, Sean Murray; art direction, Heather Cameron; sound, Stan Gordon; associate producer, Peter Martineau; assistant director, Wendy West; casting Lisa Pontrelli. Reviewed at the Paramount Theater, L.A., Dec. 5, 1986. MPAA Rating: R. Running time: 98 min.

Steve Woods	Tonny Tulleners
Gifford Leese	Don Murray
Gordon Thomas	Robert Logar
Phil Keller	Allen Williams
Jackie Wielmon	Kathryn Daley
Sam Douglas	Ross Elliot
Noel Koch	John Andersor
Mehdi	Bart Bravermar
Lt. Woodman	Thom McFadder
Wolfgang Stoltz	Bill Hayes
Jack Devlin	Adam Pearson

"Scorpion" is an actioner with virtually no action, and what there is of it is almost laughably unconvincing. In his film debut, former karate champ Tonny Tulleners makes Chuck Norris look like Laurence Olivier, or at least Clint Eastwood. This Crown International pickup will be history before Santa Claus arrives.

With its diverse international locations (Spain, Amsterdam, L.A., Hawaii) lensed on lousy stock with countless random zoom shots and mediocre sound to match, pic has the physical feel of those late, unlamented German-Italian-Yugoslavian coproductions of the mid-1960s that boasted no-name casts shooting it out over mysterious stakes in glamorous settings.

Here, the determinedly inexpressive Tulleners is supposed to be a top "DIA" agent with a major in antiterrorist work. Early on, he single-handedly dispatches four armed airplane hijackers with his martial arts trickery.

Then, however, he's assigned the dull job of protecting a terrorist-turned-informant, which means the film settles down to bedroom and hospital settings for roughly half its running time, something Chuck or Clint would never sit still for.

Naturally, there are a few shootings, but more often than not the guns are tossed away so Tulleners can take on his adversaries in hand-to-hand combat.

Amazingly, these fight setpieces are over within a matter of seconds, so action fans will feel enormously cheated. Indeed, the opening day Hollywood Blvd. crowd was talking back to the screen with noticeable regularity.

Cart.

Mon., Jan. 26, 1987

Season Of Dreams (Drama — Color)

A Spectrafilm release of an Embassy Home Entertainment and American Playhouse Prods. presentation of a Nepenthe production. Produced, directed by Martin Rosen. Executive producer, Linsay Law. Coproducers, Peter Burrell, Patrick Markey. Screenplay, Victoria Jenkins. Stars Christine Lahti, Frederic Forrest. Camera (Du Art Labs color), Richard Bowen; additional photography, Paul Elliot; editor, Patrick Dodd; music, Patrick Gleeson; production design, David Wasco; art direction, Sharon Seymour; set decoration, Sandy Reynolds Wasco; costume design, Linda Bass; sound, Hans Roland; assistant director, Dick Feury; second unit camera, Ron Scott; casting, Amanda Mackey. Reviewed at the U.S. Film Festival, Park City, Jan. 22, 1987. No MPAA Rating. Running time: 109 min.

Rating, Running time: 109 min.

Kathleen Morgan Christine Lahti
Buster McGuire Frederic Forrest
Anna Mae Morgan Megan Follows
Cary Connaloe Jason Cedrick
Dan Morgan Ray Baker
Photographer Peter Coyote
Clate Connaloe James Gammon
Connie Van Buskirk Kaiulani Lee
Mrs. Connaloe Jacqueline Brookes
Mrs. McGuire Irene Dailey
Auctioneer Pat Coggins

Park City, Utah - Two outstanding performances can't save "Season Of Dreams" from a fate of dullness and overfamiliarity. Known until very recently as "Stacking," this is yet another story of perserverance and coming-ofage in rural America, and one without anything new or interesting to say. In the wake of the premiere screenings here, producerdirector Martin Rosen will reportedly be cutting up to 20 minutes of footage from the picture, but film will have to be significantly improved in order to win the favorable reviews necessary to put this sort of small, lowvoltage drama over with a sizable public.

Just when one thought one had seen enough pictures about good simple folks who are about to lose their land, along comes "Season Of Dreams," which is set in the Big Sky Country of Montana in the early 1950s. The difference here is that Pa and Ma fall so far into bitterness and self-pity that the only one willing to fight to save the farm is their 14-year-old daughter Anna Mae (Megan Follows), an adorable and resilient kid who coaxes layabout farmhand Frederic Forrest to help her rebuild the mechanical haystacker, the only thing that can enable them to make some quick money.

Dramatic situation seems pretty clear at the outset, but Victoria Jenkins' lumpy screenplay then takes off in all sorts of different directions, dilly-dallying over unfocused digressions and never making up its mind where the heart of the film lies.

Much too much time, for instance, is spent with the incapacitated father, hospitalized after a domestic accident and now useless to his wife and daughter. After dwelling upon young Anna Mae for awhile, film's attention shifts to her mother (Christine Lahti), a lovely lady who suddenly realizes that she could easily spend the rest of her days wasting away as a waitress in the local diner and now feels compelled to do something about it, regardless of the consequences for her husband or daughter.

Pic comes alive in the scenes between Follows and Forrest, the latter in the role of the drunken town good-for-nothing whc, years ago, lost Lahti to her future husband and now becomes seized with jealousy when he observes the budding Follows flirting with a good-looking teenaged cowboy.

Forrest brings an enormous supply of unexpected humor to his role, milking every line for all its worth and through amusing looks and gestures creating considerable sympathy for an essentially dumb and foolish soul who has nothing to show for his life.

The Canadian Follows, acclaimed for her performance in "Anne Of Green Gables" on television, is a dream of a young actress, convincing in her most demanding dramatic scenes and fascinating to watch in repose. She's so good that one misses her whenever she is offscreen, which is too often, and winces whenever the script takes her character in misguided directions.

Although good as always, Christine Lahti is burdened with a role that is too repressed for the actress to let out the stops and display her usual wit, intelligence and energy. Peter Coyote rides in on a motorcycle for about five minutes to tempt Lahti and start her dreaming seriously about taking off.

Rosen, director of the animated features "Watership Down" and "The Plague Dogs" and producer of last year's U.S. Film Festival winner "Smooth Talk," makes his dramatic directorial debut here and has handled matters in a polite, decorous fashion. He and lenser Richard Bowen have captured many beautiful Western landscapes, but emphasis on pastoralism, along with undue running time, makes for very slow going through much of the picture.

Cart.

Wed., April 8. 1987

The Secret Of My Success (Comedy — Color)

A Universal Pictures release of a Rastar production. Produced, directed by Herbert Ross. Screenplay by Jim Cash, Jack Epps, A.J. Carothers from a story by Carothers. Camera (Deluxe Color), Carlo Di Palma; editor Paul Hirsch; music, David Foster;

production design, Edward Pisoni, Peter Larkin; set decorator, Susan Bode; sound (Dolby stereo), Jim Sabat; costumes, Joseph G. Aulisi; assistant director, Robert G. Girolami; associate producer, Nora Kaye; casting, Mark Colquhoun, Hank McCann. Reviewed at Universal Studios screening room, April 2, 1987. MPAA Rating: PG-13. Running time: 110 min.

Brantley Foster.......Michael J. Fox

Brantley Foster Michael J. Fox
Christy Willis Helen Slater
Howard Prescott Richard Jordan
Vera Prescott Margaret Whitton
Fred Melrose John Pankow
Barney Rattigan Christopher Murney
Art Thomas Gerry Bamman
Donald Davenport Fred Gwynne
Jean Carol-Ann Susi

"The Secret Of My Success" is a bedroom farce with a leaden touch, a corporate comedy without teeth. What it does have is Michael J. Fox in a winning performance as a likeable hick out to hit the big time in New York. But even he can't carry this turkey on his shoulders, although his presence should generate some interest at the boxoffice.

Fresh off the bus from Kansas, Brantley Foster (Fox) doesn't want to return until he has a penthouse, jacuzzi, a beautiful girlfriend and private jet he can go home in. While his ideals are a yuppie's dream, Fox is sweet and unassuming enough to dilute the boorishness of his goals.

But where script by Jim Cash, Jack Epps and A.J. Carothers (from a story by Carothers) could have gone for a good screwball social comedy with an edge, it settles for a cliche-ridden ride down easy street.

Fox encounters the predictable crime-infested corners of New York and his squalid apartment is furnished with roaches and rats. When he meets his dream girl (Helen Slater), he is literally thunderstruck and visualizes her in an evening gown parading down the lobby of a Madison Ave. office building.

After Fox lands a job in the mailroom of an anonymous N.Y. corporation with the reluctant help of a distant relative (Richard Jordan), he soon proves that "I can do anything if I get a chance." His big chance comes when he takes over an abandoned office and sets himself up as a young exec.

His double life becomes even more complicated when his uncle's neglected wife (Margaret Whitton) seduces him about the same time he's getting started with Slater, an exec at the company, who turns out to be Jordan's mistress.

None of it is terribly convincing and director Herbert Ross pushes it all along with surprising heavyhandedness. Instead of establishing real emotional connections he resorts to cheap montages that jump over the rough spots.

Soundtrack by David Foster is also used as filler and adds some hideous basso profundo moans and overstated music to signal deep emotion.

Jordan and Slater, fine in some scenes, are encouraged to sacrifice a personal and specific voice for broad caricatures. Even Fox, in spite of his inherent charm, lacks a genuine personality and is neither country bumpkin nor city sharpie. Consequently, the film lacks a consistent tone, or style.

John Pankow and Christopher Murney as Fox' mailroom buddy and boss, respectively, are fine in supporting roles but overall the corporate types and hangers-on are rendered without much imagination.

Cinematography by Carlo Di Palma impressively captures a city of steel and concrete but too often the people seem to be made of the same stuff. Jagr.

Thurs., May 14, 1987

Shadows Of The Peacock (Australian — Color)

A Laughing Kookaburra production in association with Australian European Finance Corp. Executive producer, Jan Sharp. Produced by Jane Scott. Directed by Phillip Noyce. Stars Wendy Hughes, John Lone. Screenplay, Jan Sharp (additional material, Anne Brooksbank); camera (color), Peter James; editor, Franz Vandenburg; music, William Motzing; production design, Judith Russell; costumes, Clarissa Patterson; sound, Tim Lloyd; production manager, Antonia Barnard; assistant director, Chris Webb; casting, Liz Mullinar. Reviewed at Cannes Film Festival (market), May 11, 1987. Running time: 90 min.

Maria McEvoy Wendy Hughes
Raka John Lone
George McEvoy Steven Jacobs
Judy Peta Toppano
Terry Rod Mullinar
Mitty Gillian Jones
Julia McEvoy Claudia Karvan

Cannes - After a six-year absence from feature films, director Phillip Noyce ("Newsfront," "Heatwave") returns with a wellmade, high-toned soaper about an Australian wife who has a love affair with a Balinese dancer she meets on holiday in Thailand. Toplining one of Australia's finest actresses, Wendy Hughes, and John Lone (pic was made just before the latter started work on Bertolucci's "The Last Emperor"), this film should spark lots of interest and do wonders for tourism in Thailand. In the old days, "Shadows Of The Pea-cock" would have been dubbed 'a woman's pic" and, with skillful marketing, should find an audience on its names and its exotic locale.

Ironically, pic was originally, and far more logically, set in Bali, but only four days before production commenced, the Indonesian government, miffed by an article in an Aussie newspaper, cancelled all visas for Australians. Location was hurriedly moved to Thailand and it's much to the credit of the production team that the resulting pic shows few signs of the troubles it encountered.

Opening and closing scenes are set in Sydney in winter, lashed by rain and wind, and the city never looked less attractive. Hughes plays Maria, married to philandering lawyer Steven Jacobs, and distressed by the death of her beloved father.

When she discovers her husband's infidelities, her anguish mounts. A woman friend suggests she come along on a holiday to a Thai beach resort run by a sexually ambiguous Aussie expatriate (neatly played by Rod Mullinar), and there she meets Raka (Lone), himself an exile from his native Bali. Before long, Maria is in love with the handsome, aesthetic dancer.

Pic can best be compared to David Lean's "Summertime," also about a frustrated woman holidaying in an exotic place who falls for a handsome local.

As usual, Hughes gives a performance of great sensitivity and depth; opening scenes, of her father's death in a hospital, his funeral, and her discovery of her husband's secret girlfriend, are beautifully handled.

The Thai scenes, adroitly interpolated with studio sets in Australia (top marks to production designer Judith Russell), also look good, thanks to Peter James' camerawork.

However, pic is not totally satisfactory. Jan Sharp's screenplay, with additional material by Anne

Brooksbank, tends towards the predictable but, more crucially, John Lone never really convinces as a passionate lover.

He certainly looks the part, and scenes in which he performs a traditional Balinese dance are delightful, but the sparks, which should be here in the love scenes, aren't.

In contrast, Steven Jacobs is convincingly sleazy as Hughes' wayward spouse. There are also some curious ambiguities, especially in the Rod Mullinar character, which are hinted at but never spelled out, let alone resolved.

Technically, pic is fine, with tight editing (Franz Vandenburg) and a charming music score (William Motzing). Production was hitherto known as both "Promises To Keep" and "Love On A Tourist Visa."

Stra

Tues., June 23, 1987

She Must Be Seeing Things (Drama — Color)

Produced, directed and written by Sheila McLaughlin. Camera, Mark Daniels; supplementary footage, Heinz Emigholz; editor, Ila Von Hasperg; music, John Zorn; art director, Leigh Kyle; sound, Margie Crimmins; associate producer, Christine LeGoff. Reviewed at Castro Theater, San Francisco, June 19, 1987. Running time: 90 min.

With: Sheila Dabney, Lois Weaver, Kyle DeCamp, John Erdman.

San Francisco - The 11th S.F. International Lesbian & Gay Film Festival, a 10-day affair with features and vidpix in three venues, had a festive opening until the feature unspooled. "She Must Be Seeing Things," which drew more than 1000 to the Castro, is a technically uneven, lamely written and directed exposition of a lesbian relationship between a filmmaker (Lois Weaver) and lawyer (Sheila Dabney). Both actresses hold Obie awards, but their talent is not evident in this yarn.

The lighting is skimpy, the sound often distorted.

Dabney portrays a jealous lover and often drifts into fantasy when contemplating the flirtations of girlfriend Weaver, who's busy directing a film within the film, an equally dismal pic at that. There is no explicit sex in the pic; for that matter, there's no explicit pic.

Frameline, the fest sponsoring organization, presented McLaughlin with a \$2000 "completion" award before the pic unspooled. She should just use the bucks for her next feature.

Herb.

Mon., May 18, 1987

Shy People (Drama — Color)

A Cannon Pictures release. Produced by Menahem Golan, Yoram Globus. Directed by Andrei Konchalovsky. Screenplay, Gerard Brach, Konchalovsky, Marjorie David, from a story by Konchalovsky. Camera (Rank Labs color), Chris Menges; editor, Alain Jakubowicz; music, Tangerine Dream; production design, Steve Marsh; art director, Leslie McDonald; set decorator, Leslie Morales; sound, Mark Ulano; assistant director, Michael Schroeder; casting, Bob MacDonald. Reviewed at the Cannes Film Festival (in competition), May 14, 1987. (No MPAA rating.) Running time: 118 min.

Diana Jill Clayburgh
Ruth Barbara Hershey
Grace Martha Plimpton
Mike Merritt Butrick
Tommy Don Swayze
Paul Pruitt Taylor Vince
Candy Mare Winningham
Louie Michael Audley
Larry Brad Leland

Cannes — "Shy People," director Andrei Konchalovsky again explores the struggle for survival in a hostile environment, this time

in the dense back-country swamps of the Louisiana bayou. For most of the way it's a compelling journey, but filmgoers will have to be cleverly coaxed into theaters. Bets here are for satisfactory but not sensational b.o.

Film opens with a sweeping aerial view of New York where Cosmopolitan writer Diana Sullivan (Jill Clayburgh) lives in splendid disharmony with her teenage daughter Grace (Martha Plimpton). Clayburgh is totally in her element as a spoiled middle-age woman trying to cope with her too-hip daugh-

They are soon out of their element though, when they travel to Louisiana for a story Clayburgh is writing about a long-lost branch of her family. But it is not simply a case of invaders from civilization soiling a pure culture, though there are elements of that. Story is deepened by the exploration of family

Konchalovsky and cinematographer Chris Menges offer a slow and seductive descent into this world of crocodiles and primordial beauty. Wearing a shiny red coat and a bright yellow New York sweater, the two visitors are like queens of the Nile on a runaway boat.

What they find when they arrive is Ruth Sullivan (Barbara Hershey), the matriarch of a family of three sons, one of which is kept in a cage and another retarded, and a pregnant daughter (Mare Winningham). Also very much present is Hershey's husband, Joe, Clayburgh's great uncle, who has been dead 15 years but is believed by the family to still lurk in the swamps to protect :hem.

Although they don't recognize what they are seeing, mother and daughter have gone from a world of abstractions in New York to a world of absolutes where "you're either for us or against us" and people's dispositions run hot and cold, out never lukewarm.

Grace introduces Tommy (John Philbin), the caged brother, to frugs and sex. In the climactic scene with the mother out of the nouse everything collapses. Paul Pruitt Taylor Vince) lets the goats out and Mark (Don Swayze) gets stoned for the first time and tries to ape Grace

As a result, both Grace and Diana become stranded in the swamp until order is restored and they are saved by what seems to be Uncle Joe. Ruth explains it by saying that in he swamps sometimes you see what you want to see.

And there is plenty to see. Konchalovsky has a keen eye for detail and has loaded the film with images hat say more than long-winded exposition ever could. White egrets oar low over the swamps and moss shuffles in the breeze as if it were ilive. Here as he did in "The Killng Fields," Menges' photography s able to suggest that more is going

on than meets the eye.

On a story level, "Shy People" is i bit less successful with Gerard 3rach, Konchalovsky and Marjorie David's screenplay sagging a bit in he middle section before all hell inally breaks loose. But generally hey have created a memorable colection of faces.

Clayburgh gives one of her best performances and seems right at nome with the ticks and selfcentered mannerisms of a modern woman. Plimpton nearly steals the show with her mixture of girlish prashness and suggestive sexuality. In undoubtedly the strangest role of her career, Hershey presents a bit of a problem and not from her acting, which is quite solid. At times she just seems wrong for the part of the young matriarch and comes off more like Mammy Yokum than a forceful presence. Part of the difficulty is in the script, which strains the limits of credibility where Ruth is concerned.

Music by Tangerine Dream helps to heighten the tension and suggest mysteries unseen. Technical credits throughout are impressive especially Steve Marsh's production design packing the corners of the screen with subliminal images. But fortunately "Shy People" does not sink under the weight of its ma-

Mon., April 13, 1987

Silent Night, Deadly Night Part II

(Horror comedy — Color)

Silent Night Releasing Corp.-Ascot Entertainment Group release of a Lawrence Appelbaum production. Produced by Lawrence Appelbaum. Directed and edited by Lee Harry. Screenplay, Lee Harry and Joseph H. Earle, from a story by Harry, Earle, Dennis Paterson and Larry Appelbaum, based on a character created by Michael Hickey and Paul Caimi. Camera (United Color Laboratories), Harvey Genkins; score, Michael Armstrong; associate producers, Eric Gage Joseph Earle. Reviewed at the Woods Thea ter, Chicago, April 10, 1987. MPAA Rating: R. Running time: 88 min.

Cast: Eric Freeman, James L. Newman, Elizabeth Clayton, Jean Miller.

Chicago — This low-budget grinder is the sequel to a belowaverage splatter item released three years ago that obtained notoriety by turning Santa Claus into an axe-wielding psycho.

The sequel is conceptually nowhere near as daring. It's execution is substandard overall, dimming its b.o. prospects considerably.

Ironically, "Silent Night, Deadly Night Part II" could well outgross the relatively superior original. Latter is a case study of how quickly a major studio can drop a property once public outcry reaches sufficient proportion.

After protests, Tri-Star dumped the '84 original. Under indie distribution, grosses proved modest.

"Part II" is unlikely to engender much attention largely because it's being dumped onto the market well outside the Christmas season with almost no ad-pub support from Ascot Entertainment Group, the L.A.based indie that's parent to the pic's releasing company. This is strictly a case of grabbing the money and

One indication of that is the fact that at least a third of the sequel, its opening plot exposition, consists of excerpts from the original. Credits of the "Silent Night, Deadly roll in toto on "II's" final crawl, although none of the creative principals nor cast members are involved in the sequel.

Plot simulates that of the original with a familial twist. "Silent Night, Deadly Night" thematically equated Christmas and terror by introing Billy, a psychotic young man whose parents were shot and bludgeoned to death by sadist dressed as Santa.

"Night II" repeats the scenario with younger brother Ricky, who, like Billy, is consigned to an orphanage run by a hard-hearted Mother Superior before emerging a violent nut case.

Most of the bloodshed of "II" belongs to those excerpts from the original, quite bloody indeed. The mayhem of the sequel once Ricky links Santa Claus and gore is largely uninspired, lacking the blasphe-

my and violent brio of the original. There is occasional inventiveness

when, for example, Ricky impales a mob hitman by jamming an umbrella through his midsection and then opening it. Another scene has Ricky blowing up the head of an adversary by jamming live battery charger down his mouth.

In general, special effects, particularly decapitations, are strictly low-budget. So too is the cast. Under director-coscripter-editor Lee Harry's direction, "Deadly Night II" is hambone heaven.

Ricky is played for unintentional laughs by Eric Freeman, a Nautilus-sculpted actor who telegraphs states of mind via facial contortions he crosses his eyes during strangulation scenes. Production values are minimally adequate at best.

Thurs., March 26, 1987

'68

(Drama — U.S. — Color)

A Sixty-Eight Ltd. production. Produced by Dale Djerassi, Isabel Maxwell, Steven Kovacs. Directed, written by Kovacs. Cam era (Monaco Labs Color), Daniel Lacambre; editor, Cari Coughlin; music, John Cipollina. Shony Alex Braun; art direction, Joshua Koral; set decoration, Kris Boxell; sound, Anne Evans; associate producer, Eli Zaffaroni; assistant director, Karen McCabe Reviewed at the American Film Institute (AFI Fest), L.A., Feb. 13, 1987. No MPAA rating Running time: 97 min.

Peter Szabo. Eric Larson Sandy Szabo Robert Locke Sandor Tecsi Zsuzsa Szabo Anna Dukasz Alana Chan . . . Miran Kwun Terra Vandergaw /era Kardos Tibor Kardos . . Piroska Kardos Shony Alex Braun . . Donna Pecora Elizabeth De Charay Gizi Horvath Dezso Horvath Jan Nemed Bela Csontos . . Rusdi Lane . Nike Doukas Beatrice . . Westy

" '68" is like an ambitious first novel, a work in which the young author tries to cram everything he can think of to say into the framework of a single story. The vear 1968 was a momentous one, to be sure, and writer-director Steven Kovacs sympathetically overreaches himself in trying to explain why in his first feature. With retrospective looks at the Vietnam era now seemingly back in fashion, this could have some possibilities in the commercial arena, notably with student audiences.

Kovacs wants to cover everything the generation gap, hippies, bikers, gays, the immigrant experience, draft dodging, minority rights, rock music, free love, LBJ, RFK, McCarthy, Martin Luther King, Prague, Chicago, you name

He tackles this through a presumably autobiographical portrait of a Hungarian family, one that has fled the Old World in 1956 and is still struggling to make a breakthrough in the land of opportunity.

The bull-headed patriarch, a virulent anticommunist, struggles to make a success of a Hungarian restaurant in San Francisco, and can't begin to understand why his son Peter and the rest of the new generation want to protest against the country where "anything is possible."

Peter is kicked out of school, begins working at a biker shop owned by a redneck (rock star Neil Young in a cameo), flirts with political activism and is progressively walloped by the historical events of the Spring and Summer.

What actually hurts the film more than the cramming in of too much sociology is the suddenness and extremity of the personal drama. Right after Peter's younger brother beds and becomes engaged to a young girl, the kid (oy vay!) discovers he's gay. Then it turns out old pa (mama mia!) wants to elope with the restaurant's young waitress, the kid brother is drafted, the restaurant fails, pa gets sick, and on

Enough incident is packed in here to satisfy a soap opera for a month, and it is so unprepared for that matters become a bit silly after awhile. All the events, emotions and reactions are legitimate in their way, but piled one on top of another become more like a litany of cataclysm than convincing drama.

To his credit, Kovacs has managed, to a great degree on a low budget, to re-create the look and feel of San Francisco in the late 1960s. Even more successfully, he accurately conveys modes of behavior, the social casualness, the political and moral openness, the idealism under stress, of the period.

Although lighting is occasionally overly bright, Daniel Lacambre's lensing makes the indie production look richer than it undoubtedly was. A graduate of the Roger Corman school, Kovacs seems to have something to offer, and much of what he is saying here is appealing. But only a cinematic Tolstoy could have succeeded with the task he set for himself with his first film.

Cart.

Wed., Oct. 29, 1986

Sky Bandits (British — Color)

A Galaxy International Releasing release of a London Front Ltd. production. Produced by Richard Herland, Directed by Zoran Perisic. Screenplay, Thom Keyes; camera (Rank color), David Watkin; editor, Peter Tanner: music, Alfie Kabilje: sound, David Hildyard; production design, Tony Woollard; supervising art director, Charles Bishop; art direction, Malcolm Stone, John Siddall (U.K.), Jose Maria Taprador (Spain); set decorator, Hugh Scaife; assistant director, Michael Murray; costume design, Betsy Her mann; stunt coordinator, Marc Boyle; visual effects supervisor, Perisic; special effects supervisor, Ian Wingrove; model effects supervisor, Brian Smithies; second unit director, Terry Marcel; aerial unit director, Terry Cole; casting, Mary Selway. Reviewed at Magne Preview 9 screening room, N.Y., Oct. 22, 1986. (MPAA Rating: PG.) Running time: 93 min.

Barney Scott McGinnis Luke . Jeff Osterhage . Ronald Lacey Fritz ... Miles Andersor Yvette Valerie Steffen ...Ingrid Held Mitsou. Von Schlussel . Keith Buckley Col. CanningTerrence Harvey

New York - "Sky Bandits" misfires on all cylinders. Meant as a rollicking World War I adventure, mishmash of a feature is missing a plotline. Touted as the most expensive (production budget pegged at \$18,000,000) indie British film ever, pic doesn't deliver the expected values on screen and has a no-name cast that won't help it attract attention domestically or overseas. Distrib Galaxy International has unwisely opted for a national saturation

Originally titled "Gunbus" (after the small fighter planes featured), Thom Keyes' unsatisfactory screenplay opens with a reel of two young heroes (Scott McGinnis and Jeff Osterhage) making like Butch Cassidy & Sundance (the early days, that is) in montages of bank robberies. With this pointless material headed nowhere the boys are suddenly sent to France to fight in the Great War against the dreaded hun.

Misadventures for the duo include a game of one upsmanship

with haughty British flyers, a little sack time with two pretty mademeiselles (Valerie Steffen, Ingrid Held) and a mission to destroy a vast Graf Zeppelin the Germans are using for bombing runs. With dogfighter prowess picked up instantly (heroes decide to try piloting biplanes on a dare), they save the day and are subsequently back in the west blowing up banks quicker than you can say "Blue Max.

Film plods along episodically with no forward momentum to the story: every once in a while there is a dissolve and a new scene has begun. Since Keyes' script lacks humor, the boring repartee between the two wooden heroes is downright deadly. What producer Richard Herland and director Zoran Perisic deliver is a succession of pretty but very fake-looking model plane shots or process shots. The excitement of aerial dogfights, which have entertained audiences in hundreds of war films and served as the inspiration for "Star Wars," is missing.

Cast is truly awful, with the only familiar actor, Ronald Lacey, hamming it up and American leads McGinnis and Osterhage lacking the charisma this sort of yarn calls for. Production, including David Watkin's photography, is technically adequate but wholly lacking in verisimilitude. For all the money spent, it would have been more convincing to use stock footage left over from "Hell's Angels." The comic book approach doesn't work.

With Rank, ITC and Thorn EMI as recent examples, experienced British producers have learned how difficult it is to try and compete with the Americans via big-budget projects; modest efforts like 'Gregory's Girl'' and "My Beautiful Laundrette" have been more successful. "Sky Bandits" will undoubtedly reinforce this conventional wisdom.

Lor.

Fri., May 22, 1987

Slam Dance

(New Wave Mystery — Color)

An Island Pictures and Zenith Prods. presentation of a Sho Films production. Produced by Rupert Harvey, Barry Opper. Executive producer, Cary Brokaw. Directed by Wayne Wang. Screenplay, Don Opper. Camera (DeLuxe Color), Amir Mokri; editor, Lee Percy; music, Mitchell Froom; production design, Eugenio Zanetti; art director, Philip Dean Foreman; assistant director, John R. Woodward; casting, Lora Kennedy Reviewed at Cannes Film Festival (Images du Cinema), May 13, 1987. Running time: C.C. Drood Tom Hulce

Yolanda	izabeth MastrantonioVirginia MadsenMillie Perkins
Buddy	Adam Ant Don Opper Harry Dean Stanton Herta Ware John Doe Robert Beltran Judith Barsi

Cannes — "Slam Dance" is like junk food. It's brightly packaged, looks good and satisfies the hunger for entertainment, but it isn't terribly nourishing or well-made. Pic is self-consciously hip for a young urban crowd that will probably turn out in fairly good numbers for select engagements.

Latest in a growing line of films like "Diva" that sell style over substance, "Slam Dance" doesn't really make much sense as a mystery story but keeps up its high spirits with visual flash and a likable performance by Tom Hulce.

Hulce is underground cartoonist C.C. Drood, a man whose life has cheerfully come apart at the seams. He's separated from his wife (Mary Elizabeth Mastrantonio) and daughter (Judith Barsi), though he still imagines them back together as a family.

But Drood's the kind of man who never let a little thing like marriage stand in the way of a good time or a hot romance with the beautiful and mysterious Yolanda (Virginia Madsen). Only one day Yolanda turns up dead and Drood's the prime suspect.

Script by Don Opper has a short attention span and introduces threads, follows one for a bit, and then drops it for a new one. Finally he winds up with some kind of political sex scandal involving a top copper (John Doe) and a retiring detective (Harry Dean Stanton) for which Drood is poised to be the scapegoat.

Except for Drood, characters are never given the opportunity to take hold and much of the acting talent is wasted. Mastrantonio is lovely as always but without direction. Madsen fares even worse and has virtually nothing to do but look glamorous in a few scenes. Connection between Drood and Yolanda is tenuous at best.

Adam Ant decorates the screen as Drood's two-timing buddy, but basically he's just along or the ride. What really holds the film together is Hulce's loosey-goosey performance, which sets the tempo for the action.

Director Wayne Wang tries to find a visual style to match the loose-limbed story and hits the mark about half the time. Since Drood is a visual artist, Wang has the opportunity to look at the world through his eyes and comes up with some original images. At other times, he resorts to hackneyed visual tricks and fancy cutting.

Production design is predictably current, with an array of the latest fashion inventions. Drood's studio is a particularly nice piece of minimalist design. But then minimal is the operative word here.

Jagr.

Fri., July 17, 1987

Slammer Girls (Comedy — Color)

A Lightning Pictures release of a Vestron Entertainment presentation of a Platinum Pictures production. Produced, directed by Chuck Vincent. Screenplay, Craig Horrall, Vincent, Rick Marx; additional dialog, Larue Watts; camera (color), Larry Revene; editor, Marc Ubell (Vincent); music, lan Shaw, Kai Joffe; sound, Peter Penguin; assistant director, Billy Slobodian; production manager. Philip Goetz; costumes, Eddie Heath; associate producer, Jeanne O'Grady; casting, John Weidner. Reviewed on Lightning Pictures vidcassette, N.Y., July 9, 1987. MPAA rating: R. Running time: 80 min.

Melody Devon Jenkin
Harry Jeff Eagle
Crabapples Jane Hamilton
Gov. Caldwell Ron Sullivan
With: Tally Brittany, Darcy Nychols, Stasia Micula, Sharon Cain, Beth Broderick,
Sharon Kelly, Kim Kafkaloff, Philip Campanaro, Michael Hentzman, Louie Bonanno,
Janice Doskey, Jane Kreisel, Captain Hag-

New York — "Slammer Girls," a.k.a. "The Big Slammer," is a frenetic, all-out spoof of the durable women's prison genre that comes off as silly rather than funny. Made in 1985, pic has been quietly slipped into regional release by Vestron subsidiary Lightning Pictures.

Heavyhanded source of black humor is watching the cast manhandle (and womanhandle) pretty, blond, virginal heroine Melody (Devon Jenkin).

She's been convicted of a murder

attempt against the governor (Ron Sullivan, better known as porn director Henri Pachard), which results in the loss of his family jewels.

While he and pretty assistant Candy (Tally Brittany, a.k.a. Tally Chanel) are working on getting him a transplant, Melody is put through the wringer by sadistic prison matron Miss Crabapples (Jane Hamilton, a.k.a. Veronica Hart) and various tough cellmates.

Reporter Harry Wiener (Jeff Eagle) disguises himself as a woman to go undercover and get her true story.

Filmmaker Chuck Vincent makes a similar mistake as the unsuccessful New World spoof in the same vein, "Reform School Girls," in thinking that exaggeration and hambone "acting" is funny or campy. In fact, the original women's prison films, whether from the '50s or '70s, definitively provide the drama and/or laughs without need of highlighting.

Cast, including numerous porno stars on holiday, is embarrassing, with even the reliable Hart overdoing her prison matron stint to a farethee-well. Lead actress Jenkin looks pretty but proves to be an overly bland central presence.

Thurs., July 23, 1987

Slate, Wyn & Me (Australian — Drama — Color)

A Hemdale Releasing (U.S.) Filmpac (Australia), Palace Pictures (U.K.) release of a Hemdale-International Film Management-Ukiyo Films production. Executive producers, Antony I. Ginnane, William Fayman Produced by Tom Burstall. Directed by Don McLennan. Screenplay, McLennan, from the novel "Slate And Wyn and Blanche Mc-Bride," by Georgia Savage. Camera (Panavision, Eastmancolor), David Connell; editor, Peter Friedrich; music, Peter Sullivan; sound, Andrew Ramage; production design, Paddy Reardon; costumes, Jeanie Cameline producer, Brian D. Burgess; production manager, Rosslyn Abernethy; assistant director, Brett Popplewell; casting, Jo Larner, Reviewed at Film Australia screening room, Lindfield, Sydney, July 19, 1987. Running time: 90 min. Sigrid Thornton

Dianone McDilde.	Oigna momon
Wyn Jackson	Simon Burke
Slate Jackson	Martin Sacks
Morgan	Tommy Lewis
Molly	Lesley Baker
Sammy	Harold Baigent
Daphne	Michelle Torres
Martin	Murray Fahey
Pippa	Taya Straton
Del Downer	Julia MacDougall
Old Man Downer	Peter Cummins
Sgt. Wilkinson	Reg Corman

Sydney — "Slate, Wyn & Me" looks great and is a classy production, but its uncertainty of direction, its aimlessness and lack of conviction will make it a tough sell indeed.

It's been seven years since Don McLennan's previous film, the well received prize-winning low-budgeter "Hard Knocks," which dealt with a young woman living a precarious existence on the edge of the Melbourne underworld.

Now he's back with an adaptation of an interesting book by Georgia Savage about two brothers, one a Vietnam vet, who kidnap a school teacher who's a witness when one of them guns down a policeman.

Martin Sacks is the vet and Simon Burke the younger brother who actually does the shooting in a moment of panic when they're caught robbing a small-town bank.

Sigrid Thornton plays the witness who's unceremoniously bundled into the trunk of their battered car as the brothers make a getaway across country. They plan to kill her, too, but before long they're both attracted to her. She, in turn, plays off one against the other,

though ultimately seems to enjoy living on the run more than life back home.

One of the main problems with the film is that the character of Blanche, though well played by Thornton, is never well defined; her motivations remain obscure, right to the end.

As a result, the viewer loses interest in the drama, which doesn't contain enough action scenes for the youth audience and which is too flawed to appeal to more sophisticated customers.

It's a pity, because the film is handsomely produced, with magnificent location photography and a potentially interesting situation. An early suspense sequence, in which the trio cross a very rickety bridge, is excellent, and an indication of what the rest of the film could have been like.

McLennan seems to be under the influence of Terrence Malick's "Badlands" (which was itself, and more productively, influenced by James Dean pix) and there are rather too many self-conscious scenes here in which the bare-chested brothers strut around with rifles—there's even a repeat of a scene from "Giant." There are also too many elements that lack conviction: especially the final scene, which fails to ring true on any level.

Strat.

Wed., Nov. 26, 1986

Solarbabies

(Sci-fi Adventure — Color)

A MGM Entertainment Co. release of a Brooksfilms production. Produced by Irene Walzer and Jack Frost Sanders. Directed by Alan Johnson. Screenplay, Walon Green, Douglas Anthony Metrov. Camera (Metrocolor), Peter MacDonald; editor, Conrad Buff; music, Maurice Jarre; production design, Anthony Pratt; art director, Don Dossett; set decorator, Graham Sumner; costumes Bob Ringwood; sound mixer (Dolby), Jim Willis; visual effects, Richard Edlund; assistant director, Juan Carlos L. Rodero; casting, Pennie Du Pont and Meg Simon/Fran Kumin. Reviewed at Lorimar-Telepictures, Nov. 20, 1986. MPAA Rating: PG-13. Running time: 94

min.	
Grock	Richard Jordan
Terra	
Jason	Jason Patric
Daniel	Lukas Haas
Metron	James Le Gros
Rabbit	Claude Brooks
Tug	Peter DeLuise
Gavial	.Peter Kowanko
Darstar	Adrian Pasdar
Shandray	Sarah Douglas
The Warden	Charles Durning

This futuristic teenage morality tale pitting good against evil plods along unconvincingly as it swiftly becomes more laughable than plausible. Stillborn concept barely makes the slightest pretension of originality while conjuring key aspects of some of the biggest hits of the past few years. It's a dud.

The force is back — this time in the shape of a magical sphere named Bodhi. The orb has come to earth during a gloomy period in which a parched planet suffers from both the absence of abundant water and gestapo rule of the Protectorate.

Bodhi turns up near a bleak orphanage on a barren terrain in the midst of nowhere. While youngsters housed in the facility are manipulated towards ultimate obedience and service to the state, some honorably rebel in an attempt to maintain free spirited humanness while others capitulate to their darker sides.

Discovered after an unauthorized confrontation between these two groups in a roller skateball contest, the sphere assumes a guiding persona role that inevitably recalls youthful responses to a lovable extraterrestrial

of another pic. About the size of a bowling ball — but dressed up visually with postproduction special effects — Bodhi even makes electronic sounds that only the nice kids understand.

Dubbed the Solarbabies for team skating purposes, these five teens and young Lukas Haas are propelled into action when one Darstar steals the orb and heads for the outside world. The tyrannical police chieftain Richard Jordan sends his men in pursuit in ridiculously styled vehicles that make one wonder for a moment if this Brooksfilm outing was actually a "Springtime for Hitler" spoof.

However, it's readily apparent that the pic takes itself seriously but can't find a way out of the dramatic desert. Story is virtually abandoned — save for its most simplistic rights versus wrong framework — as production design dominates once chase is underway.

As film takes on even more of a Mad Max quality, characters enter the Tiretown village. Inventive construction of this haunting postindustrial factory captures eerie moods of a dismal period.

Pursuit of the Bodhi leads to a climactic confrontation between an octopus-like robot and the sphere. Orb triumphs; baddies are felled; and the universe's ultimate authority is reinstated. A pic that easily keeps one on the edge of his watch finally concludes.

Maurice Jarre's score exceeds the material here. Alan Johnson's direction seems weakest with the teen thesps. Charles Durning's nominal part as orphanage warden is forgettable.

Tege.

Fri., Feb. 20, 1987

Some Kind Of Wonderful (Drama — Color)

A Paramount Pictures release of a John Hughes production. Produced and written by John Hughes. Executive producers, Michael Chinich and Ronald Colby. Directed by Howard Deutch. Camera (Technicolor), Jan Kiesser; editors, Bud Smith, Scott Smith; music, Stephen Hague, John Musser; production design, Josan Russo; art director, Greg Pickrell; set decorator, Linda Spheeris; costume designer, Marilyn Vance-Straker; sound mixer (Dolby), David MacMillan; assistant director, Jerry Ziesmer; casting, Judith Weiner. Reviewed at Paramount Pictures screening room, Feb. 18, 1987. MPAA Rating: PG-13. Running time: 93 min.

Keith Nelson Eric Stoltz ... Mary Stuart Masterson Watts Amanda Jones.. Lea Thompson Hardy Jenns . Cliff Nelson . .Craig Sheffer John Ashton Skinhead. Elias Koteas Shayne.. Molly Hagan Laura Nelson Maddie Corman Carol Nelson. .Jane Elliot Cindy Nelson. Candace Cameror

"Some Kind of Wonderful" is a simple, lovely and thoughtful teenage story that occasionally shines due to fine characterizations and lucid dialog. While plot is largely predictable, there is vitality enough to attract modest business from a youthful audience.

Writer-producer John Hughes and director Howard Deutch, who collaborated on "Pretty In Pink," return here for an empathetic portrait of dilemmas on such weighty matters as individuality, genuine friendship and love. Hughes and Deutch deftly avoid being ponderous via steady and sure pacing, even during slower sequences.

Film is set in L.A.'s San Pedro area and centers on high school senior Eric Stoltz, who is a sensitive young man struggling to develop his artistic talent while juggling school, part-time work as a car mechanic and the distraction of the immensely popular Lea Thompson.

Stoltz is so smitten by Thompson that he can't quite pick up on the emotions of Mary Stuart Masterson, whom Stoltz dismisses early on as just a tomboy friend.

It seems that the whole world is watching — or at least the entire school — as Thompson fights with her wealthy and arrogant b.f., Craig Sheffer. Stoltz manages to get her to accept a date amidst the furor and stage is set for the inevitable confrontation with Sheffer.

While we may be fairly certain where it's all heading, Hughes-Deutch make the passage so engaging as Stoltz' perspective is accessed through relationships with people closest to him. It's especially satisfying to watch the bond deepen between him and longtime friend Masterson.

She's a bit on the tough side and may be most happy rocking time away on the drums. However, there is here a wise and caring young woman who is sounding board for Stoltz as he plays out his fantasy of taking out Thompson.

Masterson is so adept and appealing in her role that she becomes the most interesting character of all. Fortunately, however, Stoltz has the substance to maintain his lead role.

Further weaving the fabric of Stoltz' life, Hughes-Deutch introduce family and friends of real believability. John Ashton as his father is stern but likeable; Maddie Corman as one of his younger sisters is just precocious enough to avoid being unlikeable; Elias Koteas as the disaffected punk outsider manages to deliver a comical but realistic performance.

Once Thompson and Sheffer are suitably established as unsympathetic characters, Stoltz is ready to actually go out on that date. By now the event has taken on a symbolic grandeur of such consequence that risk is all else yet to unfold may be anticlimactic.

Stoltz and Masterson, however, team up for an inventive way to arrive at anticipated destination of the story. Resolution nicely underscores just how appropriate the casting has been.

Project was a worthy undertaking that reaffirms Hughes' credentials as one of the most insightful writers around on contemporary American youth.

Tege.

Thurs., April 2, 1987

Someone To Love (Comedy-drama — Color)

An International Rainbow Picture. Produced by M.H. Simonsons. Executive producer, Michael Jaglom. Directed, written by Henry Jaglom. Camera (Deluxe color), Hanania Baer; sound, Sunny Meyer; associate producer, Judith Wolinsky. Reviewed at the Los Feliz Theater (AFI Fest), L.A., March 28, 1987. No MPAA rating. Running time: 109 min.

Danny's Friend........Orson Welles

Danny Sapir Henry Jaglom
Helen Eugene Andrea Marcovicci
Mickey Sapir Michael Emil
Edith Helm Sally Kellerman
Yelena Oja Kodar
Blue Stephen Bishop
Harry Dave Frishberg
With: Geraldine Baron, Ronee Blakely,
arbara Flood, Pamela Goldblum, Robert
allak, Kathryn Harrold, Monte Hellman,

With Geraldine Baron, Ronee Blakely, Barbara Flood, Pamela Goldblum, Robert Hallak, Kathryn Harrold, Monte Hellman, Jeremy Kagan, Michael Kaye, Miles Kreuger, Amnon Meskin, Sunny Meyer, Peter Rafelson, Ora Rubens, Katherine Wallach.

"Someone To Love" represents Henry Jaglom's alternately engaging and chaotic rumination on loneliness and aloneness in the '80s. As with Jaglom's previous efforts, this is a specialty item that will need astute handling if it is to reach its maximum audience 1 the upscale market. A serioomic psychodrama in which the immaker calls upon his friends 2 explore why he and they have roblems with commitment or inding the right mate, pic is lessed with an almost overrhelming final screen appearance y Orson Welles, but also proves 1 addening when the nonstop hatter loses its focus and preciion. Some additional cutting ould be helpful.

As before, Jaglom plays himself, director who is so frustrated at his irlfriend Andrea Marcovicci's untillingness to settle down that he ecides to devote an entire feature what he perceives as a general alaise of his generation.

Without revealing his intentions, aglom invites many friends to a St. 'alentine's Day party at a beautiful Id legit theater that his brother fichael Emil owns and will shortly emolish (standing in is the still-xtant Mayfair Music Hall in Santa Ionica). Guests, most of whom are utgoing showbiz types, are somethat taken aback by their host's detre to scrutinize their innermost belings and insecurities with a amera, and some bow out.

Others respond glibly to Jaglom's uery, "Why are you alone?" ome become defensive, others are tore matter-of-fact. Similarly, ome people prove more interesting n the subject than others, and fially the unrestricted flow of ords, words and more words becomes too much.

Whether true or not, Jaglom sems to be winging it here, and aparent lack of script or coherent ructure allows film to wander unertainly through the middle tretch, when some of the characters begin to establish tentative ties with one another, most of which

and nowhere or are just dropped. Dramatically, in fact, story omes to naught, but that doesn't revent the climax from being dyamite. Orson Welles, who apeared in Jaglom's first feature, "A afe Place," in 1971, returns here act as the younger man's mentor nd provocateur as he sits in the ack of the theater smoking a cigar nd delivering stunningly percepve and intellectually far-ranging omments on aloneness, women's beration, slavery in world history nd the nature of social revolutions. Glimpsed briefly at the begining, Welles carries the entire last ection of the picture and almost inglehandedly makes the film noving and mandatory viewing for uffs. He is sensationally responive, inquisitive, impudent and live playing himself and reacting the situation in which Jaglom laced him, and the very end, /here he calls, "Cut," and breaks nto his inimitable laugh, stands as ne of the warmest screen moments 1 recent memory.

Also notable is Welles' longtime ompanion Oja Kodar, who does ot appear with her friend but, rather, portrays a visiting Yugoslavian oman with particularly sensitive nd personal things to say about being a woman alone. Marcovicci ets to sing impressively and aggraate Jaglom, Sally Kellerman gives vivid account of what one imgines Sally Kellerman to be like, nd Michael Emil here gets his usul humorous philosophical ramlings thrown back in his face for a hange.

Technically, this marks somehing of an improvement on aglom's previous films, and the remise, and his way of approachng it, were daring and worth pursuing. A little more intellectual rigor and stylistic control would have helped enormously, but there are more ideas here than in most films. And there is Welles, his personality in full flower, dominating everything, giving his viewers one last chance to relish his great mind and conversation.

Car

Wed., Oct. 29, 1986

Something Wild

(Romantic thriller — Color)

An Orion release of a Religioso Primitiva presentation. Produced by Jonathan Demme, Kenneth Utt. Executive producer, Edward Saxon. Directed by Demme. Stars Jeff Daniels, Melanie Griffith. Screenplay, E. Max Frye. Camera (DuArt Color, De Luxe prints), Tak Fujimoto; editor Craig McKay; music. John Cale. Laurie Anderson; open ing song, David Byrne; production design, Norma Moriceau; art direction, Steve Lineweaver; set decoration, Billy Reynolds: sound, Les Lazarowitz; associate producers, Bill Miller, Ron Bozman; assistant director, Bozman; casting, Risa Bramon, Billy Hopkins. Reviewed at the Samuel Goldwyn Theater, Beverly Hills, Oct. 22, 1986. MPAA Rating: R. Running time: 113 min.

Charles Driggs Jeff Daniels	
Audrey Hankel Melanie Griffith	
Ray Sinclair Ray Liotta	
Irene Margaret Colin	
The Country Squire Tracey Walter	
Peaches Dana Preu	
Larry Dillman Jack Gilpin	
Peggy Dillman Su Tissue	
Tracy Kristin Olsen	

"Something Wild" gets better the wilder and bolder it becomes, but it does take awhile. Heavily trendy musical trappings encumber the film as much as they enhance it, and positioning this hybrid creation commercially will be a tricky task for Orion.

Conceptually and stylistically compelling under Jonathan Demme's sometimes striking direction, off-beat thriller about an unlikely couple on the run begins conventionally but finally generates strong tension after jettisoning the many accumulated cliches close to the midway point.

With elements of "After Hours" and "Blue Velvet" reverberating not far from the surface, first-time screenwriter E. Max Frye's story sees superyuppie Jeff Daniels being picked up by hot number Melanie Griffith at a luncheonette, driven out to New Jersey and, before he knows what's happening, being handcuffed to a bed and ravished by this crazy lady, all as he protests that he really should be getting back to the office that afternoon, and shouldn't be doing this because he's got a wife and kids back home.

A stolen car or two later, Mr. Nice Guy tags along with Griffith to meet the latter's mother, to whom he is instantly introduced as the young woman's husband. Not wanting to appear slow on his feet, he accepts the guise, and continues it when he unwittingly accompanies her to her 10th high-school reunion.

All of the above is unnecessarily overelaborated, as the same territory could have been covered in 15 minutes with no loss of character or dramatic value. The viewer, like Daniels, is being set up by Griffith, to whom there is clearly more than meets the eye, but the fascination she inspires fails to warrant the extended display of her wiles.

All changes at the reunion, however, as Griffith's ex-con husband makes an unexpected appearance and proceeds to change the couple's joyride into a nightmare. From this point on, Demme and Frye adroitly tighten the screws as the focus shifts from Griffith to the showdown between the two utterly different men vying for her attentions.

Part of the reason for the film's

sudden transformation for the better lies with Ray Liotta's mesmerizingly menancing performance as the sadistic cast-off lover, but it is equally due to the energy derived structurally from his character's role in the drama. What had been a cute but hopelessly contrived little anecdote becomes a story of twin obsessions and, finally, a life-ordeath struggle.

Demme brilliantly handles some

Demme brilliantly handles some of the set-pieces, notably the reunion, a low-key, high-stakes restaurant confrontation, a convenience store robbery and the final battle between the men, in which he displays a hitherto unrevealed flair for violent action. The film develops considerable force during the second half, only to end on a disappointly trite and conventional note.

At the same time, there are some odd choice in evidence. For a story about three white misfits, the telling is oddly backdropped by a preponderance of black culture — rappers, hitchhikers, Baptist church members, musicians and countless others are constantly floating on the periphery of the images, interestingly, but for no apparent reason.

Most absurd is the instance of Griffith, whose character may have street smarts but no book-learned intelligence, suddenly turning up reading a biography of Winnie Mandela.

Daniels does a good job in transforming himself from straightlaced good boy to loosened up, wised-up man. Griffith is provocative enough, but falls a little short in putting across all the aspects of this complicated woman (when she repeatedly calls out to Daniels' character, "Charlie," she sounds very much like Dorothy Comingore addressing "Charlie" Foster Kane).

Supporting roles are all beautifully filled, with Margaret Colin making a strong impression as Liotta's punky, aggressive prom date, and Jack Gilpin and Su Tissue projecting a hilariously accurate image of self-satisfied, well-to-do young successes. Directors John Waters and John Sayles are in for brief cameos.

There may be a lot of good music on the track, but Demme lays it on a bit thick here, and some of the music distracts as the suspense mounts. Tak Fujimoto's lensing and Norma Moriceau's production design are tops, while Craig McKay's editing is excellent within scenes, even if entire pic could have been considerably shorter. Cart.

Wed., April 15, 1987

Sorority House Massacre (Horror — Color)

A Concorde Pictures release. Produced by Ron Diamond. Written and directed by Carol Frank. Camera (Fotokem Color; prints by Filmhouse Group), Marc Reshovsky; editor, Jeff Wishengrad; music, Michael Wetherwax; sound design, David Lewis Yewdall; art direction, Susan Emshwiller; set decoration, Gene Serdena; assistant director, David B. Householter; production manager, Diamond; second-unit camera, Ken Wiatrak; postproduction supervisor, Deborah Brock; additional editor, Mike Miller. Reviewed at Cosmo Theater, N.Y., April 11, 1987. MPAA Pating: R. Running time: 73

Beth	Angela	O'Neill
Linda	. Wendy	Martel
Sara	. Pamela	a Ross
Tracy	Nic	ole Rio
BobbyJ	lohn C.	Russell
Andy	arcus Va	aughter
John	/incent 6	Bilancio
Craig	Jo	e Nassi
Dr. Lindsay	Gilliar	Frank

New York — With "Sorority House Massacre," Roger Corman, via his Concorde Pictures, revisits the genre he seemingly

kissed off five years ago with Amy Jones' spoof "Slumber Party Massacre." This time, filmmaker Carol Frank plays it straight, and though technically well-crafted, the resulting pic has nothing new to offer in a moribund genre.

Pic gets off to a wobbly start, with needlessly complicated cross-cutting during the first two reels of three separate narrative strains, all embedded within a film-long flashback related to heroine Beth (Angela O'Neill) from her hospital bed.

We gradually learn (though key plot points are immediately obvious and trite) that Beth has survived a massacre that felled many girls and their boyfriends at a sorority house where she was staying for the weekend. The house 13 years earlier was her home (traumatically forgotten except for tingles of deja vu), where her brother killed the whole family while she escaped.

Bro, unidentified, is shown in a state mental institution in periodic intercuts, while also intercut are nightmare flashbacks of the bloody incident that took her parents and sisters. Further complicating matters are Beth's hallucinations of her brother, his knife, etc., which extend her nightmares into wideawake scenes.

Director Carol Frank is careful to avoid the much-criticized hallmarks of the slasher film by making sure that victims are not just pretty girls but male bystanders as well, while keeping the gore content minimal. Her script also discusses the psychological and paranormal underpinnings of the heroine's plight, almost elevating the picture from terror status to supernatural horror or science fiction categories.

Angela O'Neill as the heroine physically resembles and is styled (only femme on-screen with short hair) to look like the genre's leading lady of 15 years ago, Pamela Franklin. She does a nice job, while the other cast members execute nothing roles.

Pic's brief running time suggests B-pix of old, but with its only Manhattan playdate occurring in Harlem, one wonders about the viability of such a format. Like the bulk of recent Concorde Pictures product, it is targeted squarely at homevideo—theatrical release a mere anachronism from headier days when drive-ins were in flower.

Fri., Oct. 10, 1986

Soul Man (Comedy — Color)

A New World Pictures release of a Steve Tisch production in association with Balcor Film Investors. Produced by Steve Tisch. Cu-producers, Carol Black, Neal Marlens, Directed by Steve Miner. Screenplay by Carol Black. Camera (CFI Color), Jeffrey Jur; editor, David Finfer; music, Tom Scott; production design, Gregg Fonseca; art direction, Don Diers, John Rienhart; set design, Larry Fulton; set decoration, Dorree Cooper; costume design, Sharon Simonaire; makeup, Devorah Fischa; sound mixer, Donald Summer; assistant director, Betsy Magruder; associate producers, Bernhard Goldmann, Stephen Vaughan; casting, Melissa Skoff Reviewed at the Samuel Goldwyn Theater, Beverly Hills, Oct. 8, 1986. MPAA Rating: PG-13. Running time: 101 min.

Mark Watson	.C. Thomas Howell
Gordon Bloomfeld.	Arye Gross
Sarah Walker	Rae Dawn Chong
Professor Banks	James Earl Jones
Whitney Dunbar	Melora Hardin
Mr. Dunbar	Leslie Nielsen
Bill Watson	James B. Sikking
Dr. Aronson	Max Wright
Ray McGrady	
George Walker	
Jonathan	"Fudge" Leonard

This social farce is superbly written, perfectly paced and intelligently directed. "Soul Man" is

arguably the best comedic review of the state of America's racist attitudes during an era one character calls "the Cosby decade." New World's reward for success with such provocative material should be substantial business.

Film is hilarious throughout as initial screenplay by Carol Black consistently engages via fable-like tale of a white man (C. Thomas Howell) darkening his skin in order to win a law-school scholarship intended for a black.

If there is a paradox here, it is that this soul man's transformation may be initially unconvincing but is so propelled by swift story movement and complementary performances that the preposterous becomes plausible.

Director Steve Miner skillfully guides pic through visually compelling scenes, including one of a pick-up basketball game revolving around Howell's desirability due to presumed prowess at the hoop.

Ron Reagan shows up as one of the team's captains vying for the supposedly skilled "black" player. The presidential progeny returns later with some ably delivered punchlines.

The racist-oriented humor escalates from here on as two fellow students periodically unload jokes slurring blacks.

Perhaps the zaniest turn of events comes at a dinner during which fantasies of the uppercrust white hosts are mentally conjured in extreme racial stereotypes.

In boldly — if not brazenly — tackling this subject matter, film-makers could be perceived as edging toward racism themselves. They verged the closest in shots of Howell mimicking Stevie Wonder as not only blind but hearing-impaired. Ultimately, the depiction may have risked bad taste more than personal or racial slight.

Such scenes appeared neither destructive nor maliciously-intended. Indeed, the entire film's point of view strikes a chord for racial harmony, enlightened evolution of one white man and a 1980s sensibility to address these topics with ease and good humor.

Black, Miner et al. are able to empathize with the black perspective without pandering. Their plot intricacies also understate, rather than overblow, antiblack sentiments by several characters.

Howell as the white-turned-black law student is just effective enough to be believable. His portrayal does require, and is substantially enhanced by, at least three other cast members.

As Howell's close buddy, Arye Gross delivers gifted and energized screen humor. This is not just a second banana. This is a sidekick who gets most of the guffaws and absolutely shines in a climactic classroom monolog.

Rae Dawn Chong is wholly natural and intellectually appealing. Her reluctant romantic involvement with Howell focuses his ultimate moral dilemma over the skin deception. Jonathan (Fudge) Leonard, as her young son, is so charming that he nearly steals the entire picture.

And then there is James Earl Jones. As a criminal law prof, Jones' imposing voice and stern demeanor result in a hybrid of his Darth Vader and John Houseman's Prof. Kingsfield of "The Paper Chase." Jones' representation of authority, with occasional glimpses of human warmth, are critical to the film's denouement.

Long before the story's resolution,

however, it is clear that this film is going to provide audiences with a cascade of visual and verbal humor.

Early on, when one college prepster declares that "It's never too soon to start networking," the biting social insights begin flowing.

In some sense, the picture's overall thrust is aimed as much at this country's absurd preoccupation with lawyering as it is at race.

Story winds up delivering both an uplifting and entertaining tone proving that the combination is compatible.

Mon., June 22, 1987

Spaceballs (Comedy—Color)

An MGM/UA release. Produced by Mel Brooks. Coproducer Ezra Swerdlow. Directed by Brooks. Screenplay, Brooks, Thomas Meehan, Ronny Graham. Camera (Metro color), Nick McLean; editor, Conrad Buff IV: music, John Morris; production design, Terence Marsh; art director, Harold Michelson Diane Wager, set decorator, John Franco, Jr.; sound (Dolby stereo), Randy Thom, Gary Rydstrom; special visual effects, Apogee Inc.; visual effects supervisor, Peter Donen; costumes, Donfeld; assistant director, Robert Latham; casting, Bill Shepard, Lynn Stalmaster & Associates, David Rubin Reviewed at Filmland screening room, Culver City, Calif., June 18, 1987. MPAA ratings: PG. Running time: 96 min. President Skroob........

. Mel Brooks Mel Brooks Yogurt . . Barf John Candy Dark Helmet.. .Rick Moranis Lone Starr Princess Vespa Daphne Zuniga King Roland Dick Van Patten George Wyner Colonel Sandurz Radar Technician Michael Winslow Voice of Dot Matrix Joan Rivers Lorene Yarnell John Hurt. .John Hurt

Mel Brooks will do anything for a laugh. Unfortunately, what he does in "Spaceballs," a misguided parody of the "Star Wars" adventures, isn't very funny. Brooks, the quintessential ethnic joker, gears his humor here for a young crowd and misses the mark by light years. Older folks probably won't be amused either.

While the film misfires on all cylinders, it may have been irrevocably wrong from its conception. Whereas western and horror films were ripe for parody in "Blazing Saddles" and "Young Frankenstein," the charm of "Star Wars" was that it never took itself too seriously and existed as almost a self-parody to begin with.

In addition, many of the obvious "Star Wars" jokes have already been exploited elsewhere and writers Brooks. Thomas Meehan and Ronny Graham fail to come up with much that is original or innovative. One can expect silliness from Brooks but "Spaceballs" beats the gags into the ground with

On a story level, film is also dismal and barely keep's going as it interrupts itself with constant asides and non sequiturs.

After every joke, pic practically winks at the audience. Brooks has also peppered the script with industry in-jokes about videocassettes and merchandising that are sure to be wasted on the "Star Wars" audience and only add to the film's self-consciousness. At it's worst, displays a colossal ego at work and humor better left to home movies

Picture also suffers from the absence of the Brook's stock company, although Dom De Luise does the voice for a giant pizza-like creature. As suitably moronic as Rick Moranis is as Dark Helmet, no one quite approaches the satiric edge of Madeline Kahn or the lovable dumbness of Gene Wilder.

Instead, there is Bill Pullman as Lone Starr and Daphne Zuniga as Princess Vespa, Harrison Ford-Carrie Fischer clones. Pullman's partner is John Candy as Barf, a half-man, half-dog creature who is his own best friend. Equipped with a constantly wagging tale and furry sneakers, Barf is one of the better comic creations in the film.

But the plot about the ruthless race of Spaceballs out to steal the air supply from the planet Druidia is more cliched than the original. Brooks turns up in the dual role of President Skroob of Spaceball and the all-knowing, all-powerful Yogurt, who passes on the power of the Schwartz to young Lone Starr.

Production does offer some amusing sight gags, including the first look at the ridiculously enormous Spaceball spacecraft and Lone Starr's flying Winnebago, but other special effects are inferior to the original and provide little fireworks. Brook's direction is far too static to suggest the sweeping style of the "Star Wars" epics and pic more closely resembles Flash Gordon programmers.

Other tech credits are well done, highlighted by Terence Marsh's daffy production design and Donfeld's ridiculous costumes, but except for a few isolated laughs. "Spaceballs" is strictly not Ko-

Thurs., July 2, 1987

Space Rage

(Futuristic western — Color)

A Vestron Pictures release from Vestron Entertainment of a Morton Reed production. Produced by Reed; reshoots produced by Eric Barrett. Directed by Conrad E Palmisano. Reshoots directed by Peter McCarthy. Screenplay, Jim Lenahan, from story by Reed. Camera (Deluxe Color), Timothy Suhrstedt, reshoots, Tom Richmond; editor, W. Peter Miller; additional editing, Arthur Bressan Jr., Amy Sumner; music, Billy Ferrick, Zander Schloss; sound, Nolan Roberts, reshoots., Calvin Allison; an direction, Cliff Cunningham, William Pomeroy, reshoots, Richard Rollison; set decoration, Diana Allen Williams; stunt coordinator, Bruce Paul Barbour, reshoots, Rick Barker; production manager, Charles Skouras III; assistant director, Leon Dudevoir; special effects, Roger George, Frank DeMarco; as sociate producers, Damian Lee, Patrick Wells. Reviewed on Lighting Video vidcassette, N.Y., June 20, 1987. MPAA Rating: R. Running time: 77 min.

The Colonel Richard Farnsworth .Michael Pare Grange. John Laughlin Walker Maggie Lee Purcel .William Windom Drago Lewis Van Berger Quinn . Dennis Redfield . Harold Sylvester Hank Worden

New York — "Space Rage," subtitled "Breakout On Prison Planet," represents an abortive early effort by video giant Vestron to enter the ranks of motion picture producers. Project went through innumerable title changes, including "A Dollar A Day," "Trackers: 2180," "Trackers" and 'The Last Frontier," and was test-booked at home in Stanford, Conn., for Christmas 1985 before further bookings a year later and current homevideo availabiltiy.

Numerous credits for "reshoots" and the tacking on of a very inappropriate soundtrack of hard-rock songs indicated a lot of second thoughts went into the film, final version of which is a brief 77 minutes long.

Concept is to update, cheaply, prison film and Western formats to appeal to the public's fascination with sci-fi.

Unreconstructed in look from his various Western roles, Richard Farnsworth portrays an ex-LAPD cop now living in New Botany Bay,

actually the planet Proxima Centauri 3 in the 22d Century. He is mentor to various young guys including tracker (bounty hunter) John Laughlin, who drives a modified dune buggy and ruthlessly captures or kills escapees from the local penal colony.

Michael Pare, in a switch on his usually heroic casting, is an utterly evil prisoner who engineers an escape and kills people (including the warden/governor of the colony. William Windom) in cold-blooded fashion until the underwhelming Wild West shootout with Farns-

Special effects are meager and there is almost no futurism to the picture's design, an instant disappointment for sci-fi fans. A good cast is wasted, particularly Lee Purcell as the token femme on view. Westerns are dead and enough clunkers like this one will kill off the space opera as well.

Fri., Jan. 16, 1987

Square Dance

(Drama — Color)

An Island release of a Michael Nesmith presentation produced in association with NBC Prods. Produced, directed by Daniel Petrie. Executive producers, Charles Haid, Jane Alexander, Stars Jason Robards, Jane Alexander, Winona Ryder, Rob Lowe Screenplay, Alan Hines, based on his novel. Camera (Allied Lab Color: Metrocolor prints), Jacek Laskus; editor, Bruce Green; music, Bruce Broughton; production design Jan Scott; set decoration, Erica Rogalla; costume design, Elizabeth McBride; sound, Bob Wald; assistant director, Katterli Fraunfelder; associate producers, P'nenah Goldstein. Cyris Yavneh; second unit camera, Rick Anderson; casting, Shari Rhodes, Liz Keigley. Reviewed at Lorimar-Telepictures, Culver City, Jan. 14, 1987. MPAA Rating: PG-13. Running time: 112 min.

Dillard. Jason Robards .Jane Alexander Juanelle ..Winona Ryder Rob Lowe . Deborah Richter Gwen Guich Koock .Elbert Lewis

A very traditional drama about a young girl's search for a home and an identity, "Square Dance" provides a showcase for some fine performances but emotionally never quite flowers as bountifully as it should. Tastefully produced Island release has its world premiere tonight in Salt Lake City as the opener for the U.S. Film Festival and seems destined for okay, if not remarkable, b.o. results in class situations.

Winona Ryder, first seen onscreen last year in "Lucas," plays a 13-year-old whose normal pubescent awkwardness is compounded by her general unwantedness. Raised by a gruff grandpa (Jason Robards) in rural Texas, she finds solace mainly in church activities, and when her slatternly mother

(Jane Alexander) turns up to take her away, the girl refuses to go.

However, a spat with the old man prompts Ryder to hop a bus to Ft. Worth and surprise Mom, who lives above a gas station with a man she doesn't deserve and works at a nearby beauty parlor, where Ryder gets a new "do" and is immediately given a job.

The youngster's burgeoning oveliness is all the more in these tawdry surroundings, where the women are all tarts and moneygrubbing is the only ideal.

She quickly falls in chaste but intense love with a retarded fellow, played in a drastic change-of-pace by Rob Lowe, which momentarily distracts her from the fact that her mother has still not made room for her in her life and is still basically as selfish as the day she walked out on her father and daughter. As Mama puts it, "You don't belong anywhere, kiddo.

Drama rises to its peak during the climactic mother-daughter confrontations, and while the scenes are strongly acted explorations of an emotionally potent dilemma, they are not as painful or incisive as they might have been. As written, Ryder's character bears up almost unbelievably well under mightily adverse conditions, and quick cutting away from moments of the greatest tension prevents the impact from being total.

Director Daniel Petrie's handling of the material proves very conventional and film overall could have profited from further tightening by 10 minutes or so; but Petrie's work with the actors is exemplary. Ryder's big brown eyes, composed seriousness and budding looks rivet the attention throughout, and she carries off the demanding central role with thorough impressiveness.

Alexander is also right on as the brassy mom who torments her daughter by revealing that she has no idea who the child's father was, so numerous were the candidates, and who has obviously always foresaken any sense of responsibility for another night of good times.

Robards' embittered crustiness is utterly believable, and Lowe, while never disguising his too-good looks, manages to pull off his role of the pathetic but pure-hearted soulmate of Ryder's.

Guich Koock delivers a strong supporting turn as Alexander's struggling, well-intentioned man. while Deborah Richter is flashy as the number-one floozy in town.

Pic is modest technically, with Jacek Laskus' muted lensing and Jan Scott's straightforward production design helping set the mood without overloading the atmosphere.

Mon., July 6, 1987

The Squeeze (Comedy — Color)

A Tri-Star Pictures release. Produced by Rupert Hitzig, Michael Tannen. Directed by Roger Young. Executive producers, Harry Colomby, David Shamroy Hamburger Screenplay, Daniel Taplitz, Camera (DuArt Color, Technicolor prints), Arthur Albert; editor, Harry Keramidas; production designer, Simon Waters; art director, Christopher Nowak; set decorator, Ted Glass; sound (Dolby), Milton C. Burrow; music, Miles Goodman; costume designer, Jane Greenwood; assistant director, James Chory; casting, Lynn Kressel. Reviewed at the Coronet Theater, Los Angeles, July 1, 1987. MPAA Rating: PG-13. Running time: 101 min.

Harry Berg Michael Keaton Rachel Dobs Rae Dawn Chong Hilda Berg . Liane Langland Leslie Bevis Honest Tom T. Murray. John Davidson Meat Loaf Ronald Guttman

Not much life can be wrung out of "The Squeeze," a hapless comedy that runs dry fast. B.o. should be equally barren.

Michael Keaton and Rae Dawn Chong try and do their best to pump some energy into an essentially nonsensical story about a corrupt Lotto host named Honest Tom T. Murray (John Davidson in a classic parody of his real-life tv pitchman self) and his unctuous accomplices lead by Monsieur Rigaud (Ronald Guttman).

Keaton's sort of an artist and a con man. Chong first meets up with him trying to serve him papers in her silly role as a bill collector and would-be detective. At about the same time, Keaton goes to retrieve a package at his soon-to-be-exwife's apartment and finds a dead man in the closet. He doesn't call

Story by Daniel Taplitz has abo two laughs, but in total, the scri fails on nearly every level, not th least of which because it is simp unbelievable.

With some great leaps in plo Taplitz links the dead body with lo tery fixing, with Chong working a a detective for both Keaton an Guttman.

Director Roger Young, eve while working with a script full c holes, doesn't know where to tak his characters with the material he

Keaton and Chong's romanc springs from nowhere and has n spark. Their adversarial relation ships to the bad guys is almost ca toonish since it seems their run-ir with them are totally contrived an without fear or fun.

Meat Loaf takes a turn as the lea thug who is constantly sweating an fanning himself. He doesn't emot much, but even so, still comes of like a reject from a bad Mafi

The other nasty characters (Gut man, Leslie Bevis) play their role as if told to "act heavy." Heavy i this case is wooden.

The bottom line is these folks are not worth caring about and a thrown lotto game isn't exactly the most compelling premise to work from. Combination of dull personalities and a leaden script adds up to boredom.

Sad to say, considering that Kea ton and Chong can be very funny "The Squeeze" would make even bad vidpic.

Mon., Aug. 3, 1987

Stakeout

(Action comedy — Color)

A Buena Vista Pictures release of Touchstone Pictures presentation. Pro duced by Jim Kouf, Cathleen Summers. Ex ecutive producer, John Badham. Directed b Badham. Screenplay by Kouf. Camera (De Luxe Color), John Seale; editor, Tom Rol Michael Ripps; music, Arthur B. Rubinsteir production design, Phillip Harrison; art d rector, Richard Hudolin, Michael Ritter; se decorator, Rose Marie McSherry, Lesli Beale; sound (Dolby stereo), Larry Sutton assistant director, Rob Cowan; associat producer, Dana Salter; casting, Mike Fer ton/Jane Feinberg, Judy Taylor, Sidney Kc zak. Reviewed at Avco Cinema, Westwood Calif., July 27, 1987. MPAA rating: R. Rur ning time: 115 min.

Chris Lecce Richard Dreyfuss Bill Reimers . . . Maria McGuire Emilio Estevez Madeleine Stowe Richard Montgomery Aidan Quinn Phil Coldshank Jack Pismo Dan Lauria Forest Whitaker Caylor Reese Earl Billings Captain Giles FBI Agent Lusk **Jackson Davies**

"Stakeout" is slick, sure-foote entertainment that has enough wit and speed to sidestep gapin; holes in credibility, character de velopment and simple human be havior. One part buddy comed: and one part police actione stitched together with a dash o romance, film is another phon formula picture executed wel enough to make big money if peo ple find out what it's about.

Characters in "Stakeout" ar pure film creations without mucl relation to reality. They are built or a few quick hooks and one liners by scripter Jim Kouf and that's it They can't be trusted or believed but they're fun.

Particularly problematic is Rich ard Dreyfuss as a reckless co whose life is slowly unravelling While he's on familiar ground talk ing his way out of tight spots an jousting with his partner, Emili-Estevez, when the plot calls for rough stuff it's a stretch he doesn°

quite make.

As the more stable, but still mischievous anchor of the pair, Estevez is likable, if a bit flat. He's not in actor with a great gift for comely and many of his exchanges with Dreyfuss lack chemistry.

As Seattle cops (the film was acually shot in Vancouver, B.C.), the visecracking duo is assigned to a outin takeout where they are upposed to wait for an escaped con Aidan Quinn) to contact his exgirlfriend (Madeleine Stowe). But Dreyfuss is not a man to wait round for something to happen and is he barrels into the case, he falls n love with Stowe.

For the long middle section, diector John Badham plays the pic as mother problematic love story. vith Quinn's impending arrival the leat under the pan. Quinn is a timenomb waiting to explode as Badham ntercuts his roundabout journey to Seattle to collect money he has tashed at Stowe's house.

As an actor Quinn seems to have nherited Dennis Hopper's mantle is the psychopath in the crowd. With eyes like laser beams, Quinn s so close to the edge that occaionally he tips over into a cartoonsh crazy

But where the film really sags is n the love story and especially Stowe's character. In this kind of ilm, love comes cheap and almost overnight. Lovely though she is, it s hard to get a handle on her charicter, let alone her attraction to Drevfuss. It's just another skinleep affair passed off as true love.

Kouf has opted for clever rather han deep, and fortunately Badham s able to whip it all into a fast-paced

pleasing package. Pic tries to satisy light romance fans and action nongers and consequently, its shifts into intense violence may come as too much of a jolt.

Arthur B. Rubinstein's pop score ynthesizes the action even more by ouring on a tinny layer of sound. ohn Seale's camerawork, however, fixes the film in a Northwest earthiness otherwise lacking in the Jagr.

Mon., Nov. 17, 1986

Star Trek IV: The Voyage Home (Space Fantasy — Color)

Paramount Pictures release of a Harve lennett production. Executive producer, lalph Winter, Produced by Bennett, Coprouced by Industrial Light & Magic. Directed y Leonard Nimoy. Screenplay, Bennett, Steve fleerson, Peter Krikes, Nicholas Meyer from story by Nimoy, Bennett, based on "Star 'rek" tv series created by Gene Roddenber y; camera (color by Technicolor, filmed in 'anavision), Don Peterman; editor, Peter E. lerger; music, Leonard Rosenman; sound Dolby), Gene S. Cantamessa; production deign, Jack T. Collis; art direction, Joe Aubel, 'ete Smith: set design. Dan Gluck. James layliss, Richard Berger; set decorator, John)wyer; visual effects supervisor, Ken Ralton; visual effects, Industrial Light & Magic; pecial-effects supervisor, Michael Lanteri; ostume design, Robert Fletcher; assistant lirectors, Patrick Kehoe, Douglas E. Wise; asting, Amanda Mackey. Reviewed at Paranount Studios, Hollywood, Nov. 12, 1986. #PAA Rating: PG. Running time: 119 min. Kirk . William Shatner Leonard Nimoy McCoy . DeForest Kelley Scotty James Doohan Sulu. George Takei Walter Koenig Chekov Uhura. Nichelle Nichols Amanda .Jane Wyatt Gillian. Catherine Hicks

Federation Council President. Robert Ellenstein Klingon Ambassador. .John Schuck

Mark Lenard

Robin Curtis

Sarek.

Lt. Saavik

Kirk and company may be without a U.S.S. Enterprise and rounded temporarily in earthly

in "Star Trek IV: The Voyage Home" is no less entertaining than in the previous filmed missions. Already this years' b.o. leader, Paramount should load its coffers even more with this entry.

Latest excursion is warmer, wittier, more socially relevant and truer to its tv origins than prior odysseys, which will satisfy the legions of trekkies while conquering a galaxy of new admirers with its more commercial treatment.

This voyage finds the crew earthbound to face trial for stealing the Enterprise and journeying to a restricted planet to battle the Klingons - and seeing their beloved starship destroyed in the process.

Forced to travel homeward on a Klingon klunker, they find the galaxy dark and messages from earth distorted, triggering a bit of worrying on the ship's deck.

In his inimitable, calculated. reasoning mind, Spock locates the source of the trouble in the bleeting, eerie sounds of an unidentified probe and links them to a cry from the earth's past that has long been silenced.

Scripters employ successful use of time travel, found in many sci-fi stories and a certain number of celebrated "Star Trek" tv episodes, to take Kirk et al back to where they stand a chance to save the Earth of the 23d century - the San Francisco Bay of the 20th century.

Opening scenes don't give off the feeling that this will be a particularly precarious mission for the crew, they seem to be having too much fun exchanging lighthearted barbs to be worried if their Klingon ship can survive warp speed in one piece.

Spock (Leonard Nimoy) resurrected in "Star Trek III" and not fully himself vet, is the foil for most of the jokes, being the quintessential straight man still suffering from rebirth trauma that resulted in some lapses in memory

He and Kirk (William Shatner) play off each other in a sort of deadpan futuristic version of Hope and Crosby with Nimoy, surprisingly, as the awkward one relying on Shatner's smooth talking to win the help of a zealous save-the-whales biologist (Catherine Hicks) in capturing a couple of specimens readily available for the taking upon their arrival on

Audiences may find the save-thewhales message overwrought and a bit heavy-handed for what is ostensibly a spec-fantasy film. Theme might have been received better in the ecologically more aware 1970s than mid 1980s, although principal is not less valid today.

Nice that filmmakers have moved away from reliance on special-effects wizardry and series of inter-gallactic confrontations to carry the story, instead developing drama and suspense through a strong narrative.

Nevertheless, some of the more ardent trekkies may find the dialog a bit too cute at times and derivative of the kind of slick one-liners so well employed in "Back To The Future." They may also object to the violation of the cardinal science-fiction rule not to tamper with the past.

Characters' situations and banterings are certainly enjoyable to watch, but there are a handful of gratuitous scenes that only contribute to the overall frenectic pacing of the picture without furthering the story any. One notable cut could have been made of Chekov's (Walter Koenig) contrived emergency surgery scene. Presumably, each of the crewmates are

predicaments, but their adventure guaranteed a certain amount of screen time for each film appearance, even if their moments might not integrate well into the plot.

Technical credits are terrific, as should be expected in such a highbudget film, though strangely not much is made of the beautiful geographic San Francisco setting.

Tues., Jan. 20, 1987

The Stepfather (Thriller — Color)

A New Century/Vista Film Co. release. Produced by Jay Benson. Directed by Joseph Ruben. Screenplay, Donald E. Westlake from a story by Carolyn Lefcourt, Brian Garfield, Westlake; Camera (CFI Color), John Lindley; editor, George Bowers; music, Patrick Moraz; art director, Davie Willson; production design, James William Newport; set decorator, Kimberly Richardson; costumes, Mina Mittelman; assistant director, Michael Steele; casting, Mike Fenton, Jane Feinberg, Judy Taylor. Reviewed at the Writer's Guild theater, Beverly Hills, Calif., Jan. 15, 1987. MPAA Rating: R. Running time: 88 min.

Jerry Blake . Terry O'Quinn Stephanie Maine Jill Schoelen Susan Blake Shelley Hack Dr. Bondurant Charles Lanver Stephen Shellen Jim Ogilvie

"The Stepfather" is a wellproduced but predictable thriller in which the stepfather is a psychopath and his new wife and kid a little dimwitted. Even so, fine performances are turned in by all members of this afflicted nuclear family, even the poor pooch, while it is fairly evident all along their dilemma will be short-lived. Boxoffice should be minimally exciting.

The opening scene is grisly enough, with "The Stepfather," a.k.a. a number of aliases, including Jerry Blake (Terry O'Quinn), revealing just what of a twisted individual he is. He shaves, showers and walks very calmly downstairs in his two-story suburban colonial straightening up family photos on his way — before hanging up the phone and stepping over the bloody body of his daughter on his way out the door.

Next scene finds him remarried to an attractive widow (Shelley Hack) with a troubled daughter (Jill Schoelen) and living in another two-story colonial in another suburb not far away.

As the story moves along, it's pretty evident that film is building to the point where he will strike again, and usually at foreseeable

O'Quinn is a convincing enough sicko, but audience doesn't learn why he's demented or even if he derives any pleasure or satisfaction from slaughtering people.

While he's done an incredible snow job on his adoring wife (and Hack is the perfect Mrs. Perfect), at least his adopted daughter shows a tiny bit more sense when it comes to judging character.

One wonders how the writers believe they could get away with the notion that a wife wouldn't call her husband at the office for as long as five days (to find out that he quit his job) or accept that he had no past worth telling — or even lying

At the same time, Schoelen as the belligerent teenager has at least enough skeptical bones in her to give her old man more than a couple of uneasy moments.

Strange as it may seem, she is the focus of the film, not her demonic stepfather. Scripters gave her part color and depth as she investigates her identity, which they didn't the other two, and she handles her role

without ever overacting - no mean feat for this genre.

Charles Lanyer is very effective as the girl's shrink, and it's refreshing to see one who's not afraid to give advice to a troubled youth instead of just asking her questions.

Credit goes to filmmakers for creating a technically sharp production on what surely must have been a low budget. Sets and location shooting never look cheesy and the continuity is flawless.

Scoring by Patrick Moraz is quite fitting, even if at times it could stand being toned down.

Fri., April 3, 1987

Stewardess School (Comedy — Color)

A Columbia Pictures release from Columbia-Delphi V Prods. of a Summa Entertainment Group-Triton Ltd. production. Produced by Phil Feldman, Written and directed by Ken Blancato, Camera (Deluxe Color), Fred J Koenekamp; editor, Kenneth C. Paonessa Lou Lombardo; music, Robert Folk; sound, Dick Raguse; production design, Daniel A. Lomino; set design, Sue Lomino; set decoration, Robert Zilliox; production managercoproducer, Jerry A. Baerwitz; coproducer, Michael Kane; assistant director, Bill Scott; associate producers, Don McFarlane, Elizabeth A. Bardsley; casting, Melissa Skoff. Reviewed on RCA/Columbia Home Video vidcassette, N.Y., March 21, 1987. MPAA rating: R. Running time: 93 min.

.Brett Cullen ... Mary Cadorette Kelly. George .Sandahi Bergman Wanda Miss Grummett. . Vicki Frederick Sugar Dubois... Judy Landers Jolean. Wendie Jo Sperber Pimmy .Julia Montgomery Snake. Dennis Burkley Corinne Bohre

Also with Rob Paulsen, Vito Scotti, Rod McCary, William Bogert, Alan Rosenberg, Sherman Hemsley, Yuliis Ruval, Richard Erdman, Brooke Bundy, Gloria Leroy, Joe Dorsey, Leslie Huntly, Fran Ryan.

New York — It doesn't take a lot of hindsight to see the problem Columbia had with its "high concept," "can't miss" project "Stewardess School." Unabashed attempt to capitalize on the success of WB's "Police Academy" and Par's "Airplane" features contain some effective vocks but is extremely vulgar, suited for drive-in audiences. Drive-ins are not exactly a primary market for Col, so the pic played briefly in Detroit last August, ahead of its April vidcassette release.

Working with a substantial budget (\$8,000,000) for this type of sexploitation comedy, debuting writer-director Ken Blancato has a good cast and impressive production scale. What's lacking is cast chemistry and a fresh storyline.

Heroes Brett Cullen and his sidekick Donald Most try stewardess school when their budding careers as airplane pilots crash with Cullen's poor eyesight, causing them to be kicked out of pilot school.

The stewardess academy is lorded over by martinet Vicki Frederick, intent on washing out the misfits, who happen to include our heroes plus a motley crew of attractive young women. Chief among these is accident-prone Mary Cadorette, the voluptuous Judy Landers (whose sister Audrey similarly costarred with Frederic "A Chorus Line") as an ex-hooker with always-alluring decolletage, butt of fat jokes Wendie Jo Sperber and in solid casting, statuesque Sandahl Bergman as an ex-wrestler.

Misfits are literally sold to poverty-row airline owner Vito Scotti to get him past an inspection run and of course Cullen's bad eyes (plus a guest appearance by Sherman Hemsley as a blind passenger) figure prominently in the climax.

Blancato's humor is several notches below the gross-out approach of a "Porky's" pic, with toilet gags and sexual material (Landers "relaxing" an agitated passenger during the big flight) abounding. Principals keep their clothes on, with requisite nudity left to such alluring femmes as Leslie Huntly and Playboy model Yuliis Ruval (a.k.a. Lillian Muller).

It's highly unlikely that David Puttnam's regime at Col will followup on this watershed film. Lor.

Fri., May 22, 1987

Straight To Hell (British - Color)

A J & M presentation of an Island Pictures release of an Intitial Pictures production of a Commies From Mars film. Produced by Eric Fellner. Directed by Alex Cox. Screenplay, Cox, Dick Rude. Camera (color), Tom Richmond; music, The Pogues; production design, Andrew McAlpine; sound, Ian Voigt; assistant director, Joe Ochaha. Reviewed at

Cannes Film Festival (market), May 14, 1987. Running time: 86 min. Norwood..... . Sy Richardson Simms. .Joe Strummer .. Dick Rude

Courtney Love Velma Dennis Hopper ... Elvis Costello Farber. Hives. .Grace Jones Mr. Dade Jim Jarmusch Also with: Biff Yeager, Zander Schloss, Sara Sugarman, The Pogues, Juan Torres.

Cannes — Audiences looking forward to the new Alex Cox pic, after "Repo Man" and "Sid And Nancy," will be sorely disappointed with "Straight To Hell," a strenuously unfunny comicstrip western. It's going straight to nowhere.

Shot quickly in Almeria, Spain, but deliberately in view of a highway so that traffic is frequently seen on the horizon, pic starts promisingly by introing three scrungy outlaws (Sy Richardson, Joe Strummer, Dick Rude) and their moll (Courtney Love), who wake up too late one morning to complete an assassination contract.

After a desultory bank robbery, they head for the hills, and when their car breaks down, bury the loot and go on into a small town in which the rest of the action is set.

What follows is a labored parody of westerns, especially those of Leone and Peckinpah. It looks as though the cast and crew had fun, but only the most easily amused audience will raise a smile. Pic seems to be striving for cult status, but even this is iffy. It gets pretty dull as the tired jokes are dragged out; John Landis covered similar territory far more amusingly in "Three Ami-

The cast has a variety of accents, and each does his or her own thing. Dennis Hopper makes a brief appearance, Elvis Costello has a running joke as a waiter always ready with a tray of coffee, even during the shootouts, and Jim Jarmusch makes a belated appearance as a vil-

The prolonged gun battle that climaxes the film is nothing to write home about, but at least has some action to watch as opposed to the dreary first two-thirds of the pic. Most apt line of dialog comes from a girl who says: "Can I please go

now? It's really boring for me." Many in the audience will feel sym-

There are joke credits for "Sex & Murder Consultant" and "Unnatural Acts Researcher," but funny credits do not a picture make. Final credit promises a sequel, "Back To Hell," a most unlikely event under the circumstances.

Street Smart (Drama - Color)

A Cannon Group release of a Golan-Globus production. Produced by Menahem Golan, Yoram Globus. Directed by Jerry Schatzberg. Stars Christopher Reeve Screenplay, David Freeman. Camera (TVC Color), Adam Holender; editor, Priscilla Nedd; music, Robert Irving III; production design, Dan Leigh; art direction, Serge Jacques (Canada); set design, Raymond Larose, Katherine Matthewson (Canada); set decoration, Bill Stabile (N.Y.); costume design, Jo Ynocenio; sound (Dolby), Patrick Rousseau (Canada); associate producer, Evzen W. Kolar; assistant directors, Jacques Methe (Canada), Herb Gains (N.Y.); casting, Joy Todd. Reviewed at the Cannon screening room, L.A., Feb. 27, 1987. MPAA Rating: R. Running time: 95 min.

Jonathan Christopher Reeve Fisher. . Kathy Baker . Mimi Rogers Alison Parker Jay Patterson Leonard Pike Andre Gregory Fast Black Morgan Freeman Anna Maria Morsford Harriet.Frederick Rolf Joel Davis Reggie Art Sheffield . .Erik King . Michael J. Reynolds .Shari Hilton Donna Bailey Yvonne

"Street Smart" is a well-made but unpersuasive concoction about an uptown journalist who gets caught up in the downtown world of pimps and prostitutes. Role of a dishonest, unscrupulous reporter represents a change of pace for Christopher Reeve, but gap between the gritty backdrop and farfetched plotting creates a strain the modest production can't bear. B.o. prospects look

Faced with a pressing deadline and a complete lack of material, freelance writer Reeve whips up a fabricated story about the private life of a successful pimp that creates a sensation when run as the cover story in the chic New York Journal.

Suddenly the toast of the Big Apple, Reeve is brought aboard an onthe-spot tv news show called "Street Smart" and all looks rosy, except for the fact that the dude described in the fictitious piece bears an uncanny resemblance to one Fast Black, a vicious pimp concurrently up on a murder charge.

Reeve is jailed for contempt after refusing to turn over his "notes" to the D.A.'s office and, under pressure from the pimp, later produces phoney notes to show that Fast Black was elsewhere when the murder was committed. Yarn proceeds from there to a violent and severely unlikely conclusion.

Despite the famous case a few years back of the Pulitzer Prize winning newspaper article that turned out to be fiction, the premise of David Freeman's screenplay is rather hard to take, but not as much as the series of coincidences that follow. Furthermore, Reeve's character becomes increasingly un-

likeable with each compromise and shady agreement he makes, which would be all right if there seemed to be some notable moral or ethical

point being made.

Unfortunately, pic doesn't add up to much at all except as a cynical commentary on journalistic and legal procedures, which seem unfair and unconvincing given the highly unusual nature of the goings-on

Under the adverse circumstances, director Jerry Schatzberg still manages to come up with some potent scenes, particularly those involving Morgan Freeman, who turns in a strong and disturbing performance as the volatile pimp. Pic suffers from some less than indelible characterizations in other parts. however.

Production team has done an excellent job in making Montreal pass for New York City (only three weeks of lensing were done in Gotham), and score is notable for some solo work by Miles Davis.

Fri., March 27, 1987

Street Trash

(Gore exploitation — U.S. — Color)

A Chaos production. Produced, written by Roy Frumkes. Executive producers, James Muro Sr., Edward Muro Sr. Directed by Jim Muro, Camera (Technicolor), David Sperling; editor, Dennis Werner; music, Rick Ulfik; production design, Rob Marcucci; art direction. Denise Labelle, Tom Molinelli; special makeup effects, Jennifer Aspinall; special makeup artist, Mike Lackey; costume design, Michele Leifer; sound, Alex Giraldo; assistant director, Robert J. Hurrie; associate producer, Frank Farel. Reviewed at the American Film Institute (AFI Fest), L.A., March 12, 1987. No MPAA rating. Running time: 91 min.

Bill the Cop	Bill Chepil
Fred	Mike Lackey
Bronson	Vic Noto
Kevin	Mark Sferrazza
Wendy	Jane Arakawa
Winette	Nicole Potter
Frank Schnizer	R.L. Ryan
Burt	Clarenze Jarmon
Wizzy	Bernard Perlman
Drunken Wench	Miriam Zucker
Ed	.M D'Jango Krunch
Doorman	James Lorinz
Black Suit	Morty Storm
Nick Duran	Tony Darrow

"Street Trash" has only one thing on its mind — to be the grossest film yet in the gore exploitation cycle. Much of the meager budget must have been expended on all manner of slime, goop, prosthetics, blood and entrails, but all for naught, since the context in which they are used is so preposterously silly that the special effects have virtually no impact other than as bad jokes. Indie effort has its world premiere tonight at the AFI Fest, although what it's doing in an international film festival is a question for the ages. This has some commercial potential as a midnight show, although best results will probably be found in homevid.

Allegedly inspired by Akira Kurosawa's 1970 study of slum life, "Dodes'ka-den," "Street Trash" entered the world as a 10-minute, 16m film by Jim Muro at the School of Visual Arts in New York. His instructor, Roy Frumkes, not only encouraged the 20-year-old to expand it into a 35m feature, but offered to write and produce.

Unfortunately, it should have remained a short. After a spritely opening chase sequence, in which an assortment of New Yorkers try to apprehend a bum for ripping off their stuff, pic descends quickly into irredeemable idiocy.

A motley crew of derelicts, perverts, cretins, winos and terminally deranged Vietnam vets live marginal existences on the streets of New York, occasionally assaulting society but mostly doing damage to each other.

But, far from aspiring to the mantle of Kurosawa or the Hector Babenco of "Pixote," Muro clearly dreams of joining the ranks of Cronenberg, Romero, Craven and Hooper. One by one, as skid row denizens get their mitts on bottles of some very bad booze, they selfdestruct by bubbling, boiling, bursting and decomposing to death.

Flowing ooze comes in every primary color, and is so obviously phoney that effects are only laughably gruesome.

The highlight — and the scene

that virtually cleared the room at the press screening — comes when one of the derelicts urinates and has his penis sliced off by a mischievous bum.

Junkyard residents then proceeed to play a game of keep-away with the severed organ, which is photographed in slow-motion closeup flying through the air a la the bone in "2001" as the victim desperately races about trying to retrieve it from his fun-loving pals.

Muro makes ample use of the Steadicam to push the filth in the audience's face, but he's miscalculated by not even establishing a nominal protagonist among the scum on view and by not funneling the outlandish goings-on into a coherent storyline.

This will please only the most easily amused exploitation fans, those who, like Muro, as one learns in the end credits, were taken to see "I Drink Your Blood" when they were six.

Thurs., Nov. 6, 1986

Streets Of Gold (Melodrama — Color)

A Twentieth Century Fox release of an Ufland/Roth Production. Produced by Joe Roth, Harry Ufland. Coproduced by Patrick McCormick, Dezso Magyar. Directed by Roth. Screenplay, Haywood Gould, Richard Price, Tom Cole, based on a story by Magyar; camera (DeLuxe Color), Arthur Albert; editor, Richard Chew; music, Jack Nitzsche; production design, Marcos Flaksman; art direction, Bill Pollock: set decoration, Victor Kempster; costume designer, Jeffrey Kurland; sound, Frank Stettner; assistant director, James Chory; casting, Margery Simkin, Todd Thaler. Reviewed at CBS Studios, Studio City, Oct. 29, 1986. MPAA Rating: R. Running time: 95

Alek Neuman . . Klaus Maria Brandauei Timmy Boyle. . Adrian Pasdar Wesley Snipes Roland Jenkins.Angela Molina Elena Gitman....

How many versions of "Rocky" do film audiences want to see? How many boxing pictures can be sold to the public? Not too many if the tale doesn't have a protagonist with the charm of a Rocky Balboa or unique variation of his melodramatic rise from street fighter to champion. "Streets Of Gold" tries and fails on both accounts. It's a likable, but hardly compelling story of not one, but two kids trying to box their way out of the slums. B.O. should be lightweight.

Klaus Maria Brandauer is at the center of the ring, playing a Russian Jew and former boxing champion who was banned from competing for the Soviet team because of his religion so he emigrated to the U.S. and now lives in Brighton Beach, works as a dishwasher and loses himself nightly in booze.

Brandauer has a chip on his shoulder as big as the borough of Brookly, making him a belligerent drunk with a failed image of himself and of his new homeland, that he laments ain't quite the land of promise it was cracked up to be.

One night in a stupor, he picks a fight with young, streetwise black kid, Roland Jenkins (Wesley Snipes), and starts to whip on him, telling the youth he couldn't box his way out a bag if he tried.

While the kid's a bit ruffled, it isn't he, but his chief rival at the neighborhood boxing club, a brash

Irish tough named Timmy Doyle (Adrian Pasdar), who's so impressed that this middle-aged and seemingly out-of-shape lunk can so easily humiliate an athlete half his age, he seeks him out the next day and asks him to be his coach.

A little too neatly, Snipes and Pas-

dar become pals and work together training with Brandauer. Snipes turns out to be the better boxer, but illogically is denied his big chance to compete, a plot move that undermines the story's value.

Needless to say, when the Ruskies come to town to go against the local boys, Brandauer's veins practically pop out with the chance to wage a vendetta against the Soviet coach (and his team) who did him wrong those many years before by putting his two hungry proteges into the

"Streets Of Gold" is paved with credibly gritty scenes shot in and around a dingy local boxing club and the grimy environs of Brighton Beach, but the end result comes off as a kind of high-brow boxing training film.

There are just too many rounds watching Brandauer instructing his pupils on how to dodge hits to the head than scenes or dialog to get a feel for what's really rolling behind all those punches.

The characters aren't developed enough to be enthusiastic about getting behind their struggle to achieve beyond their misfortunate lot in life.

It's not that these three aren't worth rooting for, it's just that they don't encounter the kind of roadblocks along the way to make the trip seem worthwhile.

Snipes and Pasdar are basically affable, good-hearted kids with the requisite number of muscles to play boxers and Brandauer has that beefy, authoritarian demeanor to be at one moment intimidating and the next, sternly compassionate.

But the three scripters credited for the dialog (Haywood Gould, Richard Price and Ron Cole) should have put more meat on the material.

The only other person who figures ever so slightly here is Brandauer's love interest and fellow emigre, Elena Gitman (Angela Molina). She appears perhaps too earnest in explaining very succinctly to the boxers at dinner one night the whys and wherefors for their coach's detached personality. There is a certain sweetness, but no fire, in her love for him.

On a technical level, film is stunning - from Arthur Albert's photography to Jack Nitzsche's scoring as was Ufland/Roth's previous feature, "Where The River Runs Black."

Tues., June 23, 1987

Stripped To Kill (Drama — Color)

A Concorde Pictures release, Produced by Andy Ruben, Mark Byers, Matt Leipzig. Executive producer, Roger Corman. Direct ed by Katt Shea Ruben. Screenplay, Katt Shea Ruben, Andy Ruben, Camera (Film House Group Color), John Leblanc; editor, Zach Staenberg; music, John O'Kennedy; sound, Ann Krupa, Jan Brodin; sound de sign, David Yewdall; art direction, Paul Raubertas; choreography, Ted Lin; production manager, Clif Gordon; assistant director, Byers; special effects makeup, Michael Westmore: special effects, Roger George; stunt coordinator, John Stewart. Reviewed at Cine 2 theater, N.Y., June 19, 1987.

IPAA Hating: H. Hunning time: 84 min.
Cody/SunnyKay Lenz
Sgt. Heineman
Ray Norman Fell
FannyTracy Crowder
Zeena Athena Worthey
Cinnamon Carlye Byron
Dazzle Debbie Nassar
BrandyLucia Nagy Lexington
Angel Michelle Foreman
Eric/Roxanne Pia Kamakahi
Mobile entrepreneu Tom Ruben
Shirl
Pocket Peter Scranton
Also with: Brad David, J Bartell, Andy
uben. Debra Lamb.

New York - "Stripped To Kill" is a solid little thriller set in the world of topless dancing Nearing the end of its regions theatrical run, pic is likely to d well in the homevideo market o the basis of its exploitation angles

Kay Lenz stars as a policewomai in L.A. assigned by her partner Greg Evigan, to go undercover posing as a stripper to catch the serial killer of dancers at a loca club. She gets a dancing job fron the club's owner, Norman Fell, af ter winning an amateur stripteas contest there, with help from an au dience stacked with off-duty cops.

Scripters Katt Shea Ruben (form er actress who also makes he directing debut here) and And; Ruben play fair with the audience offering legitimate clues and rea herrings regarding the killer's iden

Lenz, firmly established as a sexy screen persona 15 years ago in her de but in Clint Eastwood's "Breezy," is extremely effective here, faking several stripteases that substitute acting for professional dancing.

A cast of mainly professiona dancers performs well; ditto sup port roles by Evigan and Fell, plu: a funny turn by Diana Bellamy as: taciturn lady at police headquarters

Fri., Jan. 23, 1987

Sullivan's Pavilion

(Comic memoir — Color)

A Ritchie/Sullivan/Sweeney production Produced, directed, written, edited by Fre G. Sullivan. Executive producers, Charles I Ritchie Jr., William A. Sweeney. Camer (Duart Labs Color), Hal Landen; music, Ker neth Higgins, James Calabrese; art direct tion, Susan Neal; costumes, Carol Gabridge sound, Rip Allen; associate producers Daniel P. Reilly, Bill Sweeney. Reviewed a the U.S. Film Festival, Park City, Utah, Jan 20, 1987. No MPAA rating. Running time: 8

Themselves...Polly, Tate, Katie, Kirk, Ricky & Fred G. Sullivan Bear/Narrator. ...Jon Granik

Conrad P. Drizzle, Ph.D., Ph.&J.....James R. Hogue The Temptress. ...Jan Jalcnak Sister Mary Anthony . . . Judith Mayes The Cretin Beer Lover...Don Samuels Gillian Solomon,

. Roberta Schwebel

Park City, Utah — A highly un usual and personal work, "Sulli van's Pavilion" is the whimsica autobiography of an independen filmmaker, a comic memoir abou the difficulty of balancing family and professional lives. In effec an extremely elaborate and ambi tious home movie starring the di rector, his wife and four kids film is disarming in its unpreten tiousness, but also limited in potential due to its small scopand specialized concerns. Bes commercial route would lie in in dividually tailored single runs in major cities and film-wise collegtowns.

Fred G. Sullivan is a bearish bearded, 40-ish, outdoorsy gu: with one feature film, something called "Cold River," to his credit Up to his ears in the rigors o parenthood, he lives a chaotic, basi cally improverished but not unpleasant life in the Adirondacl Mountains, and watches the years slip away as the prospect of making real films grows increasingly elu A self-revelation without self

analysis, pic gives the viewer th contours of Sullivan's life, startin with photos of his parents and 8r movies he made as a kid. The there are the college years, his stin as a Eugene McCarthy worker, hi Army service and his hustling ef forts to scrounge together the mon ey for his initial screen foray, al presented to the disparaging remarks of his kids, who can't understand why their dad is such a flake.

A jocular meditation on life's necessary choices and a lighthearted consideration of such weighty questions as, "When do dreams peter out?" Film does become a bit silly at times, and Sullivan's mind seems so preoccupied with the details of living, and so unburdened by urgent artistic matters, that one comes out of spending nearly 90 minutes with him uncertain whether or not he has anything beyond this unique one-shot to offer.

Sullivan certainly knows how to laugh at himself, which makes his film very easy to take.

Cart.

Thurs., April 16, 1987

Summer Camp Nightmare (Drama — Color)

A Concorde Pictures release of a Crow Prods. presentation of a Butterfly producion. Produced by Robert T. Crow, Emilialesniak-Crow. Directed by Bert L. Dragin. Screenplay, Dragin, Penelope Spheeris, rom William Butter's novel "The Butterfly Revolution." Camera (United Color), Don 3urgess; editor, Michael Spence; music, red Neeley, Gary Chase; sound, Stephan ron Hase; production design, Richard McGuire; art direction, Barry Franenberg; set decoration, Jennifer Pray; stunt coordinator, John Branagan; coproducer-production manager, Andy Howard; casting Sengston & Cohn. Reviewed at Mark Goodson theater, N.Y., April 15, 1987. MPAA ratng: PG-13. Running time: 87 min.

Mr. Warren . . Chuck Connors . Charles Stratton Franklin Donald Adam Carl . Harold P. Pruett Chris. Heather . . . Melissa Brennan Stanley Stuart Rogers Hammond Shawn McLemore Samantha Newark Debbie . Nancy Calabrese Jerome Blackridge Michael CramerRick Fitts Ed Heinz

New York — Beneath the intenionally misleading release title,
'Summer Camp Nightmare,'
ests an uneasy mixture of teen
ijinks pic and cautionary lecture
or youngsters. In adapting Wilam Butler's novel, "The Butterly Revolution," (film's original
ttle during its 1985 lensing), filmnaker Bert L. Dragin and cowritr Penelope Spheeris have created
n all-too-obvious anti-fascist
arable that is simply not enteraining in the manner of the S.E.
Linton pix or even the John
lughes comedies.

First few reels play like "Meatalls" without the laughs (not for ack of trying, but the gags here fall lat), with the young boys at Camp lorth Pines dreaming of the slighty older girls at nearby Camp South ines. Fly in the ointment is new amp director Chuck Connors, tyled as a strict disciplinarian who mly allows an all-religious channel o play on the camp tv and locks nisbehaving boys or counselors up

n a detention cabin.

Pic takes a dark turn after 35 ninutes when a counselor, played by Charles Stratton, organizes an anstant revolution, locking up Confors and his adult staff and having he kids and student counselors run he camp in military fashion. He quickly extends his control to the cirls' camp, locking up all the dults there, too.

With teens and kids running the how, film gradually tries for 'Lord Of The Flies' commentary, s Stratton's fascist behavior leads o several deaths and the kids decend into barbarism. Unfortunate-

y, Dragin's direction is very soft, enying the film the tough-minded oints and power of such foreruners as Harold Becker's "Taps."

Instead, we get an alternation of comedy and seriousness which represents a candy-coated lecture few kids will swallow.

Acting is passable, with Stratton very good indeed at suggesting a likable (on the surface) yet megalomaniacal character.

Fri., May 22, 1987

Summer Heat

(U.S. — Color)

An Atlantic Entertainment Group release and production. Produced by William Tennant. Executive producers Thomas Coleman, Michael Rosenblatt. Directed by Michie Gleason. Screenplay, Gleason, based on the novel, "Here To Get My Baby Out Of Jail," by Louise Shivers. Camera (CFI Color), Elliot Davis; editor, Mary Bauer; music, Richard Stone; sound, E. Lee Haxall, production design, Marsha Hinds; art direction, Bo Johnson; set decorator, Jan K. Bergstrom; assistant director, Elliott Lewis Rosenblatt; casting, Junie Lowry. Reviewed at Cannes Film Festival (market), May 15, 1987. MPAA rating: R. Running time: 80 min

Roxy Singer
Aaron Anthony Edwards
Jack Bruce Abbott
Also with: Kathy Bates, Clu Gulager.

Cannes — "Summer Heat" is a well-made low-key period piece set in North Carolina in the '30s. It's a time when tobacco is king and life goes it's uneventful way until a star-crossed love affair shakes the foundations. Subject matter and scope limit the pic to specialty venues, where it could find a modest following.

Lori Singer's local girl whose beauty doesn't make life any bed of roses for her. When her grandmother dies, the only option is to marry and in a few years she's tired

of her husband (Bruce Abbott) and ready for something to happen. That something is Anthony Edwards, who arrives in town one hot and dusty day and soon lights a fire in Singer.

Edwards gets in good with Abbott to be near Singer and soon is living in their spare room. From the first time she spots Edwards at her daddy's funeral parlor, there is little doubt where this story is headed. The pair exchange meaningful glances while Abbott goes about the everyday business of harvesting the tobacco crop, until the inevitable erunts

One day when her husband's gone, Edwards jumps her in the fields and now there's no stopping them as their affair heats up. But even in the throes of desire there isn't enough intensity to suggest the crime of passion that Edwards finally commits. It's an act too violent for this lazy corner of the world and the town moves to regain its equilibrium.

Narrated by Singer as an older woman looking back at her life, story tries to be a character study and a crime story in one and is only partially successful.

Script by Michie Gleason, who also directed, doesn't reveal any surprising truths about the Singer character and hers is truly an unremarkable life by today's standards. She really only becomes interesting after the murder as she attempts to rebuild her life.

Singer is well suited to the passive, diminutive role and gives the character a likable sweetness. As the lover she can't say no to, Edwards looks like a young Robert De Niro and conveys his desire without overdoing it.

Abbott delivers the most textured performance as he suggests a decent man who has his limitations but is not the right man for his wife. Clu Gulager is almost recognizable in a

likable turn as the girl's father.

As a director, Michie Gleason doesn't pull any tricks and allows the material to speak for itself, which it does in a rather quiet, contained voice. Tech credits are first-rate, with cinematography creating an atmosphere bathed in a yellow light perhaps too soft to allow any violence to disrupt it. Jagr.

Mon., July 20, 1987

Summer School (Comedy — Color)

A Paramount Pictures release of a George Shapiro-Howard West production. Directed by Carl Reiner. Executive producer, Marc Trabulus. Screenplay by Jeff Franklin, Story by Stuart Birnbaum, David Dashev and Franklin. Camera (Panavision), David M. Walsh; editor, Bud Molin; music, Danny Elfman; production design, David L. Snyder; art direction, Joe Wood; set designer, John Warnke, costume supervisor, Ray Summers; sound mixer, Joe Kenworthy; first assistant director, Marty Ewing; second assistant director, James Dillon; associate producer, Jeff Franklin; casting, Penny Perry. Reviewed at the Mann Chinese Theater, Hollywood, July 18, 1987. MPAA Rating: PG-13. Running time: 98 min.

Freddy Shoop	Mark Harmon
Robin Bishop	Kirstie Alley
Phil Gills	.Robin Thomas
Kevin Patri	ick Labyorteaux
PamCourtne	
Chainsaw	.Dean Cameron
Dave	Gary Riley
Denise	Kelly Minter
Larry	
Rhonda	Shawnee Smith

"Summer School" is a wellmeaning but shallow film that attempts to confront such weighty topics as alcoholism, juvenile delinquency, teacher-student affairs, dyslexia and teen pregnancy while remaining primarily a laugh-a-minute teen comedy. Director Carl Reiner's quick pacing and scripter Jeff Franklin's scattershot storytelling render much of the dramatic action superficial and much of the comedy stilted. But given Mark Harmon's appeal and the subject matter, none of the above should prevent this from being a Summer hit.

Harmon plays Freddie Shoop, a gym teacher who lives for fun and games and Summer vacation. Moments before taking off for Hawaii with his girlfriend, he is blackmailed by a vice principal (Robin Thomas) into teaching a Summer school remedial English class to a band of misfits and malcontents.

Shoop quickly meets a straitlaced yet mini-skirted honors history teacher Robin Bishop (Kirstie Alley, whose gravelly voice will remind many of Debra Winger), with whom he immediately falls in love. She naturally thinks he's sort of cute, but has no respect for him as a teacher and is in any case already dating the vice principal.

While Shoop's pursuit and eventual (and inevitable) conquest of Bishop keeps popping up throughout, most of this film concerns the cast of unruly students that he must make proficient at English (or else be denied his tenure).

Almost every one has a special "problem" to overcome, and in most cases these are brought up so casually and solved in such short order later on as to be laughable. There's a kid with a drinking problem, a student who sleeps through classes because he's a professional stripper by night, an unwed pregnant girl, a perpetual nerd, and another girl who can't pass her driver's test.

While underachieving horror film buffs Chainsaw (Dean Cameron) and Dave (Gary Riley) have the biggest student parts — and are responsible for much of the comedy herein — both are ultimately overshadowed by Courtney Thorne-Smith's relatively small but subtlyplayed role of Pam, a surfer student with a crush on the teacher.

Her pursuit of Shoop — she's full of innuendo early and then tries to seduce him in his bedroom at a party — is so convincing that it injects some much needed tension into the smooth and superficial ride to the requisite happy ending.

But Reiner undercuts the crucial scene, following a couple of the unwritten rules of youth-oriented comedy — never let things get too heavy, and always let the protagonist take the moral high ground — and quickly moves merrily on to the next problem.

While Harmon is appealing in his first feature film lead, he never is able to generate much chemistry with Alley, and his character is little more than a cousin of his beer commercial persona. Still, he has enough charisma and acting chops to keep this film going through the rough spots, of which there's many.

Tech credits are fine, with Danny Elfman's unobtrusive score a rarity for teen movies. Camb.

Mon., July 27, 1987

Superman IV: The Quest For Peace

(Fantasy adventure — Color)

A Warner Bros. release of a Cannon Group Inc./Golan-Globus production Produced by Menahem Golan, Yoram Globus. Executive producer, Michael Kagan Directed by Sidney J. Furie. Stars Christopher Reeve, Gene Hackman. Screenplay, Lawrence Konner, Mark Rosenthal, story by Reeve, Konner, Rosenthal. Camera (Rank Color, Joe Dunton Cameras widescreen), Ernest Day; editor, John Shirley; music, John Williams; music adapted, conducted by Alexander Courage; production design, John Graysmark; art direction, Leslie Tomkins; set decoration, Peter Young; costume design, John Bloomfield; sound (Dolby), Danny Daniel; visual effects supervisor, Harrison Ellenshaw; special effects supervisor, John Evans; model effects supervisor. Richard Conway: flyingunit director, David Lane; flying/second-unit directors, Lane, Ellenshaw, Reeve; secondunit camera, Godfrey Godar; associate producer, Graham Easton; assistant director, Gino Marotta; casting, Noel Davis, Jeremy Zimmermann, Reviewed at the Paramount Theater, L.A., July 24, 1987. MPAA Rating: PG. Running time 89 min.

Superman/ Clark Kent. Christopher Reeve Lex Luthor. Perry White Jackie Cooper Marc McClure Jimmy Olsen Lenny .Jon Cryer David Warfield Sam Wanamaker Nuclear Man #2 Lacy Warfield Mariel HemingwayMargot Kidder Lois Lane...

At one point in this fourth installment of the lucrative "Superman" series, Gene Hackman's villainous Lex Luthor says, "When I escaped from prison, I had one thing on my mind — the end of Superman." Despite his failure to dispatch the caped hero on the screen, it would appear that Luthor's wish has finally come true, for Superman has finally been done in — by the makers of this film.

Unlike the case for numerous other recent successful series, b.o. for the "Superman" pix has dropped rather precipitously with each entry—the second earned 21% less in rentals than the first, and the third was off 43% from the second. That factor, plus the new film's second-rate look, will certainly reduce revenues to the point where continuing the expensive series would no longer be profitable.

For this chapter, the Salkinds passed the producing baton to Cannon's Menahem Golan and Yoram Globus, while Sidney J. Furie has

taken over from Richard Lester behind the camera.

Neither change has been for the good, as this production has a chintzy appearance that one does not associate with the earlier entries, and Furie lacks the light touch that Lester applied with particular success in "Superman II."

Another credit of note is star Christopher Reeve's as coauthor of the story, which sees Superman taking up where "Amazing Grace And Chuck" left off in singlehandedly forcing the world to junk its nuclear arms.

Opening sequence shows that Superman has picked up the spirit of glasnost, as he flies into space to rescue an imperiled cosmonaut and utters his first lines of the picture in Russian. Film then becomes earthbound for a long stretch, as the Daily Planet goes tabloid after being bought by tycoon Sam Wanamaker as a plaything for his daughter, Mariel Hemingway.

Hemingway takes a fancy to Clark Kent, and there is mild comedy attendant to a double date that she and Margot Kidder's Lois Lane are supposed to have with Kent and Superman.

But this is all fluff next to Superman's newly assumed mission, which sees him addressing the United Nations to tell the world that he is personally going to remove all nuclear weapons from the face of the earth.

Niftiest sequence in the film has the Man of Steel intercepting launched missiles, stuffing them in a giant net in outer space, then flinging them, hammer-throwstyle, smack into the sun.

At this point, relatively early in the picture, it would seem that everyone's troubles are over, except that Lex Luthor has created an evil clone of Superman called Nuclear Man, who wreaks havoc with famous landmarks around the world and does savage battle with the hero on the face of the moon until Superman discovers his nemesis' single flaw.

The earlier films in the series were far from perfect, but at their best they had some flair and agreeable humor, qualities this one sorely lacks. Hackman gets a few laughs, but has less to work with than before, and everyone else seems as if they're just going through the motions and having less fun doing so.

Major new cast addition, Hemingway, looks great and seems game, but hasn't been given the special sock scene she needs to try to score with either Kent or Superman.

Flying effects look notably cheesier than in the earlier installments, but that's in keeping with the more threadbare look of the entire production.

From the evidence here, it seems clear that even Superman needs a rest once in awhile, and that time has arrived.

Cart.

Wed., Jan. 21, 1987

Sweet Country (Drama — Color)

A Cinema Group release of a Playmovie Prods. production. Executive producer, Yannoulla Wakefield. Produced by Michael Cacoyannis, Costas Alexakis. Written and directed by Cacoyannis, based on a novel by Caroline Richards. Camera (color), Andreas Bellis; editor, Dinos Katsourides, Cacoyannis; music, Stavros Xarhakos; set decorator, Antonis Kyriakoulis; production manager, George lakovides; sound, Nicos Ahladis; casting, Lois Planco. Reviewed at Broadway Screening Room, N.Y., Jan. 15, 1987. MPAA Rating: R. Running time: 147 min.

AnnaJane Alexander
BenJohn Cullum
EvaCarole Laure
PaulFranco Nero
MonicaJoanna Pettet
Juan Randy Quaid
Mrs. Araya Irene Papas
Mr. ArayaJean-Pierre Aumont
Father VenegasPierre Vaneck

New York — "Sweet Country" is a sprawling, overly stylized and disappointing film played against the backdrop of totalitarian Chile after the 1973 assassination of Marxist leader Salvador Allende. Tale of two families and what befalls them in a country of political chaos and fear is surprisingly flat considering the subject matter. B.o. prospects must be considered

Based on the 1979 novel by Caroline Richards, the story is a complex web of love, terror and treachery told from the point-of-view of Anna (Jane Alexander), an American who has moved to Chile with her husband Ben (John Cullum).

Perhaps producer-writer-directoreditor Michael Cacoyannis was too close to his subject matter, having himself been exiled from his native Greece from 1966-74 after a military takeover there. The majority of scenes in the pic, in addition to being too long, are overly staged and stylized to the point of pretentious-

Anna and Ben are friends with a Chilean family headed by Irene Papas that is drawn directly into the political turmoil because their daughter Eva (Laure) had worked for the Allende government. The imprisonment and torture of her and thousands of others leads to Anna's involvement in an underground movement, setting the stage for the film's violent conclusion.

The film's hollow quality is no more evident than in the bizarre casting of Randy Quaid as Juan, a sadistic Chilean security officer. Standing a full foot taller than his South American army brethren and speaking in an accent reminiscent of his days on "Saturday Night Live," Quaid terrorizes Eva and her sister Monica (Pettet) with sneers and leers and generally undermines one of the more crucial plot elements in the story.

Other characters in the film include a Canadian journalist (Franco Nero) who either is or isn't a spy for the Chilean military (not to give away one of the few good twists in the film) and a left-wing priest (Pierre Vaneck), among others.

Alexander notches a credible performance under such trying conditions, but even good acting gets lost in this meandering and ultimately, directionless film.

Cacoyannis obviously wrestled long and hard with this difficult and important subject matter. Unfortunately, it got the better of him.

Wed., April 22, 1987

Sweet Lorraine (Comedy-Drama - Color)

An Angelika Films release of an Autumn

Pictures production. Executive producers, Angelika Saleh, Joseph Saleh. Line producer, lain Paterson. Produced and dire Steve Gomer. Screenplay, Michael Zettler, Shelly Altman from a story by Zettler, Altman, George Malko. Camera (color), Rene Ohashi; editor, Laurence Solomon; music, Richard Robbins; production design, David Gropman; art direction, Karen Schulz; set decorator, Richard Hoover; assistant director, Gary Marcus; associate producers. Jerry Lott, Rob Stoller; casting, Barbara Shapiro; costume design, Cynthia Flynt; production manager, Amy Kaufman. Reviewed at the Mercede Cinema 4, Fort Lauderdale, Fla., April 11, 1987. (MPAA Rating: PG-13.) Running time: 91 mins.

Lillian Maureen Stapleton
Molly Trini Alvarado
SamLee Richardson
JackJohn Bedford Lloyd
Phil Allen Freddie Roman

Fort Lauderdale - "Sweet Lorraine" is a subdued charmer about the close of an era for the family-run Catskill Mountain Borscht Belt retreats.

The presence of Maureen Stapleton as topliner should give the film a pleasant sendoff in mainstream houses, but staying power isn't likely. Presented softly, like a musical comedy, its ballad style requires careful handling to achieve crossover appeal outside specialty houses and ethnic neighborhoods where it can generate topical in-

Pic is a realistic, nostalgic story of an 80-year-old Catskills retreat whose matron (Stapleton) realizes she must sell because business is headed toward the newer, more fashionable addresses. Though still mostly fresh outside, the Lorraine is rotting from the inside and renovations are too costly.

Though not presented as a sweeping generalization, the portrait comes off as a typical commemorative. The screenplay tries to focus somewhat on Stapleton's relationships with her longtime salad chef (Lee Richardson) and her granddaughter (Trini Alvarado), but sentiment clearly lies with the hotel.

'Sweet Lorraine'' may have been designed around 100-105 minutes to flesh out the human aspects of the story, with cuts made to quicken an even deadlier pace. If so, it hasn't been an entirely happy tradeoff. Despite the camera's affection the story still drags; the ensemble can't develop serious interest in their retrospective

Story covers the hotel's last Summer, beginning with the employes' arrivals and a gradual return to life. The matron expresses worry the season will be even tougher than usual, and frets over whether she should drop her attachment to the old place and accept the first buyout offer she's received in 15 years.

Complicating the decision is the chef, who also loves the old place, and the granddaughter, who shows up unexpectedly looking for a job and eventually decides she'd like to help keep the hotel running. The girl also mixes with an appealing corps of seasonal help and has a cute, peripheral summer romance with the local handyman (John Bedford Lloyd).

Performances are good, including Freddie Roman in a warm stereotype as the Lorraine's omnipresent social director. The camera also pans the public rooms regularly for effective scene-setters with the guests. Adding to the sense of realism is predominantly natural lighting, though murky on some in-

Uncertainty of focus is a common first-effort problem, one producerdirector Steve Gomer hasn't overcome. Still, "Sweet Lorraine's" quietude has an appeal of its own that should result in a modest pay-

Wed., March 11, 1987 Swimming To Cambodia (Monolog — Color)

A Cinecom Pictures release of a Jonathan Demme picture. Produced by R.A. Shafransky. Directed by Demme. Stars Spalding Gray. Executive producers, Lewis Allen, Peter Newman. Coexecutive producers, ducer, Edward Saxon, Screenplay, Gray, Camera (color), John Bailey; editor, Carol sociate producer, Jose Lopez Rodero; cast-

Littleton; production designer, Sandy McLeod: music, Laurie Anderson, Reviewed at Magno Preview Four Theater, N.Y., March 5, 1987. No MPAA Rating. Running time: 87 min.

With: Spalding Gray; also Sam Water-

New York - In its original incarnation as a staged monolog, Spalding Gray's free-associating recollection of his experiences in Thailand during the making of "The Killing Fields" had an exhilarating immediacy that is mostly absent in this compressed filmed performance of "Swimming To Cambodia." In spite of incendiary flashes of biting comedic insight, the loopy impact of Gray's freewheeling narrative is diminished on the bigscreen and does not figure to generate the word-of-mouth necessary for sustained boxoffice. However, it could find a following as a video item.

Director Jonathan Demme was obviously limited in cinematically expanding the anecdotal soliloquy performed at the Performance Garage in the SoHo district of Manhat-

When he was addressing a live audience from a seat at a bare table, the emotionally expansive, antiheroic raconteur skillfully fostered an illusion of spontaneous, confessional intimacy, but in spite of zooming closeups, this bond is irretrievably diminished on the screen.

Nevertheless, there's a compelling originality in Gray's breathless rhetorical four-walling, as this selfeffacing, self-styled "perceiver" drolly seeks to divine a grand connective design in the absurd fabric of life experience.

Gray can leap effortlessly from contemplating the assasination of a noisy SoHo neighbor, to an Amtrak encounter with a sex-addicted Navy warhead operator, to an incomprehending elegiac reflection on the horrific "auto-genocide" wrought upon the Cambodian people by the Khmer Rouge armies in the mid-'70s.

That terrible mass murder was documented in "The Killing Fields," for which Gray was cast in a small part by director Roland Joffe ("a combination of Zorro, Jesus and Rasputin''), and haunted the actor long after his few scenes, amusingly recalled here, were over and in

Re-creating a dislocating cultureshocked odyssey that takes him from the surreal fleshpots of Bangkok to a nearly suicidal quest for a "perfect moment" at a spectacularly paradisical Thai beach, Gray elicits compassion and universal recognition for his serio-comic search for self

Although the sheer inventiveness of Gray's monolog shines through, its raving passion is kept at a fatal remove on the screen.

This is hardly mitigated by a grabbag of camera angles, brief outtakes from "The Killing Fields" and tropico-Oriental minimalist musical flourishes by Gray's fellow downtown performance artist Laurie An-

Fri., Nov. 7, 1986

Tai-Pan

(Period drama - Color)

A De Laurentiis Entertainment Group release. Produced by Raffaella De Laurentiis. Directed by Daryl Duke. Screenplay, John Briley, Stanley Mann, based on the novel by James Clavell. Camera (Technicolor), Jack Cardiff; music, Maurice Jarre; production design, Tony Masters; art director, Benjamin Fernandez, Pierluigi Basile; set dresser, Gior-Amir Malin, Ira Deutchman. Associate progio Desideri; sound (Dolby), Nelson Stoll, John Haptas; special effects, Kit West; asing, Rose Tobias Shaw. Reviewed at De Laurentiis screening room, Beverly Hills, Calif., Nov. 5, 1986. MPAA rating: R. Running time: 127 min.

Tai-Pan	Bryan Brown
May-May	Joan Chen
Brock	John Stanton
Culum	Tom Guinee
Gorth	Bill Leadbitter
Gordon	Russell Wong
Mary	Katy Behan
Tess	Kyra Sedgwick
Shevaun	Janine Turner
Quance	. Norman Rodway
Orlov	John Bennett
Vargas	.Derrick Branche

"Tai-Pan" is a big, sprawling, foolish film - a historical epic lost somewhere between 19th century Hong Kong and 20th century Hollywood. Despite flashes of brilliance and color, "Tai-Pan" fails to evoke a mysterious and moving world as a backdrop to its romantic drama. In the end it's pretty humdrum stuff and unlikely to provoke much of a groundswell or must-see quality, even among fans of the novel.

More than a decade in the works on paper, perhaps that's where this film should have remained. After numerous false starts by filmmakers including Carl Foreman and Richard Fleischer and stars Steve McQueen and Sean Connery, Dino De Laurentiis, with producer/daughter Raffaella De Laurentiis, was the one to actually make it, but he didn't solve the multitude of problems inherent in a production of this scope and com-

For all of its bravado, "Tai-Pan" is sorely lacking in human qualities. Director Daryl Duke and his team have made an attractive shell but failed to put in any heart. The delicate balance between large-scale action and the lives going on within is never achieved. Characters are drawn only in broad strokes without revealing what was particular to life at that time and place.

Story is so dense and complex with numerous threads that it is impossible to tell exactly what is going on at any given moment or who is doing what to whom.

Script by John Briley and Stanley Mann, based on James Clavell's bestseller, sadly plays like a period soap opera. Film is surprisingly lacking in the resonance and richness that the material should gener-

One learns little about the period other than that characters fight a lot and are blessed with an abundance or cursed with a paucity of "joss," a quality akin to cosmic luck.

And no one has more joss than the Tai-Pan, or trade leader of the European community first in Canton and later in Hong Kong. As the Tai-Pan, Aussie actor Bryan Brown looks the part well enough but lacks some of the charisma and authority Connery, for instance, might have brought to the role.

Within the exotic setting, story is actually rather conventional. Brown is opposed by arch villains Brock (John Stanton) and his son Gorth (Bill Leadbitter) for the control of the trading rights. At same time there is considerable politicing going on with the Chinese over the opium trade and the British over trade regulations, although, unfortunately, not much of that intrigue is seen on screen.

Instead, film presents a good deal of romancing, between Brown and his lively Chinese concubine May-May (Joan Chen) and several other women who seem to have an endless supply of revealing costumes.

Lovemaking alternates with bitter power struggles between the Tai-Pan and his enemies, who are portrayed as little more than animals in human dress. At one point Gorth is even seen whipping a prostitute for no other reason than the sport of it.

With the sides so blatantly drawn, there is little room for subtlety and yet it is difficult to root for Brown in a way that would make the silliness of the film emotionally rewarding. The impact remains little more than looking in a shop window at some beautiful costumes.

Although film went to great lengths to shoot in China, scenery is surprisingly limited and unexceptional. Much of the action takes place indoors and could have been just as easily filmed on a back-lot closer to

Lensing by Jack Cardiff does take in a few scenic vistas but is generally hampered by Duke's stuffy and contrived staging. Script also contributes a stilted quality to the dialog, as when a doomed ship captain confesses to his would-be lady that "I love thee."

Music by Maurice Jarre is appropriately lush and tech credits are fine. But underneath all the gloss, this film isn't really about anything.

Thurs., May 14, 1987

The Tale Of Ruby Rose (Australian — Color)

A Hemdale release, in association with Antony I. Ginnane and F.G.H. A Seon Film production. Executive producer, Basia Puszka. Produced by Bryce Menzies, Andrew Wiseman. Directed by Roger Scholes Screenplay, Scholes; camera (Eastman Col or), Steve Mason (second-unit camera Scholes); music, Paul Schutze; art director Bryce Perrin; sound, Bob Cutcher; associ ate producer, Ian Pringle; production manager, Christine Gallagher; assistant director James Legge; casting, Liz Mullinar. Re viewed at Cannes Film Festival (market) May 11, 1987. Running time: 101 min.

. Melita Jurisic Ruby Rose..... Henry Rose .Chris Haywood ... Rod Žuanic Gem... Bennett......Martyn Sanderson Grandma.....Sheila Florance

Cannes - Visually magnificent, though dramatically some times muddled, "The Tale O Ruby Rose" has the look of a labor of love. It will need to be lovingly handled to find an audience because it's essentially a mooc piece in which some towering mountain scenery dwarfs the human characters.

Tale is set in the southern island state of Tasmania in 1933. Ruby Rose (Melita Jurisic) lives with her husband, Henry (Chris Haywood) and their adopted son, Gem (Roc Zuanic), in a remote mountain hut Henry and Gem trap and skin possums and wallabies, though the youth hates the killing involved.

Ruby herself is terrified of the dark, thanks to a childhood trauma. but her self-absorbed husband offers her little comfort, and she has retreated into a world of illusior and fantasy.

Climax of the film comes wher she treks into the valley to seek a solution to her problems and there, in the film's best scenes, meets the elderly grandmother she neve knew before. A sequence in whicl she shares a bath with the old lady delightfully played by Sheila Flor ance, is a joy.

Melita Jurisic has a difficult role as the deprived Ruby, who can barely read and lives an incredibly hard life during the bitterly colwinters; she gives a rather stilted performance, but it fits the charac

Chris Haywood is, as usual, i good form as her unfeeling hus band, while Rod Zuanic acquit himself well as the youth.

But the star attraction here is th

amerawork of Steve Mason, with econd-unit work handled by writr-director Scholes himself. Even vhen the narrative bogs down, the iewer can derive considerable leasure from the way the spectacuar scenery has been captured on

Paul Schutze's score is a plus, in voking needed atmosphere. Editng is ragged at times (no credit for ditor on the print), but otherwise ic is technically perfect. Scholes vidently put his heart into this one, ut his intentions are somewhat obcure. An abrupt opening title erves no purpose, and could be eleted with no ill-effect.

Hemdale will have to nurse this ne, but it will be worth it if an auience can be found for this trange, hauntingly beautiful piece.

Mon., June 1, 1987

They Still Call Me Bruce (Action-comedy — Color)

A Jihee production. Produced, directed d written by Johnny Yune and James Orr. amera, R. Michael Delahoussaye; editor, by Watts; music, Morton Stevens; art ector, Jeff McManus; casting, Gary Chasi. Reviewed at the Hollywood Egyptian leater, May 29, 1987. MPAA Rating: PG. ınning time: 91 min.

Bruce Johnny Yune Billy White . David Mendenhall ⊃sychiatrist Pat Paulson Ronnie. Joey Travolta V.A. Officer. Robert Guillaume Bethany Wright Carl Bensen

"They Still Call Me Bruce" is a poff of every film that ever pped off "Rocky," including its vn predecessor, "They Call Me ruce," released in 1982. With ich lame underpinnings for plot there's this Asian guy, see, amed Bruce (as in Lee), only e's no good at martial arts o. most likely will be limited to latives of the participants.

Story follows Bruce Won's 'une), arrival in America looking r G.I. Ernie Brown, who saved s life during the Korean War. He es to the V.A. office in Houston here he's given a list of possible E. Browns" and turned loose on

After a series of utterly stupid inances of mistaken identity and intrived communication difficules, a bruised Bruce goes to a artial-arts studio, hoping to learn ome tactics of self-defense. Inead, he winds up getting a job as gurehead black belt, since the hite owner is losing business to sian studios in the city.

While faking his way through his st class, he meets a young orphan y (David Mendenhall) and ... ell, you know the rest. Both ung and old learn valuable lesns about trust and commitment ong the way. Both have champiiship fights in which they beat gger opponents, thanks to the rce imparted them by a special ck. ("Michael Jackson has just e glove, you have one sock,' ys Bruce to orphan Billy at one

Bruce's romantic interest (Betha-Wright) is a prostitute who orks for Mr. B (Carl Bensen), an ganized crime boss who Bruce irs might be the man who saved ; life gone bad. She is a believa-: bimbo.

Closing scene, in which little Bilcomes out of a one-day coma, eaks out of a hospital and heroilly staggers to the coliseum to re Bruce the inspirational sock is

intentionally hilarious. While Yune certainly means

well, he has no gift for a screenplay, little feel for direction and no discernible acting ability. Too often here, what is presumably supposed to pass for deadpan humor emerges as nothing more than bad timing.

Cameos by Guillaume (as a V.A. officer) and Paulsen (as a psychiatrist) are pathetic. Not a single acting performance stands out.

In addition to a disturbing overload of comic-book violence, racial stereotypes abound. Besides pimps #1, #2 and #3, there's another jivetalking cahracter listed in closing credits simply as "Black Dude."

Technical credits are poor, with R. Michael Delahoussaye's photogrtaphy constantly looking drab and washed out, and the dated disco soundtrack simply gruesome.

Camb.

Fri., April 10, 1987

Three For The Road (Romantic Comedy — Color)

A New Century/Vista release of a Vista Organization production. Produced by Herb Jaffe, Mort Engelberg. Directed by B.W.L. Norton. Screenplay by Richard Martini, Tim Metcalfe, Miguel Tejada-Flores, from a story by Martini, Camera (DeLuxe Color), Steve Posey; editor, Christopher Greenbury; music, Barry Goldberg; production design Linda Allen; art director, William Buck; set decorator, Linda Allen; sound, Glenn Berkovitz; costumes, Hillary Wright; associate producer, Greenbury, Jay Cassidy; assistant director, Dennis Maguire; casting, Nina Axelrod. Reviewed at the Preview House, Hollywood Calif., April 3, 1987. MPAA rat-Charlie Sheen

radi
Robin Kerri Green
T.SAlan Ruck
Blanche Sally Kellerman
MissyBlair Tefkin
Senator
Kitteridge Raymond J. Berry
VirginiaAlexa Hamilton

"Three For The Road" would more aptly be titled "Three Strikes For The Road," so totally does the film fail to connect on all counts. A statically staged and poorly played road pic, unrelieved by an occasional bright performance, story is so slight and execution so uninspired that one can only wonder what the filmmakers had in mind.

It is equally difficult to believe that the script took the talents of three writers, Richard Martini, Tim Metcalfe and Miguel Tejada-Flores, to concoct.

Perhaps with a stronger lead and some spark to the romance, pic could have had a sweet charm, but Charlie Sheen's performance as a would-be politician escorting a senator's problem daughter (Kerri Green) to boarding school is so lifeless and flat that it sinks any chance the film had.

As the senator battling to control his daughter, Raymond J. Berry is a caricature of the unfeeling father and gives no dimension to the role. Green is a bit better as the poor little rich girl but seems a mere child next to Sheen. Taking her across state lines could well be a violation of the Mann Act.

Tagging along for the ride and the only character with any spontaneity is Alan Ruck as Sheen's literary-minded buddy. Ruck is at once likable and mischievous and would have surely turned in a more convincing job as the uptight young pol. Blair Tefkin is likable, if somewhat improbable, as Ruck's love interest.

It's a paint-by-numbers plot with the girl's mother (Sally Kellerman) and boyfriend waiting in the wings to rescue the poor kid. Unfortunately, director B.W.L. Norton can't generate an ounce of real feeling behind any of this nonsense.

Instead, he shoots every imaginable scenic vista he can find and puts an overbearing soundtrack by Barry Goldberg behind it all to indicate what emotion he's calling for. The result is a travelog of places no one wants to visit.

Wed., March 4, 1987

Tin Man

(Comedy — Color)

A Buena Vista release of a Touchstone Pictures presentation in association with Silver Screen Partners II. Produced by Mark Johnson. Written and directed by Barry Levinson, Camera (DeLuxe Color), Peter Sova; editor, Stu Linder; music, David Steele, Andy Cox; production designer, Peter Jamison; set decorator, Philip Abramson; costume designer, Gloria Gresham; supervising sound editor (Dolby), Bill Phillips; assistant director, Albert Shapiro; associate producer, Kim Kurumada; casting, Louis DiGiaimo, Lisa Clarkson; reviewed at Avco Cinema Center, Los Angeles, March 2, 1987. MPAA Rating: R. Running time: 112

1111.
BBRichard Dreyfuss
Tilley Danny DeVito
NoraBarbara Hershey
MoeJohn Mahoney
SamJackie Gayle
GilStanley Brock
Cheese Seymour Cassel
MouseBruno Kirby
WingJ.T. Walsh
Carly Richard Portnow
Looney Matt Craven
Stanley Alan Blumenfeld
Masters Brad Sullivan
Bagel Michael Tucker

The improbable tale of a pair of feuding aluminum siding salesmen, i.e. "Tin Men," winds up as bountiful comedy material in the skillful hands of writer-director Barry Levinson. Returning to the hometown well of Baltimore, as he did for "Diner," Levinson has transformed the early 1960s into a pic that should easily keep Disney's Touchstone Pictures on its 1986-87 b.o. roll.

Film is packed with laughs, thanks to taut scripting and superb character depictions by Richard Dreyfuss, Danny DeVito and a fascinating troupe of sidekicks. These fast-buck hustlers collectively fashion a portrait of superficial greed so pathetic that it soars to a level of black humor notable in the works of author Kurt Vonnegut.

Additional element of considerable consequence is casting of some 40 local residents for location shooting in Baltimore. Resulting framework is so credible that audience is readily drawn into the milieu of this tacky business of pushing the aluminum siding fad onto gullible homeowners. Levinson manages to make these unsavory con men into a nearly-likeable bunch of scammates.

Central storyline finds Dreyfuss and DeVito tangling from the start after an accident damages both of their Cadillacs - a brand that is visible throughout as the quintessential sign of success. Conflict between the two strangers - who don't find out until later that they're both tin men - escalates to the point where Dreyfuss seeks to get even by wooing DeVito's unhappy wife into bed.

Barbara Hershey falls for the ploy by the dapper and slick Dreyfuss character, who cranks out some well-honed sales bull to lure her quickly. When Dreyfuss brazenly phones DeVito to taunt him with the development, latter cavalierly claims he doesn't really want her anyway.

DeVito is nonetheless so enraged that he hurls his wife's personal effects into the street in a hilarious sequence. His character's mumblings and blatherings throughout the pic are terrifically enhanced by DeVito's masterful adoption of a city of "Ball-mer" accent.

As the conflict between the men grows. Levinson illuminates the world of tin men via montages of sales pitches, periodic coffee-shop gabfests and intimate shots of patrons at a neighborhod bar. They're most effective in establishing the feel of time and place.

While each of the tin men are revealed as compelling off-center types in their own right, the one played by Jackie Gayle especially shines. Previously cast as one of Woody Allen's deli-roundtable co-medians for "Broadway Danny Rose," Gayle's ribald lines reflecting on the then-popular "Bonanza" tv series are side-splitting.

In latter stages of the film, proceedings begin to take on a more serious tenor as a state investigation of tin men begins; Dreyfuss and Hershey develop a relationship and DeVito's life falls further apart as the IRS dogs him.

Plot by now seems only important as a vehicle for determining just how the Dreyfuss-DeVito feud and film itself will fare. Necessity of dramatic resolution prevails over initial and mid-point strength of the

By pic's end Hershey is left well in the background after a callous bit of wheeling and dealing by the tin men in her life. It turns out that she's been along mostly as a foil anyway, with scant development of her role.

Peter Sova's d.p. work is tops here and costuming by designer Gloria Gresham captures the period

Film overall clearly contains seeds of a tv series - such as the one developed from Touchstone's successful "Down And Out In Beverly Hills" theatrical.

Thurs., Aug. 27, 1987

A Tiger's Tale (U.S. — Drama — Color)

An Atlantic Entertainment release of a Vincent Pictures production. Produced, directed by Peter Douglas. Screenplay, Douglas, from a book by Allen Hanney III; camera (CFI Color), Tony Pierce-Roberts; editor, David Campling; music, Lee Holdridge; production design, Shay Austin; production manager. Donald Goldman: assistant director, Alan B. Curtiss; casting, Patricia Mock. Reviewed at World Film Fest, Montreal, Aug. 22, 1987. MPAA Rating: R. Running time: 97 min.

Rose Ann-Marg	ret
Bubber	ell
Charlie Charles Durni	ng
Shirley Kelly Prest	on
Claudine Ann Wedgewo	rth
Randy	ka
Sinclair James No	
Also with: Tim Thomerson, Steven Ka	amp

Montreal - First feature di-

mann, Traci Lin, Angel Tompkins.

rected by Peter Douglas (son of Kirk) is an amiable, lightweight reworking on the theme of love between a middle-aged woman and a teenager. The picture is adroitly handled, and has several engaging characters, but makes no lasting impact, and Atlantic may have a tough sell finding substantial audience for it. Names of C. Thomas Howell and especially Ann-Margret will help.

Setting is a small Texas town where 19-year-old Bubber (Howell) is dating spoiled Kelly Preston until he decides that her mother (Ann-Margret) is an altogether more desirable woman.

She's willing to go along at least once, and love blossoms so that before long the jealous and embarrassed Preston is calling for her father (long divorced and with a

young girlfriend of his own in tow) to come and take her away. "This has destroyed my whole adolescence," she complains.

A subplot involves Bubber's genial father (Charles Durning), a retired veterinarian with a houseful of animals, mostly huge snakes, including a handsome tiger raised from birth but starting to get too big for Howell to wrestle. Eventually, Howell comes to accept that "you can't hold on to things too long," meaning the woman as well as the

Though looking older than 19, Howell proves once again that he's an adept light comedian and handles his chores effectively. Durning has little to do, but Ann-Margret positively glows as the woman in love.

An odd aspect of the film is the clinical way female contraception is discussed: the jealous Preston punctures her mother's diaphragm, leading to her pregnancy, and the film includes scenes where the damaged item is examined and inspected almost as if this were a sex education

Good production dress and tight running time are assets to a generally pleasant but unremarkable pic that will occupy that commercially tricky middle-of-the-road area: it lacks the big laughs or the big emotions which might make it stand out from the crowded field of indie product jostling for the audience dollar.

Thurs., Dec. 11, 1986

Three Amigos (Comedy — Color)

An Orion Pictures release. Produced by Lorne Michaels, George Folsey Jr. Executive producer, Steve Martin. Directed by John Landis, Screenplay, Martin, Michaels, Randy Newman; camera (Technicolor, DeLuxe Prints), Ronald W. Browne; editor, Malcolm Campbell; production design, Richard Saw-yer; set decorator, Richard Goddard, set designers, Mark Faybus, Stan Tropp; costumes, Deborah Madoolman; sound, William Kaplan; music, Elmer Bernstein; songs, Newman; second unit director, Folsey; second unit camera, John Stephens; assistant director, David Sosna; casting Jack Burch, Reviewed Nov. 24, 1986 at the Academy of Motion Picture Arts & Sciences Samuel Goldwyn Theater, Beverly Hills. MPAA Rating: PG. Running time: 105 min.

Dusty Bottoms. Chevy Chase Lucky Day. Steve Martin Ned Nederlander .Martin Short Carmen El Guapo... Alfonso Arau .Tony Plana

A few choice morsels of brilliant humor can't save the "Three Amigos" from missing the whole enchilada. Film is a reheated mishmash of old oaters that teases ones' buds with familiarity without enough new flavoring to make it a completely satisfying concoction. With steller comedic cast, b.o. prospects should be hearty, which is to say, there's no accounting for

"Three Amigos" is a take off of "The Magnificent Seven" (and the "Seven Samurai") and an uneven parody of a number of other horse operas. It has a stunning desert setting, beautifully captured by Ronald Browne, luscious scoring by Elmer Bernstein (who also did the music for "The Magnificent Seven") and clever original songs by Randy Newman that Gene Autry or Roy Rogers easily could have sung.

It also has three funny guys riding horseback in garish caballero garb — Steve Martin, Chevy Chase and Martin Short — playing three wimpy matinee idols known as the "Three Amigos" each doing his particular brand of shtick that is priceless in a few scenes but grows wearisome after a while

Martin's clever slapstick works best when he's alone on the screen acting silly in his unabashed way, but is considerably less funny playing off Chase and Short in the role as lead

Short is sincere as the wide-eyed innocent and suprisingly limited to always appearing too serious. Chase is simply irritating, always arching his eyebrows and mugging for the

These singing cowboy stars of the silent screen have just been fired by the flamboyant Goldsmith Studios mogul Harry Flugelman (a throwaway performance for Joe Montegna) when they get a cryptic telegram from a Mexican woman (Patrice Martinez) offering them 100,000 pesos to come to her dusty desert town of Santa Poco.

It turns out, she's hired them under the mistaken belief they are as macho in real life as on screen and will be able to stop the notorious bandito El Guapo (Alfonso Arau) from continuing to terrorize the poor Santa Poco people. Well, the "Three Amigos" think they're traveling south of the border to put on a show.

Much of the humor is derived from gags where these three hapless gringos make fools of themselves trying to uphold their images as valiant screen heroes, when in fact they are really singing sissys scared out of their britches by the irascible Arau.

Some of the gags work when taken in two-minute bites, not unlike the kind scripters Martin and Lorne Michaels perfected for "Saturday Night Live," but they don't make for a cohesive comedic romp when. strung together into a feature film.

Cardboard characters, such as these guys, can only perform a certain number of silly antics before they become redundant — unless the dialog really shines.

The writers have come up with some hilarious one-liners. Unfortunately, a few too many are beaten to death like when Arau is teasing his side kick Jefe (Tony Plana) on the meaning of plethora.

It's also hard to figure out what the scripters were thinking when they put a medieval dungeon under a dinky adobe house and a German fighter pilot zooming in from overhead, elements that are ludicrous without adding any chuckles.

However, there are moments in the film that just shine with all the inventiveness these comedians can muster.

Martin doing bird calls atop the studio gate is a real treat as is the obviously staged scene right out of a John Ford classic where the Three Amigos are sitting around a campfire in front of a matte drawing of Monument Valley singing a corny cowboy song joined in at the chorus by a mountain lion, a turtle, a covote, an owl and other desert creatures.

Brit.

Fri., May 22, 1987 **Three Kinds Of Heat**

(U.S. - Color)

A Cannon International release. Produced by Michael J. Kagan. Written and directed by Leslie Stevens. Stars Robert Ginty, Victoria Barrett, Shakti. Camera (Rank Color), Michael Bishop, with Scott Page; sound, Stan Phillips; production design, Duncan Cameron; art direction, Alan Hunter Craig; set decoration, Robyn Hamilton-Doney; assistant director, Steve Bernstein; special effects supervision, John Gant; stunt coordinator, Peter Diamond; postproduction supervision, Michael Alden; casting, Noel Davis, Jeremy Zimmerman, Bob McDonald; associate producer, Michael Hartman. Reviewed at Cannes Film Festival (market), May 17, 1987. MPAA Rating: R. Running

Elliot Cromwell. Robert Ginty Sgt. Terry O'Shea Victoria Barrett

Major Shan	Shakti
Harry Pimm	. Sylvester McCoy
George Norris	Barry Foster
Angelica	. Jeannie Brown
Also with: Paul Gee,	Malcolm Connell,
Trevor Martin, Mary Tar	nm, Keith Edwards,
Jack Hedley, Bridget Kh	an.

Cannes - "Three Kinds Of Heat" is a negligible action picture that plays rather like a busted tv pilot than a feature film. Admirers of writer-director Leslie Stevens will be bewildered by this shoddy production. Boxoffice prospects are not overwhelming.

Burdened with an utterly wooden trio of contrasting lead players, Robert Ginty as a state department agent, six-foot-tall blond Victoria Barrett as a N.Y.C. cop and sixfoot-tall Oriental Shakti as a Hong Kong policewoman, pic throws them together on a chatty mission for Interpol.

They're tracking down Sylvester McCoy, using the beautiful (and she looks to be six-foot-tall as well) Jeannie Brown as their surveillance target to get to him.

Trail leads from New York (poorly faked since pic was shot in London) to London and back again, with a fiery finale in a warehouse that explains the film's original title, "Fireworks."

Mechanical action scenes dot the laborious running time en route to a boring explanation of the plot's twists, as well as an underwhelming unveiling of who the criminal mastermind is. Production is so threadbare and direction limp enough to make an action fan scream.

Ginty walks through his part drowsily, delivering lines with evident boredom. Barrett has little personality and is very unflatteringly photographed in her closeups. Shakti is odd-looking rather than pretty and all Stevens does is make fun of her character's inability to pronounce the letter "L." There is no heat whatsoever between them, no sex, no nudity and nothing to keep one from dozing off.

Credits list top British sex symbol-singing star Samantha Fox in a small role but she didn't show up in the print screened. She probably wasn't tall enough.

Mon., May 18, 1987

Tough Guys Don't Dance (Murder mystery - Color)

A Cannon Films release of a Golan-Globus production in association with Zoetrope Studios. Produced by Menahem Golan and Yoram Globus. Executive producers, Francis Coppola, Tom Luddy. Directed by Norman Mailer. Screenplay, Mailer based on his novel. Camera (credited as visual consultant) (TVC color), John Bailey; editor, Debra McDermott; music, Angelo Badalamenti; production design, Armin Ganz; set decorator, Gretchen Rau; sound, Drew Kunin; casting, Robert MacDonald, Bonnie Pietillia, Bonnie Timmerman. Reviewed at Cannes Film Festival (out of competition). May 16, 1987. (No MPAA rating.) Running time: 108 min.

Tim Madden. .. Ryan O'Neal Madeline sabella Rossellini Patty Lareine Debra Sandlund ... Clarence Williams 3d Doug Maggen Lawrence Tierney . Penn Jillette Big Stoop. Jessica Pond.... Frances Fisher Lonny Pangborn...R. Patrick Sullivan Stoodie Stephen Morrow Spider John Snyder

Cannes - Norman Mailer's "Tough Guys Don't Dance" is like a film noir thriller turned in as film-school assignment by a very gifted student. He knows all the moves but it just doesn't have any heart. "Tough Guys" is part parody and part serious with a nasty streak running right down the middle. Picture may generate

some interest as a curiosity item, but as a filmgoing experience it's certain to leave audiences cold.

Mailer violates the cardinal rule for this kind of genre fare: he fails to create characters that can make up for the absurdities of the plot. As a scriptwriter working from his novel, he offers a convoluted story that goes on far too long and runs out of steam before it's over, making the resolution of little interest when it finally does come.

What the film does do well is create a sense of time and place for the story to unfold in. Cinematographer John Bailey (listed in the credits as visual consultant) gives the picture, set in a small coastal town in Massachusetts, a mournful look right from the opening credit montage.

It's the sort of place where everyone knows everyone else's business, and for Tim Madden (Ryan O'Neal), business is bad. Story has something to do with a botched drug deal, men who love the wrong women and women who love the wrong men. In the course of playing its hand, Madden's wealthy wife (Debra Sandlund), a washedup porno star (Francis Fisher), a suicidal southerner (John Bedford Lloyd), a gay sugar daddy (R. Patarick Sullivan) and a corrupt police chief (Wings Hauser) all get blown

Things just seem to happen to Madden that he can't do anything about so he just lives with it, gritting his teeth along the way. It's a typical dry, flat, nothing-rufflesmy-feathers performance from O'Neal, which is effective only as long as what's happening to him holds some mystery.

Film is at its best when it's tongue-in-cheek, and it's fun to listen to the guys talk tough and throw out lines like "people just don't know how tough it is out there.' And the biggest, baddest, nastiest one of them all is Lawrence Tierney as O'Neal's father, a man who won't dance for anyone.

At it's worst "Tough Guys" has a rather dismal view of human nature, with woman, perhaps, even more vicious and predatory than the men. So at the end when Madden gets back with his true love Madelaine (Isabella Rossellini), one can only wonder if Mailer is a closet romantic masquerading as a tough

Mon., Jan. 19, 1987

Travelling North (Australian - Color)

production. Produced by Ben Cannon. Directed by Carl Schultz. Stars Leo McKern. Screenplay, David Williamson, based on his play; camera (Eastmancolor), Julian Penny;

A CEL release of a View Pictures Limited

editor, Henry Dangar; production design, Owen Paterson: music coordinator, Alan John; sound, Syd Butterworth; production manager, Julia Overton; assistant director, Colin Fletcher; casting, Sandra McKenzie. Reviewed at Academy Twin, Sydney, Dec. 7, 1986. Running time: 96 min.

Leo McKern Frank Julia Blake Frances Graham Kennedy Freddy. And: Michele Fawdon, Diane Craig, Andrea Moor, Drew Forsythe, John Gregg.

It's early yet, but "Travelling North" already looks set to be a major contender in the 1987 Australian Film Awards, especially in the acting stakes. This superbly crafted adaptation of David Williamson's popular stage play makes few concessions to the youth audience, but as a mature, frequently funny and ultimately most moving story of old age and retirement, it will doubtless be dubbed Australia's "On Golden Pond." With the right handling, it could do solid biz anywhere.

Opening scenes are set in the southern city of Melbourne. Leo McKern plays Frank, a rather cantakerous ex-Communist and civil engineer who retires from work at age 70.

A widower, he has persuaded his close friend, Frances, (Julia Blake), a widow but not as old as he is, to accompany him north, to subtropical northern Queensland. Marriage doesn't enter into the arrangement, but Frances goes along, and they both bid their families goodbye (Frances has two awful, selfish daughters - Michele Fawdon and Diane Craig — married to equally hopeless husbands, while Frank has become estranged from his son, though is still quite close to daughter Andrea Moor).

After a nostalgic final visit to Melbourne's art gallery (Frank and Frances are both lovers of art and music) they make the long drive north where Frank has purchased a spectacular cliff-top house. Here they meet their over-friendly neighbor (Graham Kennedy) who talks too much to hide his own loneliness and whose political convictions are far removed from Frank's; and a doctor (Henri Szeps) who also becomes a friend.

After many happy days fishing, reading and listening to music (and enjoying the sexual side of the relationship), Frank's health begins to deteriorate. He becomes bad tempered and cranky, and Frances starts to yearn to see her family again. Frank reluctantly accompanies her on a trip back to Melbourne, but it isn't a success. Returning to Queensland, he finds his facilities are failing, he's no longer able to make love, he's often in pain, and his future is circumscribed. He and Frances decide to marry, and fly down to Sydney for an hilarious honeymoon weekend before returning to Queensland for the final stages of Frank's illness and the film's emotional resolution.

Australian-born McKern, in his first Australian film, gives a remarkable performance as the crotchety, yet endearing, Frank. His humanity shines, through, and he delivers David Williamson's frequently witty dialog with considerable style. It's a hugely enjoyable portrayal.

As Frances, Blake positively glows; she plays a patient, loving woman with a determination of her own, and it's a rich characteriza-

Michele Fawdon is suitably horrid as Blake's elder daughter, while Henry Szeps, as the small-town doctor, also creates a fully rounded character.

As the chatty neighbor, Graham Kennedy proves again he's one of Australia's best character actors, with an ability to show the loneliness and pain beneath the apparently brash and shallow exterior.

Credit for the entire production must go to director Carl Schultz, who is best known for "Careful, He Might Hear You" (1983); ravelling Schultz came late to " North" (which was orignally to have been directed by Michael Blakemore, who actually handled most of the principal casting), but he has handled his chores with distinction, giving the film a fluidity and pace that belies its stage origins. His use of visual metaphors (such as a strange fern which closes in on itself when touched by humans) is assured.

Producer Ben Gannon has put to-

gether a top-class production, wit fine lensing by Julian Penny, cleve production design by Owen Pate son, very tight editing by Heni Dangar and a fine choice of class cal music excerpts.

It all makes for a touching fil about old age and death that's nev heavy, though there will be few d eyes by the end. It's a good start the year for Australian cinem

Fri., Oct. 24, 1986

Trick Or Treat

(Horror musical — Color)

A De Laurentiis Entertainment Gro elease. Produced by Michael S. Murphe Joel Soisson. Directed by Charles Mar Smith. Screenplay, Murphey, Soisson, Rh Topham, from a story by Topham; came (Technicolor), Robert Elswit; editor, Ja Schwartz Jaffe; music, Christopher Your original songs, Fastway; production design Curt Schnell: art direction, Colin D. Irw set decoration, Doug Mowat; special make effects, Kevin Yahger; sound (Ultrasound), White; assistant director, Matia Karrell; castii Paul Bengston, David Cohn. Reviewed DEG, Beverly Hills, Oct. 21, 1986. MP. Rating: R. Running time: 97 min.

Eddie Weinbauer Marc Price Sammi Curr Tony Field: Leslie Graham Lisa Orgolin Tim Hainey Doug Savan . Elaine Joyce Angie Weinbauer Roger Mockus... Gene Simmons Rev. Aaron Gilstrom . . . Ozzy Osbourne

Like a relatively dark street (Halloween night, "Trick Or Trea is ripe for howls and hoots, b only manages to deliver a choihandful of them when the festiviti are just about over. Last half-ho has some first-rate scenes for a picture with a C theme (horrors heavy metal rock) that is only like to appeal to adolescents.

Film doesn't quite parody ba musicians as well as "Spinal Tap despite a story with an equally hile ious premise.

A recently killed rock star nam Sammi Curr (Tony Fields, made like a member of Kiss) comes back life when his last, awful unreleas record is played backwards. He determined to seek revenge on h most ardent critics, among the Ozzy Osbourne in a real role revers as a bilious tv preacher on a anti-ro

The thing is, the satanic rock takes himself seriously in reinca nation and ends up acting out those evil acts he's been singing about for years — drawing his power fro the megawatts that surge throu his guitar.

There's a geeky high-school k Eddie (Marc Price), who idolizes t rocker and is responsible for l appearances. Every time he puts t record on the stereo or the cassette the deck, everything that's electrica charged starts to heat up and t singer materializes — at first to he his fresh-faced fan revenge the joc at school who taunt him (which t little punker appreciates) but who later turns on. The kid begins to f over Fields' excessive guitar playir.

Fortunately, filmmakers went lig on the music (by the group Fastwa that is awful and presumably suppos to be, making the film a lot mc endurable for those who can't stoma a minute of heavy metal, let alo several songs.

Scoring is only intense when Fie is on one of his rampages electrifyi people, who beautifully disintegra or throttling them - as he does w Osbourne by reaching into a tv a zapping the blithering fool to de: with his super-charged fingers (c of the film's highlights, such they are.)

Price is perfectly cast as the d mayed rock worshipper, as is me of the cast. Gene Simmons gets top billing for appearing as the disk jockey who hands over the rock star's unreleased song to his number one fan, but is only on the screen for a few opening minutes.

Technical credits are superb and possibly unintentionally too absurd to be horrifying, especially in one scene when Price's amour Leslie (Lisa Orgolini) tries to electrocute the frazzled rocker by flushing the toilet with the star's strummin' hand writhing in it.

Brit.

Thurs., Jan. 22, 1987

The Trouble With Dick (Comedy-drama-Color)

A Frolix production in association with Robert Augur. Produced, directed, written by Gary Walkow. Executive producer, Augur. Coproducer, Leslie Robins. Line producer, Albert Barasso. Camera (color), Daryl Studebaker; editor, G.A. Walkowishky; music, Roger Bourland; production design, Eric Jones, Pui Pui Li; sound design, George Budd; special effects supervisor, James Zarlengo; costume design, Ted Sewell; assistant director, Charlie Mullin; second unit camera, Bill McDonald; casting, Susan Young. Reviewed at the U.S. Film Festival, Park City, Utah, Jan. 19, 1987. No MPAA Rating. Running time: 86 min.

Dick Kendred Tom Villard
Diane Susan Dey
Sheila Dibble Elaine Giftos
Haley Dibble Elizabeth Gorcey
Lars David Clennon
Samsa Jack Carter
Betty Marianne Muellerleile

Park City, Utah — While it could have pushed its imagination further and in even bolder ways, "The Trouble With Dick" provides a generally funny look at writer's block brought on by the scribe's increasingly complicated sex life. Despite its limitations, first feature by Gary Walkow shows a sure, professional hand both with actors and the camera, and pic could make a modest showing commercially in major cities and college areas if distributed intelligently.

Tom Villard ably plays the title character, a young sci-fi writer with one novel under his belt who presently can't even get a short story published. Desperately in need of a sale, he takes a cheap room in a nice Los Angeles house also occupied by former college heartthrob Susan Dey, with whom Dick would finally like to get a romance going.

As Dey, a terribly serious science researcher, proves unreceptive, Dick puts up no resistance when the landlady's Lolita-like daughter, Elizabeth Gorcey, flings herself at him. As if one hot number were not enough, the landlady herself, artsy aerobics nut Elaine Giftos, also puts the make on the confused fellow, and finally succeeds as well.

The bedroom farce aspects are handled with aplomb by the director and actors, with tone remaining racy without falling into crudeness. Setting these scenes off are dreamlike smippets of the sci-fi tale Dick is writing, a yarn about a convict trying to escape an arid prison plan-

Sci-fi sequences could have been much more imaginative and bizarre, and thereby have added to the amount of incident in the picture, which is basically restricted to two settings and a limited number of characters. Futhermore, Dick's emotional breakdown stemming from all the sexual and creative stress comes on rather too suddenly, as does his recovery.

Nevertheless, the action moves along quite amusingly for the most part, and Walkow's look at artistic frustration is refreshingly unpretentious. Villard is attractive enough to validate the provocative attention he receives from the two women, but also has an edge of naivete and dorkiness that makes him plausible as a sci-fi nut.

Dey, Giftos and Gorcey are all right on the money in their characterizations, and film's technical aspects, notably Daryl Studebaker's lensing, production design by Eric Jones and Pui Pui Li, and special effects by James Zarlengo, are all outstanding for such a low-budget affair.

Cart.

Fri., Oct. 3, 1986

True Stories (Drama — Color)

A Warner Bros. release of a True Stories Ventures production. Produced by Gary Kurfirst. Directed by David Byrne; executive producer, Edward R. Pressman; coproducer, Karen Murphy; screenplay, Byrne. Beth Henley, Stephen Tobolowsky; camera (color), Ed Lachman; editing, Caroline Biggerstaff; music, Byrne and the Talking Heads; production design, Barbara Ling; costumes, Elizabeth McBride; choreography, Meredith Monk, Dee McCandless, Gene Menger. Reviewed at Alice Tully Hall, N.Y. (New York Film Festival), Oct. 1, 1986. MPAA rating: PG. Running time: 111 min.

Narrator David Byrne Louis Fyne John Goodman Miss Rollings Swoozie Kurtz Earl Culver Spalding Gray The Cute Woman Kay Culver Annie McEnroe Roebuck "Pons" Staples Mr. Tucker Ramon Umberto "Tito" Larriva The Preacher John Ingle The Lying Woman Jo Harvey Allen The Computer Guy . . . Matthew Posey

New York — "True Stories" is a natural progression into film for Talking Heads' David Byrne, but represents neither a musical advance nor a significant artistic flowering for the thinking person's rock 'n roller. Consequently, WB will be hard pressed to duplicate b.o. success of the 1984 Talking Heads' concert film, "Stop Making Sense."

In his feature directorial debut, Byrne takes a bemused and benevolent view of provincial America's essential goodness in a loosely connected string of vignettes that amount to sophisticated musicvideo concepts dressed up as filmmaking.

Ed Lachman's stunning picture-postcard cinematography doesn't entirely compensate for Byrne's fixation with stock images of mainstreet Americana, while his wry sense of comic detachment and scattershot use of the soundtrack songs (only three of which are sung by the Heads) may prove unsatisfying to the pop masses and artsy intelligensia alike.

Byrne uses the surreal, cartoonish conceit of examining life in the hypothetical town of Virgil, Tex., (how many Heads fans will grab the reference to the Roman poetstoryteller?) with the humaninterest perspective of a supermarket tabloid feature.

Affecting a trusting innocence as easily as he slips into natty western duds, Byrne drives into Virgil during its sesquicentennial "celebration of specialness" for a series of close encounters with the town's peculiar denizens.

These include Louis Fyne, a lovelorn and loveable "dancing bear" of a man (John Goodman), Miss Rollings, "the laziest woman in the world" (Swoozie Kurtz) and Earl Culver, owner of the town's microprocessor plant who has not spoken directly with his wife for 30 years (Spalding Gray). These actors turn in affecting and funny turns that help to distract from the film's lack of narrative depth.

Byrne seems more intent on mak-

ing obvious and unremarkable observations on the nature of change in America while indulging in a fondly romantic, overstated celebration of the virtues of smalltown life.

Byrne tosses darts at the homogonizing cultural forces at work in shopping malls, pre-fab housing, the computer revolution and, of course, television.

Underlying everything is a poignant sense of sympathy with decent folk who don't quite have the narrator's refined perspective on the inexorability of change.

Byrne is at his best, however, in celebrating the unique humanity of his characters and, by extension, everybody. This joyously affirmative populism is best expressed in a marvelous nightclub scene in which various Virgilians take to the stage to lip-synch lines from the Heads' irresistible tune "Wild, Wild Life"

There are other good moments in the film as well, but more frequently, as in a prairie-kitsch "fashion show," Byrne is a mite too selfabsorbed with his own sense of the absurd.

Ultimately, "True Stories" emerges as a stylishly designed, occasionally amusing concoction of snappy songs, half-realized concepts and scattered, dry-witted jokes.

Rich.

Thurs., June 11, 1987

Under Cover (Action — color)

A Cannon Group release of a Golan-Globus production. Produced by Menahem Golan, Yoram Globus. Directed by John Stockwell. Screenplay, Stockwell, Scott Fields; camera (color), Alexander Gruszynski; editor, Sharyn L. Ross; music, Todd Rundgren; sound (Ultra-Stereo), Glenn Berkovitz; production design, Becky Block; production manager, Neil Rapp; assistant director, Allan Nicholls; stunt coordinator, Greg Walker; postproduction supervisor, Michael R. Sloan; casting, Pat Orseth; associate producers, Susan Hoffman, Fields. Reviewed at Cine 42 2 Theater, N.Y., June 6, 1987. MPAA rating: R. Running time: 94 min.

Sheffield David Neidorf
La Rue Jennifer Jason Leigh
Sgt. Irwin Lee Barry Corbin
Lucas David Harris
Corrinne Kathleen Wilhoite
With: David Denney, Brent Hadaway,
John Philbin, Brad Leland, Mark Holton,
Carmen Argenziano.

New York — "Under Cover" is a lethargic, uninteresting melodrama about cops busting kids using drugs at a Southern high school. Young actor (from "Top Gun," "Radioactive Dreams" and many other pix) turned director John Stockwell directs with little energy; like several other Cannon releases of late, pic opened in N.Y. sans advertising at a 42d St. grindhouse.

David Neidorf (who physically resembles Stockwell somewhat) plays a Baltimore cop who goes to Port Allen, S. Car. (Pic was actually lensed in Louisiana) to join local narcs operating under cover at a high school.

His fellow cop and pal (John Philbin) was recently murdered down there and Neidorf is out to bring the killers to justice. He is teamed up with pretty narc Jennifer Jason Leigh but runs into resistance from his local, Southern-fried boss (and obvious heavy) Barry Corbin.

Though Neidorf and Leigh blow their covers halfway through the film in order to finger the school kids in a mass bust, pic continues in its listless narrative towards a wishy-washy ending in which even the bad guy is left alive and described as not really all bad.

Neidorf unwisely tries to imitate Mickey Rourke here with constant smirk and throwaway readings, creating a vacuum at film's center. He's way too old for the role, but script merely mentions that and goes on full-speed ahead. Leigh looks sexy but has little to do and supporting cast is weak. Tech credits and score by Todd Rundgren are unimpressive. Lor.

Wed., May 20, 1987

Sous Le Soleil De Satan UNDER THE SUN OF SATAN (French — Drama — Color)

A Gaumont release of an Erato Films-Films A2-Flach Films-Action Films-CNC-SOFICA coproduction. Executive producer, Daniel Toscan du Plantier. Produced by Claude Abeille. Directed by Maurice Pialat. Stars Gerard Depardieu, Sandrine Bonnaire, Screenplay, Sylvie Danton, Pialat, from the novel by Georges Bernanos; camera (Fuji-Agfacolor), Willy Kurant; editor, Yann Dedet; music, Henri Dutilleux; production design, Katia Vischkof; sound, Louis Gimel; costumes, Gil Noir; production managers, Jean-Claude Bourlat, Edith Colnel; assistant director, Didier Creste. Reviewed at Cannes Film Fest (In Competition) May 13, 1987. Running time: 98 min.

Cannes — Maurice Pialat's latest, 'Under The Sun Of Satan," is very different from his last few pix ("Loulou," "To Our Loves," "Police"). New entry is a demanding adaptation of a 1926 novel by celebrated Catholic author Georges Bernanos and deals with a country priest's confrontation with evil. Filled with powerful scenes and very well acted, it will create controversy and only be fully appreciated by Catholics. Careful handling in art-house situations is indicated. (Film was awarded the Cannes Film Festival Golden Palm nod vesterday.)

Film initially intros two separate characters and themes. Father Donissan (Gerard Depardieu) is a dedicated priest who makes up for his lack of intelligence by an almost fanatical dedication. He flagellates himself with a chain, believes in his own inner strength, and despises his superior (played by Pialat himself), whom he sees as a dilettante.

The other character is Mouchette (Sandrine Bonnaire), a precocious 16-year-old, pregnant by an impoverished nobleman and also mistress of a wealthy, married politician. She shoots and kills the nobleman when he refuses to go away with her (whether by accident or design is never made clear) and later loses her baby; the killing is accepted as suicide.

These two characters meet during a long night when the priest has been sent to another parish. Exhausted and lost, he enounters a horse-trader who first helps him, then plants a passionate kiss on his lips; the priest believes he's encountered Satan himself.

Later, he comes across Mouchette and has an instant vision in which he knows all about her: he confronts her with her crime, intending, as he later says, "to restore her to God," but she kills herself.

Since Robert Bresson made two austere, beautiful films from later Bernanos books ("Diary Of A Country Priest" and "Mouchette"), comparisons with Bresson will be made, and some images from Pialat's film (Depardieu striding across a field in his cassock) inescapably evoke "Country Priest."

But Pialat is a less serene, less subtle director, though he manages to stage scenes of immense power, such as a magical sequence in which he miraculously restores a dead child to life.

Catholic audiences will be more able to tackle the themes raised here, but everyone will experience the extraordinary thrall of this demanding, rigorous film.

Depardieu has always worked well with Pialat (he won the best actor award at Venice two years ago for "Police"), and he's exceptional again as the rigidly doctrinaire priest who ultimately believes Satan has conquered the world.

Bonnaire, discovered by Pialat for "To Our Loves," also impresses as the lying, promiscuous teenager who thinks it's fun just to be beautiful. Pialat himself gives an authoritative performance.

The pic needs an attentive audience, ready to go along with its long dialog scenes, its sudden shifts forward in time, and its complex, contradictory characters. Fine camerawork by Willy Kurant, telling use of music and sound, provocative editing and precise direction all help.

Not everyone will go for this discourse on good and evil, but there's no denying the quality of Pialat's work. Despite pros and cons, this was head and shoulders above the other French films competing in Cannes.

Strat.

Fri., Feb. 20, 1987

Tenebrae UNSANE (Italian – Color)

A Bedford Entertainment/Film Gallery release of a Sigma production. Executive producer, Salvatore Argento. Produced by Claudio Argento. Directed by Dario Argento. Screenplay, Dario Argento, George Kemp, from story by Argento. Camera (Technovision, Eastmancolor), Luciano Tovoli; editor, Franco Fraticelli; music, Claudio Simonetti, Fabio Pignatelli, Massimo Morante; art direction, Giuseppe Bassan; set decoration, Maurizio Garrone; production manager, Giuseppe Mangogna; assistant director, Lamberto Bava, Michele Soavi; special effects, Giovanni Corridori. Reviewed at Cine 42, N.Y., Feb. 13, 1987. MPAA Rating: R. Running time: 100 min.

New York — "Tenebrae" (released Stateside as "Unsane") finds Italian horror maestro Dario Argento returning to the roots of his success (beginning back in 1970 with "The Bird With The Crystal Plumage") in a routine whodunit, albeit saturated with gore. Lack of fantasy elements and the colorful stylization that denote his best work is a disappointment. Film was a hit release in Italy in 1982.

Tony Franciosa stars as thriller author Peter Neal, whose latest novel is subjected to the usual criticism of being overly violent and sexist. A rash of gory murders occurs, executed in similar fashion to those depicted in his book and soon people around him (and even himself in a failed attempt) are subjected to the violent attacks, resolved with a twist in a Grand Guignol climax.

Argento apparently uses this thin story as a vehicle to vent his own feelings about criticism regarding the violence in his films, featuring extreme, almost laughable, bloodletting here as a way of thumbing his nose at his detractors.

However, film largely devolves into an uninteresting series of vignettes of beautiful women being stalked and slashed, reducing Argento's craft to the mindless level of his many exploitation-minded imitators.

With most of the setpieces filmed at a modern villa, Argento eschews the fabulous studio creations and pastel lighting that are his trademarks in features such as "Suspir-

Cameraman Luciano Tovoli gets to flex his gyroscopic muscles in the flashy manner of his work on Michelangelo Antonioni's "The Passenger" but to little purpose. Cast is attractive but hurt by some clumsy dubbing.

Mon., June 1, 1987

The Untouchables

(Crime drama — Color)

A Paramount Pictures release of an Art Linson production. Produced by Art Linson. Directed by Brian De Palma. Screenplay by David Marnet. Camera (Technicolor), Stephen H. Burum; editors, Jerry Greenberg, Bill Pankow; music composed, orchestrated and conducted by Ennio Morricone; art director, William A. Elliott; visual consultant, Patrizia Von Brandenstein; set decorator, Hal Gausman; set designers, E.C. Chen, Steven P. Sardanis, Gil Clayton, Nicholas Laborczy; costume designer, Marilyn Vance-Straker wardrobe, Giorgio Armani; sound mixer (Dolby), Jim Tanenbaum; stunt coordinator, Gary Hymes; assistant director, Joe Napolitano; associate producer, Ray Hartwick; casting, Lynn Stalmaster & Associates, Mali Finn; reviewed at Paramount Pictures Studio The ater, May 28, 1987; MPAA rating: R. Running time: 119 min. Kevin Costner

Eliot Ness Jim Malone Sean Connery Oscar Wallace . . . Charles Martin Smith .Andy Garcia Geroge Stone.... Robert De Niro Al Capone. Richard Bradford .Jack Kehoe Payne Brad Sullivan George. . Billy Drago Ness' Wife Patricia Clarkson

"The Untouchables" is a beautifully crafted portrait of Prohibition-era Chicago. Film's elements enhance one another as script, directing, characterization, wardrobe, art direction and score jointly evoke the celebrated conflict between gangster bootleggers and Federal agents. Visually reminiscent of "The Sting" as much as several other underworld sagas, this picture should deliver the goods for Paramount at the Summer boxoffice.

Director Brian De Palma sets the tone in a lavish overhead opening shot in which Robert De Niro's Al Capone professes to be just "a businessman" giving people the product they want. That such business often required violent methods is immediately depicted as prelude to arrival of idealistic law enforcer Eliot Ness (Kevin Costner).

While the dichotomy of values is thus established between these two adversaries, it is the introduction of street cop Jim Malone (Sean Connery) that gives the film its momentum. A wily veteran who tutors Ness on "the Chicago way" of success and survival, Malone commands one's attention during every moment of his screen presence.

Propelled by scripter David Mamet's rich dialog, Connery delivers one of his finest performances ever. It is filled with nuance, humor and abundant self-confidence. Connery's depth strongly complements the youthful Costner, who does grow appreciably as Ness overcomes early naivete to become just hard-bitten enough without relinquishing the innocence of his personal life. Costner solidifies his acting credentials here.

Rounding out the quartet of "Un-

touchables" are Charles Martin Smith and Andy Garcia, who offer distinctly different portrayals. The diminutive Smith is completely plausible - and at times quite comical - as a government accountant who now wields a shotgun. Garcia's South Side police recruit is as likeable as he is tough.

These lawmen are pitted against Capone's corrupt infrastructure that reaches up through top police ranks, to the courts and to Mayor "Big Bill" Thompson over at City Hall. Depicting the man at the center of it all, De Niro is a compelling figure who stops just short of caricature.

With the addition of 30 pounds and the legendary facial scar, De Niro is quite convincing — perhaps never more so than during one powerful scene in which he wields a baseball bat while philosophizing about business with his lieutenants. It is one of those instances that will be synonymous with "The Untouchables" when people recall it over the years.

As fine as De Niro is here, his limited screen time is the pic's most notable shortcoming; his number five billing suggests as much but could still disappoint. It must also be noted that there are several loose ends in sequence involving a raid conducted outside of the city.

In directing the proceedings, De Palma has brought his sure and skilled hand to a worthy enterprise. His signature for this film may well be an intense scene involving a baby carriage. (The filmmakers liken it to the Odessa Steps montage from 1925's "The Battleship Potemkin" by Sergei Eisenstein.)

No stranger to filmic violence, De Palma employs it appropriately throughout and benefits from excellent camera work by cinematographer

Stephen Burum.

Overall texture of the film — from exteriors on La Salle St. near Chicago's Board of Trade building to cop-shop interiors — is a tribute to the work of art director William A. Elliott, costume designer Marilyn Vance-Straker, wardrober Giorgio Armani and visual consultant Patricia Von Brandenstein. Kudos

also to Ennio Morricone for the music.

Giving the story some final perspective, writer Mamet concludes with a short exchange that not only further humanizes Ness but neatly questions the whole foolhardy national exercise of trying to eliminate alcohol. However it may have failed, Prohibition did wind up providing superb dramatic material for these skilled collaborators a half century later. Tege.

Fri., Oct. 17, 1986

Vacation Nicaragua (Docu — U.S. — 16m — Color)

A Rock Solid production. Produced, directed by Anita Clearfield. Executive producer, David A. Griffin. Camera (color), editor, Geoffrey Leighton; sound, John Luck; additional camera, lighting, Cathy Zheutlin. Reviewed at the Fox International, Venice, Oct. 10, 1986. No MPAA rating. Running time: 77

"Vacation Nicaragua" takes a fresh approach to the political documentary form, as filmmaker Anita Clearfield accompanied a group of 25 middle-class American tourists on a trip to the embattled Central American country, saw what they saw, and recorded their responses. Pic sags in spots and lacks the fervor to be found in successful "committed" docus, but is unavoidably interesting to anyone concerned with ongoing events in the region. Opening to-

day at the Fox International in Venice, film has a place at fests and specialized venues, as well as on public television outlets.

Clearfield announces no political agenda at the outset, and is at pains to present the travelers as resolutely normal types who are not already converted to the Sandanistas' cause, but instead simply individuals with a curiosity about what's going on and a taste for adventurous excursions.

Although their trip was organized by the government tourist agency, the Americans were free to roam about on their own, and early on visited with U.S. Rep. Richard Cheney and others who had less than complimentary things to say about the Sandanistas.

Gradually, however, the effect of the person-to-person contact with the natives and their struggle to build a new society created a strong sympathy among the visitors, who by the end uniformly expressed a view that the U.S. is utterly wrong to continue its age-old policy of meddling in the destiny of Central American people.

Seen along the way are portions of a speech and q&a with President Daniel Ortega, a private conversation with the Minister of Culture. Father Ernesto Cardenal, and a trip to the Managua McDonald's, where the only items available were hamburgers and tamarind juice.

Most unusual, however, is a glimpse of the odd, impoverished community of Bluefields. Isolated on the Atlantic coast, far from the political hotbed of Managua, and reachable only by boat, Bluefields is more Caribbean than Latin in nature, boasts an English-speaking population and is full of mistrustful people who are skeptical about if not openly opposed to, the course of the revolution.

Pic tries to deal with both the pros and cons of what has happened in Nicaragua since 1979 by talking about the preservation of culture and advances in education and health care on the one hand, and censorship and repression on the other. Because Clearfield locks herself into the tourist's p.o.v., however, only a superficial look at such issues is possible, and this robs the film of any possibility of incisive analysis.

Technically, effort is okay, and it does give one a good look at the country and its people.

Fri., March 20, 1987

The Violins Came With The Americans

(Drama — U.S. — Color)

A Sun and Moon production. Produced by David Greene. Directed by Kevin Conway. Screenplay, M. Quiros (Mila Burnette). Camera (Technicolor), Benjamin Davis; editor, John Tintori; music, Fred Weinberg; set design, Sue Raney; sound, Felipe Borrero; associate producer, Dean Silvers; second unit director, Maria Norman. Reviewed at the American Film Institute (AFI Fest), L.A. Feb. 25, 1987. No MPAA rating. Running time: 94

. Mila Burnette Annie Adams . . Joaquim de Almeida Don Eulhencio Jose Ferrer With: Maria Norman, Kevin Conway, Norma Candal, Iris Martinez, Paula Trueman,

The worthwhile intentions of "The Violins Came With The Americans" enormously outweigh the artistic and political results on view. Independently produced effort to explore the fruits of the United States' long domination of Puerto Rico is aggravatingly simplistic and naive, and doesn't begin to dramatize the situation in any meaningful

way. Commercial prospects are meager. World premiere takes place tomorrow at the AFI Fest.

Mila Burnette wrote the script (as M. Quiros) and plays the lead, a woman of early middle age who splits with her midtown Manhattan husband and returns to relatives in economically devastated South Bronx, where she grew up.

With considerable difficulty, she motivates and organizes the reclusive tenants to fix up their shabby building and defy the slum landlord. At the the same time, she enters into what passes for a romance with a handsome young attorney who argues for Puerto Rican independence at the United Na-

All this is fine, except that it's done completely unconvincingly and sheds no light either on poverty in the U.S. or the Puerto Rican cause. Leading lady is laughably simple-minded and naive, and all of her activities are presented without complexity or irony.

Worse, her boyfriend is, for all his alleged education and erudition, a brooding silent type who never even gives her, or the audience, a lesson on the history of Puerto Rico, American involvement there and what's bad about it.

Point of the entire picture is clearly the rediscovery of one woman's roots, but writer Burnette and director Kevin Conway fail completely to elucidate the situation, or even to taste the different sides of the argument.

On a more human level, relationship of the pair is presented as if it was supposed to be a passionate, alliance, made stronger through marriage, to Chiang Kai-shek.

Extensive use of the People's Army and superior, unfamiliar locations do provide a feast for the eye. and director Sing Yinnan manages some fine compositions and camera moves. But this is children's-book history, and hardly sophisticated enough for the international mar-

Fri., Jan. 23, 1987

Waiting For The Moon (Period comedy-drama — Color)

A Skouras Pictures release of a New Front Films/A.B. Films Laboratory for Icon and Idiom production in association with American Playhouse/the Societe Francaise de Production/ARD-Degeto/Channel 4. Produced by Sandra Schulberg. Executive producer, Lindsay Law. Line producers, Jean Achache, Frederic Bourboulon, Directed by Jill Godmilow. Screenplay, Mark Magill, from a story by Godmilow and Magill. Camera (color), Andre Neau; editor, Georges Klotz; music, Michael Sahl; production design, Patrice Mercier; costume design, Elisabeth Tavernier: associate producer. Barbara Lucev Reviewed at the U.S. Film Festival, Park City Utah, Jan. 21, 1987. No MPAA rating. Running time: 87 min.

Alice B. Toklas Linda Hunt Gertrude Stein Linda Bassett Andrew McCarthy Henry Hopper Fernande Olivier. . Bernadette Lafont Ernest Hemingway .Bruce McGill Guillaume Apollinaire Jacques Boudet

Park City, Utah - A Film of considerable loveliness and charm, "Waiting For The Moon" is an imaginary look at episodes in the later lives of literary lioness Gertrude Stein and her longtime companion Alice B. Toklas. Decidedly an art house item that will play best to viewers who are at least familiar with the names of the leading characters, picture is at the same time funny and accessible enough to make some inroads with more general audiences, specifically that which embraced "A Room With A View" so warmly.

Known during production as "The

Trail Of The Lonesome Pine" (reportedly Stein's favorite song), film opens on a beautiful Summer day with the two middle-aged women proof-reading one of Stein's manuscripts at their French country home while also attending to an unexplained baby. Director Jill Godmilov covers the action with a beautifully choreographed to-and-fro tracking shot, and brittle, intelligent dialog here sets the tone on a high plane from which it rarely slips.

Mark Magill's script flips in a fragmentary way back somewha earlier moments during the mid-1930: when the couple drove through France and also endured a very dif ficult period in their relationship prompted by Stein's refusal to dis cuss with Toklas her possibly fata illness.

Picture is nothing but talk, bu Magill has risen to the occasion and provided the two women with con versation worthy of their reputa tions, and makes one believe tha they really could have been like this. Portrait is entirely believable even if Godmilow and Magill have insisted that what's on view is entirely fictional.

On their motor tour through the countryside, the women pick up a hitchhiking American, Henry Hopper, who is on his way to the Spanish Civil War; pick up Fernande Olivier, Picasso's mistress, with whom Toklas enjoys a particularly rapport "What about your genius?," they ask each other, and are joined by the poet Apollinaire, who, around a campfire, hauntingly tells of having eaten mushrooms with Jean Cocteau on a mountaintop on a night wher they named all the constellations it the sky after people they knew.

Less successful is the portrait o Ernest Hemingway, who is crudely depicted as a drunken, whoring buffon lacking the sensitivity of the other characters.

But the core of the film is the wonderful relationship between the two women, which is alive and re silient even at its worst. Heming way, among others, calls Toklas: saint but putting up with the tough demanding Stein, and the two tes and spar with each other just as the give comfort and provide constan reminders of their extraordinary mutual knowledge.

Lack of narrative thrust will pu off some viewers, as will the jux taposition of Summer villa scene with other sequences set at differen

Tale is narrated by Toklas, and Linda Hunt virtually walks away with the picture in the role. Fed up with, hurt and frustrated by he companion, she nevertheless under stands and loves her thoroughly and Hunt conveys all of this with at exemplary economy of expression Linda Bassett is similarly fully up to the demands of her role as Stein never overdoing the arty or bossy sides and getting across a great dea through looks and the authority o her line delivery.

Period feel is seamlessly expressed through Patrice Mercier's production design and Elisabeth Tavernier' costuming, and Andre Neau's lens ing is subtly adaptable to the chang ing moods of the piece. Car.

Thurs., April 16, 1987

Walk Like A Man (Comedy — Color)

An MGM/UA release. Produced by Leonar Kroll. Executive producer, Robert Klane Directed by Melvin Frank. Screenplay b Robert Klane. Camera (Metrocolor), Victo J. Kemper; editors, Bill Butler and Stev

Butler; music, Lee Holdridge; production designer, Bill Malley; set designer, Richard J. Lawrence; sound mixers, Gary Bourgeois, Chris Carpenter, Dean Okrand; assis tant director, Roger Joseph Pugliese; casting, Jane Jenkins, Janet Hirshenson, Denise Chamian. Reviewed at MGM/UA screening room 2, Culver City, Ca., April 15, 1987. MPAA rating: G. Running time: 86

Bobo Shand . Howie Mandel Christopher Lloyd Reggie Shand Henry Shand. Christopher Lloyd Margaret Shand Cloris Leachman Rhonda Shand Colleen Camp Amy Steel

"Walk Like A Man" can easily take its place on anyone's list of the 10 stupidest pix ever made in Hollywood. The story is ludicrous, the script hollow, the acting wooden and on and on. Laughs are zilch, which is about what this stinker should deliver at the box office.

Originally named "Bobo" for Howie Mandel's lead character, film is an excruciatingly boring attempt to create comic plausibility from an empty premise.

Mandel is lost in the woods as a youngster and is not found for 28 years — during which time he has been raised by a pack of wolves. Returned to the city by animal benaviorist Amy Steel, this man-beast curries around on all fours and acts ike an untrained canine.

Mandel's nonspeaking antics early on surely lose anyone over fourrears-old or with an IQ above 58. Purported plot has him under the tuelage of Ms. Steel, with his evil prother (Christopher Lloyd) trying o trick Bobo out of his share of the amily fortune.

Steel's patience and thoughtfulness, of course, inevitably evolves nto a half-baked romance while the napless Lloyd connives to cop his sibling's millions.

Most embarrassing of all amidst he proceedings is the presence of Cloris Leachman as the guys' crackpot mother. Role is an insult o her skills and past credits.

Other family femme, Colleen Camp as Lloyd's wife, is left with a limwit part as a greedy alcoholic who resorts to tiresome reprise of Irinking everywhere and anywhere.

All told, pic is one of those instances where the whole is less than he sum of its parts.

Fri., Jan. 23, 1987

A Walk On The Moon (Drama - Color)

A Benenson/Midwest Films production. roduced by Dina Silver. Executive producr. Bill Beneson, Directed by Raphael Silver. creenplay, William B. Mai. Camera (Duart abs Color), Adam Greenberg; editor, Peter rank; music, Paul Chihara; production deign, Holger Gross; sound, Robert Graveor; casting, Bonnie Timmermann. Reiewed at the U.S. Film Festival, Park City, Itah, Jan. 21, 1987. No MPAA rating. Runing time: 95 min.

Kevin Anderson Everett JonesTerry Kinney .Laila Robins Lew Ellis. Marty Ellis. India Patrice Martinez Doctor . Pedro Armendariz CandyRoberto Sosa

Park City, Utah — The full poential of the material has not learly been achieved in "A Walk In The Moon." Tale of Peace lorps workers trying to cope in Colombia in 1969 had the seeds of trenchant analysis of American dealism and a glimpse of nascent hird World anti-Americanism, out execution blandly fails to folow through on story's promise. his one will be a tough sell.

Set during a period when the right optimism of the JFK years, till the inspirational focus of the 'eace Corps, clashed with the aner and cynicism bred by the Viet-

nam War, William B. Mai's interesting script lands young volunteer Kevin Anderson in a droughtstricken village to take over from a married couple. Pair has split up. however, with the husband, Terry Kinney, having gone wacko and the wife having taken up an affair with the local medico.

Shocked by the disinterest with which the natives react to his dogooder enthusiasm, Anderson nevertheless proceeds with a plan to bring electricity to the impoverished community, and also becomes involved in a rather unlikely romance with India, the foxiest lady in the vicinity, a young woman who was probably Kinney's mistress earlier.

Over time, Anderson wises up a bit, but not enough to avoid making the mistake of impregnating and marrying his native sweetie. In a wildly melodramatic sequence, the rains finally come to Afogados, and the American's waterwheel succeeds in lighting up the town, but Anderson and his bride are separately washed away in the flood, with the former going nuts and the latter conveniently never to be heard from again.

Based on personal experiences of both scripter Mai and exec producer Bill Benenson, story provides plenty of opportunities for insights into how the good intentions of Americans abroad can easily achieve results opposite from those intended. It might also have been provocative to show a parallel influence on the natives from the left, by way of comparison of the methods of the communist and capitalist power spheres to win favor in underdeveloped nations.

Unfortunately, director Raphael Silver shows little feel for the setting or the characters.

Contributions of lenser Adam Greenberg and production designer Holger Gross lend verisimilitude to the effort, which was shot in Mexico. Title refers directly to the technological triumph of landing men on the moon at the same time the characters on view are groveling in

Mon., Feb. 23, 1987

Die Wannseekonferenz THE WANNSEE CONFERENCE (W. German — Color)

A Rearguard release of an Infafilm GmbH Munich-Manfred Korytowski/Austrian Television-O.R.F./Bavarian Broadcasting Corp. coproduction. Produced by Korytowski. Executive producer, Siegfried B. Gloker, Directed by Heinz Schirk, Screenplay, Paul Mommertz. Camera (color), Horst Schier; editor, Ursula Mollinger; art direction, Robert Hofer-Ach, Barbara Siebner; costumes, Diemut Remy; sound, Sigbert Stark; historical advisor, Shlomo Aronson. Reviewed at the Fine Arts Theater, Beverly Hills, Feb. 20, 1987. No MPAA rating. Run-

ing time. or min.	
Hofmann	Robert Artzorn
Muller	.Friedrich Beckhaus
Eichmann	Gerd Bockmann
Leibbrandt	Jochen Busse
Luther	. Hans W. Bussinger
Meyer	Harald Dietl
Stuckart	Peter Fitz
Buhler	.Reinhard Glemnitz
Neumann	Dieter Groest
Lange	Martin Luttge
	Anita Maily
	. Dietrich Mattausch
Schongarth	Gerd Rigauer
	Franz Rudnick
	Gunter Sporrle
	Bainer Steffen

The little-known Wannsee Conference was one of the momentous occasions of the 20th century, a conclave of 15 leading Nazis at which the decision to proceed with the "Final Solution of the Jewish Question" was detailed and implemented. This West German film, financed largely by

German and Austrian television and released there in 1984, represents a fastidious and fascinating reconstruction of the event virtually in real time, as the entire conference lasted a mere 85 minutes. Entering U.S. release on Feb. 25 in Los Angeles, docudrama will probably be pitched primarily to Jewish audiences and others already concerned with the period and issues in question, but would also prove stimulating to anyone interested in history or, specifically, fresh cinematic methods of relating it.

Although the rounding up, expulsion and killing of Jews had taken place virtually since Hitler's coming to power, the plan to finally achieve the Fuhrer's longtime goal of ridding the Reich of all Jews had not been formalized and systemized until the meeting at Wannsee, on the outskirts of Berlin, on Jan. 20,

Convened by Reinhard Heydrich, Chief of the Security Police and the SS and widely considered to be Hitler's likely successor, conference was attended by representatives of the many competing security arms and bureaucracies within the regime, and detailed notes taken by a secretary and found after the war provided the incredible raw material for Paul Mommertz's dense screenplay.

First 20 minutes are occupied with arrivals of the principals and preliminaries, at which Heydrich, the "ideal Aryan" and in all ways a whirlwind of efficiency, clarity and purpose, is briefed by subordinates and confers with such advisors as Adolf Eichmann, the "Jewish spe-

Evidently with only slight editing from the actual event, and under the constant forward pressing of Heydrich, the meeting moves like wildfire, covering an enormous number of subjects in a brief time span.

Various Nazis express concern that such concentration on the Jews will divert resources from the war effort, particularly on the Russian front: some forward the notion that mass public executions are messy and make for bad p.r.; others still are concerned with transportation problems, et al., ad nauseum.

Climax, such as it is, comes in a heated discussion of the fate of half-Jews, their offspring and any subjects of mixed blood. None of the participants here would have been at the meeting in the first place if they didn't fundamentally agree on the evil represented by the Jewish people, but topic still causes tempers to flare.

Limitations of the approach are a lack of identification of who the participants are and what interests they represent, and a lack of clarity concerning the jurisdictional factions and frictions between them. Although overt, documentary-like labels might have seemed a crude device, they still would have helped.

Nevertheless, director Heinz Schirk's approach to the essentially static and heavily talky material is visually elegant and to the point, and the pace he sets is terrific. Act ing by the entire ensemble is utterly believable, with special kudos going to Dietrich Mattausch's commanding portrait of Heydrich.

Such seemingly dry history might not be the stuff normal art house patrons like to feed on, but the drama and fascination inherent in the material and its treatment should give any intelligent audience plenty to chew on.

Tues., Jan. 13, 1987

Wanted: Dead Or Alive (Actioner — Color)

A New World Pictures release. Executive producer, Arthur Sarkissian. Produced by Robert C. Peters. Coproduced by Barry Bernardi. Directed by Gary Sherman. Screenplay, Michael Patrick Goodman, Brian Taggert, Gary Sherman: Camera (CFI Color) Alex Nepomniaschy; editor, Ross Albert; music, Joseph Renzetti; art director, Jon Hutman; production designer, Paul Eads; sound, Peter Bentley; assistant director, Alan Curtiss; casting, Ellen Meyer, Sally Stiner. Reviewed at New World Pictures, L.A., Calif., Jan. 8, 1987. MPAA Rating: R. Running time: 104 min.

Nick Randall Rutger Hauer Malak Al Rahim Gene Simmons Philmore Walker Robert Guillaume . Mel Harris Danny Quintz William Russ

Last two minutes of "Wanted: Dead Or Alive" save the film from being a complete bust. Steely demeanor of Rutger Hauer is about the only arresting characteristic of this actioner, which, if less violent, could easily be thought of as episodic tv. Pic should do healthy sales in the vidcassette market after a marginal theatrical run.

Hauer plays a modern-day bounty hunter and fictional great-grandson of the character Steve McQueen played on the tv series of the same title that ran in the late 1950s.

While McQueen brought in outlaws of the Old West, Hauer brings in villains of the modern media world who have a high price on their heads.

As an embittered ex-CIA agent, Hauer gets a certain amount of satisfaction commanding high fees from ex-bosses he mostly despises.

They are dependent on him to bring in society's rottenest, and he needs them to pay for his high-tech warehouse loft home/office (complete with what must be an illegal arsenal of weapons) and a boat docked at San Pedro.

Nearly the first hour is one drawn out scenario showing Hauer in his various locales and moods (mostly unsmiling ones) while mapping out a strategy to capture the diabolical Malak Al Rahim (Gene Simmons), who's terrorizing Los Angeles with random bombings.

Plot has more holes in it than Hauer's firing range (also a feature of his loft) and consequently, story never seems to work as anything other than an average good guy ver-

sus bad guy caper.

Nice performances are turned in by Hauer's two law enforcement buddies, one an old CIA partner (Robert Guillaume) and the other a lieutenant in the L.A.P.D. (William Russ), both of whom have unique friendships with the bounty hunter that should have been developed

Unfortunately, scripters chose to move things along by substituting Rahim's dastardly deeds at regular intervals for those that give his works some color by explaining what motivates the man responsible

The squeamish will not find this pic too easy to sit through as it seems that someone gets blown to bits, sliced up or shot every few minutes, not including a couple of group annihilations.

The saving grace is the last scene which is so ludicrous, it's unintentionally riotous, but nevertheless a uniquely entertaining payoff for those who can sit through to the

Wed., May 13, 1987

Warm Nights On A Slow **Moving Train**

(Australian — Drama — Color)

A Filmpac Holdings release (in Australia) of a Western Pacific Films presentation of a Ross Dimsey production. Executive producers, William T. Marshall, Peter Sherman, Robert Ward. Produced by Dimsey, Patric Juillet. Directed by Bob Ellis. Stars Wendy

Hughes. Screenplay, Ellis, Denny Lawrence. Camera (color), Yuri Sokol; editor, Tim Lewis, music, Peter Sullivan; production design, Tracy Watt; costumes, Alexandra Tynan; sound, Gary Wilkins; production manager, Darryl Sheen; assistant director, Robert Kewley; casting, Liz Mullinar. Reviewed at Cannes Film Festival (market), May 10, 1987. Running time: 91 min.

. Wendy Hughes The Man The Salesman . . Norman Kaye The Football Coach . . . John Clayton The Soldier . . . Rod Zuanic The Brother Lewis Fitz-gerald The Singer . Steve J. Spears The Politician The Steward. Peter Whitford With: Chris Haywood (Station-master),

John Flaus (Taxi-driver), Peter Carmody (Second-class passenger).

Cannes — This upper-class drama, toplining Wendy Hughes as a prostie who solicits for high-class trade at weekends on an overnight train running between Sydney and Melbourne, has an intriguing premise, frequently witty script, adroit direction and a gallery of excellent actors. Pic should do good business in Australia thanks to its strong cast and classy look. Overseas distribs should take a look, too.

Despite its theme, it's not an erotic film (there's no nudity), but the intelligent viewer should be intrigued by the situation and the way it develops. Also, it showcases Hughes in one of her best screen performances.

She plays the unnamed protagonist who — via a special deal with gay train steward Peter Whitford - has access to the Judy Garland Suite, reserved for visiting celebrities who don't like flying. Each Saturday, she travels to Sydney, returning home next day.

A chameleon-type character, she changes her appearance and style according to her prospective clients, not telling them she'll want money from them until its too late for them to change their minds.

Among her clients are a football coach (John Clayton) planning to write a Dostoyevskian novel; a retired salesman (Norman Kaye) who's found God; a lonely young soldier (Rod Zuanic); and a burly amateur singer (Steve J. Spears). To each one, Hughes comes up with a different story and appearance.

The pattern changes when she meets a handsome stranger (Colin Friels) who takes her without paying; she falls heavily in love, and reluctantly agrees to assist him in the assassination of a politician.

Pic is technically up to the usual high standard, with fine photography from Yuri Sokol, intelligent production design by Tracy Watt, and lively music from Peter Sullivan.

As noted, all performances are good, with Hughes outstanding in the demanding central role.

Editor Tim Lewis has done a commendable job under the circumstances: it's well known in the industry that Bob Ellis, here directing his second pic after the successful lowbudget item "Unfinished Business," originally planned a much longer version of the film: 35-40 minutes have been cut from the version Ellis

> Mon., Jan. 26, 1987 **Warrior Oueen**

(Exploitation — Color)

A Seymour Borde & Associates release of a Lightning Films production. Produced by Harry Alan Towers. Directed by Chuck Vincent. Screenplay, Rich Marx, based on a story by Peter Welbeck. Camera (TVC Color), Lorenzo Battaglia; editor, Vincent, Joel Bender, Jim Sanders, Tony Delcampo; music, lan Shaw, Kai Joffe; production design, Lucio Parise; costumes, Parise; sound, Larry Revene; assistant director, Per Sjostedt; associate producer, Aristede Massacesi, Donatella Donati. Reviewed at the Hollywood Egyptian Theater, Hollywood, Calif. Jan. 23, 1987. MPAA Rating: R. Running time: 69 minutes.

BereniceSybil Danning	
Clodius Donald Pleasance	
Marcus Richard Hill	
ChloeJ. J. Jones	
VespaTally Chanel	
PhilomenaStasia Micula	
VeneriaSuzanne Smith	
Victo	
Roberto Mario Cruciani	
Goliath	

"Warrior Queen" is a below average exploitation pic without enough action or flesh to please fans of the genre. In fact, it's rather tame stuff and even the presence of veteran schlock queen Sybil Danning doesn't do much to validate the experience.

One thing is certain. It didn't take long for Danning to memorize her lines since she does little more than grimace and change togas through the film's 69 minutes. She's the mistress of the Roman emperor slumming in Pompeii at the time of the big roast.

City is run by Donald Pleasance, who looks more like Mayor Koch than Mayor Clodius. There's some minor depravity in the town but nothing to get too excited about. Nonetheless, Danning turns her nose up on the whole affair while trying to save the purity of two young kittens in bondage (Tally Chanel and J.J. Jones).

Pic has the usual assortment of good guys with big muscles and bad guys with big muscles. Richard Hill is the best of the just and Marco Tulio Cau is worst of the rest.

Story is, of course, besides the point and only real fun to be had is watching the scenery. The non-human kind is pattently phony which, again, is part of the fun. Director Chuck Vincent has cut in a good deal of footage from another film to show the eruption of Mt. Vesuvius and the fleeing mob. Inconsistency in cinematography stands out like a chariot on 42d Street.

Chanel, as the object of Hill's affection, is a Goldie Hawn lookalike who certainly has all the assets to find more work in similar pix. But no one can sneer with the authority of Danning.

Jagr.

Wed., March 18, 1987

Weapons Of The Spirit (Documentary — U.S./French — 16m — Color)

A Friends of Le Chambon/Pierre Sauvage production in association with F.R.3. Produced, directed, written, narrated by Sauvage. Coproducer, Barbara M. Rubin. Camera (color), Yves Dahan; editor, Mathew Harrison; sound, Patrick Baroz. Reviewed at the American Film Institute (AFI Fest), L.A., Feb. 23, 1987. No MPAA rating. Running time: 91 min.

(In English and French; English subtitles)

"Weapons Of The Spirit" breaks remarkable new ground where treatment of the Nazi holocaust is concerned, being a portrait of how 5000 French villagers saved 5000 ws from delivery to concentration camps and, in the process, a rare glimpse of the true spirit of Christianity in action. Subject matter alone would guarantee interest from specialized ethnic audiences, but eye-opening evidence about the extent of Vichy France's cooperation with the Germans and power of the story should make this marketable internationally wherever documentaries are welcome. Film has its world premiere tonight at the AFI Fest.

Located 40 miles from Vichy and 75 miles from Lyon, Le Chambonsur-Lignon was inhabited at the start of World War II almost exclusively by Protestants who, as descendents of the Huguenots, represented a religious minority themselves in the overwhelmingly Catholic country.

Out of a tradition of helping "guests in need," the local citizenry began sheltering Jews, two of whom were parents of present filmmaker Pierre Sauvage, who narrates and shows himself at the outset returning to place where he was born and visiting with some of the people who made his life possible.

The context Sauvage quickly sketches in is startling; vintage newsreel footage reveals virulent anti-Semitic displays in Paris, and Petain and his deputies are shown making the rounds to drum up support for their collaborationist regime. In all, the film underlines, France handed 75,000 Jews over to the Germans.

Body of the picture explores how and why the villagers doubled the population of their community right under the Nazis' noses.

Interviews show the locals (many of whom have died since the filming) to be honest, simple folk who believe that it was "a normal thing to do" to behave as they did, and who are embodiments of the basic Christian credo, "Love thy neighbor as thyself."

Pic has extra power because of the intensely personal meaning it obviously had for its maker, but Sauvage never loses sight of the bigger story and doesn't become maudlin or sentimental.

With the grimmest possible backdrop, filmmaker has still been able to tell an upbeat tale, and to make his own subjective experience universally accessible. Cart.

Thurs., Aug. 27, 1987

Noce En Galilee A WEDDING IN GALILEE (Belgian-French-Palestinian — Drama — Color)

A Lasa Films (Paris) release of a Marisa Films (Brussels)/LPA (Paris) coproduction, with the participation of the French Ministry of Culture, the French Community Ministry of Belgium and ZDF. Produced by Michel Khleifi, Bernard Lorain. Written and directed by Khleifi. Camera (color), Walther van den Ende; editor, Marie Castro Vasquez; music, Jean-Marie Senia; sound, Ricardo Castro; art director, Yves Brover; assistant director, Alain Tasma; production manager, Jacqueline Louis. Reviewed at the Cinematheque Francaise, Paris, June 4, 1987. (In Montreal Film Festival.) Running time: 113 min.

With: Ali Mohammed Akiki (The Moktar), Nazih Akly (the groom), Mabram Khouri (the military governor), Anna Achdian (bride), Sonia Amar (the young sister), Emtiaz Diab, Georges Khleifi, Hassan Diab, Abkas Hi-

Paris — "Noce En Galilee," which is unspooling at the Montreal Film Fest, stands a good chance for specialized playoff, in addition to offering rich ethnographic detail for noncommercial and educational use. In any case, it promotes writer-director Michel Khleifi to the vanguard among Beligum's exportable filmmakers.

Though provocatively billed (in press materials) as a Belgian-French-Palestinian coproduction, "Noce" transcends propaganda and dramatic facility to present a complex and affecting picture of an Arab village on the occupied Left Bank.

Khleifi, 36, wrote and directed with deep understanding and a lucid eye. Born and raised in Nazareth,

he has pursued a career in theater, tv, radio and film in Belgium, where he also teaches directing at the INSAS film school. He devoted a first (docu) feature to Palestine in his 1980 production "La Memoire Fertile."

The dramatic premise of Khleifi's script is a traditional Arab wedding in a village where a curfew has been imposed by Israeli authorities following violent demonstrations and incidents.

The village elder, the moktar, who is marrying off his son, wants a ceremony in grand style, but the curfew is the major obstacle to the festivities. Appealing to the Israeli military governor, he is dealt a daunting condition: the governor and his staff must be official guests, to ensure peace.

The moktar accepts the arrangement, though immediately gets flack from the radical elements in the village, who begin plotting a terrorist action during the celebrations

Working skillfully with an ostensibly nonprofessional cast and filming on location in a Palestinian village, Khleifi fills his dramatic canvas with vivid vignettes of Arab culture that are often schematized or neglected in propaganda pieces.

Preparations for the wedding and its tense long-day's-journey-intonight consummation occupy most of the screen time as the village elder attempts to harness local energies and prevent threatened violence.

Internal problems and the groom's inability to perform his conjugal duties (without which the fete cannot be considered ended) prolong an atmosphere of compromised tradition and forced gaiety.

Though the Israeli guests are treated with cool distance and some irony — asked if he's enjoying himself, the military governor tactlessly responds that he wishes he could stay a hundred years — Khleifi keeps the Palestinian locals and their often contradictory problems as the film's dramatically humane mainstay.

Walther van den Ende's lensing caps pic's first-rate technical credits, which never betray any feeling of travelog or tourist superficiality.

Len.

Mon., Oct. 20, 1986

Weekend Warriors (Comedy — Color)

A Movie Store release. Produced by Hannah Hempstead. Executive producers Bert Convy, Stanley Fimberg. Directed by Convy. Screenplay, Bruce Belland, Roy M. Rogosin. Camera (color), Charles Minsky; editor, Raja Gosnell: production design, Chester Kaczenski; music, Perry Botkin; sound, John Brasher; costume design, Susie Desanto; assistant director, Dean Stevens; stunt coordinator, Wally Crowder; casting, Junie Lowry. Reviewed at the Hollywood Pacific Theater, L.A., Oct. 17, 1986. MPAA

Rating: R. Running time: 85 min. Vince Tucker. .Chris Lemmon Sergeant Burge Vic Tayback Colonel Archer Lloyd Bridges Congressman Balljoy Phil McCracken. Daniel Greene Marty Cohen Decola. Cory Seacomb Brian Bradley . Matt McCoy Duckworth. Alan Campbell .Tom Villard Mort Seblinsky Jeff Meyer Tom Dawson Cantain Cabot Mark Taylor .Gail Barle Nurse Nancy Betty Beep .Camille Saviola

"Weekend Warriors" is another low-budget comedy release, originally shot as "Hollywood Air Force Base," that throws in ribald hijinks, a little nudity and not much of a story in order to lure a teenage audience with nothing better to do. The pic may very

soon grace the shelves of video stores.

It's Hollywood, 1961, and the boys there are doing anything to avoid active military duty. So they join the National Guard. Obviously, since it's Hollywood, where nothing or no one is taken seriously, the crew of this guard spend their duty time gambling and conducting flatulence contests.

It's only when the brass come to visit and threaten to put these would-be actors on active duty that they decide to shape up their act.

Of course, since it is Hollywood, shaping up their act means putting on a show hiring people that look like good soldiers, stocking the place with sexy nurses and wowing the often-cliched dirty old colonel.

As in all films, the plan works and the men are then free to pursue their slovenly ways.

The film, which is Bert Convy's directorial debut, was obviously put together quickly and somewhat haphazardly, with scenes that sometime look like they are from a home movie.

Chris Lemmon, son of Jack, plays Vince Tucker, the lead crony of this band, who comes up with the star-spangled plan to save the men. Lemmon has a good screen persona and even in this inane release, it's obvious that he will endure.

Brian Bradley puts in a good performance as a bisexual gossip columnist who gets out of active duty by declaring he is homosexual.

Others in the film, including veteran actors Lloyd Bridges and Vic Tayback, are mildly amusing.

The best part of the film comes when Lemmon's character and the boys host their own Hollywood extravaganza to wow the brass. This includes some pretty talented marching bands, dancing drill teams and a rather spectacular baton twirler. Now that's entertainment, or at least its the only kind found in this pic.

Teen.

Wed., Dec. 3, 1986

Welcome To 18

(Teen comedy-drama — Color)
An American Distribution Group release

of a Summer Release production. Executive producer, Bruce W. Brown. Produced by David C. Thomas. Directed by Terry Carr. Screenplay, Carr, Judith Sherman Wolin; camera (Metrocolor), Stephen L. Posey; editor, Lois Freeman-Fox; music, Tony Berg; sound (Dolby), Ron Judkins; production design, Steven Legler; set design, Don Ferguson; associate producers, Cheryl Downey, Kathleen Lawrence; assistant director, Cheryl Downey; casting, Junie Lowry, Marcy Carrik; aerial camera, Rex Metz. Reviewed at Movies At Town Center, Boca Raton, Fla., Nov. 20, 1986. MPAA Rating: PG-13. Running time: 89 min.

Lindsey Courtney Thorne-Smith
Joey Mariska Hargitay
Robin Jo Ann Willette
Talia Cristen Kauffman
Roscoe E. Erich Anderson

Boca Raton, Fla. — "Welcome To 18," originally titled "Summer Release," is a ho-hum approach to the usual teenage comedy-drama about youngsters (in this case 18-year-old girls) finding out about the cold, cruel world and adults who inhabit it. The format worked as drive-in fodder about 15 years ago, but this watered-down version lacks even titillation value.

An attractive cast is headed by striking blond Courtney Thorne-Smith as Lindsey, who hops in her convertible with redhead pal Robin (Jo Ann Willette) and brunet Joey (Mariska Hargitay) to spend the post-high school graduation Summer working at a dude ranch in Nevada.

Overly busy and unconvincing plotline has the trio splitting quickly from the ranch after they are cheated in the first payroll and forbidden to fraternize with the hunks there. They go to the mansion of a girl they've met, Talia (Cristen Kauffman), at Lake Tahoe, where her young gangster-lover Roscoe (E. Erich Anderson) gets the girls phony ID's and jobs working at a casino.

The girls end up at a rundown motel in the mountains where they make new friends including a goofy entomologist and a sympathetic transvestite neighbor. After a party involving prostitution and drugs, the three girls end up in jail and are bailed out for \$5000 by Roscoe, who steals Lindsey's car as collateral until he is repaid.

While trying to protect Talia from this young brute, the girls devise a scheme in which Lindsey ends up winning about \$35,000 in a poker game for local highrollers (it's never explained how Lindsey is so proficient at poker). After two of the girls succeed in having sex with their new boyfriends, a happy ending is contrived of them spiriting Talia away from Roscoe and all four heading for San Francisco before the Fall college term begins.

Aided by an appealing set of players, pictures tries to give young girls various lectures on the false lures of the fast life (living high, wild parties, gambling, prostitution, etc.) but sends out the same old messags of the genre, especially regarding sex as fulfillment of the transition to womanhood. Even the romantic view of gambling is used as the tool to getting everyone out of a bind, including freeing Talia, who turns out to also be 18, though she looks older, from her life of prostitution. Given this subject matter, pic's tame, PG-13-rated approach robs it of exploitation values.

Director Terry Carr displays the dreaded influence of musicvideos, with feature having more silent-plus-music montages than most films had even at the height of romantic filler interludes in the 1960s. Four lead actresses all deserve better vehicles in future. Lor.

Wed., May 13, 1987

The Whales Of August

(Drama — U.S. — Color/B&W)

An Alive Films release produced with Circle Associates Ltd. in association with Nelson Entertainment. Produced by Carolyn Pfeiffer, Mike Kaplan. Executive producer, Shep Gordon, Directed by Lindsay Anderson. Stars Bette Davis, Lillian Gish, Vincent Price, Ann Sothern. Screenplay, David Berry, based on his play. Camera (color/b&w TVC Labs processing; CFI prints), Mike Fash; editor, Nicolas Gaster; music, Alan Price; production design, Jocelyn Herbert; art direction, K.C. Fox, Bob Fox; set decoration, Sosie Hublitz; costume design, Rudy Dillon; Bette Davis' costumes, Julie Weiss; sound, Donald Summer; associate producer, Stuart Besser; assistant director, Broderick Miller. Reviewed at Lorimar Telepictures screening room, Culver City, April 24, 1987. (Out-of-competition at Cannes Film Fes-

Libby Strong	Bette Davis
Sarah Webber .	Lillian Gish
Mr. Maranov	Vincent Price
Tisha Doughty .	Ann Sothern
Joshua Brackett	Harry Carey Jr.
Mr. Beckwith	Frank Grimes
Old Randall	Frank Pitkin
Young Randall .	Mike Bush
	Margaret Ladd
	•

Young Tisha Tisha Sterling Young Sarah Mary Steenburgen

A number of remarkable art-

ists, each representing different significant traditions and eras in film history, have joined forces for "The Wheels Of August," and the result is lovely on all counts. Muted but engrossing tale about the balance of power between two elderly sisters boasts superior lead performances from two of the screen's most legendary actresses, Bette Davis and Lillian Gish, and interest in seeing these two ladies in a quality film will assure strong business in art houses and possibly beyond upon its theatrical openings this Fall. World premiere takes place May 15 at the Cannes Film Festival.

Occasion also marks the first American outing for director Lindsay Anderson, who has bounced back from the boundless absurdism of "Britannia Hospital" with precise, rigorously controlled work that gets the most out of modest material.

Completely without pretention or a false sense of self-importance, pic is scaled just right to let the drama take hold and the performers take off.

Adapted by David Berry from his 1981 play, story has two sisters living alone in a comfortable but basic home they have occupied for decades on the striking coast of Maine. Sarah, played by Gish, is a doting busybody who is obliged to care for her sister Libby, portrayed by Davis, because the latter is blind.

As she putters around the house tidying up and doing her sister's bidding, Gish continually refers to her Davis as "dear," although she is anything but. Irascible, cranky and stubborn, with only occasional pleasant streaks, Davis would clearly have been a handful even in the best of times, but in her dotage is a burden her sister cannot shake off.

Trouble rears its head in the form of Vincent Price, a White Russian of considerable charm and gentlemanliness who for decades has lived as a "houseguest" of numerous ladies.

Having had yet another woman die on him, Price is clearly casting about for a new situation and sets his sights on the eager Gish. Davis, however, will have none of it, and does all within her limited powers to interfere with this potentially dramatic change in her living conditions.

Such are the simple dramatic contours of the piece. Lacking in explosive fireworks or even startling confrontations, it makes its points quietly, with understatement that resonates with time.

Creating much of this resonance, of course, are the two actresses. Gish's career dates virtually to the beginnings of narrative cinema in the United States, and despite much fine work in the intervening years, she is still most often thought of as having set the standards for acting on the silent screen.

Davis, of course, was queen bee during the golden studio era, and is as famous for her forthrightness and frequent treachery in her roles as Gish is for her resilient innocence.

In "Whales," Gish looks older but essentially little changed from former appearances, while Davis, in her first bigscreen part since a stroke and major surgery, is not even instantly recognizable.

Wearing long, pure white hair, which Gish carefully brushes in one of the film's magical moments, Davis looks gaunt, grim and disturbed, but her performance is restrained in such a way that may even increase

its power.

Gish is a delight throughout, and has one beautiful scene all to herself late in the picture when she celebrates her wedding anniversary by dressing up, putting on the gramophone, pouring a glass of port and reminiscing with her long-departed mate.

Ann Sothern is winning as the ladies' jocular neighbor, and Price, in his first nonhorror film in 25 years, brings a warm sophistication to his gentleman caller, even if his light Russian accent slips in and out. As a local handyman, Harry Carey Jr. contributes enormous pep to his brief scenes.

Recognizing this as an actors' piece above all else, director Anderson has imposed impressive discipline on both the performers and the visual telling, keeping everything tight but still free enough to breathe.

Material is low-keyed, but picture casts a quiet, special spell and has a number of privileged moments that film lovers will cherish. Further, it has none of the cloying cuteness and sentimentality of the last major feature about old people, "On Golden Pond."

Contributing heavily to the delicate mood is Alan Price's outstanding score, as well as the windblown Maine seashore, which is nicely caught by Mike Fash's camera and abetted by Jocelyn Herbert's discreet production design.

A black-and-white prologue, in which Mary Steenburgen, Tisha Sterling and Margaret Ladd appear as the women in their youth, gets the film off to a nice start. Cart.

Mon., Feb. 9, 1987

Wheels Of Terror (U.S.-British — Color)

A Panorama Film International production. World sales, Manley Prods. Produced by Just Betzer and Benni Korzen. Line producers, Benni Korzen, Milos Antic. Directed by Gordon Hessler. Stars David Carradine, Don W. Moffett. Sceenplay, Nelson Gidding, based on a novel by Sven Hassel. Camera (Eastmancolor), George Nikolic; editor, Boo Gordon; music (Dolby stereo), Ole Hoyer; production design, Vladistav Lasic; production facilities, Avala Film 41 Studios. (Belgrade). Reviewed at the Imperial, Copenhagen, Feb. 4, 1987. Running time: 101 mins. Colonel

von Weisshagen	David Carradine
Captain von Barring	gDon W. Moffett
"Old Man"	Keith Szarabajka
Porta	Bruce Davison
Tiny	Jay O. Sanders
The Legionaire	David Patrick Kelly
Sven	Slavko Stimac
Stege	Andrija Maricic
Bauer	Boris Komnenic
Muller	Bane Vidakovic
The General	Oliver Reed
Also with Irena Pros	en (the Madam), Svet-
lana, Gordana Les, Lid	ija Pletl, Annie Korzen,
-Ab	•

Copenhagen — "Wheels Of Terror," based on Sven Hassel's internationally bestselling novelizations of his own wartime experiences (12,000,000 copies reportedly sold), is a carefully tooled World War II actioner cum comedy. Devoid of high-minded artistic ambition, it is likely to do fast theatrical playoff business wherever it is picked up before heading into homevideo, where it should be a surefire item.

"Wheels" is structured as any and all such war pictures from "All Quiet On The Western Front" to (especially) "Kelly's Heroes."

Story concerns a platoon of hardpunching armored division troopers doing their best to win WWII by venturing far behind enemy lines to blow up an ammunition train. The twist is that this time the boys are Germans and members of one of Hitler's particular Penal Regiments, made up of hardened criminals as well as of political or religious dissidents

It's okay to root for these guys since the enemy is, of course, Russia on the 1943 Eastern Front.

Also, these Germans have been disillusioned with the Fuehrer and all Nazi propaganda. Otherwise, it is hail to the old gang of stock characters: the tenderfoot, the clown, the brute, the bitter wisenheimer, the professor-type with the literary quotes, all of them getting tougher all the time but also being turned into a fine fighting team.

Run-ins with the officers (the good: Don W. Moffett; the bad: David Carradine; the ugly: Oliver Reed, latter in a cameo only) belong to the story as well as do robust whorehouse fun and a sequence of near-idyll cavorting in a river with much frontal male and female nudity on display.

Screenplay and production occasionally lean towards the crude, but most of the way plot and character delineations as well as the playing in all roles are cleancut and convincing. Bloodshed and brutality and the awful noise of battle (latter complemented by even louder sound-track music) is kept reasonably in check. Author Hassel's personal period and military know-how adds many refreshing insights to director Gordon Hessler's well-handled genre specimen.

The fun of "Wheels" involves, especially, the oddball characters of huge Tiny (Jay O. Sanders), the Legionaire (David Patrick Kelly) and mildly psychotic Porta (Bruce Davison), a trio sure to endear itself with all audiences (and to be a repeat for the sequel already being prepped by producers Just Betzer and Benni Korzan).

Strictly of serious mien, David Carradine adds fine nuance to his playing of mean Colonel Weisshagen. Oliver Reed, however, comes on too late in the picture to make any impact.

Kell.

Tues., Feb. 3, 1987

When The Wind Blows (British — Animation — Color)

A Recorded Releasing release of a Meltdown production in associatin with the National Film Finance Corp./Film Four International/TVC London/Penguin Books. Produced by John Coates. Executive producer, lain Harvey. Directed by Jimmy Murakami. Screenplay by Raymond Briggs, based on his book. Art director; animation and layout design, Richard Fawdry; background and color design, Errol Bryant; storyboard, Jimmy Murakami, Richard Fawdry, Joan Ashworth technical manager, Peter Turner; production coordinator, Anne Goodall; special ef fects sequences planning and animation, Stephen Weston; music, David Bowie, Roger Waters, Genesis, Paul Hardcastle, Squeeze, Hugh Cornwall. Reviewed at British Film Academy, London, Jan. 22, 1986. Running time: 85 min.

Voice of Hilda...... Peggy Ashcroft Voice of Jim......... John Mills

London — "When The Wind Blows" is a classy animated feature that looks seriously at the horrors of a nuclear holocaust while at the same time poking fun at the British government's "Protect And Survive" campaign. ABC's "The Day After" and BBCTV's "Threads" have shown that nuclear war makes compulsive viewing, and with the established popularity of Brigg's book, feature version should also have b.o. pull.

Film has a tendency to wander, as if the basic storyline of an elderly stoical British couple coping with nuclear destruction wasn't enough. It would be far stronger if pix lost some 20 minutes of animation ex-

periments and dream sequences. That aside, its strength and impact are undeniable, and the production is given extra gloss by the voice-overs of John Mills and Peggy Ashcroft, plus a title song from David Bowie.

Based on the best selling cartoon book of the same title by Raymond Briggs, film focuses on the lives of happily retired Jim and Hilda Bloggs in their rural cottage.

Jim has his finger on the pulse of the international scene because he reads the newspapers at the local library, and has picked up governmental leaflets on how to protect the household in case of nuclear war.

Over dinner, they hear the news on the radio that there could be war in a few days. "They say there may be a pre-emptive strike," says Jim. "Oh, not another strike. It's wicked. Blessed Communists," responds Hilda.

The film is punctuated with other charming malapropisms, and as Jim starts building their "inner-core-of-refuge," using doors and cushions according to governmental recommendations, the couple reminisce about the blitz and the happy days of World War II.

When they finally get a threeminute warning over the radio Hilda is keen to get her washing in, but Jim bundles her into the "innercore-of-refuge" as the blast blows through their house. Animation has the edge over live-action when it comes to depicting nuclear destruction, and the pictures of the devastation look harrowingly realistic, though human death is never focused on.

"Blimey," is Jim's only reaction as the shock of the bomb abates, and from then on the elderly couple are faced with major problems like not being able to brew a cup of tea, and the paper boy being late with his deliveries. The horror of the situation is made all the worse since Jim and Hilda don't really understand what is happening.

Ever optimistic, they put the sores, bleeding gums, and falling hair down to their age, and talk about how they are going to have a "good long rest after that blessed bomb."

The makers of the acclaimed animated pic "The Snowman" have produced a remarkable nonpolitical film that is both funny and touching.

Adam.

Fri., May 22, 1987

Where The Heart Roams (Docu — Color)

A Film Arts Foundation release. Produced, written and directed by George Csicsery. Camera (color), John Knoop. Reviewed at Winifred Moore Auditorium, St. Louis, May 14, 1987. No MPAA rating. Running time: 83 min.

Participants include: Barbara Cartland, Janet and Bill Dailey, Chelley, Ted and Gina Kitzmiller, Kathryn Falk, Jude Deveraux, Rebecca Brandewyne, John Gfeller, Hilari Cohen, Vivian Stephens, Diane Dunaway, Lori and Jerry Herter, Brenda Trent, Kathryn Davis, Lida Lunt, Chamisa James, Maralys Wills, E. Jean Carroll, Linda Wisdom, Robert Pearson.

St. Louis — The American zany and the American documentary filmmaker have walked hand-inhand through garlic festivals, pet cemeteries, gumbo cookoffs and a variety of other celebrations. Now, filmmaker George Csicsery rides the love train, a week-long celebration of historical romance fiction, its readers and its writers. The film is a fascinating look at an American subculture, and should be a winner on the fest and college circuits.

Romance fiction is big business;

writers like Barbara Cartland, the English grand doyenne of the genre, and Americans Rosemary Rogers and Janet Dailey are multimillionaires, and their readers number in the millions.

A fan and would-be writer (all the fans seem to be would-be writers) named Chelley Kitzmiller had the idea of the rolling convention, via Amtrak from Los Angeles to New York, in 1983, and Csicsery went along, with everyone then spending a few days in New York at the Romantic Booklovers' Conference, an orgy of autographed copies and admiring squeals.

Csiscery is more observer than participant; he turns on the camera and lets it go as readers and writers talk about their heroes and heroines, the writing styles and the unabashed love that the fans hold for the authors.

Editors, and reporter E. Jean Carroll, are far more cynical as they discuss the formulas and the marketing techniques, and Carroll points out that the romance is the perfect solution for a woman who wants to be seduced by a different man every night while never leaving the solitary confines of her living room.

Romance novels are big business — 120 to 150 titles every month, readership over 20,000,000, a Barbara Cartland with 370 novels and some 400,000,000 copies sold.

The mix is good by the filmmaker; he does not sit in judgment, but allows the participants full rein. Both readers and writers show their hopes and dreams, with writers and editors adding the touch of commercialism, fans displaying their limitless adoration.

Cinematographer John Knoop has a sure touch with the camera, and Csicsery, who worked with Errol Morris on "Gates Of Heaven," and who is an experienced documentarian on his own, tells a smooth story, heightened by the presence of Cartland as a singer on the track.

The sad conclusion is to learn that the readers of romances all think they can easily become writers, something that never occurs to those who read, say, John Updike or William Fulkner, or even Stephen King.

Jopo.

Mon., May 11, 1987

White Of The Eye (British — Color)

A Cannon Group release of an Elliott Kastner presentation in association with Cannon Screen Entertainment of a Mrs. Whites production. Produced by Cassian Elwes, Brad Wyman. Directed by Donald Cammell. Stars David Keith, Cathy Moriarty. Screenplay, Donald Cammell, China Cammell, from novel "Mrs. White" by Margaret Tracy; camera (Consolidated color; Technicolor prints), Alan Jones, Larry McConkey; editor, Terry Rawlings; music, Nick Mason, Rich Fenn; music supervision, George Fenton; sound, Bruce Litecky; production manager, Sue Baden-Powell; assistant director, Andrew Z. Davis; special effects, Thomas Ford; stunt coordinator, Dan Bradley; associate producers, Baden-Powell, Vicki Taft: casting; Pamela Rack. Reviewed at Cannes Film Festival (Market), May 9, 1987. MPAA rating: R. Running time: 110 min.

Paul White David Keith
Joan White Cathy Moriarty
Charles Mendoza Art Evans
Mike Alan Rosenberg
Ann Mason Alberta Watson
Phil Michael Greene
Also with: Mark Hayashi, William
Schilling David Chow Davidle Smith

Schilling, David Chow, Danielle Smith, China Cammell.

Cannes — Notable for marking the screen return of filmmaker Donald Cammell (a decade after "Demon Seed") and actress Cathy Moriarty, "White Of The Eye" is an intriguing thriller that almost qualifies as a sleeper. Unfortunately, Cammell piles on the fancy editing and ostentatious camerawork to a fare-the-well, ultimately sinking the pic.

Beneath the layers of flashbacks and at times almost subliminal imagery is a conventional storyline: sound expert David Keith, living in a small Arizona town, is having marital problems with frau Cathy Moriarty. Circumstantial evidence points strongly at Keith, with cop Art Evans in from Phoenix to hound him, in the cases of a serial murderer who mutilates the corpses of his wealthy housewife victims.

With lots of clues and red herrings introduced in the early reels (including a heavy emphasis on 10 years-earlier 16m blowup flashbacks of Moriarty first meeting Keith while trekking westward with her boyfriend Alan Rosenberg), picture maintains considerable suspense that is heightened by Cammell's edgy camera and fractured editing.

After 75 minutes, Cammell has Keith matter-of-factly reveal that he is the killer and proceed to terrorize Moriarty and their young daughter for the rest of the anticlimatic picture. Reintroduction of Rosenberg, now living nearby as a braindamaged garage helper, to figure in the windup is awkward and unconvincing.

Though the flashbacks are set in 1976, this footage and film's psychedelic style (plus pithy, zonked-out dialog for Keith) harken back to the fabulous 1960s. It's certainly fun much of the way to sort through the stylish tricks, but they're eventually self-defeating.

Moriarty is quite forceful here, and her distinctive screen presence deserves more frequent vehicles. Keith likewise creates a powerful figure, but character becomes a stock psychotic (painted face and all) once the mystery is fully out of the bag. Other than Rosenberg, supporting cast has little to do.

Location-lensed feature reeks of atmosphere, with obviously lowbudget production values fitting Cammell's treatment.

British-financed, it has been inherited by Cannon as part of the Screen Entertainment Ltd. library purchased last year (and among titles still retained by Cannon after selling most of the features to Weintraub Entertainment Group).

Mon., Aug. 10, 1987

Who's That Girl (Romantic comedy — Color)

A Warner Bros. release. Executive producers, Peter Guber, Jon Peters, Roger Birnbaum. Produced by Rosilyn Heller, Bernard Williams. Directed by James Foley. Screenplay, Andrew Smith, Ken Finkleman, from a story by Smith. Camera (Technicolor), Jan DeBont; editor, Pembroke Herring; art director, Don Woodruff; set decorator, Cloudia; costume designer, Deborah Lynn Scott; stunt coordinator, Bud Davis; sound (Dolby), Ed White; assistant director, Ric Kidney; casting, Glenn Daniels. Reviewed at the Mann Chinese Theater, L.A.,

Aug. 7, 1987. MPAA Rating: PG. Running

time: 94 min.	
Nikki Finn	Madonna
Loudon Trutt	Griffin Dunne
Wendy Worthington	Haviland Morris
Simon Worthington .	John McMartin
Det. Bellson	Robert Swan
Det. Doyle	Drew Pillsbury
Raoul	Coato Mundi
Benny	Denis Burkley
Montgomery Bell	Sir John Mills

In "Who's That Girl," Griffin Dunne reprises his role as the crazed, overwrought straight man while Madonna lays on a thick New Yawk bimbette act in this frenetic and ridiculously reworked "After Hours"-"Arthur" combination. All three pix, not incidentally, are Warner Bros. releases. If not for Dunne's charm and the pop singer's strangely fascinating persona, this alleged comedy would earn no coin.

The Material Girl, who fits the bleached-blond starlet role perfectly, plays a just-out-of-jail, backtalking petty thief who's bent on avenging the thugs who made her take the rap for a murder she didn't commit

As she's released, weak-kneed lawyer-type Griffin Dunne is sent by his megabucks soon-to-be father-in-law (John McMartin) to pick her up and make sure she's on the next bus home. Dunne accepts McMartin's incredible explanation for the task and also dutifully stops by the docks on the way there and picks up a rare cougar. All this on the eve of his wedding to McMartin's ice princess daughter (Haviland Morris).

Madonna wastes no time stomping her way through the early scenes, her voice like fingers on a chalkboard and her movements more like a streetwalker than a wrongly treated, misunderstood good girl at heart.

She bamboozles Dunne into doing what she wants to do, turning him into a near nut case — bashing up his future mother-in-law's Corniche, losing the rare cat, buying stolen goods in Harlem, stealing right and left, and so on.

Fortunately, Dunne's playful personality eventually counterbalances Madonna's shrillness and their adventures together, while completely farfetched, finally become involving.

In "After Hours," action takes place in the space of a few hours where Dunne is trapped due to circumstances beyond his control and his own urban paranoia, whereas here it's because of sheer ineptness.

Like "Arthur," Dunne's an upper-crust boy marrying great wealth and having to deal with stuffy inlaws, which turns his interest to a femme from across the tracks.

What's lacking is pure and simple good humor.

Andrew Smith and Ken Finkelman rush things so much they leave little time for comedic development. Scenes come and go in a flash and many of the secondary characters are wasted in lackluster roles, notably the detective duo (Robert Swan, Drew Pillsbury) and the captured bridesmaids.

None of their ideas is particularly original, except perhaps getting a cougar to protect Madonna on command.

The wild cat is neither ferocious nor totally tame and actually comes off nonthreatening considering its potential for mauling people.

Title sequence by Broadcast Arts Inc. is terrific, as is Madonna's title track.

Thurs., April 16, 1987

Wild Thing

(Urban fantasy — Color)

An Atlantic Releasing Corp. release of an Atlantic Entertainment Group production in association with Filmline International Inc. Produced by David Calloway, Nicolas Clermont. Executive producers Thomas Coleman, Michael Rosenblatt. Directed by Max Reid. Screenplay, John Sayles, based on a story by Sayles, Larry Stamper; Camera (Sona Lab, Toronto, Color), Rene Verzier: editor, Battle Davis, Steven Rosenblum; music, George S. Clinton; production design, John Meighen, Jocelyn Joli; costumes, Paul-Andre Guerin; sound, Henri Blondeau; assistant director, Pedro Gandol; coproducer, Pieter Kroonenburg; casting, Paul Ventura.

Reviewed at Atlantic screening room, Los Angeles, April 15, 1987. MPAA rating: PG-13. Running time: 92 min.

Wild Thing.

Chopper.

Rob Kneppe

Robert Davi

Kathleen Quinlan

Trask	Maury Chaykin
Leah	Betty Buckley
Wild Thing At 10 Yea	rs
OldGuillaume	e Lemay-Thivierge
Wild Thing At 3	
Years Old	
Winston	Clark Johnson
Father Quinn	

"Wild Thing" is one of those film oddities that is impossible to categorize. Story of an urban Tarzan is by turns sanctimonious and silly, with detours for street philosophizing, '60s idealism, gang uprisings and exhortations for nonviolence from the neighborhood priest. One can only watch with a curious fascination and wonder what in the world is going on here.

As originally conceived by John Sayles and Larry Stamper, film must have had a good deal of quirky humor to offset the '60s sermonizing about the corrupting forces of society, but as delivered by director Max Reid from Sayles' script, this is deadly serious business. It's a film with it's head in the clouds and it never really comes back down to earth.

Picture opens with the brutal killing of two peace-loving hippies inadvertently mixed up in a botched drug deal as their young son flees for his life, only to grow up to become the savior of the ghetto — the legendary Wild Thing.

It's all a rather dated fairy tale but could have been fun in the right hands. Unfortunately, staging by Reid is consistently clumsy without establishing a groove of its own. With Kathleen Quinlan as a naive social worker who falls in love with the Wild Thing and archvillain Chopper (Robert Davi) trying to hide his crime of years earlier, picture is like a stew that hasn't been stirred enough.

Performances come in all sizes and shapes here and Betty Buckley as the shopping bag woman who raises the young Wild Thing gets to recite lines like "the blue coats work for the company and the white coats scramble your eggs." This is definitely not one of Sayles' better efforts as a screenwriter.

As Wild Thing himself, Rob Knepper is indeed adept at scaling buildings and is a gifted primitive artist to boot, but he doesn't speak much and as attractive as he may be, there is hardly a character hidden behind his warpaint.

Although the villains often take on the tone of cartoon cut-outs to Wild Thing's pseudo-superman, Davi is a powerful and menacing presence and by far the most intriguing character here.

Rene Verzier's cinematography is city-slick and stylish but reminiscent of dozens of other hard-edged urban actioners. And although the Troggs rock anthem "Wild Thing" is used freely, it has little to do with the character it's meant to describe.

Fri., June 5, 1987

Winners Take All (Supercross drama — Color)

An Apollo Pictures release, produced in association with Embassy Home Entertainment. Produced by Christopher W. Knight, Tom Tatum. Executive producer, David R. Axelrod. Directed by Fritz Kiersch. Screenplay, Ed Turner, story by Tatum, Knight. Camera (DeLuxe Color), Fred V. Murphy II; editor, Lorenzo De Stefano; music, Doug Timm; production design, Steven P. Sardanis; set decoration, Tom Talbert; costume design, Darryi Levine; sound, Gerald B.

Wolfe; assistant director, John W. Woodward; action unit camera, Leo Napolitano; casting, Caro Jones. Reviewed at the Raleigh Studios screening room, L.A., June 2, 1987. MPAA Rating: PG-13. Running time:

I OE IIIIIII.	
Rick Melon	Don Michael Paul
Judy McCormick.	Kathleen York
'Bad' Billy Robins	onRobert Krantz
Cindy Wickes	Deborah Richter
Wally Briskin	Peter DeLuise
Goose Trammel	Courtney Gains
Frank Bushing	Paul Hampton
Johnny Rivera	Gerardo Mejia
	Tony Longo
Peggy Nolan	Isabel Grandir

"Winners Take All" is a passable teenpic set in the world of Supercross motorcycle racing that actually could have been a lot worse. A few mildly surprising plot turns of a sort one never expects in such cut-from-the-mold products help perk the attention, and femme lead Kathleen York would seem to be an actress to watch. But pic's running time, too long by 20 minutes, dilutes virtually all the goodwill the other elements generate, and heavy concentration on racing footage will dull the interest of all but hardcore biker fans. Theatrical b.o. outlook for Apollo Pictures' first release is dim.

Most of the action is assemblyline stuff about smalltown racer Don Michael Paul, who can win local events but has always run second-best to boyhood friend Robert Krantz, who's now a national champion and returns to town and casually takes his old g.f. away from Paul.

After quitting the sport in despair, Paul recharges himself and predictably decides to take on his buddy in a big-deal Supercross race in Dallas, which ends in very unusual fashion. But then there's yet another race, which takes forever to end.

Paul and Krantz are abnormally tormented for the usual bland sports picture heroes, with Paul suffering from an inferiority complex and Krantz suspecting that he's on the way out at the ripe old are of 25.

way out at the ripe old age of 25. Deborah Richter's trampy bimbo, who shuttles between the two guys, and Paul Hampton's smarmy personal manager are viewed with a more acutely critical eye than is the custom in such fare.

But despite all the elaborately staged and filmed motorbike footage, which will do little to promote interest in the specialized sport among the uninitiated, pic most comes to life when Kathleen York is on-screen. As a highly intelligent and practical racer who rides almost as well as the men, actress displays an appealing directness and sense of self that puts the strutting, posing guys to shame.

Film looks and sounds okay, but is padded with far too much second unit action footage for general consumption.

Cart.

Mon., Nov. 17, 1986

Wired To Kill

(Actioner — Color)

An American Distribution Group release. Produced by Jim Buchfuehrer. Executive producer, Paul McGuire. Coproducer, Peter Chesney. Directed by Franky Schaeffer. Screenplay by Schaeffer. Camera (Foto-Kem Color), Tom Fraser; editor, Daniel Agulian, Schaeffer; music, Russell Ferrante; art director, Diana Williams, Gay Redinger; set decorator, Ainslee Colt DeWolf; cosutmes, Dorothy Bulac; special effects, Bruce Hayes; assistant director, Guy Louthan; sound (Dolby stereo), Ken Ross; casting, Pamela Seaman. Reviewed at Hollywood Pacific Theater, Hollywood, Nov. 14, 1986. MPAA Rating: R. Running time: 94 min.

RebeccaEmily Longstreth
Steve Devin Hoelscher
ReegusMerritt Butrick
Sly Frank Collison

Loady	Garth Gardner
Sleet	Tom Lister, Jr.
Rooster	
Zero	
Mother	
Sergeant	
Grandmother[Dorothy Patterson

"Wired To Kill" is another postapocalyptic "Mad Max"-inspired effort, with flashes of its own style and some evidence of talent lurking in there somewhere. But it is unlikely that very many people will be intrigued enough by the premise to check it out.

On a story level, "Wired To Kill" is totally routine and verges on the moronic. Franky Schaeffer seems to have more going as a director than a writer and manages to create a modicum of suspense and interest despite the nonsensical plot.

Set in 1998 following a massive plague a few years earlier, packs of renegades roam free in run-down quarantine areas. Working with a shoe-string budget, Schaeffer and art director Diana Williams have succeeded in creating an environment that is at once familiar and bizarre, where garbage trucks are the main source of transportation on otherwise deserted streets.

For no apparent reason, a gang breaks into a ramshackle house and terrorizes one of the few remaining families. Rest of the film is a revenge tale for young Steve (Devin Hoelscher) and his girlfriend (Emily Longstreth). Story could have taken on some added depth if Longstreth had been a more forceful heroine instead of just a victim.

Only unusual twist is that Hoelscher conducts his vendetta by remote control from his wheelchair after being maimed by the attackers. But with an unlikely robot named Winston doing most of the dirty work, the film turns highly implausible.

Acting is not particularly distinguished but the leads are earnest and fresh enough to be likable and win audiences' sympathy. As the leader of the goons, Merritt Butrick appears to be the only gang member with a triple-digit I.Q.

Only real rewards of the film are visual, with Tom Fraser's camerawork seemingly casting a shadow over everything in this nether world.

Jagr.

Wed., Dec. 31, 1986 Wisdom

(Adventure — Color)

A Twentieth Century Fox release of a Gladden Entertainment Corp. presentation. Executive producer, Robert E. Wise. Producer, Bernard Williams. Directed, screenplay by Emilio Estevez. Camera (Deluxe Color), Adam Greenberg; editor, Michael Kahn; music, Danny Elfman; production designer, Dennis Gassner; art director, Dins Danielsen; set decorator, Richard Hoover; sound (Dolby), Richard Portman, Thomas Gerard; costumes, Jonathan Kinsey; assistant director, Bernard Williams; casting, Penny Perry. Reviewed at Twentieth Century Fox studios, L.A., Dec. 30, 1986. MPAA Rating: R. Running time: 109 min.

Karen Simmons Demi Moore
John Wisdom Emitio Estevez
Lloyd Wisdom Tom Skerritt
Samantha Wisdom
Veronica Cartwright

Williamson ... William Allen Young

"Wisdom" marks 23-year-old actor Emilio Estevez' directorial debut — and it shows. Filmmaker's naivete is evident in his completely implausible script and unending sophomoric dialog that even the young star's winsomeness can't make bearable. Boxoffice prospects look dismal.

Estevez plays an essentially good kid named John Wisdom, a misnomer. who took one wrong turn as a youth and ended up with a felony mark on his record.

For the first hour of the film, he drones on and on about how the system has done him wrong and how he's really a good, hardworking guy who just needs a break.

Except for his adoring girlfriend, played by Demi Moore, Estevez has a hard time getting understanding from anyone, including his blankfaced parents (Tom Skerritt, Veronica Cartwright) and potential employers. He has, it appears, virtually no friends.

Frustrated that he's a "criminal without a crime," he gets it in his head to be an outlaw but one that will help people, not hurt them — sort of a Robin Hood, '80s style.

His ideal: save the American Dream for farmers, homeowners and others who are having a hard time preventing foreclosure on their properties by holding up banks and blowing up all the mortage records. The goal: "to temporarily screw the system."

Estevez is totally unconvincing playing both a moral citizen and conscience-of-the-country out to do right by the simple man and an Uzibrandishing, self-styled commando on a rampage through America's heartland.

Not only do he and dutiful Moore elude the FBI through five states, but they manage to win friends and influence the media at nearly every turn on the interstate.

He becomes the Rebel Without A Cause, the antihero with his antiheroine supporting him all the way, behaving like an obedient puppy dog fetching junk food and Tofutti at appropriate intervals.

What is presumably supposed to be an adventure of two innocents out to prove a point, ends up a tedious ride with protagonists who quickly become insufferable instead of sympathetic.

Part of the problem is that it's hard to care for these two since they seem so joyless in their cause. Dialog that consists of ramblings about the injustices wrought by financial institutions, interspersed with that about their love for one another, makes for very dreary going.

Not surprisingly, story never gets very deep, it just ends — the last few moments proving to be the film's nadir.

Brit.

Tues., May 12, 1987

Wish You Were Here (British — Drama — Color)

A Film Four Intl. release of a Zenith Production (an Atlantic Releasing release, U.S.), in association with Working Title. Produced by Sara Radclyffe. Directed by David Leland. Screenplay, Leland. Camera (color), Ian Wilson; music, Stanley Myers; sound, Billy McCarthy; production design, Caroline Amies; assistant director, Steve Finn; costumes, Shuna Harwood; casting. Susie Figgis. Reviewed at Metro Cinema, London, April 29, 1987. (In the Directors Fortnight Section at Cannes Film Festival.)

Lynda Emily Lloyd
Eric Tom Bell
Mrs. Parfitt Clare Clifford
Valerie Barbara Durkin
Hubert Geoffrey Hutchings
Gillian Charlotte Barker
Margaret Chloe Leland
Tap-dancing lady Trudy Cavanagh

London — Set in a thoroughly uptight, provincial British seaside resort in the '50s, this touching account of a girl's growing pains marks the directorial debut of a rising young talent, director-scripter David Leland. Like so many of the new batch of small-budget British films, most of them made with money from the U.K.'s Channel 4, "Wish" will need proper handling to break out into a larger market.

Though pic focuses on teenagers, most likely audience would be those 30-ish and older who relish what is touching and literate rather than mentally taxing or just titillating. They won't be disappointed; despite a few awkward scenes, this is an enjoyable, well acted, technically sound production.

While best known for his bitter look at modern British society via a four-parter he scripted for the small screen several years ago, Leland shows he has more arrows in his quiver than social satire.

He can be compassionate and funny about human foibles as well as disgusted; and his eye for the telling visual detail shows promise of becoming as practiced as his facility for sharp-edged dialog.

But pic hardly charts any new territory. Audience always knows exactly where its sympathies are supposed to lie: the indictment of provincial hypocrisy and small-mindedness is hardly original. What makes it interesting is the character of the heroine; her refreshing rudeness disconcerts those around her but also wins over the audience.

By focusing on a spunky but troubled 16-year-old girl named Lynda (played with exasperating charm by newcomer Emily Lloyd), Leland also squeezes out more poignancy than would have been possible had the central character been the typical gawky male youth of most films

about sexual awakening.

What makes the girl troubled is the fact that her mother died when she was 11; the wistful triteness of the title is in keeping with the atmosphere of the film — and no one has replaced that essential loss.

Lynda's reaction to her plight is to shock people with her rudeness and to taunt the opposite sex. This makes for some verbally sharp and occasionally visually eloquent scenes, especially those in which Lynda jeopardizes one job after another because she can't hold her tongue or stop trying to entice boys.

Lynda's rebelliousness eventually leads to a potentially sinister liaison with a seedy older man (played with taciturn intensity by Tom Bell), as much a misfit as she. Their scenes together, though quite limited, are highly charged. Guid.

Mon., Jan. 19, 1987

Witchboard (Horror — Color)

A Cinema Group release of a Paragon Arts International production. Produced by Gerald Geoffray. Written and directed by Kevin S. Tenney. Executive producer, Walter S. Josten. Supervising Producer, Ron Mitchell. Camera (color), Roy H. Wagner; editor, Steve Waller, Dan Duncan; music, Dennis Michael Tenney; associate producer, Roland Carroll. Reviewed at Northland Cinema 8, Columbus, Ohio, Jan. 10, 1987. MPAA Rating: R. Running time: 98 min.

Jim . Todd Allen
Linda . Tawny Kitaen
Brandon . Stephen Nichols
Sarabeth . Kathleen Wilhoite
Dewhurst . Burke Byrnes
Mrs. Moses . Rose Marie

Columbus — Don't mess with a Ouija board. That's the message delivered with a certain flair in the low-budget but often intriguing "Witchboard," which is being given a test run in three Columbus theaters.

The film tells a somewhat complicated tale in a fairly straighforward manner. Brandon (Stephen Nichols) attends a party at the home of Jim (Todd Allen) and girlfriend Linda (Tawny Kitaen), bringing along his Ouija board.

It seems Jim and Brandon had been friends, but fell out when Jim

apparently stole Linda away from his ex-pal. Jim's working in construction, having dropped out of medical school. He doesn't believe in the power of the Ouija board, even when Brandon apparently summons the spirit of a 10-year-old, David, who died by drowning some 30 years earlier.

Brandon conveniently forgets to take the board home, and Linda becomes fascinated. She uses the board alone (that's a non-no, Brandon later explains) and "talks" to the spirit. Turns out that the spirit is evil (surprise!) and takes a special interest in Linda as a possible parent for reincarnation purposes.

The spirit kills one of Jim's fellow workers and then confronts a punk-attired medium (Kathleen Wilhoite), who supplies the film's only comic relief before perishing nastily.

Jim and Brandon finally join forces to try to save Linda from the evil being unleashed through the wicked board. There's a goosebump-raising climax, followed by a relatively happy ending.

"Witchboard" takes itself seriously. The script is well-paced, although director-writer Tenney likes to make his audience jump through some rather tired devices, such as the heroine confronting her own image in a mirror and jumping in fright, and one person scaring another by approaching silently from behind.

But "Witchboard" also develops tension, especially toward the end. The film spends too much time establishing that Jim and Brandon don't like each other, before finally letting them patch up things.

Technical credits are fine, especially some outstandingly moody photography by Roy H. Wagner. The film was shot around the San Francisco area.

Acting is okay. Kitaen can be somewhat wooden and mechanical, but it's that kind of a role. Burke Byrnes has a good turn as a noisy cop. Rose Marie, the veteran comedienne, is wasted in a cameo that occupies no more than 30 seconds of screen time.

Rated R, "Witchboard" keeps its gore to a reasonable minimum. The suspense occurs from an unseen force, which almost always is more frightening than something visible.

Mon., June 8, 1987

The Witches Of Eastwick (Romantic fantasy — Color)

A Warner Bros. Pictures release of a Guber-Peters Co. production of a Kennedy Miller film. Produced by Neil Canton, Peter Guber, Jon Peters. Executive producers, Rob Cohen, Don Devlin. Directed by George Miller. Screenplay by Michael Cristofer, based on the novel by John Updike. Camera (Technicolor), Vilmos Zsigmond; editor, Richard Francis-Bruce, Hubert C. De La Bouollerie; music, John Williams; production design, Polly Platt; art director, Mark Mansbridge; set decorator, Joe D. Mitchell; sound (Dolby stereo), Art Rochester; costumes, Aggie Guerard Rodgers; assistant director, Chris Soldo; casting, Wally Nicita. Reviewed at The Burbank Studios,

Running time: 118 min.

Daryl Van Horne... Jack Nicholson
Alexandra Medford... Cher
Jane Spofford... Susan Sarandon
Sukie Ridgemont... Michell Pfeiffer
Felicia Alden... Vernonica Cartwright
Clyde Alden... Richard Jenkins
Walter Neff... Keith Jochim
Fidel... Carel Struycken

Burbank, June 2, 1987. MPAA rating: R

"The Witches Of Eastwick" is a brilliantly conceived metaphor for the battle between the sexes that literally poses the question "Must a woman sell her soul to the devil to have a good relationship?" It's an intriguing question as three beautiful witches and a glorious devil play out their passions in the birthplace of America.

Unfortunately, the film never really solves the riddle or sheds a great deal of light on the age-old mystery, but with a no-holds barred performance by Jack Nicholson as the horny satan, it's still a very funny and irresistible set-up for anyone who has ever been baffled by the opposite sex.

Based on the novel by John Updike, "The Witches Of Eastwick" presents archetypes of the male and female spirit. Updike and scripter Michael Cristofer are in awe of the creative power of women represented here by three sides of the gender.

Sukie Ridgemont (Michele Pfeiffer), a writer for the local newspaper, is the intellectual; Jane Spofford (Susan Sarandon), a high school music teacher, is the woman of feeling and Alexandra Medford (Cher), a sculptress, represents the sensuous side. And they're all divorced and they're all looking for a Mr. Right.

Enter Daryl Van Horne (Jack Nicholson), the answer to their collective longing for a man of wit, charm and intelligence. For Nicholson, it's the role of a lifetime, the chance to seduce three women and be ruler of the roost.

And the seduction is a spectacle to behold — with Nicholson prancing, strutting, cajoling the three women with just the right blend of bravado and promises. The secret of his power is that he knows what they need and with it can tap the source of their creative energy. All he wants in return is everything.

It's not the traditional struggle between good and evil the devil usually engages in, but a battle of wills that leaves Nicholson baying at the moon that ancient complaint: Women — can't live with 'em and can't live without 'em.

"Witches" covers the main events of a relationship, including the seduction, initial fulfillment followed by disillusionment, Nicholson's desperation to hold on, the messy break-up, childbirth and life after coupling.

But the film fails to get under the skin of how men and women relate on an everyday basis and sounds only a single high-pitched note. At times it makes for grand entertainment and individual scenes soar with an inspired lunacy — among them a world class tantrum from the devil. But overall action remains on one level of intensity and consequently falls a bit flat.

Director George Miller seems to become a bit impatient with the material as well and tries to hike it up a notch towards the end with some inappropriate special effects apparently designed to wake up the older audience and lure in the younger crowd.

Spectacle of the film is really Nicholson. Dressed in eccentric flowing robes, odd hats and installed in a lush mansion, he is larger than life, as indeed the devil should be. The witches, lovely though they are, are a good deal less imaginative and exist more as types than distinct personalities.

Performances by Cher, Saradon and Pfeiffer have their charm but without Nicholson's ferocious magnetism. In fact, it's a bit unbalanced, since it is the women who dominate in the end.

Veronica Cartwright as a townie who figures out what's happening in Eastwick and hysterically tries to fight it is suitably shrill, but she's no match for the life force un-

leashed by her foes.

Miller keeps the film in constant motion, continually moving his camera, complemented well by Richard Francis-Bruce and Hubert C. De La Bouillerie's pregnant editing. Polly Platt's production design is totally contemporary, while suggesting the historical roots of the town and the struggle going on there

Vilmos Zsigmond's photography creates a deeply saturated suprareal environment where anything can happen and does. Jagr.

Thurs., Feb. 5, 1987

Withnail And I

(British — Comedy — Color)

A HandMade production. Produced by Paul M. Heller. Executive producers, George Harrison, Dennis O'Brien. Written and directed by Bruce Robinson. Coproducer, David Wimbury. Camera (Color), Bob Smith; editor, Alam Strachan; music, David Dundas; production design, Michael Pickwoad; art director, Henry Harris; sound, Olive Winter; costumes, Andrea Galer; assistant director, Peter Kohn; casting, Mary Selway. Reviewed at BAFTA, Jan. 8, 1987. Running time: 108 min.

Withnail Richard E. Grant Marwood..... .Paul McGann Monty..... Richard Griffiths Danny..... .Ralph Brown Michael Elphick Irishman... Dargh O'Mallery Issac Parkin... . Michael Wardle Mrs. Parkin.....Una Brandon-Jones General......Noel Johnson Waitress Irene Sutcliffe

London - "Withnail And I" is about the end of an era. Set in 1969 England, it portrays the last throes of a friendship mirroring the seedy demise of the hippy period, delivering some comic gems along the way. Pic is uncompromisingly English, though its tale of two city boys stuck in a dilapidated country cottage in the middle of nowhere is familiar enough. The humor is both brutal and clever, and the acting uniformly excellent, though whether pic can appeal to offshore audiences is iffy.

First-time writer-director Bruce Robinson (Oscar-nominated for his "The Killing Fields" screenplay) admits the pic is more than a little autobiographical, but he has a writer's eye for quirks and incident, and his characters are both tragic and humorous.

Pic opens with a pan around the disgusting London flat of out-of-work actors Withnail and Marwood (the "I" of the title); camera dwells on the kitchen, where the sink is filled with piles of unwashed crockery and green fungus that may just be alive. Marwood (Paul McGann) is the nervous type trying to look like John Lennon, while Withnail (Richard E. Grant) is gaunt, acerbic and never without a drink in his hand.

Life is getting too much for the duo, so Marwood declares the need to "get into the countryside and rejuvenate." The two get the loan of a country cottage after a visit with Withnail's Uncle (a standout performance by Richard Griffiths). Withnail and Marwood head off into the night, their battered Jaguar packed with alcohol and cigarettes.

They eventually arrive at the remote cottage, only to discover there is no light, heat or water. Withnail's search for firewood, and discovery of the joys of cooking food that doesn't come out of a can make for some fine screen fun.

Withnail decides the best way to dry out their sodden boots is to leave them in the oven, so the next day they are reduced to heading off in search of food and alcoholic solace with plastic bags tied to their ankles

The first 20 minutes are a bit raw, but when the pair makes it to the cottage, the action gains more class. Robinson's astute direction and clever lines make for a fine first effort, but one that will probably be hard to sell to foreign markets — but then that was also said about "Letter To Brezhnev" and "My Beautiful Laundrette." Adam.

Thurs., Oct. 9, 1986

Womens Prison Massacre (Italian-French — Color)

A Flor Films release of a Unistar film. Executive producer, Jean Lefait. Directed by Gilbert Roussel. Screenplay, Claudio Fragasso, Olivier Lefait; camera (Telecolor), Henry Froger; editor, Gilbert Kikoine; music, Luigi Ceccarelli; assistant director, Gerard Olivier; second unit director, Fragasso. Reviewed at UA Twin 1 Theater, N.Y., Sept. 26, 1986. MPAA rating: R. Running time: 89 min.

Emanuelle Laura Gemser Crazy Boy Henderson . . Gabriele Tinti Warden Lorraine de Selle Also with: Ursula Flores, Maria Romano, Antonella Giacomini, Raul Cabrera, Roberto Mura, Michael Laurant, Francoise Perrot, Franca Stoppi,

Flo Astaire.

New York — "Womens Prison Massacre" (sic) is a substandard Continental exploitation film first released domestically in May 1985. Originally titled "Emanuelle's Escape From Hell," picture was filmed back-to-back in Rome in 1982 with the 1984 release "Caged Women," featuring mainly the same cast.

Laura Gemser is Emanuelle, an undercover reporter in "Caged Women" but here unjustly incarcerated as a result of a frameup by the corrupt district attorney. Lorraine de Selle again plays the beautiful warden, but a low-budget provides less than a dozen femme prisoners and only a couple of guards.

While Emanuelle and her two lesbian cellmates are warring with a feisty prisoner named Albina, four male prisoners led by Crazy Boy Henderson (Gabriele Tinti, Gemser's real-life husband) are delivered to the coed facility, and immediately take the warden as hostage and start a siege. The d.a. shows up with lots of police leading to a hokey bloodbath and an unhappy, pointless ending of Emanuelle back in stir.

Though director Gilbert Roussel occasionaly provides an interesting composition or lighting effect, film is the usual mixture of sadism and titillation.

Pic's best element is grotesque humor provided by the overacting, poorly dubbed thesps, especially one of Tinti's henchmen, who resembles comedian Mark Blankfield in rolling his eyes and pulling faces.

Lor.

Mon., May 11, 1987

The Woo Woo Kid (U.S. - Color)

A Lorimar Motion Picture release of a Gary Adelson/Karen Mack Prods. production. Produced by Gary ADelson, Karen Mack. Directed and written by Phil Alden Robinson. Camera (color), John Lindley; editor, Patrick Kennedy; music, Ralph Burns; costumes, Linda Burns. Reviewed at Cannes Film Festival (Market), May 9, 1987. Running time: 99 mins.

Cannes — "The Woo Woo Kid" is a daffy comedy allegedly based on a real story in 1944 of a California 15-year-old who took up with two women in their 20s,

married one of them, and made newspage headlines in hero style and dubbed "the woo woo kid."

Pic begins in high spirits with the teener skipping school regularly, aching to grow up and have sex with the lady across the street. They both run away from home, are married, get caught. He's sentenced in court to leave town for the Summer and keep away from her. The marriage is annuled.

He finds another lonely lady, but caught again is up against the same stern judge, is jailed, escapes and in a sweet ending finds a girl of his own age whom he marries off camera.

Director Phil Alden Robinson losses much of the fun near the half-way mark and only partly recovers. Pic is kept in period, except for a jarring and extraneous courtroom sequence where the teenager's mother says he's big for his age. Teen spectators applaud the double entendre and the judge has the balif measure the youth who is pronounced to be of normal proportions.

Patrick Dempsey is fine and innocent looking. Talia Balsam just as fine and Beverly D'Angelo a perky knockout and properly brassy, to boot. No sex scenes are shown.

Production values are good and the story, told via voiceover, is bouncy enough for reasonable theatrical playoff and afterlife in all ancillaries. It's a quiet comedy that should have been done better, but is okay as is.

Adil.

Mon., Nov. 24, 1986

The Wraith (Supernatural thriller — Color)

A New Century/Vista Film Co. release. Produced by John Kemeny. Executive producer, Buck Houghton. Directed, written by Mike Marvin. Camera (Metrocolor), Reed Smoot; editors, Scott Conrad, Gary Rocklin; art director, Dean Tschetter; set decorator, Michele Starbuck; costumes, Elinor Bardach, Glenn Ralston; sound, Richard Portman, Robert Glass, Bob Minkler; music, Michael Hoenig, J. Peter Robinson; visual effects, VCE Inc./Peter Kuran; assistant director, Leon Dudevoir; second unit camera, Chuck Colwell; associate producer, Jeffrey Sudzin; casting, Ilene Starger. Reviewed at the Hollywood Pacific, Nov. 21, 1986. MPAA Rating: PG-13. Running time: 92 min.

The Wraith/Jake	Charlie Sheen
Packard	
Loomis	Randy Quaid
Keri	Sherilyn Fenn
Oggie	
Skank	David Sherrill
Gutterboy	Jamie Bozian
Rughead	Clint Howard
Bitly	Matthew Barry
Minty	

"The Wraith" features the relatives of several famous actors and as many as three times the number of stuntmen, most of whom drive their souped-up cars into oblivion for the duration of this epic. But as long as producers are willing to indulge the American male's fascination with fast cars and car chases, there will be American males willing to pay the price to be indulged. Filmmakers should expect to break

It doesn't take long to figure out that "The Wraith" is the ominous-looking Turbo Interceptor (a Dodge PPG Pace Car) that mysteriously materializes one day on the roads outside a small Arizona town to challenge a gang of local car thieves, led by chief thug Packard (Nick Cassavetes).

The gangs' idea of amusement is to force other hot-rodders to race and then when the suckers lose, Cassavetes and company take possession of the loser's car.

Being a bully in the worst way, and it seems also the biggest guy around, Cassavetes easily runs roughshod over his band of grease monkeys. Among them is an amusing pair of mush brains, Skank (David Sherrill) and Gutterboy (Jamie Bozian), who drink lubricating oil to get their jollies — and also have the only funny lines of dialog.

There's also Cassavetes' girl, Keri (Sherilyn Fenn), the cutest thing on skates at the local hamburger stand whose affections for a new guy raise Cassavetes' ire to an abnormal level.

He and his merry band of punks run up against the Turbo one night — and lose. The sacrificial member is Oggie (Griffin O'Neal), who crashes over a cliff in a fiery ball only to be found minutes later with his dead body completely intact and unscarred.

This scenario is repeated several times throughout the film, whereby gang members are mercifully eliminated and Cassavetes' power over the highways diminished.

Lending a sort of tongue-in-cheek authoritative air to the proceedings is Randy Quaid as the town's lieutenant, giving filmmakers more cause to have more cars do more chasing.

The action is neither suspenseful nor the story particularly original, but pictures like this always manage to entertain on the simplest level that the pyrotechnics are usually fun to watch.

For the girls, there's a saccharine love story that revolves around Fenn and Charlie Sheen, who smacks more of his parentage than the other actors.

Wed., Aug. 26, 1987

The Year My Voice Broke (Australian — Color)

A Kennedy-Miller production. Produced by George Miller, Doug Mitchell, Terry Hayes. Directed by John Duigan. Screenplay, Duigan; camera (color), Geoff Burton; editor, Neil Thompston; music coordinator, Christine Woodruff; production design, Roger Ford; sound, Ross Linton; production manager, Dixie Betts; assistant director, Charles Rotherham; associate producer, Barbara Gibbs; casting, Alison Barrett. Reviewed at Chauvel theater, Sydney, July 23, 1987. Running time: 103 min.

Danny Embling	
Freya Olson	Leone Carmen
	Ben Mendelsohn
Nils Olson	Graeme Blundell
Anne Olson	Lynette Curran
Bruce Embling	. Malcolm Robertson
Sheila Embling	Judi Farr
Bob Leishman	Tim Robertson
Jonah	Bruce Spence
Tom Alcock	Harold Hopkins
Sgt. Pierce	Nick Tate
Headmaster	Vincent Ball
Also with: Anja Co	leby (Gail Olson), Kyli
Ostara (Alison), Kelly	Dingwall (Barry), Doro

Also with: Anja Coleby (Gail Olson), Kylic Ostara (Alison), Kelly Dingwall (Barry), Dorothy St. Heaps (Mrs. Beal), Coleen Clifford (Gran Olson), Kevin Manser (Mr. Keith), Mary Regan (Miss McColl), Queenie Ashton (Mrs. O'Neil), Helen Lomas (Sally), Emma Lyle (Lisa), Louise Birgan (Lyn), Matthew Ross (Majseed), Allan Penney (Martin), Robert Carlton (Pierdon).

Sydney — This is an outstanding feature from Kennedy-Miller, a glimpse at the difference between the Australian (and British) approach to teenage pix versus usual treatment of teens in U.S. films. Film should be snagged by fests in coming months.

coming months.

John Duigan's approach to his characters is realistic and humanistic: he tells a familiar tale of kids struggling with their emotions and feelings as they find themselves approaching adulthood, but doesn't sensationalize or condescend. These are real characters in real, sometimes painful, situations.

Setting is a small country town (pic was shot in Braidwood, New South Wales) in 1962. Danny (Noah Taylor) and Freya (Leone Carmen) have been friends from childhood; his parents run the local pub, hers

the local cafe. They've spent so much time together when they were growing up that there's even a kind of telepathy between them.

Now Danny is confused and troubled because Freya, although the same age as he, is maturing far more rapidly. She starts, as she tells him, to "move in different circles," and she falls for Trev (Ben Mendelsohn), an older, hyperactive, football coach. Poor Danny can only hang around on the sidelines as his girl passes him by, and a trip to the local cinema with her younger sister is no compensation.

Things turn out badly: Freya gets pregnant, Trev gets in trouble with the law. Danny tries to help his friends, but an old scandal involving Freya's mother, who died giving birth to her, surfaces and causes more distress. Ultimately, Freya leaves town for the city, and Danny knows he'll never see her again.

All of this is handled by Duigan, who penned the original screenplay, with insight and understatement. The characters are memorable and beautifully played by the three young newcomers, with Noah Taylor especially effective as the lovesick Danny.

lovesick Danny.

Supporting roles are played by a fine roster of familiar Aussie thesps, including Bruce Spence as an eccentric writer who befriends the youngsters (he lives in an abandoned railway carriage and is busily writing what he hopes will be the first "truly erotic" Australian novel), Graeme Blundell and Lynette Curran as Freya's adoptive parents and Malcolm Robertson and Judi Farr as Danny's parents. Even small roles, such as the local police sergeant and the headmaster, are played by such seasoned performers as Nick Tate and Vincent Ball.

Geoff Burton's attractive camerawork makes the most of the smalltown setting, with its pub, cafe, school, church hall, swimming hole and even haunted house on the edge of town. Setting and characters are completely convincing.

Duigan, whose previous films include such standouts as "Mouth To Mouth" and "Winter Of Our Dreams," has been working in television lately. His excellent work on this new feature ranks as his best.

Strat.

Thurs., Aug. 27, 1987

You Talkin' To Me? (Satire — Color)

An MGM/UA release. A Second Generation Films production. Produced by Michael Polaire. Directed, written by Charles Winkler. Camera (color), Paul Ryan; editor, David Handman; music, Joel McNeely. Reviewed at Montreal World Film Festival (in competition), Aug. 22, 1987. (MPAA Rating: R). Running time: 97 min.

Bronson Green. Jim Youngs
Peter Archer. James Noble
Thatcher Marks. Mykel T. Williamson
Dana Archer Faith Ford
Judith Margolis Bess Motta
Kevin Rex Ryon
James Brian Thompson
Alan King Alan King

Montreal - A winsome performance by Jim Youngs as a deserate New York actor doing the Hollywood shuffle with a psycho right-wing tv producer centers this uneven but combative cautionary satire. Showbiz scion Charles Winkler's debut feature depicts Tinseltown as a mirror of modern America's egocentric indifference to the corruption of its decent basic values, but the filmmaker's skewer is sometimes blunted by obviousness. Aggressive promotion, stressing the production's independent genesis, could help the picture's fortunes

if it's played off in big cities as an exclusive release.

The unifying conceit of "You Talkin' To Me?" is the worshipful identification of marginal actor Bronson Green (Youngs) with actor's actor Robert De Niro, particularly the character of Travis Bickle, on-the-edge protagonist of Martin Scorcese's urban fable "Taxi Driver." Bronson's very best buddy is a black man, Thatcher Marks (appealingly played by Mykel T. Williamson) who's also amtibitious to make it in Manhattan but cannot find work as a model.

Together they head for Hollywood, where Thatcher hits paydirt with print ads and billboards promoting cow-juice for the "American Milk Council." Bronson, however, finds only a cabbie's gig and endless rejection as the "wrong type" for contempo Hollywood hunk heaven.

In an amusing sequence (that parallels scenes in Robert Townsend's "Hollywood Shuffle"), Bronson makes the rounds of grotesque agents who revel in disdaining the actor for his ravenhaired ethnicity and seething energy, traits deemed "too New York" and out of fashion in Winkler's late" 80s Hollywood.

When an airhead messenger with surf-god looks walks into one casting call and gets Bronson's role without even asking for it, the New Yorker has a California epiphany. He bleaches his hair, dons a flower-print shirt, gets real laid-back and overnight becomes a righteous So-Cal dude.

Bronson breaks up with his opportunistic actress girlfriend Judith (Bess Motta), but his new blond look soon catches the eye of Dana Archer (Faith Ford), a real blond Hollywood rich kid. She watches admiringly as Bronson emulates Travis Bickle by standing up when a pricey surfer boutique is held up by a yuppie with a cap pistol. Dana's father is a wealthy, sanctimonious racist who produces syndicated tv shows that preach the gospel of "the pure truth, the white truth" to "real Americans."

James Noble, as Peter Archer, lends an edge of disturbing plausibility to the stereotypical character of the rich right-wing nut, replete with guns and Aryan goons (in one of the many L.A. in-jokes here, one bodyguard is an Arnold Schwarzenegger lookalike). Archer has been searching in vain for a convincing new tv spokesman and credits divine intervention with sending him the hungry and pliable bottle-blond actor.

Mesmerized by the opportunity, Bronson is inexorably corrupted by money and success. Inevitably, he loses his old "stand up guy" values as well as the respect of Thatcher, his old and new girlfriends and finally himself. Ultimately, his big chance for self-redemption plays as a major role in a minor morality play that deals with the deadly dangers of self-delusion.

Youngs' self-assured screen presence (the kid brother of John Savage also recalls a young Christopher Walken) and obvious relish for the character of the De Niro-fixated Bronson pump some vitality into the screenplay's cliched milieu of life on the fringes of Hollywood. Downtown L.A. locations stand in adequately for New York, abetted by grainy and flat cinematography that obscures the very real differences between the two cities.

Rich.

Thurs., May 14, 1987

Zegen THE PIMP (Japanese — Color)

A Tosi Co. release of its coproduction with Imamura Prods. Produced by Yoshiniko Sugiyama, Kunio Takeshige and Jire Ooba. Exec producers, Atsushi Mihori and Gore Takita. Directed by Shohei Imamura. Stars cen Ogata and Mitsuko Baisho. Screenplay, Imamura, Kota Okaba. Camera (color), Masao Tochizawa; score, Shinichiro Ikebe; sound, Kenichi Benitani; lighting, Yasuo waki; art direction, Yoshinaha Yokoo. Reviewed at the Cannes Film Festival (In Competition), May 10, 1987. Running time: 124 min.

Iheiji Muraoka (Zegen)....Ken Ogata Shiho.....Mitsuko Baisho Tomonaga (Bizenya)....Nerihei Miki Shimada (The

Barber) Taiji Toneyama Iheiji's last wife, Kino Mami Kumagaya "Boss" Wang Ko Chun-Hsiung

Cannes — Constructing a twonour-plus period drama on an aronic conceit linking Japanese economic and military expansionism to the fortunes of a pimp s both an appealing and dangerous exercise. "Zegen" does exacty that and paradoxically emerges is a boldly conceived historical arn and a bore. Thanks, however, to director Shohei Imamura's international reputation, the pic comes reasonably well as a foreign ales attraction.

It bows in Japan on Sept. 5, a prestige item of Tosi Co., one of he three largest Japanese film najors, and the one which distributed Imamura's "Narayamabushia" (The Ballad Of Narayama). That pic copped four years ago the op competitive prize at Cannes, the 'alme d'Or.

"Zegen" is based on the actual dventures of one Iheiji Muraoka, a ikeable and intensely patriotic coundrel who begins the pic as a long Kong castaway shortly after ne turn of the century. As Japan's nilitary adventurism reaches throughout Southeast Asia, Muraoa engages in low-level sabotage in fanchuria before hitting on the noon of setting up a chain of brothels throughout Asia.

As Imamura presents him, furaoka (Ken Ogata) is charming, bit of a dolt but blessed with enery, a sense of fairness, a respect for loney and with an unbridled patritism. He becomes a pimp-ntrepreneur on behalf of Emperor feiji. This is no ordinary flesh eddler. He even wound up owning rubber plantation in Malaya.

Director-coscripter Imamura is byiously taken with his chief naracter who reigned as self-styled Big Boss of the South Seas' for the first 20 years of this century. He let as obviously is ambivalent bout him, regarding Muraoka as oth a likeable sort and a bit of a um.

This ambivalence comes through the film, putting a distance beween the audience and the pic itelf. This zegen may provide musement throughout, but he's resented at unnerving distance, efying much audience sympathy rempathy.

In making "Zegen," director Immura overcame formidable physial challenges. Pic commenced loation lensing in Hong Kong and facao in early September, and oved on to a host of locales — Kula Lumpur, Malacca, Malaysia, aiwan and Japan's northern island f Hokkaido.

The director imbues the outing ith the naturalistic, sweaty carnaly and feel for life at low levels. As brothel keeper whose fortunes axed and waned with those of Jan itself, Muraoka is surrounded

by sex. "Zegen" doesn't stint in the couplings, some of which may have to be trimmed for Western exposure.

The pic's strengths are those of Ogata and Mitsuko Baisho, perhaps Japan's most accomplished screen actress and the one with the most international potential. Unfortunately, Baisho, as Zegen's quietly forceful and independent wife, is restrained by her character who's conceived as Muraoka's appendage. The actress was given much wider scope in "Love Letter," which played at last year's Cannes market.

"Zegen" belongs to Ogata, a superb 50-year-old character actor who emerged as an internatnional star two years ago in director Paul Schrader's "Mishima." Ogata plays Muraoka with energy, strength and subtlety. It's a first-class performance.

Production values are topnotch. Yoshinaga Yokoo's period set designs are especially good. Sege.

SEPTEMBER FILM REVIEWS

Wed., Sept. 16, 1987

Amazon Women On The Moon

(Comedy — Color)

A Universal Pictures release. Produced by Robert K. Weiss. Directed by Joe Dante, Carl Gottlieb, Peter Horton, John Landis, Robert K. Weiss. Executive producers, Landis, George Folsey Jr. Associate producer, Robb Idels. Screenplay, Michael Barrie, Jim Mullholland; camera, (Technicolor), Daniel Pearl; editor, Bert Lovitt, Marshall Harvey, Malcolm Campbell; art director, Alex Hajdu; set decorator, Julie Kaye Towery; sound, Susumu Tokunow; assistant directors, Deborah Love, Daniel Schneider, David Sosna; casting, Sally Dennison, Julie Selzer. Reviewed at Universal Pictures screening room, Universal City, Celif., Sept. 11, 1987.

MPAA Rating: R. Running time: 85 min. Cast: 85 bits and cameos.

"Amazon Women On The Moon" is as irreverent, vulgar and silly as its predecessor, "The Kentucky Fried Movie." Pic is amusing enough to earn return visits from those who enjoy anthology comedies and probably some crossovers from the Russ Meyer camp as well. Universal should do just fine.

should do just fine.

Like "Kentucky," new film has some hilarious moments and some real groaners too. In the 10 intervening years between releases, John Landis & Co. have found some '80s things to satirize — like yuppies, the vidcassette biz, dating, condoms — done up in a way that's not particularly shocking anymore.

Besides Landis, directors Joe Dante, Carl Gottlieb, Peter Horton and Robert K. Weiss take turns doing sketches.

Weiss' "Amazon Women On The Moon" '50s parody of bad sci-fi pix is stretched piecemeal throughout the film in a semi-successful attempt to hold this anthology together. As the featured piece, it is also the least original. Sight gags like the visible wires holding planets and spaceships in space work only once or twice, as do the mock playoffs between macho astronaut Steve Forrest and his goofy crewmen Joey Travolta and Robert Colbert.

Casting Sybil Danning as Queen Lara will make the industry crowd chuckle, considering how many B movies she's been in, but the joke surely will be lost on the general public.

Eighteen other segs fill up the pic's 85 minutes, some mercifully short like Weiss' "Silly Pate" while Landis' "Hospital" is one of those slow-building, totally zany bits where the chuckles grow as the situation gets more ridiculous and one wishes there was more. Griffin Dunne's wacko doctor role here is the best thing about the entire film.

While "Kentucky" spoofed tv, "Amazon" spoofs many other media, mostly with a rightfully cynical eye. However, takeoff of a swash-buckler called "Video Pirates," which shamefully plugs MCA Video, is as crass as many of the subjects that filmmakers are deriding.

Nudity and sex, not surprisingly, are the basis for a number of routines. Filmmakers have engaged the expertise of none other than the King of the Naked Femme Torso himself — Russ Meyer — to play a role in the most outrageous skit, "Video Date," a salacious few minutes with a lonely guy and his VCR. Meyer probably had a hand in casting a couple of other titillating segs as well that feature well-endowed women.

Women viewers get a turn too — watching a nude man run around, Ed Begley Jr. as the "Son Of The Invisible Man," who isn't invisible.

Scripters Michael Barrie and Jim Mulholland have targeted their audience to the hip "Saturday Night Live" crowd that is amused, not offended, when American values and its culture are satirized, and less to juvenile audiences who are supposedly too young for this sort of thing (pic's rated R).

Since audiences are pretty jaded these days, in no small part because of the success of "Saturday Night Live," "SCTV" and their clones, filmmakers seemed to find the need to do those things they can't do on tv — namely lots of nudity and profanity.

The numbing of American sensibilities lessens the entertainment value of a lot of previously sacred subjects. Thus, vignettes like "Roast Your Loved One," where an Irish wake is conducted in the style of a bad Vegas act or "First Lady Of The Evening," about a President's wife with a past, cause only faint smiles since it seems they've been seen before.

Tech credits are great — appropriately tacky where they should be and top-rate at all other times. *Brit*.

Fri., Sept. 18, 1987

Best Seller

(Drama — Color)

An Orion Pictures release of a Hemdale Film Corporation film. Executive producer, John Daly, Derek Gibson. Produced by Carter De Haven. Directed by John Flynn. Screenplay by Larry Cohen. Camera (CFI Color), Fred Murphy; editor, David Rosenbloom; music, Jay Ferguson; production design, Gene Rudolf; art direction, Robert Howland; set direction, Chris Butter; sound mixers, Donald O. Mitchell, Rick Kline, Kevin O'Connell; stunt coordinator, Steve Lambert; assistant directors, David Anderson, Leonid Zisman; casting, Michael McLean, Diane Dimeo. Reviewed at Samuel Goldwyn Theater, Los Angeles, Sept. 16, 1987. MPAA Rating: R. Running time: 110

rikri.	
Cleve	James Woods
Dennis Meechum	Brian Dennehy
Roberta Gillian	Victoria Tennant
Holly Meechum	Allison Balson
David Madlock	
Graham	George Coe
Mrs. Foster	
Cleve's Mother	
Monks	
Annie	
Cleve's Father	
	•

"Best Seller" combines the sinister appeal of James Woods at his cold-blooded best with the gruffly lovable persona of Brian Dennehy as a literary cop; on the level of detective thriller, it's a real page-turner. Snappy direction by John Flynn and good lead performances overcome fact that Dennehy could walk upright through some of the plot holes in the script. This pairing may lack sex appeal, but the chemistry is good and word of mouth should make boxoffice results reasonably

Dennehy is Dennis Meechum, a cop who writes a book based on a famous unsolved case, during which he was wounded and three other policemen were killed.

Seventeen years after the incident, he is a lonely burn-out case. His wife has died of cancer and he lives at home with his meek teenage daughter (Allison Balson), trying to crank out another book that just won't come.

Into the picture comes mysteryman Woods, full of unctuous charm and foreboding stares. After following Meechum around and saving his life in a dockside shootout, he presents himself as Cleve, a former hit-man who worked for "modern robber baron" David Madlock, a pillar of L.A. society who, Cleve claims, ordered murders on everyone from business associates to tax auditors.

The body of the film has Cleve bringing Meechum around the country, providing different details in his story in an attempt to prove its authenticity, while Meechum takes it all down in a book whose ending is written during the closing moments of the film.

These scenes work with varying degrees of success, ranging from the splendid (a darkly humorous scene in which Cleve returns to the scene of a crime) to the stupid (the first evidence of Cleve's still-murderous ways leaves so many plot questions unanswered that it is best ignored completely).

Flynn keeps things moving through action scenes but is at his best during the psychological catand-mouse games in which the two leads find out about one another. Highlight shows Meechum becoming last one in the theater to figure out that Cleve is the man who wounded him years ago.

Conclusion is seen from a mile away, with one of the main characters changing his ways and partially proving Cleve's contention that he and Meechum have more in common than the cop would care to admit.

But while ending is pat, pic is ultimately carried by the two lead performances. And here it succeeds: Woods plays the baddie with Nicholsonian glee and Dennehy is warm and dignified in one of the very best roles he's ever had.

Supporting parts are never examined deeply enough to be more than perfunctory (Paul Shenar is appropriately despicable as Madlock). Tech credits are pretty good, with Jay Ferguson's score and Fred Murphy's camerawork both impressive. Editing of David Rosenbloom (especially during an early car-explosion scene) leaves something to be desired. Camb.

Thurs., Sept. 24, 1987

Big Shots

(Drama - Color)

A 20th Century Fox release of a Lorimar Pictures production. Produced by Joe Medjuck, Michael C. Gross. Executive producer, Ivan Reitman. Directed by Robert Mandel. Screenplay, Joe Eszterhas; camera (color), Miroslav Ondricek, editors. Bill Anderson, Sheldon Kahn, Dennis Virkler; music, Bruce

Broughton; production design, Bill Malley; sound, Bill Randall. Reviewed at Toronto Festival of Festivals, Sept. 19, 1987. MPAA Rating: PG-13. Running time: 90 min.

With: Ricky Busker, Darius McCrary, Robert Joy, Robert Prosky, Jerzy Skolimowski, Paul Winfield.

Toronto — The unlikely friendship between a white suburban boy and an inner-city black youth is the fulcrum for the action in "Big Shots," latest feature from Robert Mandel ("F/X"). There's plenty of energy, plot twists, and sentimental sidebars to make it appealing to both kids and their parents, but the script is often too contrived to make it credible.

Joe Eszterhas has the right highspirited commercial touch here to please the youth market, and pic features a swift soundtrack as well. A young white boy, Obadiah, whose father has died suddenly, gets lost on his bike in the black ghetto of Chicago. When a gang of rednecks steal the watch his father gave him, he is befriended by Jeremy.

Jeremy is a funny, street-smart black wisecracker, who drinks beer, hangs out in bars and considers himself a shrewd businessman.

The duo's daring adventures begin when Jeremy jump-starts a Mercedes and drives off. Unfortunately for them, there's a dead body in the trunk, and the two thugs who did the contract killing are now out to nab the kids.

After a run-in with a crooked pawnbroker, the two hold him up and drive off in their stolen car.

Meanwhile, their friendship grows and they discover their links to their fathers: Obadiah mourns the loss of his, and Jeremy bemoans the fact that his dad left him when he was little.

The boys find out where Jeremy's father is living and then are off to Louisiana to meet him, still chased by the Mercedes' owners. Obadiah is transformed to a street kid, who talks jive and can suddenly maneuver a car like Mario Andretti.

Car chases and crashes plus a pulsing rock beat speed things along as the boys become partners in crime. There's a mushy reconciliation between Jeremy and his pa.

Most surprising casting coup comes in the form of Robert Joy and Jerzy Skolimowski as the hired killers, who bring snap to their roles. Paul Winfield does a smart turn as a street-smart dude.

Mandel can direct fast action scenes well, but in this case he's more successful in developing the humorous acting talents of the two unknown leads, Ricky Busker and Darius McCrary.

Because they're not self-consciously cute-acting-school grads, they inject an innocence and camaraderie in their parts. Too bad Eszterhas' script supports the kids' lack of responsibility for their madcap criminal adventure and condones it because it leads to a family reunion.

Devo.

Mon., Sept. 21, 1987

The Big Town (U.S. — Color)

A Columbia Pictures release of a Martin Ransohoff production. Executive producer, Gene Craft. Produced by Martin Ransohoff. Coproducer, Don Carmody. Directed by Ben Bolt. Screenplay, Robert Roy Pool, based on the novel "The Arm," by Clark Howard. Camera (color), Ralf D. Bode; editor, Stuart Pappe; music, Michael Melvoin; production design, Bill Kenney; costumes, Wendy Partridge; production manager, Joyce Kozy King, art direction, Dan Yarhi; assistant director, Don French; associate producer, Jon Turtle; casting, Nancy Klopper. Reviewed at Leicester Square Theater, London, Sept. 8 1987.

London — Despite its veneer of glamour 'n gambling, and gangsters 'n gals, "The Big Town" is essentially a very moral period pic that promises more than it actually delivers. Despite a host of name actors and a slick '50s sound-track, b.o. success will probably be limited.

A question mark must still be put against Matt Dillon's ability to carry a larger-budget pic, and though actors of the stature of Tommy Lee Jones, Bruce Dern, Tom Skerritt and Lee Grant were undoubtedly brought in to bolster the film, they end up putting Dillon somewhat in the shade.

Producer Martin Ransohoff made his name with pix like "The Cincinnati Kid," and to an extent "The Big Town" — a tale about crap shooting — could be seen to be trying to fit into the same genre as numbers like "The Cincinnati Kid," and "The Hustler."

Unfortunately dice rolling lacks the cinematic appeal of pool or poker, and while the other two involved skill, craps seems to be mainly about luck.

Apparently, country-boy J.C. (Cully) Cullen (Dillon) has got the "cool," according to his gambling mentor — meaning he is a dice player who always seems to win — so he packs his bags and heads off to the Windy City to make his fame and fortune.

He is hired as a crapshooting "arm" by a blind Bruce Dern, and Lee Grant, and sets about breaking into all of the big-money games in town.

Along the way he is attracted to the nice girl (Suzy Amis) but falls for the floozie (Diane Lane) to the chagrin of her gangster husband Tommy Lee Jones.

The complex storyline has about one plot too many, but though Dillon momentarily loses his "cool" he soon gets it back, and ends up breaking the gangster, helping the floozie but being deceived by her, and eventually realizing what he really wants is the nice girl.

And everyone lives happily ever after — apart from Tommy Lee Jones, who is arrested for murder, but that is another subplot.

First-time theatrical director, Briton Ben Bolt, lenses with confidence, and is greatly helped by cinematographer Ralf D. Bode's use of vivid colors, but would have been advised to tighten up the story and inject slightly more dramatic tension.

Everything looks perfect — from the plentiful neon signs to the costumes — but "The Big Town" never really shifts up that extra gear to make it a winner.

Diane Lane as stripper Lorry Dane makes the perfect floozie, and her sexy fan dance adds a much needed bit of sleaze to the story, while Suzy Amis (who looks uncomfortably like June Allyson at times) is spoton as down to earth single parent Aggie.

Dern, Skerritt and Grant all perform well, but it is Tommy Lee Jones as the malevolent gangster with slicked-back hair, silk shirt and dollar-sign tie clip, who scowls and sneers his way through the scenes, easily stealing most he is in.

The ethics and morals of "The Big Town" are such that it could

easily have been made in the '50s, and beneath all the gloss and glitz a simple tale is struggling to get out.

Similarly beneath Dillon's macho bravura there lurks a better actor than this role, or his leading man mantle, seems to allow. Adam.

Thurs., Sept. 3, 1987

Blood Diner

(Gore parody — Color)

Vestron release of a Lightning Pictures Inc. presentation of a PMS Filmworks production. Executive producers, Lawrence Kasanoff, Ellen Steloff; producer, Jimmy Maslon; creative consultant Bill Osco. Directed, coproduced by Jackie Kong. Screenplay, Michael Sonye; camera, Jurg Walther; editor, Thomas Meshelski; music, Don Preston; sound effects, Bob Biggart; production design, Ron Petersen; costume design, Shiz Herrera; production manager, Jay Koiwai; art director, Keith Barrett; assistant directors, Bill Laxson, Paul Leclair, Val Norwood; special effects, Bruce Zahlava; make-up artist, Loraina Drucker. Reviewed at Strand Theater, San Francisco, Aug. 22, 1987. MPAA Rating: R. Running time: 90 min.

San Francisco — Director Jackie Kong, whose previous pix were "The Being" and "Night Patrol," has more gore-bore lore in store with "Blood Diner," a self-cancelling cannibalism caper that shoots down its send-up style. Despite a socko windup, the parody of bloodlust is a pathetic bust.

Premise has a pair of wacko moppets inspired by a certifiable uncle whose brain, and eyeballs, they have exhumed. As adults, and diner managers, their mission is to assemble body parts from an assortment of virgins and bad girls so that Sheetar, a goddess about 5,000,000 years old, or thereabouts, can be restored to life.

The brothers, portrayed with some measure of bug-eyed broadness by Rick Burks and Carl Crew, hack, chop, slice, dice, puree and dissect with verve, but without any inherent humor. Even a mass murderer at a nude aerobics class fails to generate the presumably hopedfor giggles.

The only way "Blood Diner" could possibly reach its high camp intentions is if it had been filmed in a lean-to on Mt. Everest. Herb.

Thurs., Sept. 24, 1987

Born Again: Life In A Fundamentalist Baptist Church

(Docu — Color — 16m)

A presentation of the South Carolina Educational Television Network, Columbia, S.C. Produced and directed by James Ault, Michael Camerini; associate director, Adrienne Miesmer. Camera (color, 16m), Camerini; editor, Sarah Stein; music, Paul Moravec; sound, Carol Ramsey; narrator, Norman Rose; assistant editor, Miesmer. Produced with funding from New England Foundation for The Humanities, the Corporation for Public Broadcasting and the Massachusetts Foundation for The Humanities and Public Policy. Reviewed at the American Museum of Natural History, N.Y., in Margaret Mead Film Festival, Sept. 1, 1987. No MPAA rating. Running time: 87 min.

New York — By focusing solely on a single fundamentalist Baptist church in a small town of central Massachusetts, "Born Again" debunks the popular misconception that fundamentalism is essentially a Southern movement. Fundamentalism began at the turn of the century in Boston, New York and Chicago. Nationally, the movement numbers 25,000,000 adherents and is growing rapidly, especially in the Northeast.

Fundamentalism is characterized

by the belief that salvation hinges solely on being "born again" spiritually through acceptance of Jesus Christ as one's personal saviour. The film deals with these individual believers, not with the familiar superstar tv evangelists Jerry Falwell, Oral Roberts, Jimmy Swaggart, and Tammy and Jim Bakker. We see no holy rollers, speaking-in-tongues, faithhealing or snake-handling.

or snake-handling.
Codirected by Michael Camerini, a documentary professional, and James Ault, latter a trained sociologist, professor at the University of California/San Diego, "Born Again" was carefully researched and produced with restraint and respect for this close-knit Baptist community.

Thirty-five hours of footage in modified cinema-verite style were shot over a period of seven months. We find here no cheap tricks of editing and narration to satirize and deflate the sublime confidence of these fundamentalists that each one has a direct personal rapport with God. They have total faith in their righteousness, despite their admitted fallibilities.

From young pastor John, a convert from Catholicism, his flock receives a passionate admonition to practice marital harmony. Husbands are instructed to respect their wives, whom God has given them as "helpmates." Wives must focus on their families.

Because they believe "the garbage" taught in public schools is the work of Satan, the church in self-protection has founded its own Christian academy, from kindergarten through high school.

The school day begins with prayers, the pledge of allegiance to the Bible and to the Christian and American flags. "The first priority is the Bible, the second is the Constitution."

The curriculum is structured so that "all subjects point to God." Classes discuss carnality versus the spiritual while some students snicker and squirm.

"Born Again" chooses four or five families, closely bound to their church, for special emphasis.

Despite the constant surveillance of Pastor John, some of these fundamentalist families have the same troubles that beset the rest of us.

(Film was aired last night on PBS.)

Hitch.

Wed., Sept. 9, 1987

Deadline

(West German – Thriller – Color)

A Skouras Pictures release of a Virgin Vision presentation of a Creative Film/Caro Film/Norddeutcher Rundfunk production, in association with GPHS International. Produced by Elisabeth Wolters-Alfs. Line producer, Michael Scharfstein. Directed by Nathaniel Gutman. Screenplay, Hanan Peled; camera (Geyer-Werhe color), Amnon Salomon, Thomas Mauch; editor, Peter Przygodda; music, Jacques Zwart, Hans Jansen; and direction, Yoram Barzily; assistant director, Ricky Shelach; special effects coordinator, Yoram Polack. Reviewed at Magno Preview 1 screening room, N.Y., July 24, 1987. MPAA Rating; R. Running time: 100 min.

Don Stevens ... Christopher Walken Mike Jessop Marita Marschall Linda Larson Hamdi Abu-Yussuf .Arnon Zadok Yessin Abu-Riadd. Samira.... ...Amos Lavie ...Ette Ankri Bernard. Martin Umbach Abdul... Bassam. Sason Gabay Habib... Shahar Cohen Shlomo Bar-Aba With: Gaby Shoshan, Igal Naor, Jerry Weinstock, Reuven Dayan, Nader Mas-raawi, David Menachem, Shlomo Tar-

New York — "Deadline" is a stilted topical thriller about Mid-

dle East politics and violence. Told in the already overused format of a cynical journalist caught in a hotbed of conflicting factions ("Under Fire," "Salvador," Volker Schlondorff's "Circle Of Deceit"), subject matter is intrinsically interesting but deadened by the lackluster direction of Israeli helmer Nathaniel Gutman.

Christopher Walken has almost a one-man show as a cavalier correspondent for fictitious ABS news, dispatched to Beirut in 1983, fresh from covering a European fashion obey.

Though scoffed at by the longtime hands on the scene, especially even more cynical Brit reporter Hywel Bennett, Walken quickly scores a coup by getting an exclusive interview with PLO moderate Yessin, who declares on audiotape that the PLO should have renounced terrorism as a policy long ago. Coming on the eve of Arafat and other PLO leaders leaving Beirut, story is a worldwide bombshell.

Unfortunately, it is soon revealed that Walken has been duped, having interviewed an imposter. As he scurries to unravel the mess, both the imposter and Yessin are murdered. Walken becomes a reluctant hero, caught between warring parties and trying to warn everyone before the Christian Phalangists carry out the massacre of folks in the Palestinian refugee camps.

Walken tries to pep up the surprisingly bland proceedings with an exercise in method acting, an understandable solution to the problem of playing scenes with a monotone, sleepwalking supporting cast. His acting comes off merely as forced, with Bennett getting a few laughs as his foil. Local Israeli cast is dullsville.

Gutman directs limply, conjuring up a couple of arresting images, such as an array of corpses laid out neatly when Walken goes to identify the imposter, but generally using bright, even lighting that conveys no atmosphere at all.

Tech credits are competent at a B-movie level. Picture was filmed under the title "War Zone," with British-based American Mark Forstater listed as producer, though his name has disappeared from the final screen credits.

Lor.

Wed., Sept. 9, 1987

Dudes

(Comedy-drama — Color)

A New Century/Vista Film release of a Vista Organization production. Produced by Herb Jaffe. Executive producer, Mort Engelberg. Line producer, Gordon Wolf. Directed by Penelope Spheeris. Screenplay, J. Randal Johnson; camera (color), Robert Richardson; editor, Andy Horvitch; sound (UltraStereo), Walter Martin; production design, Robert Ziembicki; assistant director, Guy Louthan; casting, Nina Axelrod. Reviewed at Magno Preview 9 screening room, N.Y. Aug. 10, 1987. MPAA Rating: R. Running time: 90 min.

Grant Jon Cryer
Biscuit Daniel Roebuck
Milo Flea
Missoula Lee Ving
Jessie Catherine Mary Stewart
With: Billy Ray Sharkey, Glenn
Withrow, Michael Melvin, Axxel G.
Reese, Marc Rude, Calvin Bartlett, Pete

Willcox, Vance Colvig, Pamela Gidley

New York — How can a film that brings punk-rockers from Queens, cowboys, Indians and crazed homicidal villains together in Utah be taken seriously? The answer, of course, is that it can't. Even on a superficial level, "Dudes" fails to round up a good time.

"Dudes" tells the story of three punked-out New Yorkers — Milo, Grant and Biscuit — who set out for Hollywood in a Volkswagen and get attacked while camping out in Big Sky country by characters who seem to have walked over from the set of "Deliverance" or "The Hills Have Eyes."

Milo is murdered by Missoula, leader of a wild-eyed gang that roams the West killing Mexicans. Grant and Biscuit vow to avenge Milo's death.

Even if one were inclined to overlook the derivative storyline, "Dudes" still manages to throw itself from the saddle so many times that it bruises the sensibilities. The humor, when intentional, is slapstick. The dialog is hopelessly adolescent, the music incredibly loud and the plot is dependent on a bizarre sequence of coincidences.

For instance, when Grant and Biscuit start out on their road to revenge, they are in the middle of nowhere with absolutely no idea how to find Missoula.

As they are driving along in their Volkswagen, they just happen to come across a dying member of Missoula's crew who has been fatally wounded by the maniacal Missoula himself. Of course, he manages to stay alive long enough to give Grant and Biscuit a clue to Missoula's whereabouts.

The element of chance plays such an important role in several subsequent scenes that it gets silly. Grant and Biscuit careen off the highway into a ravine and are immediately rescued from the wreckage by Jesse, a female tow-truck driver they met at a gas station who just happened to be driving by.

The way everyone keeps bumping into each other, one gets the impression Utah and Wyoming are the size of a parking lot.

As "Dudes" spirals to its conclusion, things get pretty bizarre Grant begins to see an apparition of a cowboy which no one else sees and Biscuit starts believing he's ar Indian. As this is going on, Jesse spends her free time shooting been bottles off a fence rail with a six gun.

Director Penelope Spheeris obviously opted for the outrageous it making "Dudes." Yet pix of this genre are more effective with tongue-in-cheek dialog delivered by spunky, likable characters. Characters — Grant is a brooding youtl looking for a purpose in life while Biscuit is an overweight overeate who keeps stuffing food in his mouth — are cliches.

There is a very thin line between wonderfully zany and pointlessly strange, between suburbia and Wy oming. In the case of "Dudes," i was a line that was crossed in the wrong direction.

Chuk

Mon., Sept. 28, 1987

Eat The Rich (British — Comedy — Color)

A New Line Cinema release of a Comir Strip film in association with British Screen Film Four International, Recorded Releas ing and Smart Egg Pictures. Executive producer, Michael White. Produced by Tim Var Rellim. Directed by Peter Richardson Screenplay, Pete Richens, Richardson; as sociate director, Richens; camera (color) Witold Stok; editor, Chris Ridsdale; music Motorhead; sound, John Hayes; costume Frances Haggett; makeup, Gordon Kay; as sistant directors, Glynn Purcell, Sean Drom goole, Marwan Al-Khafaji. Reviewed at the Boston Film Festival, Sept. 20, 1987. Nr MPAA rating. Running time: 88 min.

AIGA	Lanair Foliay
Nosher	Nosher Powell
Fiona	.Fiona Richmond
Commander Fortune.	Ronald Allen
Sandra	Sandra Dorne
Ron	Ron Tarr
Jimmy	Jimmy Fagg
Colder	Lommy

With: Robbie Coltrane, Angle Bowle, Linla McCartney, Paul McCartney, Rik Mayall, Peter Richardson, Koo Stark, Ade Edmondion, Nigel Planer, Dawn French, Jennifer Saunders, Bill Wyman, Miranda Richardion.

Boston — With the right handlng "Eat The Rich" has all the nakings of a cult success like 'Repo Man" or "Eating Raoul." Set in modern Britain, it charts he course of a gang of revolutionaries, headed by the sexually ampiguous Alex (Lanah Pellay), in their fight against Nosher, the 'Fascist cockney" who serves as Home Secretary (stuntman Nosher Powell).

Pic tips viewers that comedy will be broad and dark right from the opening scene set in Bastards, a resaurant where the obnoxiously rich can dine on endangered species and nake their business deals. Alex, employed there as a waiter, soon finds himself out of a job.

Finding welfare bureaucrats who elax and sip cocktails while they orment their poverty stricken applicants, Alex joins forces with Ron (Ron Allen), who has also come looking for a government handout.

After Alex shoots up the place, they take to the hills; this doesn't set well with Nosher, a cabinet officer who conducts public policy with his bare knuckles.

Peter Richardson, directing his second feature after "The Supergrass," keeps the bizarre and often illarious proceedings moving along at a steady clip.

There are brief cameos along the way by Paul McCartney, Robbie Coltrane and many others, several of which will be lost on American audiences. (Many are from the British comedy team, the Comic Strip, of whom director Richardson is one of the founding members.)

The brisk pace works to the film's advantage, never allowing too much time to question things.

This is hardly the sort of film likely to obtain a royal command performance, but the young and cynical on both sides of the Atlantic should find it a hoot. Kirnm.

Mon., Sept. 14, 1987

Fatal Attraction (Suspense drama — Color)

A Paramount release of a Jaffe/Lansing production. Produced by Stanley R. Jaffe, Sherry Lansing. Directed by Adrian Lync Screenplay, James Dearden, based on his original screenplay. Stars Michael Douglas, Glenn Close, Anne Archer. Camera (Technicolor), Howard Atherton; editors, Michael Kahn, Peter E. Berger; music, Maurice Jarre; production design, Mel Bourne; art direction, Jack Blackman; set decoration, George DeTitta; costume design, Ellen Mirojnick; sound (Dolby), Les Lazarowitz; assistant director, Robert Girolami; casting, Risa Bramon, Billy Hopkins. Reviewed at Bruin Theater, L.A., Sept. 8, 1987. MPAA Rating: R. Running time: 119 min.

Dan Gallagher. Michael Douglas
Alex Forrest. Glenn Close
Beth Gallagher. Anne Archer
Ellen Gallagher. Ellen Hamilton Latzen
Jimmy. Stuart Pankin
Hildy. Ellen Foley
Arthur. Fred Gwynne
Joan Rogerson. Meg Mundy
Howard Rogerson. Tom Brennan
Martha. Lois Smith

As if there weren't already enough warning signs posted about the hazards of promiscuity these days, "Fatal Attraction" comes along to serve as an additional cautionary tale to those who might dare to fancy a weekend fling once in a while. The screws are tightened expertly in this suspenseful meller about a flipped-out femme who makes life hell for the married man who scorns her, and audience delight in being chilled by the cat-and-mouse game should

make this a strong Fall performer for Paramount.

Voluptously filmed by Adrian Lyne, this tale of a vengeful lover going off the deep end to become an emotional terrorist possesses a number of disturbing elements.

Traditional women may not care for the adulterous protagonist, feminists may blanche at the portrait of a sick lady who allows a man to exert so much power over her, and many men will become antsy at the idea of a casual date quickly becoming a mortal enemy.

But all of these discomforting emotional elements contribute significantly to the unsettling mood developed after the first half-hour, which is devoted to a quickie affair between New York attorney Michael Douglas and publishing exec Glenn Close.

Douglas is happily married to the gorgeous Anne Archer and has a lovely daughter, but succumbs to Close's provocative flirtations while his wife is out of town.

It appears that these two sophisticated adults are in it just for fun and sport, but when Close slits her wrists in despair over the end of the affair, Douglas knows he's taken on more of a burden than he bargained for.

Regretful over having cheated on his wife, he tries to put Close off, but the more he insists that it's over, the harder she pushes, following him around, bombarding him with phone calls, claiming to be pregnant and eventually physically endangering him and his family.

To nonfans of his previous work, Lyne's rigor in sticking to plot propulsion and solid characterization will come as a pleasant surprise. For once, his staging is coherent, done without mannered frills, and the imagination and energy pumped into nearly every scene results in a genuinely suspenseful tale of psychological disturbance and peril.

Pic does go over the top at times, notably when Close makes predictable use of the child's cute pet rabbit, even more so in the wrenching climax, which dares to resurrect the hackneyed device of the dead rising from the grave one last time, a gambit seemingly used and abused in 90% of the late 1970s-early 1980s horror entires but, from the evidence of preview audience reaction, still wildly effective.

Cast topliners acquit themselves in fine fashion. Michael Douglas, in a family man role, seems warmer and more sympathetic than before, and well conveys the evasiveness and anguish of his cornered character.

Glenn Close throws herself into the physical abandon of the early reels with surprising relish, and becomes genuinely frightening when it comes clear she is capable of any-

Although denied as many dramatic opportunities as her costars, Anne Archer at long last has a role of substance in a film of merit and comes out shining; she is most appreciatively photographed and helps make the quieter domestic scenes interesting.

Film becomes somewhat repetitive as Close dogs Douglas' tracks and two full hours is a bit too much of a good thing, but Lyne very adeptly jangles the viewer's nervous system on his way to the big payoff scene, which will produce plenty of screaming, screeching, and arm-grabbing, just the ticket for an audience pleaser.

just the ticket for an audience pleaser.
Technical contributions are absolutely first-class, from Howard
Atherton's rich lensing and Mel
Bourne's lush production design to

Maurice Jarre's helpful scoring and Michael Kahn and Peter E. Berger's razor-sharp cutting.

Unusual credit to James Dearden for his (very good) script "based on his original screenplay" stems from the fact that pic is based on Dearden's 45-minute film, "Diversion," which he wrote and directed in 1979.

Wed., Sept. 16, 1987

Gaby — A True Story (U.S. — Drama — Color)

A Tri-Star Pictures release of a Pinchas Perry-Luis Mandoki production. Produced by Pinchas Perry. Directed by Luis Mandoki Written by Martin Salinas, Michael James Love. Camera (color), Lajos Koltai; editor, Garth Craven; art director, Alejandro Luna; sound, Robert Grieve; music, Maurice Jarre; associate producers, Jacobo Feldman, Marcos Salame, Rafael Jauregui, Marc A. Solomon. Reviewed at Toronto Festival of Festivals, Sept. 14, 1987. Running time: 110

Sari Liv Ullmann Florencia Norma Aleandro Gaby Rachel Levin Michel Robert Loggia Fernando Lawrence Monoson Luis Robert Beltran

Toronto — There's an ebullient spirit permeating "Gaby," the true story of a Mexican Jewish girl born with severe cerebral palsy who, against all odds, went on to become an accomplished poet and writer. Luis Mandoki's feature is a true labor of love, with total cooperation and blessings from the real Gaby Brimmer, and the unsentimental feelgood attitude should easily lead to boxoffice sparks.

Mandoki succeeds in re-creating Gaby's spirit. She was born with a disease that left her unable to move any part of her body except her left leg. Her parents, Sari (Liv Ullmann) and Michel (Robert Loggia) settle in Mexico in 1938 to escape Jewish persecution in Austria.

Pic focuses on Gaby's intellectual development — for that part of her was unimpaired — through the nurturing relationship with her devoted nanny, Florencia (Norma Aleandro).

Florencia teaches Gaby to talk through the use of an alphabet board and typewriter. Gaby attends a handicapped school, where she is clearly outstanding academically. She befriends another straight-A classmate, Fernando, with whom she falls in love. Mandoki directs a love scene between them that is both poignant and painfully touching.

Gaby fights to attend a normal junior high school and, ultimately, university, but this results in a falling out with Fernando, due to his parents' displeasure at Gaby's pressure on him to try to overcome his handicaps and be integrated into a regular classroom

But most luminous is Gaby's relationship with her nanny.

Stage actress Rachel Levin, who has recently recovered from her own near-total paralysis due to Guillain-Barre syndrome, is adept at inhabiting Gaby's every thought and body movement. Her journey for expression as a sexual woman is also depicted with grace.

Liv Ullmann and Robert Loggia, in encouraging Gaby to express herself fully, are always commanding presences, but they're both a bit too restrained and cool in their parental roles.

Mandoki must be complimented for not falling into the "all the handicapped are just like you and me" trap and for making "Gaby" a singularly special project.

His honest handling of the actors, his injections of humor and silliness amid the pathos, and the assistance he had from Gaby Brimmer, whose autobiography became a best-seller in Mexico, is felt in every frame.

Devo.

Thurs., Sept. 10, 1987

Gondola

(Japanese — Drama — Color)

An OM production. Produced by Mayato Sadasue. Directed by Chisho Itoh. Screenplay, Itoh, Yashi Natsume; camera (color, Toshihiko Uriu; editor, Shuichi Kakesu; sound, Harehisa Otsuka; music, Satoru Yoshida. Reviewed at Bloor Cinema, Toronto, Sept. 1, 1987. Running time: 112 min.

Kagari Keiko Uemura
Ryo Kenta Kai
With: Midori Kiuchi, Sumie Sasaki, Hideo
Satoh, Hide Demon.

Toronto — Slick, assured camerawork marks the directorial debut of Chisho Itoh in "Gondola," but the slow and lumbering storyline of two lonely souls undermines pic's mainstream appeal. Domestic audiences will probably be limited to the arthouse circuit, but recent film school graduates can use "Gondola" as a rich resource in technique.

Almost spartan in its script, film's narrative is sustained by its telling images.

Kagari is a young, ennui-laden fifth-grade girl, living alone with her glamorpuss mother in a Tokyo highrise. She's isolated and scorned by her schoolmates, and amuses herself with her attachment to her pet birds and by playing her tuning fork.

Ryo, a recent arrival in Tokyo from a northern fishing village, is a window washer on the skyscrapers in the city, who lives in a squalid apartment and is overcome by lyrical memories of his fishing town. Ryo meets Kagari on the street after one of her birds is seriously attacked by the other.

The two strike up an amiable bond; she's the first person he's ever talked to behind the window. They exchange a minimum of words but do more to support each other's lives than their friends or family.

The direction is highly stylized, with polished, inventive camera angles, dramatic use of black and white memory shots, and with sound and silence given equal weight in the drama.

Itoh fixes on many powerful images — a suspended metronome, the dead bird that Kagari places in a lunch box in the fridge, the dizzying view of downtown Tokyo from the 50th floor of an office tower — but they often translate into contrivances.

Actors Keiko Uemura and Kenta Kai use a minimal style to communicate their disjunction, and their relationship doesn't translate as pretentious. It's just that the flashy, surreal photography outweighs the tale of the somber duo, who have very few moments of joy. Devo.

Tues., Sept. 1, 1987

Au Revoir, Les Enfants GOODBYE, CHILDREN (French-West German — Drama

— Color)

An MK2 release of a Nouvelles Editions de Films/MK2 Prods./Stella Film, Munich/NEF, Munich, coproduction. Produced, written and directed by Louis Malle. Camera (Eastmancolor), Renato Berta; editor, Emmanuelle Castro; art direction, Willy Holt; sound, Jean-Claude Larreaux, Claude Villand; costumes, Corinne Jorry; makeup, Susan Robertson; music, Schubert, Saint-Saens; production manager, Gerald Molto; assistant director, Yann Gil-

bert; casting, Jeanne Biras, Iris Carriere, Sylvie Meyer. Reviewed at the Ponthieu screening room, Paris, Aug. 24, 1987. (In Venice Film Festival — competing.) Running time: 104 min.)

With: Gaspard Manesse (Julien), Raphael Fejto (Bonnet), Francine Racette (Mme. Quentin), Stanislas Carre de Malberg (Francois Quentin), Philippe Morier-Genoud (Father Jean), Francois Berleand (Father Michel), Francois Negret (Joseph), Peter Fitz (Muller), Pascal Rivet, Benoit Henriet, Richard Leboeuf, Xavier Legrand, Arnaud Henriet

Paris — "Au Revoir, Les Enfants" is competing at the Venice Festival and has the right qualities to travel, despite the downbeat ending. For the ailing domestic film scene, Louis Malle's homecoming is, in any case, one of the best things to have happened to the French this year.

Malle says this is the film he has wanted to make since the beginning of his career, and he has not betrayed his subject matter. Applying skillful dramatic license to his memories of that time, the writer-director has extracted one of his best films, an elegy to a friendship nipped in the bud by war and hate.

Quasi-autobiographical drama is set in a provincial Catholic boarding school in the last months of World War II. The finely rendered chronicle about youth, a Malle specialty, assumes the dimensions of tragedy when the Gestapo disrupts the cloistered routine to arrest the school fathers and three Jewish children they are hiding there under false names.

Basis of the film is a true incident that has haunted Malle ever since his schoolboy days in the similar religious establishment near Fontainebleau. (Young Malle's nascent friendship with a new boy in class was brutally ended when latter, the son of Jews who had been carted off to the death camps in the infamous Vel d'Hiver roundup of 1942, was arrested and sent to his death with two other youths and the school director, a clandestine resistant.)

Malle directs with clarity and understatement, setting the mainstage of the drama with detailed recall of lulling rhythms of boarding school life, its secret collective pleasures, and the intrusions of the real world, banal at first, finally erupting in all their horror.

Most of the youthful cast are nonprofessional, directed with a sure hand. Gaspard Manesse is Malle's alter-ego, Julien, a boy (like Malle) of upper middle class background, who is intrigued by a new arrival after the Christmas holiday in the early days of 1944.

Bonnet (Raphael Fejto), the new boy, is reserved, different and cultivated, and a threat to Julien's academic superiority in class.

But Julien's initial distrust and jealousy slowly evolve towards more positive sentiments as the two boys discreetly find common interests in books and music, and share some extramural adventures (lost in the woods after a treasure hunt with the other classmates, Julien and Bonnet are brought back by some patrolling German soldiers).

The friendship follows its natural course despite, or because of, Julien's gradual awareness that Bonnet is Jewish. Secretly poking about latter's closet, he comes across a book with Bonnet's real name still legible; later, he awakens in the night to watch Bonnet upright next to his dormitory bed, whispering a Sabbath prayer in front of two lit candles. But the full meaning of his new friend's origins only hit him when the Gestapo enter the

classroom and demand the Jewish boy by his real name.

The vivid depiction of life under the German Occupation also forms a pendant to Malle's 1974 film "Lacombe Lucien," though without that controversial picture's ambiguous portraiture.

Still, the character of a lame scullery boy who is dismissed by the school director for black market activities, an action that triggers the final tragedy, can be seen as a distant cousin to Malle's protagonist in "Lacombe."

Some of the film's most powerful scenes dramatize the irony of the period. Most striking is a sequence in a village restaurant where Julien's mother has taken him, his brother and Bonnet during a Sunday visit.

An elderly Jewish gentleman (who has managed to avoid the racist dragnet until now) suddenly is confronted by some members of the Vichy militia, but latter are promptly ejected from the premises by a Wehrmacht officer enjoying a convivial meal that the barkings of the French collaborators have disturbed.

Among adult players, Philippe Morier-Genoud, a stage actor, is excellent as Father Jean, the head of the school, giving the role sharp, subtle definition despite its episodic nature. Francine Racette, as Julien's starchy bourgeois mother, and Peter Fitz, as a Gestapo agent who carries out the climactic raid, also are vivid.

Renato Berta's lensing and Emmanuelle Castro's editing contribute to the film's fluid movement and lucid direction. Len.

Fri., Sept. 11, 1987

He's My Girl

(Romantic comedy — Color)

A Scotti Bros. Entertainment release. Executive producers, Tony Scotti, Fred Scotti, Ben Scotti. Produced by Lawrence Taylor Mortorff, Angela Schapiro. Directed by Gabrielle Beaumont. Screenplay, Taylor Ames, Charles F. Bohl. Camera (Guffanti Labs), Peter Lyons Collister; editor, Roy Watts; art director, Cyntha Kay Charette; sed decorator, Gary D. Randall; sound, Ed Somers; costume design, Patricia Field; assistant director, Xavier H. Reyes; casting, Meryl O'Laughlin. Reviewed at Scotti Bros. screening room, Santa Monica, Sept. 10, 1987. MPAA Rating: PG-13. Running time: 104 min.

Reggie/Regina	T.K. Carter
Bryan	
Tasha	Misha McK
Lisa	
Simon Sledge	Warwick Sims
Mason Morgan	
Sally	

"He's My Girl" is a funny sex farce from Scotti Bros. Entertainment that rises well above its lowbudget rock 'n roll genre by the sheer exuberance of its cast working from a snappy script. Unknown talent and indie distributor might limit b.o., but creative marketing and lead song tie-in may help ticket sales.

French singer David Hallyday gets star billing as a hungry rock musician from Missouri, but his black gas station attendant/manager, T.K. Carter, steals this show.

The duo win a contest from Video LaLa, an MTV-type Los Angeles station, to be limoed around Hollywood for a week at the end of which they get a splashy, mediahyped debut on national tv.

The hitch is Hallyday is told he must bring a girl with him and for every reason like loyalty, friendship and plain old obligation (Carter was the one who entered the cotest), the rocker gives in to Carter's

powers of persuasion and agrees to allow him to dress like a femme and parade as his object d'amour.

Under Gabrielle Beaumont's lively direction, working with Taylor Ames and Charles F. Bohl's often-clever script and aided tremendously by Roy Watts' crisp editing, this youth comedy surfaces with a certain amount of freshness as it falls somewhere between a parody of rockers and transvestites and the silliness that sometimes characterizes their lives and a sentimental love-at-first-sight story.

Fortunately, filmmakers have also managed to keep the rock score down to a few, unobtrusive numbers at the beginning and at the end—but enough to be able to sell the picture to that crucial youth market.

Mistaken identity theme, thankfully, has a much wider appeal, which distinguishes this from the blatantly commercial pop that's released ad nauseum today.

Carter is a considerable talent and, whether it's unintentional or not, plays a better slightly-lessthan-trampy transvestite than he does hetero music manager.

His character undergoes a number of humiliations that would make even Jim Bailey blanche, but none too salacious to offend.

Equally good, if less intriguing a personna, is David Clennon as Video LaLa's huckster Mason Morgan. He's got a thing for black women, whom he refers to by any number of diminutives — all very funny.

Secondary characters are considerably more one-dimensional, including Hallyday, who has managed to lose any trace of his French accent and unfortunately has allowed a certain blandness into his performance as well.

Also, both his and Carter's love interests could have used some different personality traits.

Misha McK, the gorgeous assistant at Video LaLa, is sweet, but otherwise it's hard to see what Carter's fussing about. Jennifer Tilly tries too hard to be both an ardent sculptor and ditzy cocktail waitress.

Warwick Sims, as has-been acid rocker Simon Sledge, has some choice moments on-screen — the best when he accidentally gets his gum caught in his long tresses and decides that rather than discarding it, to stick it back in his mouth.

There are some problems with continuity and sound mixing which aren't particularly egregious, but are noticable.

Pic ends with a where-are-theynow seg that is totally unnecessary and actually detracts from the nice ness of the finale.

Brit.

Tues., Sept. 22, 1987

House Of Games (Drama — Color)

An Orion Pictures release of a Filmhaus production. Produced by Michael Hausman. Written and directed by David Mamet. Story, Jonathan Katz, Mamet. Camera (Panavision, color), Juan Ruiz Anchia; editor, Trudy Ship; art direction, Michael Merritt; costumes, Nan Cibula; music, Alaric Jans; special effects, Robert Willard; sound, Anthony John Ciccolini III. Reviewed at the Venice Film Festival (competing), Sept. 3, 1987.

MPAA Rating: R. Running time: 102 min.

Margaret FordLindsay Crouse
MikeJoe Mantegna
JoeyMike Nussbaum
Dr. LittauerLilia Skala
BusinessmanJ. T. Walsh
Also with: Willo Hausman, Karen Kohlhaas, Steve Goldstein, Jack Wallace, Ricky
Jay, G. Roy Levin, Bob Lumbra, Andy Potok, Allen Soule.

Venice — Writer David Mamet's first trip behind the camera as a director is entertaining good fun, an American film noir with Hitchcockian touches and a few dead bodies along the way. The action unfolds at a steady pace, highlighted by a series of con games which are explained like good card tricks. Not overly sophisticated as a thriller (Mamet doesn't hesitate to explain his tricks an extra time to be sure they're understood, and anybody who's read a mystery should guess the final hoax 20 minutes before the heroine does), "House Of Games" shows a woman giving in to hidden desires that endanger her safe world. Film should find an audience without difficulty.

Any story that pairs a psychiatrist and a con man has possibilities. Here the famous Dr. Margaret Ford (Lindsay Crouse) finds her patients' lives more interesting than her own, and with the unwitting encouragement of her mentor (Lilia Skala), allows herself to be drawn into a nest of confidence sharks.

In the tense atmosphere of a smoky backroom cardtable, the irresistible heel Mike (Joe Mantegna) sets her up for a \$6000 drubbing.

The good doctor gets out of that one by comic chance, but drawn to Mike and his dangerous life, she comes back the next night for more.

As a debutant director, Mamet devotes more energy to getting through scenes than developing characters, and pic could have done with a hint more work in this department.

Why, for example, is Lindsay Crouse decked out in masculine garb and haircut? In the absence of a compelling reason, the part cries out for a cool Hitchcock blond with more fragility, all the better to stun in the last-scene turn-around.

Mantegna, on the other hand, is right on target as one of the screen's most likable baddies, obviously a better psychologist as far as human nature goes than the professional shrink.

His big con involves an elaborate setup to convince a conventioneer, picked up by partner Mike Nussbaum, to offer "security" for a suitcase full of money found on the street.

Where the film shows at the seams is in Dr. Margaret Ford's apparently unlimited gullibility, equaled only by her fatal flaw of making Freudian slips at the wrong moment. Pic opts for a fashionably cynical ending that washes its hands of two potentially deep characters and settles for a cute twist.

Alaric Jans' edgy score and Michael Merritt's classic noirish sets keep film firmly rooted in the thriller genre. Juan Ruiz Anchia's camerawork is simple and effective. Yung.

Thurs., Sept. 3, 1987

Julia And Julia

(Italian — Drama — Color)

An Artist Associati (in U.S., Cinecom) release of a RAI-TV production. Directed by Peter Del Monte. Screenplay, Del Monte, Silvia Napolitano, Sandro Petraglia; camera. (high definition video HDVS, color by Technicolor), Giuseppe Rotunno, editor, Michael Chandler; art direction, Mario Gar-buglia; music, Maurice Jarre; English dialog, Joseph Minion. Reviewed at C.D.S., Rome, Aug. 26, 1987. Running time; 97 min. Julia Kathleen Turner Paolo......Gabriel Byrne Paolo's Father Gabriele Ferzetti Paolo's Mother.....Angela Goodwin With: Lidia Broccolino (Carla), Norman Mozzato, Yprgo Voyagis, Mirella Falco, Alexander Van Wyk (Marco), Francesca Muzio, John Steiner, Renato Scarpa (Com-

Venice - "Julia And Julia"

weds high tech and the Italo art film in hopes of coming up with international entertainment. Results are mixed. Superficial resemblance to Kathleen Turner's "Peggy Sue Got Married" could be a plus abroad, though this is a colder, European version with sexual morbidity and adult scenes in the place of humor. Convoluted plot also has a tendency to confuse viewers halfway through.

But one of distrib's main headaches will be getting a watchable 35m transfer into theaters. Italy's RAI-TV has been experimenting with high-definition television (HDTV), or video with 1125 lines an image instead of the usual 600-odd, since 1983. "Julia And Julia" was born as a pioneer effort at using the new advances in electronic technology for feature filmmaking, put into artistic hands, budgeted beyond \$10,000,000, with a cast headed by starnames Turner and Sting.

Prints screened for press in Rome and Venice showed there were still technical bugs to work out in transfering HDTV to film stock.

Yet despite these problems, director-cowriter Peter Del Monte and his cameraman Giuseppe Rotunno, with the help of art director Mario Garbuglia, manage to turn film's visual into a major asset, creating an eerie atmosphere that recalls De Chirico's metaphysical paintings. It helps, particularly when the going gets rough in the script department.

Viewers meet Julia (Turner) on the day of her wedding to Paolo (Gabriel Byrne). Setting, the Adriatic coast near Trieste, is breathtaking, the couple radiant.

Six years later, Julia is a lonely travel agent still obsessed with her lost love. One night, after driving through a foggy tunnel, she is surprised to find herself in another dimension: in the midst of the life she would have had if the fatal car accident hadn't occurred.

In this other world, she lives in material bliss with Paolo and their little boy. But soon she discovers there's a threat to her happiness, a demonic photographer named Daniel (Sting), who is her secret lover. All her efforts to shake off this violent man prove useless, and after he rapes her practically in the middle of the town square, Julia decides to get rid of him.

The other threat to Julia is that film begins casually shifting her back and forth between this world and reality.

Turner is not at her subtle best acting-wise, tending toward loud overreactions, but if film sticks together at all it's thanks to the force of her star persona, convincing us Julia is sane. Sting handles his small, double role with modest understatement, and as the sensitive, comprehensive husband, Byrne makes one of his most successful screen appearances.

The English-language version makes use of the unpleasant convention whereby everyone in Trieste speaks pidgin English, on the flimsy excuse of Julia's American background

Maurice Jarre's score is right in tune with pic's abstract spookiness.

Tues., Sept. 1, 1987

The Kid Brother (Canadian-Japanese — Drama — Color)

A Kinema Amerika-Yoshimura/Gagnon-Toho coproduction. Executive producers, Matsuo Takahashi, Makoto Yamashina. Produced by Kiyoshi Fujimoto. Coproduced by Hirohiko Sueyoshi. Written and directed by Claude Gagnon. Camera (Fujicolor), Yudai Kato; editor, Andre Corriveau; music, Francois Dompierre; production design, Bill Bilowit; costumes, Maureen Hogan; sound, Russell Fager; production manager, Kathleen Caton; line producer, Dennis Bishop; assistant director, Eduardo Rossoff. Reviewed at World Film Festival, Montreal (competing) Aug. 28, 1987. Running time: 95 min.

Kenny. Kenny Easterday
Sharon Caitlin Clarke
Sharon Kay Liane Curtis
Jesse Zack Grenier
Eddy Jesse Easterday Jr.
Billy Tom Reddy
Philippe Alain. St-Alix
Grandfather John Carpenter

Montreal — "The Kid Brother" is built entirely around its 13-year-old star, a severely handicapped Pennsylvania boy who has no legs or lower torso. The fact that there'll be audiences the world over who will want to be inspired by Kenny Easterday's pluck should give the film wide international release. Critical debates may add to public interest, so the offbeat item looks to have a useful career ahead of it.

Film is likely to become a talking point wherever it's shown. French-Canadian director Claude Gagnon has made a presumably fictionalized film about Kenny and his family, financed with Japanese coin. Result is heartwarming and disturbing in about equal proportions.

Without young Kenny, there'd simply be no film. He proves to be a relaxed and charming young actor, who is amazingly agile in getting around, via his long, strong arms. His dramatic range is impressive — more so, in fact, than that of some of his costars.

His real-life brother, Jesse Jr., also is effective as his brother, though the character is called Eddy in the film. Caitlin Clarke and Zack Grenier play the boy's loving parents with strength and sympathy, but Liane Curtis seems a bit out of her depth in the crucial role of Kenny's 18-year-old sister, who has left home because she finds it hard to be around her kid brother whom she accuses of taking advantage of other members of his family.

Curtis has a regular jock for a boyfriend, whom Kenny hero-worships. But she craves her independence, and spends a night with a member of a French television crew that's come to make a documentary about Kenny and his family.

This rebellion spurs her eventual departure from the family's small home, and cues Kenny's daring trip to Pittsburgh to find her, sparking the film's climactic confrontation as she pours out to her brother her feelings about him.

Early part of the film is given over to satirizing the French film crew, and especially the bland director (Alain St-Alix) who ostensibly has come to make a record of the way the family lives, but who actually manipulates them into his own vision of how they should be living.

Gagnon himself is equally open to the charge of manipulation, and there will be controversy when "The Kid Brother" goes into wide release. A scene where young Kenny is threatened by a Doberman belonging to a bad-tempered neighbor seems contrived, unnecessary in the context of the film.

Handouts for the pic were amazingly coy about what makes Kenny different from other kids: his first appearance comes as quite a jolt, but he's obviously reconciled to what he is, and the film's most telling scenes are those in which he rebels against having to use artificial

legs and lower torso, pointing out they only slow him down and are intended not for him but so that his condition won't shock people who see him.

The plucky, endearing youngster came on stage after the competing screening at the Montreal fest and took a well-deserved bow. Strat.

Thurs., Sept. 3, 1987

King Lear

(U.S.-Swiss — Drama — Color)

A Cannon Films production. Produced by Menahem Golan, Yoram Globus. Written and directed by Jean-Luc Godard. Camera (color), Sophie Maintigneux; sound, Francois Musy. Reviewed at World Film Festival, Montreal (hors concours), Aug. 30, 1987. Running time: 90 min.

Lear Burgess Meredith
Shakespeare Peter Sellars
Cordelia Molly Ringwald
Professor Jean-Luc Godard
Mr. Alien Woody Allen
With: Norman Mailer, Kate Miller

Montreal — Jean-Luc Godard's fascinating first feature in English is a lyrical and purposely provocative "approach" to "King Lear." If Godard has not totally succeeded in challenging conventional assumptions about illusion and reality, this is a noble failure that restores meaning to the bankrupt term "art film." As such, it deserves a carefully handled specialty release aimed at audiences who are prepared to accept and possibly enjoy this surreal meditation on its own terms.

In the wake of the Chernobyl disaster, "movies and art no longer exist and must be reinvented," muses William Shakespeare V, a development veep for the Cannon Cultural Division, who's traveling in Europe in search of bankable projects.

He's come to Nyons, France, looking for a reclusive filmmaker who can help him rediscover "meaning" in reality as well as art. While dining at a luxury seaside hotel, he becomes fixated upon a mad old American and his devoted, introspective daughter. Shakespeare endeavors to put Mr. Lear and his daughter Cordelia in a film, but it isn't easy.

So much for the plot of Godard's film.

Following the pattern of his recent films, "Detective" and "Hail Mary," Godard freely employs disconnected imagery and relooped soundtrack effects to strip images and words of surface meanings in favor of an anarchic sensory bombardment.

This, the filmmaker suggests, is how the consciousness perceives the world behind the mask of sanity. Burgess Meredith as Lear does a fine job of imparting the erratic lucidity of mental disintegration as conveyed by Godard's rambling, fragmentary script.

Beauty in Godard's "Lear" is akin to salvation, and the filmmaker's eye alights upon the China-like loveliness of Molly Ringwald's features with lingering close-ups not likely to be found in a John Hughes flick

Her deadpan, emotionless line readings stand in cool relief to the overboiled ramblings of Lear, Shakespeare V and the filmmaking "professor" (Godard), whose dreadlocks of wires and cables testify to the insanity-inducing potential of chasing pure images.

The scenario is loosely connected with wordplay intertitles along the lines of "NOthing — No-thing," as it shifts points-of-view with dreamlike illogic. Always industryminded, Godard opens "Lear"

with the distorted but distinct accents of Cannon topper Menahem Golan pledging his loyalty to the project.

There's also a prolog using brief footage shot of Norman Mailer and his daughter before they dropped out of Godard's "Lear." Godard the jokester subsequently borrows the mafia motif suggested by "the great writer" by putting into Meredith's mouth a rambling soliloquy on Meyer Lansky and Bugsy Siegel while an uncomprehending Ringwald obediently listens.

Walkouts are inevitable at this sort of film, but it almost seems as if Godard anticipated the pitterpatter of early exits as a counterpoint to his "message."

Those who stick around until the end (as did most at a Montreal World Film Festival public screening) are rewarded with a cameo by Woody Allen (Mr. Alien) as a film editor tangled up in runaway celluloid.

Rich.

Fri., Sept. 18, 1987

Lady Beware

(Suspense drama - Color)

A Scotti Bros. release produced in association with International Video Entertainment. Produced by Tony Scotti, Lawrence Taylor-Mortorff. Executive producers, Ben Scotti, Fred Scotti. Directed by Karen Arthur. Stars Diane Lane. Screenplay, Susan Miller, Charles Zev Cohen. Camera (United Color Lab Color), Tom Neuwirth; editor, Roy Watts; music, Craig Safan; set decoration, Tom Wells costumes, Patricia Fields; sound (Dolby), Larry Loewinger; associate producer, assistant director, Paula Marcus; casting, Diane Dimeo, Joy Todd Inc., Sharon & Clayton Hill. Reviewed at the Scotti Bros. screening room, Santa Monica, Sept. 11, 1987. MPAA Rating: R. Running time: 108 min.

Katya Yarno	Diane Lane
Jack Price	. Michael Woods
Mac Odell	Cotter Smith
Lionel	.Peter Nevargic
Thayer	Edward Penn
Nan	Tyra Ferrell

Beware of "Lady Beware," an unthrilling thriller in which the central psychopath has more success boring the audience to death than knocking off the heroine. Too "serious" to work as an exploitationer but too dramatically inept to measure up to its own aspirations of thematic importance, dreary meller will make a quick pitstop in theaters on the way to its rendezvous with homevid destiny.

Above-the-title star Diane Lane plays a fashionable young lady come to Pittsburgh to make her name at the most radical department store windowdresser on the Monongahela. Her punky, avant-garde displays attract plenty of attention, including that of Michael Woods, a good-looking lab technician who clearly jumped off the deep end a long time ago.

Most of the action, such as it is, consists of Woods hounding Lane, leaving sinister messages on her answering machine, breaking into her loft apartment in her absence, and so on. She finally decides to fight back, but not by the traditional film way of getting a gun and blowing her nemesis away, but by turning the tables.

This appears to be the vaguely feminist point of Karen Arthur's picture, that a woman can fight back without fleeing or reducing herself to the man's base level. The characters are so uninteresting, however, the pacing so sluggish and the mood so glum, that one's fast-forward finger becomes quick-

Lane is pleasant enough to watch, but her range is too limited to carry such a thinly conceived drama

ly itchy.

single-handedly. Male fans will be gratified by her big nude scene, parts of which are repeated later on as memory flashbacks of her voyeuristic tormenter.

Michael Woods, star of television's new "Private Eye" series, is obvious hunk material but won't turn anyone on here with his thoroughly repulsive character, and Cotter Smith comes and goes as Lane's aspiring boyfriend.

Finally, there's no excuse for a pic of this nature with so little action running 108 minutes when 90 would have been more than enough.

ougn. Cart.

Wed., Sept. 9, 1987

The Last Straw

(Canadian — Comedy — Color)

A Cinema International Canada release of a National Film Board of Canada production. Produced by David Wilson, Giles Walker. Directed by Walker. Screenplay, Walker, Wilson. Camera (color), Andrew Kitzanuk; editor, David Wilson; sound, Yves Gendron; music, Robert Lauzon, Fernand Martet; production manager, Maurice Pion; costumes, Janet Campbell; associate producer, Denise Beaudoin; assistant director, Francois Gingras. Reviewed at National Film Board, Toronto, Sept. 4, 1987. Running time: 98 min.

Toronto — Giles Walker takes the two leads of his 1985 National Film Board comedy "90 Days" on an even droller, more surreal journey in his clever, exuberant sequel. Its humor is for mature, informed audiences and it taps into some of the major concerns in adult contempo society — infertility, feminism, and conspicuous consumption. The accessibility of this low-budgeter should be the key for a careful, wide release.

Pic primarily focuses on Alex (Sam Grana), who is now the most potent man in the world. In "90 Days" he was asked to be a sperm donor for sleek businesswoman Laura's (Fernanda Tavares) friend. Now Laura has opened an infertility clinic and has Alex' potency tested.

In hilarious scenes with the whacky, impossibly restrained Nurse Thompson (Beverley Murray), who clinically provides background mood music for his sperm donor duties, Alex has discovered that he has an extraordinary 99.5% sperm motility.

Dr. Cameron, who works on artificial insemination with bulls, wants to put Alex into production on the spot. He's as much a prize bull as the doc's barnyard varieties, and his fame attracts the most opportunistic leeches.

Plot gets a bit loopy, though, when Australian agents attempt to abduct Alex to recruit him as a stud to solve Australia's infertility problem and revive the image of the potent Aussie male.

A companion storyline follows Blue (Stefan Wodoslawsky), who in "90 Days" married a Korean mail-order bride, Hyang-Sook (Christine Pak). Now they're living in wedded bliss but are having trouble conceiving, and they, too, resort to Laura's clinic and want to receive Alex's sperm.

Film is unapologetically Canadian, with Alex touting his product as Canadian-made; a Canadian task force is set up when Alex is kidnapped, and charts Canadian, Russian, and American sperm production since 1965.

Walker loves his characters and

gets a very appealing, deadpan performance from his lead. Grana gives Alex credibility and irony in a delicate and humorous situation. Murray's nurse is a loony professional, who wears gloves when she's anywhere near Alex ("I don't want children myself," she says).

Wodoslawsky and Pak are a surprisingly believable, compassionate couple. The script glistens and shines throughout with comic gems, and while the story goes off the wall, the basic premise and subtext of designer donors and high-tech babies is topical and on the mark.

Devo.

Thurs., Sept. 10, 1987

Life Classes

(Canadian — Comedy-Drama — Color)

A Cinephile release in Canada of a Picture Plant production. Producer, Stephen Reynolds; executive producer, William D. MacGillivray. Written and directed by MacGillivray. Camera (color), Lionel Simmons; editor, MacGillivray; art director, Mary Steckle; sound, Jim Rillie; music, Alexandra Tilley; production manager, Terry Greenlaw; assistant director, Gordon Parsons. Reviewed at Bloor Cinema, Toronto, Sept. 2, 1987. Running time: 117 min.

Mary Cameron Jacinta Cormier
Earl Leon Dubinsky
Nanny Evelyn Garbary
Mrs. Miller Mary Izzard
Gloria Francis Knickle
Marie Jill Chatt
Mr. Cameron Leo Jessome
Mrs. Sitwell Caitlyn Colquhoun

Toronto — "Life Classes" is a disarming, moving and funny feature by Nova Scotia director Bill MacGillivray. There are many levels of enjoyment in this quiet, modest pic about a young woman's journey to becoming a self-sufficient artist, and it deserves handling to reach the right audiences.

MacGillivray's tale centers on Mary Cameron (Jacinta Cormier), a young Cape Breton woman who wiles away the time in her rural town with paint-by-numbers projects, working in her dad's pharmacy, and seeking out her Gaelic past with her beloved, ailing Nanny. When Mary discovers she's pregnant by her laid-back boyfriend Earl, the local bootlegger (Leon Dubinsky), she decides to go to Halifax — the big city — to have the baby.

While working in a department store, she is befriended by Gloria, a punky college art student who convinces Mary to model nude for lifedrawing classes. Mary gradually takes the road to self-fulfillment by starting to sketch her daughter Marie and then herself, developing her own latent talents and becoming an acknowledged artist.

She returns to Cape Breton at the end to start work on the lovely house that Nanny bequeathed her when she died, and decides to go it alone despite Earl's offer of support.

The leisurely pace and character development are all part of the personal style of MacGillivray, who in the past has directed docus and a feature, "Stations." There's deadpan, low key humor in most of the vignettes, especially in a primal therapy art "happening" in which Mary sings nude and confesses her feelings about her family and Earl, while it is being picked up by Earl's illegal satellite dish.

MacGillivray also pops the balloon of self-conscious, pretentious art historians. His sense of place of Nova Scotia is right on target and with cinematographer Lionel Simmons, translates the measured motion and down-home, proud nature

of the province.

The cast is almost uniformly solid. Cormier brings vulnerability, anger and self-confidence to Mary, who has a beautiful voice for her Gaelic tunes, too. The real find here is Leon Dubinsky; his Earl is natural, lively, aboveboard and sweet. Jill Clatt's Marie is button-cute, while the only weak link is Leo Jessome as Mary's stilted father.

Subtext of finding cultural roots and taking responsibility for one's life — and creation — is woven into the fabric of this pic without seeming heavyhanded. Maritime Canada is well-served by this production, which was shot for \$C622,000.

Wed., Sept. 9, 1987

The Lighthorsemen (Australian — Period Drama — Color)

A Cinecom release (Hoyts in Australia) of RKO Pictures presentation of a Picture Show production. Executive producer, Antony I. Ginnane. Produced by Ian Jones, imon Wincer. Directed by Wincer. Screenplay, Jones; camera (Panavision, Eastmancolor), Dean Semler; editor, Adrian Carr; music, Mario Millo; production design, Bernard Hides; sound, Lloyd Carrick; stunt coordinator, Grant Page; costumes, David Rowe; production supervisor, Phillip Corr; special effects, Steve Courtley; assistant director, Bob Donaldson; horse masters, Gerald Egan, Bill Willoughby, Jim Willoughby, Ray Winslade; production consultant, Gail Brealey. Reviewed at Hoyts screening room, Sydney, July 28, 1987. Running time:

Scotty. .Jon Blake Dave MitchellPeter Phelps Lt. Col. (Swagman Bill) Bourchier Tony Bonner Lt. Gen. Sir Harry Chauvel Bill Kerr Tas.....John Walton Frank..... Gary Sweet Chiller..... .Tim McKenzie Anne.....Sigrid Thornton Major Meinertzhagen Anthony Andrews

Von Kressenstein ... Ralph Cotterill With: John Heywood (Mr. Mitchell), Di O'Connor (Mrs. Mitchell), Grant Piro (Charlie), Patrick Frost (Sgt. Ted Seager), Adrian Wright (Lawson), Anne Scott-Pendlebury (Nursing sister), Brenton Whittle (Padre), Jon Sidney (Grant), Graham Dow (Hodgson), James Wright (Fitzgerald), Gary Stalker (Nobby), Scott Bradley (Lt. Burton), Peter Merrill (young German officer), Peter Browne (Arch).

Sydney — Despite its flaws, "The Lighthorsemen" should perform very well at the Australian boxoffice; word of mouth about the tremendous climactic sequence should ensure the public comes to see the flag-waving spectacle. Overseas prospects look good, too, especially if the more awkward scenes are eliminated.

Toward the end of this epic about Aussie cavalary fighting in the Middle East in 1917, there's a tremendously exciting and spectacular 14-minute sequence in which soldiers of the Light Horse charge on German/Turkish-occupied Beersheba.

Sequence is a magnificent piece of filmcraft, impeccably shot, edited, staged and stunted, and for many this scene alone will be worth the price of admission to "The Lighthorsemen." It's as much a showstopper as the climax to Michael Curtiz' "The Charge Of The Light Brigade."

It's a pity writer and coproducer Ian Jones couldn't come up with a more substantial storyline to build around this terrific climax, because the 101 minutes of footage before the charge is much less enthralling and compares unfavorably to Peter Weir's "Gallipoli," which it often resembles.

Focus of attention is on Dave

Mitchell, very well played by Peter Phelps. Opening sequence, which is breathtakingly beautiful, is set in Australia and involves young Dave deciding to enlist in the Light Horse.

Action then shifts to Gaza for the first of several miscalculated scenes involving German or Turkish officers: these poorly written and awkwardly acted segments should be pruned, as they add little to the basic story, and destroy much of the authenticity the film creates in other scenes.

Main story involves four friends (Jon Blake, John Walton, Tim Mc-Kenzie, Gary Sweet), who are members of the Australian cavalry,

chafing because the British, who have overall command of allied troops in the area, misuse the cavalry time and again, forcing the Australians to dismount before going into battle.

Sweet is wounded in one encounter with the enemy, and his place is taken by Phelps, who's at first resented by the other three until he proves his courage and loyalty.

But Phelps finds himself unable to shoot at the enemy, and eventually is relegated to being a stretcher bearer (cue for romance with pretty nurse Sigrid Thornton) before courageously going to the help of his friends in the final battle.

On every conceivable technical

level, "The Lighthorsemen" is a super production. It was expensive to make, but the money's up there on the screen.

Dean Semler's Panavision photography gloriously captures the spectacle of desert warfare; Bernard Hides' production design authentically re-creates Palestine; Adrian Carr's editing, especially in the action scenes, is very precise.

As long as the film concentrates on the young Australian cavalrymen, it's entertaining.

Scenes, however, involving the officers, and especially the enemy officers, just don't work, and usually reliable actors such as Gerard Kennedy and Ralph Cotterill are unconvincing. Nor does imported British actor Anthony Andrews add

anything in his role.

The principal leads are very well played, with Phelps a standout as the most interesting of the young soldiers. Walton scores as the quick-tempered leader of the group, while McKenzie creates a character out of very little material.

Topbilled Blake is thoroughly charming as Scotty.

Back in 1941, Australian director Charles Chauvel used the charge of the Light Horse at Beersheba for the climax of his popular film "Forty Thousand Horsemen." The expertise with which the heroic battle has been staged here will ensure the popularity of Simon Wincer's film

Mon., Sept. 21, 1987

Like Father Like Son (Comedy — Color)

A Tri-Star Pictures release. Produced by Brian Grazer, David Valdes. Directed by Rod Daniel. Stars Dudley Moore. Screenplay, Lorne Cameron, Steven L. Bloom. Camera (Technicolor), Jack N. Green; editor, Lois Freeman-Fox; music, Miles Goodman; production design, Dennis Gassner; set decoration, John T. Walker; costume design, Robert Turturice; sound (Dolby), C. Darin Knight; assistant director, Dan Kolsrud; casting, Judith Weiner. Reviewed at Mann's Chinese Theater, Los Angeles, Sept. 17, 1987. MPAA Rating: PG-13. Running time: 98 min.

Dr. Jack Hammond ... Dudley Moore Chris Hammond ... Kirk Cameron Trigger ... Sean Astin Dr. Armbruster ... Patrick O'Neal

Ginnie Armbruster Margaret Colin Dr. Amy Larkin Catherine Hicks

One wonders after watching "Like Father Like Son" why Dudley Moore has stopped sitting down at the piano in his films, for it seems that every successive nonmusical character he's played since "Arthur" has been increasingly charmless and unamusing. Both he and costar Kirk Cameron suffer from a bad case of flap jaw in this messy, repetitive rolereversal comedy that really reaches for laughs. Boxoffice outlook is dim.

Underlying Lorne Cameron and Steven L. Bloom's overly talkative script is premise that defies logic.

Moore plays a stuffy British-born surgeon and Cameron his motormouth teenage son who find themselves in each other's bodies when Moore unknowingly takes a dose of brain transference serum.

They manage to switch intelligence and personality but somehow lose the memory chips in the process thereby setting up for the comedic situations that anyone could foretell.

When Cameron goes to school, he acts like his father, which means boring his class with a lengthy discourse on the human respiratory system while out on the track, he blows a relay race.

Cameron's from tv's "Growing Pains" and he successfuly transfers that talent to screen, except here it's 98 instead of 30 minutes of benign dialog to recite. He's cute and his teen heart throb persona survives intact

As Cameron, Moore eats Cocoa Puffs and calls out to his hospital buddies, "Que Pasa?" and "What's Happening." He plays acid rock air-guitar to MTV and tools around in a new, \$12,000 Jeep. The real-life sophisticated Moore plays an ignorant slob and that's a waste of talent.

It's strictly sitcom stuff, except for smatterings of four-letter words. Sloppy directing and choppy editing also contribute to pic's overall episodic feel.

Unbelievably, neither father nor son seems to be in a particular hurry about getting out of their predicament by leaning on the kid responsible (Sean Astin). It just sort of gets worked out in the desert in the last few minutes of the film.

For whatever reason, filmmakers didn't seem to want to convey a sense of panic and without that urgency, the joke's less fun.

Brit.

Thurs., Sept. 10, 1987

Made In Heaven

(U.S. — Drama — Color)

A Lorimar Motion Pictures presentation of a Rudolph, Blocker production. Produced by Raynold Gideon, Bruce A. Evans, David Blocker. Directed by Alan Rudolph. Screenplay, Evans, Gideon; camera (color), Jan Klesser; editor, Tom Walls; music, Mark Isham; sound, Ron Judkins, Robert Jackson; art direction, Steve Legler; sets, Paul Peters; costumes, April Ferry; special effects, Max W. Anderson. Reviewed at Venice Film Festival (competing), Sept. 6, 1987. MPAA Rating: PG. Running time: 103 min.

Elmo Barnet Timothy Hutton

Almi Fackeru
Ally Chandler Kelly McGillis
Aunt Lisa Maureen Stapleton
Ben ChandlerDon Murray
Mrs. Packert Marj Dusay
Mr. Packert Ray Gideon
Billy Packert Zack Finch
Annette Shea Ann Wedgeworth
Steve SheaJames Gammon
Brenda CarlucciMare Winningham
Also with: Neil Young, Tom Robbins,
ames Tolkan, Ric Ocasek, Vyto Ruginis,
ailard Sartain, Leon Martell, Matraca Berg,
_

Tom Petty, John Considine, Rob Kneeper, Robert Gould, Debra Dusay and uncredited Ellen Barkin, Debra Winger.

Venice — There's a gentle comedy here that could have been integrated in the romantic fantasy genre along with classics such as "Angel On My Shoulder" and "Here Comes Mr. Jordan." The script, however, obviously held material that was too abundant for one single feature. Cutting pic to reach a playable running time, in this instance, is counterproductive, for it stresses the episodic nature of the story, most episodes lacking necessary substance as they are rushed into the next one.

The differences of opinion between producers and director on this project, some of which were clearly hinted at in the Venice press conferences held by Alan Rudolph, are obviously the source of many of this film's flaws.

Mike Shea is a nice small-town boy who dies and goes to heaven. There he is introduced to eternal life by his long-deceased Aunt Lisa. He also meets the solicitious Annie, a beautiful guide with whom he falls in love, and finally encounters Emmett, the strange person who is not God but is in charge of seeing that everything proceeds smoothly, as ordained.

Mike falls in love with Annie, who was born in Heaven, but before they can establish a valid union, she is sent to do her stint on Earth. He begs Emmett to let him go back as well and is granted 30 years to find his love again down below.

At this point, the script leaves Heaven and comes back to fleshand-blood reality, as it telescopes the 30 years at the end of which the couple is inevitably to meet, just before deadline.

Except for one episode, in which Elmo meets a tough cookie and is led by her, through his innocence, to participate in a gang fight, the script displays the kind of trust in human nature and its finer qualities that is rare these days, and Rudolph packages it all in a kind of rosy cheerful light, both Heaven and Earth being shown as places where nothing really bad can happen, even death being only a transitory stage from one place to another.

The nature of the story invites all sorts of religious and philosophical speculations, which are pretty much ignored here, even on the narrative level. For instance, one wonders about the possibility of being born in Heaven or having sex and children there, a premise that obviously would be shocking to traditional faith still discussing the sexual identity of angels.

Rudolph appears to have opted for a purely romantic approach, that is showing a love so perfect and strong that it can survive any obstacles, and inferring that there are such things as being paired in Heaven and that searching for the perfect mate on Earth is indeed justified.

If Timothy Hutton and Kelly Mc-Gillis are likeable, it is mostly through their own personalities that this quality comes out, the script pushing them around too much to allow any leisurely character building. Which, one could add, is exactly the opposite of what usually happens in a Rudolph film.

Some cameos in the film, like Maureen Stapleton's luminous Aunt Lisa, and Ann Wedgeworth as Mike's original mother who meets him again on his second stint on Earth and has a hand in his completing his destiny, are quite engaging.

The film has a good chance of becoming something of a cult item thanks to numerous guest performances, some of them uncredited, of showbusiness personalities such as Neil Young, who besides writing the film's theme, plays a truck driver, or Tom Petty who pops up as a mechanic.

Ellen Barkin plays the hellcat who almost deprives Hutton's character of his pure innocence, but she refused a credit, while Emmett, the great supervisor in the sky, a youngish-looking redhead credited as "playing himself," is none other than Debra Winger, Hutton's wife, who assumed the part on condition that it be kept a secret, by now revealed to all.

Musical score can also be expected to help, Rudolph relying once again, as he did many times before, on songs to support the story and convey its meanings. The attempt to separate between periods by changing color patterns is less successful, and art direction seems to be hesitant as to the right way of telling apart fantasy and reality. Edna.

Thurs., Sept. 3, 1987

Magic Sticks (West German-Austrian – Fantasy – Color)

A Wolfgang Odenthal Filmproduktion (Munich) — Tale Film (Vienna) production. Produced by Odenthal. Directed by Peter Keglevic. Screenplay, Keglevic, Chris Ragazzo, George Kranz; camera (color), Edward Klosinski; editor, Darren Kloomok; music, George Kranz; production design, Stephen McCabe, Sid Bartholomew; sound, Jochen Schwarzat; costumes, Ulrike Schutte; line producer, George Hofmann; casting, Leo Finger. Reviewed at World Film Fest, Montreal, Aug. 23, 1987. Running time: 91 min.

In English

Montreal — An English-track German production, handsomely shot on New York locations by Polish cinematographer Edward Klosinski, "Magic Sticks" is a cute-sy affair about an impoverished young drummer who obtains a pair of magic drumsticks from a street peddler. It's a rather precious concept for a film and is likely to appeal only to those with a keen sense of fantasy.

When he plays with them, the drummer discovers that native New Yorkers, but not newcomers to the Big Apple, respond with weird, jerky dancing — they become temporarily in some kind of magic state.

With the sticks, hero is able to charm music student Kelly Curtis, but finds himself in strife with a couple of small-time hoods who want some of the magic for themselves.

Lead actor George Kranz, who also coscripted and composed the music score, displays a rueful charm throughout the proceedings, but standout performance is Joe Silver in the role of a kindly pawnbroker. Pic's major asset, though, is Klosinski's splendid work behind the camera, as a result of which the big city positively shines. Strat.

Tues., Sept. 15, 1987

Near Dark (Thriller — Color)

A DeLaurentiis Entertainment Group release of a Feldman/Meeker production. Produced by Steven-Charles Jaffe. Executive producers, Edward S. Feldman, Charles R. Meeker. Coproducer, Eric Red. Directed by Kathryn Bigelow. Screenplay, Red, Bigelow. Camera (CFI Color), Adam Greenberg; editor, Howard Smith; music, Tangerine Dream; production design, Stephen Altman; art direction, Dian Perryman; costume design, Joseph Porro; sound (Ultra-Stereo), Donald Summer; special effects makeup, Gordon Smith; assistant director, Guy Louthan; second-unit camera, Chuck Colwell; associate producers, Diane Nabatoff, Mark Allan; casting, Karen Rea. Reviewed at the DEG Screening Room, Beverly Hills, Aug. 27, 1987. MPAA Rating: R. Running time: 95 min.

Caleb Adrian Pasdar
Mae Jenny Wright
Jesse Lance Henriksen
Severen Bill Paxton
Diamondback Jenette Goldstein
Loy Tim Thomerson
Homer Joshua Miller
Sarah Marcie Leeds

"Near Dark" achieves a new look in vampire films. Highpowered but pared down, slick but spare, this is something akin to a "Badlands" of the supernatural, a tale that introduces the unearthly into the banality of rural American existence. Second feature, but first mainstream effort, by director Kathryn Bigelow is intense and extremely well made, and target audience of DEG's marketing effort for this violent pickup should be the hip action crowd that went for "The Road Warrior" and "The Terminator." Pic had its world premiere last Saturday at the Toronto Festival of Festivals.

Nervous, edgy opening has sharp young cowboy Adrian Pasdar hooking up with Jenny Wright, a goodlooking new girl in town who's not adverse to some nocturnal roistering as long as she gets home by dawn.

Wright soon welcomes Pasdar into her "family," a bunch of real low-down boys and girls that would have done Charles Manson proud. Led by the spidery Lance Henriksen, the gang hibernates by day, but at night scours the vacant land-scapes in search of prey.

Rules of vampirism as set forth here have the newcomer in a kind of halfway state once he's bitten by his girlfriend. He won't become a full-fledged prince of darkness, however, until he's killed for himself, and he's put to the test in an agonizingly frightful roadhouse scene in which the bloodsuckers systematically dispatch the unfortunate habitues one by one.

Pasdar seems fully headed for a life on the wild side when the gang makes the mistake of licking their chops over the prospect of dining on his dad and little sister.

Still human enough to find this idea distasteful, he begins plotting against his colleagues. But killing a vampire has never been easy, and climax consists of some prolonged and rather spectacular assaults on the creatures who believe they will never die.

Script by Bigelow and Eric Red ("The Hitcher") is cool and laconic, and the evildoers essentially come off as some very nasty bikers who kill for sport as well as necessity.

Group is a particularly colorful one, as it reunites three veterans of "Aliens" — Henriksen, the exuberant scene-stealer Bill Paxton and the formidable Jenette Goldstein, and throws in Joshua Miller, the superbly ghastly little kid from "River's Edge," for good measure.

Main point of interest will be the work of Bigelow, who has undoubtedly created the most hard-edged, violent actioner ever directed by an American woman.

Her debut film, "The Loveless," made in 1981 in collaboration with Monty Montgomery, was an intriguingly arty biker pic with a stylistic

debt to Douglas Sirk via Rainer Werner Fassbinder.

"Near Dark" sees her working much more in the tough, highly visual Hollywood mode of Brian De Palma, Walter Hill and Jim Cameron, with a nod to Sam Peckinpah on one side and Terrence Malick on the other. Pic is a stylistic and generic hybrid, to be sure, but strongly and gutsily made on its own terms.

Leads are appealing enough, but don't quite generate the heat together that convinces one that this healthy young man would throw over his entire life for such a dubious alternative. In addition, with all the transferring of blood going on both through imbibing and transfusion, it will undoubtedly occur to viewers to ask whether or not vampires are susceptible to AIDS. Answer isn't revealed here.

Behind-the-scenes contributions on this modestly budgeted production are excellent, notably Adam Greenberg's evocative lensing, Howard Smith's very tight editing, Tangerine Dream's appropriate score and Gordon Smith's makeup effects, which make the vampires burn very realistically when they are struck by sunlight. Cart.

Wed., Sept. 23, 1987

Nightstick

(Police drama — Color)

A Production Distribution Co. release of a Sandy Howard presentation. Produced by Martin Walters. Directed by Joseph L. Scanlan. Screenplay, James J. Docherty; camera (color), Robert Fresco; editor, Richard Wells, Daniel Radford; music, Robert O. Ragland; art direction, Reuben Freed; set decoration, Tony Duggan-Smith; costume design, Eva Gord; special effects, Carere Special Effects; associate producer, Risa Gertner; assistant director, Ken Girotti; casting, Paul Bengston, David Cohn, Ann Tait. Reviewed at Showcase Allston Cinemas, Boston, Sept. 12, 1987. MPAA Rating: R. Running time. 92 min.

Jack Calhoun Bruce Fairbairn
Robin Malone Kerrie Keane
Ray Melton Robert Vaughn
Adam Beardsley John Vernon
Evans Leslie Nielsen
Roger Bantam Walker Boone
Jerry Bantam Tony De Santis
Pat Bantam David Mucci

Boston — This Sandy Howard production, originally filmed as "Calhoun," is a strictly routine formula picture with lone wolf cop Jack Calhoun (Bruce Fairbairn) on the track of three supposed terrorists.

The Bantam brothers (Walker Boone, Tony De Santis and David Mucci) have been knocking over chemical companies to get the component parts for nitroglycerin. Only pretending to be terrorists, they plan to get banker Adam Beardsley (John Vernon) to fork over a ransom to prevent his banks from being blown up.

Enter Calhoun, who's no Dirty Harry. Calhoun's two superiors, Melton (Robert Vaughn) and Evans (Leslie Nielsen), disagree as to Calhoun's value to the police department. Evans decides to put Calhoun on the case, and Melton objects. Audience never finds out why, and ultimately it proves to be irrelevant

Proceedings are strictly by the numbers. When Calhoun's girlfriend Robin (Kerrie Keane) inexplicably becomes involved as a hostage — so that the matter is now personal — he meets the bad guys in a climactic shootout in (where else?) a deserted warehouse.

Director Joseph L. Scanlan fails to make much of the material, frequently defusing the suspense by tipping off what will happen next. Rated R for the violence, it is a soft R, with most of the action taking place off camera or in long shot. (In one scene, Robin is kidnapped off the street in front of the hospital where she works. (It happens behind the Bantams' truck so that the audience only hears the scuffle.)

While veteran actors Vaughn, Nielsen and Vernon do what is expected of them, leads Fairbairn and Keane show real possibilities given a better script and direction. Fairbairn, who must carry the pic, attempts to inject some life into the proceedings, and shows a welcome sense of humor.

Lensed in Ontario, the film has been padded out with New York location footage in an attempt to give it some atmosphere. Kimm.

Tues., Sept. 8, 1987

Nowhere To Hide (Action — Color)

A New Century/Vista Film Company release of an Alliance Entertainment production. Produced by Andras Hamori. Executive producer, John Kemeny. Directed by Mario Azzopardi, Screenplay by Alex Rebar and George Goldsmith, based on a story by Alex Rebar. Camera (Film House Color), Vic Sarin; editor, Rit Wallis; music, Bard Fiedel; production executive, Susan Cavan; cos tume design, Renee April; stunt coordinator Buddy Joe Hooker; associate producer Stephane Reichel; sound mixers. Joe Grimaldi, Don White, Michael Liotta; cast ing, Amanda Mackey, Maria Armstrong. Ross Clydesdale. Reviewed at Hollywood Pacific Theater, Sept. 4, 1987. MPAA Rating: R. Running time: 90 min.
Barbara Cutter......Amy Madigan

Barbara Cutter. Amy Madigan
Rob Cutter. Daniel Hugh Kelly
Johnny Cutter. Robin MacEachern
Ben. Michael Ironside
General Howard. John Colicos
Mike Watson. Chuck Shamata
Mark Halstead. Clark Johnson

There's always been a bit of a hard edge to Amy Madigan's femininity and it's put to good use here as she plays a strong, physical heroine in this competent actioner. Screenplay and direction let her down, though, as promising storyline is ruined by connect-the-dots plot progression that telegraphs every development while the heavy-handed direction of Mario Azzopardi doesn't examine Madigan's character closely enough. Boxoffice chances are iffy.

Madigan is retired marine Barbara Cutter, the brainy, artistic wife of USMC officer Rob Cutter (Daniel Hugh Kelly, whose hair is a bit too blow-dried for Corps believability). After two Marine helicopters go down on maneuvers, Rob investigates wreckage to find out if cause was something other than human error.

He finds the clue quicker than you can say "crooked defense contractors," and when he brings the faulty rotor part, the key to the military-industrial coverup, home with him, he's brutally gunned down in his son's bedroom.

Story begins to strain under the weight of its incredibility when six-year-old son Johnny (Robin Mac-Eachern), who has witnessed the murder, keeps the rotor part snapped onto his robot toy and then suffers a case of elective mutism, not talking again until late in the film.

Baddies need to rub out Barbara before she finds the piece — and puts the pieces together — and so middle section has them chasing her all over the Montreal landscape (masquerading, evidently, as the Pacific Northwest).

When Madigan finally gets a clue as to what's up, she finds that almost everyone she trusted (save her husband) was implicated and that

Rated R for the violence, it is a soft everyone who tries to help her R, with most of the action taking seems to get murdered.

So she heads for refuge to the mountains and Rob's reclusive best buddy Ben (Michael Ironside), whom, the script hints, has been holed up since losing his Vietnamese wife to friendly fire.

By the time showdown occurs, causing Barbara to finally take rifle in hand again (she spends most of the film unarmed while she flees would-be assassins), there's little mystery as to how things will turn out. Sting operation that nails the villains in the end is just too pat, and reactions of principals at moment-of-truth lack credibility.

Occasionally subpar editing (including some violently bad jumpcuts early on) and sound further hamper overall presentation.

But Madigan usually rises above the story and technical glitches, carrying the pic on her sturdy shoulders. Had Azzopardi's touch been a bit more assured, and chain of events a bit more intelligent, she could have followed in Sigourney Weaver's footsteps and become a down-to-earth Lt. Ripley.

Camb.

Wed., Sept. 30, 1987

Once We Were Dreamers (Period drama — Israeli — Color)

A Hemdale presentation of a Belbo film. Produced by Ben Elkerbout, Ludi Boeken, Katriel Schory. Directed by Uri Barbash. Screenplay, Benny Barbash. Camera (United Studios Color). Amnon Salomon; editor, Tova Asher; music, Misha Segal; production design, Eilon Levy; U.S. casting, Paula Herold. Reviewed at the Tokyo International Film Festival (in competition), Sept. 26, 1987. Running time: 110 min.

Tokyo — If nobility and highminded earnestness were all that counted, "Once We Were Dreamers" would be a masterpiece. Unfortunately, those are about the only strong traits that mark this English-language Israeli production. Dramatically obvious and drearily verbose, tale of pioneer Jewish settlers in Palestine after World War I has widely been referred to simply as "Dreamers," but bears the longer title onscreen. Domestic commercial outlook is slight.

Entire action is placed within the immediate vicinity of a commune established in craggy Galilee by a dozen or so idealistic Jews either driven out of, or fed up with, the Old World.

Dedicated to principles of absolute equality, they have nearly as much trouble negotiating arguments among themselves as they do fighting off the occasional ambushes of the Arabs whose territory they've occupied, but they are soon able to celebrate the successful cultivation of the arid land, and their desired foothold has been gained.

Of course, the presence of a beautiful woman, Kelly McGillis, at the center of things breeds great divisiveness among the hot-blooded men at this isolated encampment, and brings the three leaders to grief.

It appears that, under their general agreement, traditional couples are frowned upon, but it is still obvious that McGillis and dashing violinist John Shea are meant for each other. Zev, the ideological chief of the group, doesn't see it that way, and events slowly but ultimately conspire to sour the Utopia the group had envisioned for itself.

Nevertheless, this is a symbolic tale about the formation of Israel,

and thus remains essentially dedicated to notions of optimism and hope in the face of adversity on all fronts.

But both the dramatic events and political attitudes are thoroughly predictable, making this a long trek through the desert to an inevitable destination.

Characters are given to a lot of unedited speechifying and director Uri Barbash, whose 1984 prison drama, "Beyond The Walls," was nominated for a best foreign film Oscar, betrays a marked tendency toward stagy composed groupings of characters, circling them around or staggering them behind the speaker as they listen to yet another impassioned oration.

Performances are uniformly intense and purposeful, with no room given over to humor or behavioral detail. Technical aspects are quite acceptable.

Cart

Tues., Sept. 15, 1987

Orphans (U.S. — Drama — Color)

A Lorimar Motion Pictures release. Produced and directed by Alan J. Pakula. Screenplay, Lyle Kessler, based on his play: coproducer, Susan Solt; camera (color), Donald McAlpine; design, George Jenkins; editor, Evan Lottman; music, Michael Small; costumes, John Boxer; associate producer, John H. Starke. Reviewed at the Toronto Festival of Festivals. Sept. 11, 1987, MPAA rat-

Toronto - From a collective actors' tour de force trisected by Albert Finney, Matthew Modine and Kevin Anderson, director Alan J. Pakula has fashioned a peculiar and demanding film that will have to be sold to audiences on the strength of its performances. Inherent dramatic insularity of Lyle Kessler's play about two urban outcast brothers and the Mephistophelian gangster who transforms their hermetic world is magnified on the bigscreen, but the film is driven by the inspired energies of its principal cast.

Treat (Matthew Modine) and Phillip (Kevin Anderson) live in isolated squalor in a ramshackle house on a vacant lot in Newark. Treat is a violent sociopath who ventures into New York to steal and scavenge. Phillip is a recluse terrified of the world outside the house and the physically dominant older brother who keeps him there, a virtual prisoner of fear.

The dynamics of their curious relationship with its shifting bonds of emotional and pragmatic interdependence are simultaneously mesmerizing and repelling. These feral, young orphans inhabit a netherworld in which a state of grace coexists with pitiful despair.

Like the drifters in "Stranger Than Paradise," the brothers speak in a fragmented "New Joisy" argot, a cartoonish device that exaggerates their bittersweet, fragmented communication.

An apparent simpleton, Phillip is actually hungry for knowledge of the world, particularly the meanings of strange words in the books and magazines Treat has forbidden him to read. Treat, who revels in his role as predator, is actually terrified of the rampaging emotions that control his frenetic and aimless existence.

Control of self and one's destiny

is the gospel of Harold (Albert Finney), a hard-drinking mobster whom Treat lures from a saloon to the house one night with the intention of holding their prosperous-looking older man for ransom.

The tables are quickly turned, however, when the mysterious but expansive gunman offers these two an opportunity for big money and a spiffy new life. Seems that the old guy was an orphan himself, and sees in these "dead-end kids" a reflection of his own troubled youth.

The transmogrification of Treat and Phillip into well-fed, well-dressed young men and the renovation of their home into something out of House Beautiful, gives the picture a needed shot of plot-point adrenaline precisely half-way to its conclusion.

Kessler has a definite talent for writing quirky dialog, but the "message" of the story — the universal power of love to redeem lost lives — is laid out with the obviousness of a fable. The author also has a fondness for precious philosophical aphorisms along the line of "the universe is in flux" which convey less than they are intended to.

Fortunately, the script does not entirely abandon its skepticism about the mutability of the human condition in a resolution in which a possibility of hope coexists with the prospect of infinite anomie.

Modine does all he can to dominate the picture in a physical performance that seems to use madness as its method; perf succeeds on those terms more often than not. Pakula's guiding hand is evident, however, in orchestrating a counterbalance to Modine's wild excursions into the turmoil of Treat's psyche.

Anderson portrays Phillip with great sensitivity and an aching pathos that's free of mannered affectation. Finney permits himself to anchor the center between these two extremes in a performance that's deceptively textured beneath a surface of gruff avuncularity. Rich.

Wed., Sept. 23, 1987

Patti Rocks (Drama — Color)

A FilmDallas release. Produced by Gwen Field, Gregory M. Cummins. Executive producer, Sam Grogg. Directed by David Burton Morris. Screenplay, story by Morris, Chris Mulkey, John Jenkins, Karen Landry, based on characters created by Victoria Wozniak in the film "Loose Ends." Camera (Foto-Kem color), Cummins; editor, Cummins; music, Doug Maynard; art direction, Charlotte Whitaker; sound, Matthew Quast; associate producer, Brian John Dilorenzo; assistant director, Kirby Dick; caşting, Laurie Grossman. Reviewed at the New World Pictures screening room, L.A., Sept. 10, 1987. No MPAA rating. Running time: 87 min.

An often bitingly humorous expose of the male ego accomplished dramatically in one night, "Patti Rocks" is a quintessential American independent production, and a very good one. Scabarously sexual dialog will no doubt put off some viewers (producers claim they received, then rejected, an X rating from the MPAA on the basis of the obscenities' "cumulative impact"), but this raw look at the ways in which the sexes both do and do not understand one another should create enough of an impression with sophisticated audiences to gain a following. Pic has its world premiere tonight at the Boston Film Festival.

Film opens with the phrase "Twelve years later ...," a cute

reference to David Burton Morris' first feature, "Loose Ends," which involved the same leading characters but is in no way mandatory viewing for appreciating the follow-up.

up.

"Patti Rocks" picks up Billy (Chris Mulkey), a working stiff who seems to be refusing to grow up even though he's into his 30s with a wife and two kids. During the cold Christmas season in Minnesota, Billy shanghais his old buddy Eddie (John Jenkins), a garage foreman, to drive with him to a distant town to help him tell a woman he's "knocked up" that he's hitched and that she ought to have an abortion.

Eddie is understandably unenthusiastic about this errand, but ends up sitting in the passenger seat for hours as Billy delivers a torrential monolog of ever-escalating sexual boasts and fantasies, which consist of what he claims he has done, will do or would do if he could, to women.

Long nocturnal sequence, which is hilariously punctuated by an episode in which a lady demands that Billy put up or shut up, probably represents women's worst nightmares of how men talk about them, and highly concentrated dose of vulgarity will certainly disturb those with delicate sensibilities.

The tone changes dramatically, however, once the boys reach the home of Patti Rocks. Too chickenhearted to break the news to her himself, Billy sends Eddie into her bedroom to do the job, and that's when the twists are added. Resolution does not prove that surprising, but is quite satisfactory and believable on human terms.

Developed and written by Morris in conjunction with the three principal actors, film simultaneously takes on greater gravity and humor as it progresses. From the brittle cold of the men's conversation in the car, the climate instantly becomes warmer and more intimate the moment they enter the warmth of Patti's apartment, so that the braggadocio of the man-to-man talk stands in stark contrast to the emotional directness of the male-female encounters.

Quite reserved about his own sentiments with Billy, the taciturn Eddie opens up with Patti, and the latter's ability to cope with the basic things of life, despite her obvious difficulties, puts the men in their place and even to shame.

Made on a frugal \$350,000 budget, film is totally dialog and performance oriented, and stands up well on both counts. Unknown thesps are not charismatic, but are vividly believable as regular folk who are both evasive and brutally frank about sex and life.

Limitations of scale and production will restrict this to the domestic specialized circuit, but pic deserves as strong a push as FilmDallas can give it. Commercial openings, after fest exposure, will come after the first of the year.

Cart.

Tues., Sept. 8, 1987

Penitentiary III (Action — Color)

A Cannon International release of a Jamaa-Leon production. Produced by Jamaa Fanaka, Leon Isaac Kennedy. Written and directed by Fanaka. Camera (color), Marty Ollstein; editor, Ed Harker; production design, Marshall Toomey; art direction, Craig Freitag; sound, Oliver Moss; costume design, Maria Burrell Fanaka; stunts, John Sherrod; assistant director, Brent Sellstrom, Pat Kirck. Reviewed at Movieland Broadway, N.Y., Sept. 4, 1987. MPAA Rating: R. Running time: 91 min.

100 Sweet	Leon Isaac Kennedy
Serenghetti	Anthony Geary
Roscoe	Steve Antin
Warden	Ric Mancini
Midnight Thud	
Jessup	Kessler Raymond
Cleopatra	Jim Bailey
Hugo	Magic Schwarz
SugarWir	ndsor Taylor Randolph
Also with: Ric	k Zumwalt, Janet Rot-
blatt, Madison	Campudoni, Bert Wil-
liams, Mark Kem	ble and Jack Rader.

New York — Is "Penitentiary III" fun? Are cartoons and professional wrestling matches fun? If you answer yes to the second question, then this film definitely is for you. The third pic in the "Penitentiary" series zips along with enough action and humor to satisfy the kid in just about everyone.

As the film opens, Too Sweet, a boxer portrayed by Leon Isaac Kennedy with a Sugar Ray Leonard-esque demeanor, is drugged by his trainer during a fight. In the subsequent chemical-induced rage, Too Sweet bludgeons his opponent, El Cid (Madison Campudoni), to death. As a result, Too Sweet lands in the pen.

Too Sweet, upon arriving in the stir, finds out that the warden (Ric Mancini) has a boxing team. So does Serenghetti, a comic-book meanie-type mobster played to maniacal perfection by Anthony Geary. They, of course, both want Too Sweet on their team. But Too Sweet refuses to fight for either.

Serenghetti, having never heard the word "no," inflicts the Midnight Thud upon Too Sweet as retribution. Wrestling fans will recognize the 4'2" Thud, played by Kessler Raymond, as midget gladiator The Haiti Kid.

Thud, who is kept in a dungeonlike area under the prison, is brought up growling and spewing. The minimonster is thrust into Too Sweet's cell and goes about his main function — the rape of prisoners who displease the sadistic Serenghetti.

As is usually the case in professional wrestling, good conquers evil and Too Sweet clobbers the ferocious Thud. For his efforts, Too Sweet is relegated to a room with no view next to Thud.

A series of events lead to Too Sweet — still refusing to fight — training another pugilist on the warden's team who gets battered by one of Serenghetti's henchman who has taken the same drug Too Sweet was given in the first scene.

This infuriates Too Sweet. Consequently, he agrees to battle it out with Hugo (Magic Schwarz), a giant Incredible Hulk act-alike, in a freestyle match.

Suddenly, Thud speaks. He is not the animal he is perceived to be, but actually is a sort of West Indian mystic who winds up training Too Sweet in what can only be described as some other version of "The Force."

The climactic warfare between Hugo and Too Sweet, replete with body slams, eye-gouging, flying scissor clinches and submission holds, is wonderful. The only thing missing is the broadcast team from the World Wrestling Federation.

Too Sweet — you knew this, didn't you? — triumphs. But not before he is almost clubbed into defeat on countless occasions. The payoff is that Serenghetti is disgraced — not to mention his loss of a huge wager to the warden — and prison life is better for all.

"From now on," the warden says to Too Sweet, "this place will be run like it should be. No more gambling with institution funds."

"Penitentiary III" is by no means a shining example of filmmaking. The looping, for example, sometimes looks like dubbing from a Japanese horror film.

Despite its technical shortcomings, the film is a rollicking roller-coaster of entertainment. It's better than a ringside seat. And a lot cheaper.

Chuk.

Wed., Sept. 16, 1987

The Pick-Up Artist (Romantic comedy-drama — Color)

A 20th Century Fox release produced in association with Amercent Films and American Entertainment Partners L.P. Produced by David L. MacLeod. Directed, written by James Toback. Stars Molly Ringwald, Robert Downey. Camera (Deluxe color), Gordon Willis; editors, David Bretherton, Angelo Corrao; music, Georges Delerue; production design, Paul Sylbert; art direction, Bill Groom; set decoration, John Alan Hicks; costume design, Colleen Atwood; sound, Les Lazarowitz; assistant director, Tom Reilly; casting, Howard Feuer. Reviewed at 20th Century Fox Studios, L.A., Sept. 14, 1987. MPAA Rating: PG-13. Running time: 81 min.

Randy Jensen Molly Ringwald
Jack Jericho Robert Downey
Flash Dennis Hopper
Phil Danny Aiello
Nelli Mildred Dunnock

As long as this film sticks to what its title suggests, "The Pick-Up Artist" is a tolerably amusing comedy. But as soon as the compulsive skirt-chaser gets hooked on one girl, James Toback's longgestating portrait of a one-track mind becomes bogged down in unconvincing plot mechanics. Molly Ringwald name and a bright sell stressing the comic elements can get this off to a decent start, but b.o. prospects look moderate overall.

Compared to the harsh, raw quality of Toback's previous films, this is a mild work, one that seems curiously sanitized and lightened in tone from anything he has done before. As "Fingers," "Love And Money" and "Exposed" were notably uncommercial, this softening can't help but create a wider audience for him, but result seems less urgently felt and freshly conceived.

Opening reels possess considerable buoyancy and zip, as makeout king Robert Downey cruises the streets of New York by foot and by car trying out his shtick on every pretty woman who crosses his path.

Playing the percentage with decent success and utterly unfazed by rejection, Downey hits on Ringwald and quickly scores in his convertible, but predictably becomes intrigued by her apparent lack of interest in seeing him again. Suddenly, he's got blinders on and finds himself assuming personal responsibility for some enormous gambling debts the mob expects delivered by high noon.

Dennis Hopper once again plays a drunken, washed-up shell of his former self as Ringwald's irresponsible father, and Harvey Keitel, in an extension of his "Fingers" character, is the threatening collector. The gambling world context into which Toback unnaturally forces the climax of the picture only weakly evokes the power of his script for "The Gambler," and the finale is bogus anyway because Ringwald,

who states her age as 19, is two years too young to sit at the tables in Atlantic City.

But more responsible for the picture's deterioration than the unnecessary melodrama is Ringwald's thinly conceived character. Her evasiveness with Downey is legitimate because she initially conceals her difficulties from her suitor, but Toback never lets the viewer into what she really thinks and feels. The character, who unbelievably flits between the disco world of drugs and high rollers and her father's Coney Island apartment, with time out to give guided tours at a museum, is just a cipher, and too serious for the actress to save it with her characteristic offbeat

In that the ending — which has everyone dropping their bad habits of a lifetime after one purgative night — doesn't ring true either, it is surprising how engagingly the picture plays for much of its brief running time. A lion's share of the credit for this goes to Downey who, in his first starring role, is brashly likeable, if perhaps too young, as the indefatigable but sincere ladies' man.

Even here, however, Toback could have worked harder to further individualize his protagonist. Without asking for a psychological analysis of why he is so compulsive, one could still use a little coloring in of Downey's specific tastes and preferences, some private appreciation of different women's traits and attributes of the sort to be found in many of Francois Truffaut's films. All women seem the same (except for Ringwald, for unknown reasons) in Downey's book.

Led by Gordon Willis' lovely lensing of Manhattan in full bloom of Summer, production credits are tops. Supporting cast is filled with curious cameos, by everyone from writer Robert Towne and former Miss America Vanessa Williams to longtime Sinatra crony Jilly Rizzo and Mustang Ranch proprietor Tony Conforti.

Warren Beatty developed the project and was listed as producer during shooting, but producer-of-record credit goes to Beatty's cousin, David L. MacLeod.

Cart.

Wed., Sept. 9, 1987

A Prayer For The Dying (British — Drama — Color)

A Samuel Goldwyn Co. release of a Peter Snell production. Produced by Snell. Directed by Mike Hodges. Screenplay, Edmund Ward, Martin Lynch, from Jack Higgins' novel; camera (Kay/Metrocolor), Mike Garfath; editor, Peter Boyle; music, Bill Conti; sound (Dolby), Chris Munro, Sandy McRae; production design, Evan Hercules; assistant director, Terry Needham; stunt arranger, Colin Skeaping; costume design, Evangeline Harrison; special effects, Ian Scoones; associate producer, Christabel Albery; casting, Mary Selway, Debbie McWilliams. Reviewed at Magno Review 1 screening room, N.Y., Aug. 12, 1987. MPAA Rating: R. Running time: 107 min.

Martin Fallon Mickey Rourke
Father Da Costa Bob Hoskins
Jach Meehan Alan Bates
Anna Sammi Davis
Billy Christopher Fulford
Liam Docherty Liam Neeson
Siobhan Donovan Alison Doody
Jenny Camille Coduri

Jenny............Camille Coduri Also with: Ian Bartholomew, Mark Lambert, Cliff Burnett, Anthony Head, David Lumsden, Lenny Termo.

New York — "A Prayer For The Dying" is a disappointing thriller adapted from Jack Higgins' novel. Impressive list of topliners is a guarantee to get the public's attention, but release version of the film has already been disowned by its director, Mike Hodges, who joined the project on short notice, succeeding the original project's helmer, Franc Roddam, before shooting commenced last year.

Originally planned to be filmed a decade ago by a different production team, with Edward Dmytryk to direct and Robert Mitchum to star, film finally got made by producer Peter Snell, representing U.S. distributor Samuel Goldwyn Co.'s biggest production investment to date.

Mickey Rourke, styled with red hair and Irish brogue, portrays Martin Fallon, IRA hitman who sees the light in the opening scene when a bomb aimed at British soldiers blows up a busload of school kids instead. Without permission from his IRA superiors, he flees to London. To get out of the country, he reluctantly agrees to carry out a mob hit for gangster Jack Meehan (Alan Bates), but the killing, staged at a cemetery, is witnessed by priest Father Da Costa (Bob Hoskins).

Fallon cannot bring himself to kill the priest to silence him, even when Meehan orders it. Instead, this constitutes the picture's key plot device, he confesses the murder to the priest. Though outraged at this misuse of religion, Da Costa feels duty bound by the sanctity of the confessional and refuses to identify Fallon to the police.

Film becomes rather conventional at this point, with Fallon outwitting the gangsters, police and IRA hit persons (Liam Neeson, Alison Doody) hot on his case, aided by the sympathetic, blind niece of the priest, Anna (Sammi Davis). Director Hodges conjures up some of the tough, ruthless style of his Michael Caine-starrer "Get Carter" in detailing Rourke's run-ins with his adversaries. Finale, set in the church, ironically develops imagery that recalls Edward Dymtryk's little-seen 1949 classic, "Christ In Concrete," though Dymtryk ultimately was not involved in "A Prayer For The Dying.

Whoever is to blame for the final result, "Dying" emerges as a cold, unexciting affair, lightened up only by Bates' funny overplaying of the villain. Casting is a bit perverse, since Hoskins is tailor-made for Bates' gangster role, and a bit hemmed-in playing the priest (though he gets some violent outbursts, ascribed to his previous war hero exploits prior to his taking the cloth). Bates, conversely, is looking more and more like the late Robert Preston and could have handled the priest-on-the-spot assignment more credibly.

Though his accent gets a bit overdone (as in his repeated references to the priest as "Fa'r"), Rourke is convincing as the antihero and ably supported by Davis, an angular-featured young actress who is also quite striking in John Boorman's "Hope And Glory." As an IRA hitlady, Alison Doody looks more like a fashion model.

Tech credits are acceptable, though pic lacks the atmosphere and large-scale logistics audiences have come to expect in thrillers.

Lo

Tues., Sept. 15, 1987

The Princess Bride

(Fantasy — Color)

A 20th Century Fox release of an Act III Communications presentation. Produced by Andrew Scheinman, Rob Reiner. Executive producer, Norman Lear. Directed by Reiner. Screenplay, William Goldman, based on his novel. Camera (DeLuxe color), Adrian Biddle; editor, Robert Leighton; music, Mark

Knopfler; production design, Norman Garwood; art director, Keith Pain, Richard Holiand; set decorator, Maggie Gray; costumes, Phyllis Dalton; sound (Dolby stereo), David John; assistant director, Ken Baker, Peter Bennett; associate producer, Jeffrey Stott, Steven Nicolaides; casting, Jane Jenkins, Janet Hirshenson. Reviewed at Regency Theater, Westwood, Calif., September 11, 1987. MPAA rating: PG. Running time: 98 min.

Westley. Cary Elwes
Inigo Montoya. Mandy Patinkin
Prince Humperdinck. Chris Sarandon
Count Rugen. Christopher Guest
Vizzini. Wallace Shawn
Fezzik. Andre The Giant
The Grandson. Fred Savage
The Princess Bride. Robin Wright
The Grandfather. Peter Falk
The Impressive
Clergyman. Peter Cook

Valerie Cook
Valerie Carol Kane
Miracle Max Billy Crystal
The Albino Mel Smith

With "The Princess Bride," director Rob Reiner takes a leap of faith — and falls. Based on William Goldman's novel, it's a post-modern fairy tale that challenges and affirms the conventions of a genre that may not be flexible enough to support such horseplay. Result is a tedious tale almost totally lacking in momentum and magic.

At heart, "Princess Bride" celebrates the power of true love to triumph over adversity but along the way undermines the sentiment with a weak imitation of Monty Python antics. It also doesn't help that Cary Elwes and Robin Wright as the loving couple are nearly comatose and inspire little passion from each other, or the audience.

Also weakening the impact is a storytelling device better suited to the printed page in which grandfather Peter Falk recites the tale to his bedridden grandson, Fred Savage. At first it's a clever way to comment on the contemporary appeal of an old-fashioned "kissing book," but after several intrusions, it becomes a distraction from an already sagging story.

Bound together by their love at a tender age, young Westley (Elwes), then a stableboy, falls in love with his beautiful master (Wright), but they are separated when he goes off to sea on a mission. After years of grieving for him, she becomes betrothed to the evil Prince Humperdinck (Chris Sarandon), who masterminds her kidnapping to strengthen his own position in the kingdom.

But as in all good fairy tales, the hero returns to overcome a series of obstacles and regain the hand of his beloved. Unfortunately, the hurdles are not particularly imaginative or believable. First off, Westley must defeat a trio of kidnappers headed by the diminutive, but slimey, Wallace Shawn. His accomplices are the kind-hearted giant Fezzik (Andre The Giant) and Inigo Montoya, a Spanish warrior (Mandy Patinkin), out to avenge the murder of his father.

Both the giant and Montoya join young Westley in his fight to rescue the princess, and it is their scenes together that are the most delightful in the film and begin to suggest the sweet playfulness Reiner was probably looking for. Patinkin especially is a joy to watch and the film comes to life when his long-haired, scruffy cavalier is on screen.

Not only does Patinkin have great charm, but he has a mission he is passionate about. Chris Sarandon and Christopher Guest are also amusing as the villains. But the leads, alas, are a bore.

Visually, "The Princess Bride" is fairly dull as well. Special effects are unremarkable and the land-scape, while unusual, is more

stagey than miraculous. It's never really possible to get a fix on where any of this action is supposed to be taking place. Production fails to tap the mythical source that has always given fairy tales their fascination and power.

Instead, Reiner seems more eager to exploit the story for moments of comic relief, and Goldman's script contributes a number of witty, if inappropriate, one-liners. But the cumulative effect of all the nonsense is to leave this fairy tale without anything to believe in, even true love.

Jagr.

Thurs., Sept. 17, 1987

The Principal (Drama — Color)

A Tri-Star Pictures release. Produced by Thomas H. Brodek. Directed by Christopher Cain. Screenplay by Frank Deese. Camera (Technicolor), Arthur Albert; editor, Jack Hofstra; music supervisor, Jellybean Benitez; music, Jay Gruska; production design, James T. Davis; art direction, Mark Billerman; set direction, Rick Brown; set design, Michelle L. Souza, Jeffrey P. Cude, Daniel J. Nilles; sound mixer, Andy Wiskes; special effects, David Pier; assistant directors, Anthony F. Balderrama, Sharon Alley; casting, Penny

Perry. Reviewed Sept. 15, at UA Coronet The-

ater, Westwood. MPAA Rating: R. Running

time: 109 min. . James Belushi Rick Latimer. Jake Phillips Louis Gossett, Jr. ...Rae Dawn Chono Hilary Orozco. Victor Duncan Michael Wright White Zac......J. J. Cohen Raymi Rojas Esai Morales Baby Emile.....Troy Winbush Arturo Diego... Jacob Vargas .Thomas Rvan Robert Darcy. Jojo.....Reggie Johnson Treena Lester.....Kelly Minter

"The Principal" is a well-meaning high-school drama that can't decide whether it wants to be "Blackboard Jungle" or "Welcome Back, Kotter." Every scene of ultra-realistic urban conflict is undercut with a wink of the eye and an irreverent — and often inappropriate — comic line. Writer Frank Deese seems to be admitting that he has nothing new to add to the subject. Boxoffice prospects are up in the air, depending on how pic plays in urban locales.

James Belushi is Rick Latimer, a hard-luck teacher at a preppy high school who gets drunk one night and bashes in the windows of his ex-wife's boyfriend's car.

Repercussions are immediate, with Latimer getting "promoted" to principal of the district's worst school, Brandel, the magnet for the city's dead-end, dope-dealing delinquents.

Latimer walks into a war zone, where physical intimidation is a constant factor in every student's life and the risks involved with personal protection make the significance of education pale by comparison.

Latimer predictably goes on a mission to straighten things out, teaming up with head of security Jake Phillips (Louis Gossett Jr. in a promising role that's nothing but cliche).

Key to story is Latimer's attempt to bust down the de facto school principal, gangleader Victor Duncan (Michael Wright, looking like a young Cleavon Little), who is a model of sinister cool up until a well-played crucial scene.

While the plot progressions are drawn without much subtlety, Belushi gives an assured, charming lead performance. Main problem is his tendency to play virtually every scene for comic effect, testing believability in some scenes and making too quick of a switch to seriousness in others.

While the breezy irreverance looks mostly good on Belushi, it doesn't do much for the film. All of this still might have worked if Deese's script set-up and director Christopher Cain's lensing execution were more sure-footed, but both are wanting.

Supporting performers are uniformly good. Rae Dawn Chong continues a string of competent work as a teacher still trying to teach education in the demilitarized zones of the classrooms; Esai Morales' nicely drawn Raymi Rojas, showing more modulation and control than his larger past roles; and the meek, loyal Arturo (Jacob Vargas).

Most impressive is the stocky and sneaky smart "Baby" Emile, sharply rendered by Troy Winbush, who begins as a Duncan disciple before trying to break with the gang — at a terrible price. Winbush displays uncommon sensitivity for a young actor, and the dramatic shadings in his performance stand out against the backdrop of this broadly-drawn picture.

Cain is responsible for that flaw, showing the same kind of jackhammer subtlety that characterized his previous "That Was Then, This Is Now." He seems to know something about how urban youths act, but his films show no evidence of his knowing why.

Arthur Albert's photography is sharp, especially in against the dingy backdrop of Brandel and costume designer Marianna Astrom-DeFina's eye is keenly accurate. Music supervision by Jellybean (formerly Benitez) is mostly obtrusive. Camb.

Thurs., Sept. 24, 1987

Rachel River (Drama — Color)

An American Playhouse Theatrical Films presentation of a Marx/Smolan production. Produced by Timothy Marx. Directed by Sandy Smolan. Screenplay, Judith Guest, based on the stories of Carol Bly; executive producer, Lindsay Law; camera (color), Paul Elliott; music, Arvo Part; editor, Susan Crutcher; design, David Wasco; associate producer. Nan Simons; costumes, Linda Fisher. Reviewed at the Toronto Festival Of Festivals, Sept. 16, 1987. Running time: 90

Momo	Zeljko Ivanek
Mary	Pamela Reed
Marlyn	. Craig T. Nelson
Jack	James Olson
Beske	Alan North
Harriet	. Viveca Lindfors
Estona	Jo Henderson
Baker	Jon De Vries

With: Ailene Cole, Courtney Kjos, Ollie Osterberg, Wellington Nelson, Richard Jenkins, Michael Gallagher, Richard Riehle, Ron Duffy, Don Cosgrove, Stephen Yoakum, Cliff Rakerd, Patricia Mary Van Oss.

Toronto — "Rachel River" is graced by performances that are as sturdy as the American-Scandinavian north Minnesota milieu it's set in. Depending on how it's handled, the picture could have modest boxoffice prospects before its journey to public television and the section of video shelves perused by those in quest of thoughtful, nonclamorous entertainment.

Film possesses the very characteristics of American Playhouse productions that some jaundiced observers find fashionably safe to knock. Indeed, this is a pretty-to-look-at film that celebrates the rock-ribbed American virtues of community spirit and individual perseverance in the face of trouble, and does so in steady unspectacular fashion.

Focus of the story is Mary (Pamela Reed), an attractive and intellectually aware mother of three who's separated from her thoughtless husband. Mary is a community radio correspondent for a station in a larger town, and has resisted offers to move up in the broadcasting world in order to remain with her kids in the cold and cozy countryside.

When an eccentric old widow dies alone at her dilapidated farm one day, Mary begins research into the woman's life that intensifies her awareness of her own suppressed loneliness.

Film's narrative is pegged to the various denizens of the town who touch Mary's life one weekend while the kids are with their father. Among them are Marlyn (Craig T. Nelson), a hard-drinking, locally colorful but not very bright deputy sheriff, and Jack (James Olson), a sincere fellow who's considered something of a failure by the gossipy townspeople.

Closer to Mary than anyone is Harriet (Viveca Lindfors), a beautiful and next-to-saintly older woman who still speaks with a strong accent and who has moved into a hospital to be beside her dying husband. There's also a poor town simpleton named Momo, who serves as a sort of silent witness to all that goes on in "Rachel River."

Nothing very much does go on, however, as these hardy folk wait for the first snow to fall. The action revolves around various life-crises and their resolution.

Fortunately, plot points are rescued from soap-operatic mawkishness by a nicely controlled balance of dialog and characterizations that make "Rachel River" a small but respectable drama.

Rich.

Mon., Sept. 28, 1987

Rampage

(Drama — Color)

A De Laurentiis Entertainment Group presentation. Produced by David Salven. Directed by William Friedkin. Screenplay, Friedkin, based on the novel by William P. Wood; camera (Technicolor), Robert D. Yeoman; editor, Jere Huggins; music, Ennio Morricone; production design, Buddy Cone; art direction, Carol Clements; set decoration, Nancy Nye; sound (Dolby), David MacMillan; casting, Rick Montgomery; assistant directors, Michael Daves, Regina Gordon. Reviewed at USA Cinemas Copley Place, Sept. 14, 1987. (In the Boston Film Festival.) MPAA Rating: R. Running time: 97 min.

Anthony Fraser ... Michael Biehn Charles Reece ... Alex McArthur Albert Morse ... Nicholas Campbell Kate Fraser Deborah Van Valkenburgh Dr. Keddie ... John Harkins Mel Sanderson ... Art Lafleur Judge McKinsey ... Billy Greenbush Gene Tippetts ... Royce D. Applegate Naomi Reece Grace Zabriskie With: Roy London, Donald Hotton, Andy Romano.

Boston — "Rampage" is a deadly serious inquiry into how the U.S. legal system handles those who commit truly heinous crimes. Currently scheduled for a November release, it is ideally suited to the Fall season's tradition of serious pix for adult audiences.

Anthony Fraser (Michael Biehn) is the assistant district attorney in charge of the major crimes division and is handed a grisly murder case with orders to go for the death penalty.

The case involves a psychopath, Charles Reece (Alex McArthur), who has killed five people, mutilating four of them and drinking their blood. Fraser doesn't want the case because he's against the death penalty.

Writer-director William Friedkin uses this premise to explore the frustrations of the legal system's insanity defense. "Rampage" follows Reece's case from his committing the gruesome crimes (handled with admirable restraint by Friedkin)

to the verdict by the jury and its aftermath.

In the legal definition of insanity, the defendant's ability to distinguish right from wrong determines whether he's fit to stand trial; from the layman's viewpoint, anyone who would commit a crime like Reece's must be insane, leading a jury to consider him "not guilty by reason of insanity."

Friedkin refuses to present an easy out to the dilemma.

To underscore the general confusion over the insanity defense, Friedkin also shows the jury struggling to understand what it means before they render their verdict. An escape sequence, however, seems tacked on to provide some action in the latter half of the film, and ultimately proves irrelevant.

Although a few odd shots call attention to themselves (including Reece's fantasy of drenching himself in blood), cinematographer Robert D. Yeoman's tone overall is somber and subdued.

The cast is top-notch all around, with Biehn (once cast as a crazed killer in "The Fan") suggesting the anguish beneath the cool exterior of his prosecutor. Deborah Van Valkenburgh brings some depth to the supporting role of Biehn's wife.

As Reece, McArthur appears dangerous and unstable, but remains opaque, so audience — like the lawyers and the doctors — can never be completely sure if he knew what he was doing when he committed the murders.

Among the supporting cast, Royce D. Applegate is particularly notable as the husband and father of two of the victims, who must somehow pick up the pieces of his life after the tragedy.

Kimm.

Wed., Sept. 16, 1987

The Romance Of Book And Sword

(Hong Hong — Historical Drama — Color)

A Yeung Tse Kong Movie Enterprise/SIL-Metropole Organization production. Written and directed by Ann Hui, adapted from the novel by Jin Yung, editor, Chow Muk-leung. Reviewed at the Toronto Festival of Festivals (Eastern Horizons), Sept. 11, 1987. Running time: 180 min.

With: Zhang Duo Fu, Da Shi Chang, Ai Nuo, Liu Jia.

Toronto — Hong Kong director Ann Hui, who scored high on crossover pix "Woo Viet" and "Boat People," might make it a hat trick with "The Romance Of Book And Sword." The two-parter is a solid three hours, but it has the historical vista and character development that often click with audiences outside its home territory.

Almost three-and-one-half years in the making, "Romance" is the eighth film version of Jin Yung's novel, according to director Hui. Its subject matter lends itself to the grand sweep, and in that respect Hui delivers. Drawbacks are the lengthy running time and the sometimes unintentionally ingenious dialog.

The period is re-created well. It's the time of the overthrow of the Ming dynasty, long the seat of Han rule, by the northern Ching tribe.

In a twist of fate that would warm Shakespeare's heart, two Han brothers are separated in infancy. One is sent to the Emperor's to be groomed as a warrior and the other is sent north. The latter, Chen Jalo, is now the leader of the Red Flower Society, which wants to return Han rule to China, while brother Quian Long is leader of the opposition

(but his subjects think he's a Manchurian, not a Han)

Chen Jalo helps Chief Mu's tribe retrieve the Koran from the Wei tribe, and during that time meets his daughter Chongking. In the second part, Chen Jalo, disguised as a camel trader, meets Chief Mu's other daughter, Hesili, and falls in love with her. It is ordained that they will be married. Chen Jalo has come to help Chief Mu fight the Qing dynasty and ultimately confront his brother.

Hui incorporates sumptuous location settings, period costumes, and large casts for her swashbuckling battles.

That's where Hui's real skill lies, in incorporating human drama, albeit naive and proud, into the panorama of history. It's a winning combina-

Tues., Sept. 15, 1987

Sammy And Rosie Get Laid (British — Drama — Color)

A Cinecom Pictures release (in the U.S.) of a Cinecom International and Film Four International presentation. Produced by Tim Bevan and Sarah Radclyffe. Directed by Stephen Frears; screenlay. Hanif Kureishi; camera (color), Oliver Stapleton; sound, Albert Bailey; design, Hugo Luczyc Wyhowski; editor, Mick Audsley; music, Stanley Myers; costumes, Barbara Kidd; assistant director Guy Travers. Reviewed at the Toronto Festival Of Festivals, Sept. 12, 1987. Running time: 100 min.

Rafi.....Shashi Kapoor Alice Claire Bloom Sammy Ayub Khan Din Rosie Frances Barber Danny Roland Gift .Wendy Gazelle Vivia.....Suzette Llewellyn Rani ... Meera Syal Ghost ... Badi Uzzaman

Toronto - Compelling independent filmmaking of the highest order, "Sammy And Rosie Get Laid" possesses the superior coherence of performance, writing and vision that should make it a substantial boxoffice attraction in specialty release.

Director Stephen Frears and screenwriter Hanif Kureishi return with a superheated vengeance to the combustible urban landscape of a present-day England wracked by jarring social flux that they previously dissected in "My Beautiful Laundrette."

Cynical and brutally unsentimental in outlook, "Sammy And Rosie Get Laid" brings the force of an accelerated cinematic attack upon its complex juxtaposition of sexual warfare, cross-cultural dislocation, racism and the ruthlessness of pow-

With relentless momentum, Frears unfolds the story of Sammy (Ayub Khan Din), the hedonistic, thoroughly English son of a prominent Pakistani politician who years ago abandoned the young man and his mother in London to seek wealth and power in his homeland.

Sammy, who scrapes out a living as an accountant, lives in a dangerous and decaying black neighborhood with his wife, Rosie (Frances Barber), a sexually adventurous feminist journalist specializing in fashionable radical issues. Theirs is

an open marriage based, as Rosie puts it, on "freedom plus commitment.'

Change enters their lives with the arrival of Rafi (Shashi Kapoor), Sammy's long-lost father who, bringing considerable funds, has been forced to flee his political enemies in Pakistan. Rafi embodies the predicament of the Anglicised Indo-Pakistani ruling classes who embraced the British democratic ideals that didn't apply later in the politically chaotic East.

Now, London itself "is out of control," muses the dazed Rafi as he contemplates once-peaceful inner-city streets burning and devastated by riots over the police killing of a middle-aged black

Struggling to maintain his dignity and command, the elegant Rafi is rapidly discombobulated by Sammy and Rosie's unanchored world and its existential tolerance of sexual liberty, drugs and revolutionary violence. (Sammy comments that Rosie views the rioting as an "affirmation of the human spirit.")

It is the human spirit's insatiable hunger for love and acceptance in a harsh, uncertain world that unites Frears and Kureishi's gallery of passionate, insecure and selfcontradictory characters. Everyone carries deep emotional bruises.

Sammy and Rosie seek relief in a roundelay of extramarital liaisons. Rafi attempts to buy his way back into the affection of his son and that of a beautiful and sensitive Englishwoman, Alice (Claire Bloom), whom he also cruelly abandoned.

Everyone is trying to cope with the ephemeral nature of love and, by extension, life itself. Sammy has an affair with a New York photographer, Anna (Wendy Gazelle), whose affection for him is unrequited. Rosie takes up with a charismatic young black man, Danny (Roland Gift of the U.K. pop group Fine Young Cannibals), who lives in a colony of nomadic squatters.

Film's harsh realism is counterpointed with fantastical touches like the ghost of a tortured labor leader who haunts Rafi from the outset. and a band of gypsy buskers who serenade the ongoing anarchy.

Staccato editing and dialog, bleakly evocative cinematography and, most of all, the impressively calibrated ensemble acting make this film an indelible experience.

Tues., Sept. 15, 1987

Sister, Sister

(U.S. — Mystery — Color)

A New World Pictures release of a Walter Coblenz production, presented in association with Odyssey Film Partners Ltd. Produced by Coblenz. Executive producers, Gabe Sumner, J. David Marks. Directed by Bill Condon. Screenplay, Condon, Joel Cohen, Ginny Corrella; camera (color), Stephen M. Katz; editor, Marion Rothman; music, Richard Einhorn; production executive, Cohen; costumes, Bruce Finlayson; design, Richard Sherman; associate producers, Pegi Brotman, Ira Trattner, Yvonne Ramond; special effects, Wayne Beauchamp, Paul Hickerson. Reviewed at Toronto Festival Of Festivals, Sept. 11, 1987. MPAA Rating: R. Running time: 91

Eric Stoltz Matt Rutledge..... Lucy Bonnard . . . Jennifer Jason Leigh Charlotte Bonnard Judith Ivev Cleve Doucet.... Dennis Lipscomb Mrs. Bettlehelm... ... Anne Pitoniak Etienne LeViolette . . . Benjamin Mouton With: Natalia Nogulich, Richard Minchenberg, Bobby Pickett, Jason Saucier, Jerry Leggio, Fay Cohn, Ashley McMurray, Ben Cook, Casey Levron and Aggie.

Toronto - This dreary, neo-Gothic psychological mystery set in Louisiana bayou country faces boxoffice prospects as murky as its rain-soaked, swampy milieu. Some respectable performances in "Sister, Sister" are ultimately compromised by direction that substitutes histrionics for narrative tension and a screenplay whose overcooked red herrings fail to nurture genuine suspense.

Director/cowriter Bil Condon exploits the tired convention of Southern eccentricity in the characters of the nubile, emotionally fragile Lucy

(Jennifer Jason Leigh) and her repressed older sister Charlotte (Judith Ivey), who live together in an ante bellum mansion aptly named "The Willows," bequeathed to them by their dead parents.

The Bonnard sisters have turned the estate into a failing guest house that they operate with the aid of a solitary and slightly looney handyman, Etienne (Benjamin Mouton).

Etienne knows the sisters almost as well as he knows the bayou which, he tells vacationing Matt Rutledge (Eric Stoltz) is mostly populated by "trappers, shrimpers and psychos like me," as well as a few ghosts, it seems. Former mental patient Lucy has apparently communed with the spirits but also devotes her creative imagination to sexual fantasies about the handy-

When handsome homeboy Matt arrives on holiday, Lucy quickly refocuses her desires. The real and imagined love-making scenes, lubricated by rainwater leaking through the mansion's sieve-like roof, are easily the most compelling feature of the film.

Persistently gloomy lighting and cinematography and a ponderous soundtrack aim to evoke a sense of other-worldly fantasy. However, like a 'gator snapping up fresh prey, they only drag this illconceived project deeper into its own mire.

Mon., Sept. 28, 1987

Someone To Watch Over Me

(Romantic thriller — Color)

A Columbia Pictures release of a Thierry de Ganay production. Produced by De Ganay, Harold Schneider. Executive producer and directed by Ridley Scott. Screenplay, Howard Franklin; camera (DeLuxe Color), Steven Poster; editor, Claire Simpson; music, Michael Kamen; sound (Dolby), Gene Cantamessa; production design, Jim Bissell; set decoration, Linda de Scenna; assistant director, Joseph P. Reidy; production manager, Max Stein, N.Y.— Bill Gerrity; costume design, Colleen Atwood; stunt coordinators, Glenn Wilder, Ronnie Rondell; associate producer, Mimi Polk; casting, Joy Todd. Reviewed at Columbia 5th Avenue screening room, N.Y., Sept. 23, 1987. MPAA Rating: R. Running time: 106 min.

Mike Keegan Tom Berenger Claire Gregory Mimi Rogers Ellie Keegan Lorraine Bracco Lt. Garber Jerry Orbach Neil Steinhart.....John Rubinstein Joey Venza.....Andreas Katsulas T.J..... Tony DiBenedetto Koontz.....James Moriaraty Win Hockings.....Mark Moses Scotty......Daniel Hugh Kelly

New York — "Someone To Watch Over Me" is a stylish and romantic police thriller which manages, through the sleek direction of Ridley Scott and persuasive ensemble performances, to triumph over several hard-toswallow plot developments. Benefitting from topliner Tom post-"Platoon" Berenger's prominence, pic stands to do well at the Fall boxoffice in a year totally dominated by police and crime films.

Berenger portrays Mike Keegan, a happily married N.Y. cop from the Bronx who has just been promoted to detective and finds himself assigned on the night shift to protect socialite Claire Gregory (Mimi Rogers), witness to a brutal murder. The heinous killer, Joey Venza, played with economical nuance and menace by Andreas Katsulas tracks Gregory down at the Guggenheim Museum and terrorizes her in the ladies' room while Keegan is distracted. Though he subsequently chases Venza down and effects the collar, failure to read the goon his rights results in Venza back on the street and Gregory marked for death.

Though wife Lorraine Bracco and son Harley Cross are lovable and supportive, plot dictates that Berenger fall in love and bed down with the at first chilly Rogers. As with the current hit "Fatal Attraction," this infidelity is a key story element but a hurdle for the audience to believe. Even more difficult to swallow is a highly contrived climax: after his wife finds out about the affair and Berenger moves out, the killer kidnaps his wife and child, leading Berenger to bring Rogers to the scene in a hostage exchange ruse. Though suspenseful and well-staged, the violation of police procedure is incredible and unconvincing.

Papering over these holes in Howard Franklin's screenplay, director Scott consistently commands attention with his trademark visual style, which frequently turns the otherwise gritty, New York thriller into something out of his sci-fi epic "Blade Runner" (opening aerial shot of Manhattan, '40s music, smoked sets and backlit, fogged street scenes often evoke the prior

Berenger carries the film handily, utterly convincing as the working class stiff out of his element accompanying Rogers through her elegant apartment or posh parties. Rogers is alluring as the romantic interest, recalling the sharpness and beauty of Laraine Day, while wife Bracco is fully sympathetic and easily has the viewer siding against the two leads during their hanky-panky segments. James Moriarty provides welcome comic relief as an uppity fellow cop while John Rubinstein is saddled with the thankless role of Rogers' creepy, rich boyfriend.

Wed., Sept. 16, 1987

La Moine Et La Sorciere **SORCERESS**

(France-U.S. — Period Drama — Color)

A European Classics release of a Lara Classics production, in association with Bleu Prods., George Reinhart Prods., La Cecilia, Selena Audiovisual, Sofinergie S.A. Executive producer, Vincent Malle, Martine Marionac. Produced by Pamela Berger, Annie Leibovici, George Reinhard. Directed by Suzanne Schiffman. Written by Berger, Schiffman. Camera (color), Patrick Blossier; art director, Bernard Vezat; editor, Martine Barraque; music, Michel Portal; costumes Mouchi Houblinne, Francoise Autran; production manager, Marignac, Michelle Cretel; associate producer, Barbara Lucey, Reviewed at Toronto Festival of Festivals, Sept. 13, 1987. Running time: 90 min.
Etienne de Bourbon....Tcheky Karyo

..... Christine Boisson The Cure......Jean Carmet Simeon Raoul Billery Catherine Frot The Count...... .Feodor Atkine Agnes..... Maria de Medeiros

Toronto — Francois Truffaut's longtime screenwriter and assistant director Suzanne Schiffman turns director with an absorbing period drama about a 13th century Dominican friar on a mission to hunt heretics. While it's pristine in its historical accuracy and lovingly photographed, pic will probably be a hard sell for mainstream audiences, although medieval-philes will relish the care that was graced upon the screenplay.

Pic was the brainchild of Boston art historian Pamela Berger, who was researching the writings of Etienne de Bourbon, a friar who tried to stop villagers in a small rural town in France from worshipping a saint named Guinefort. The twist is that the saint was a greyhound who once saved a lord's baby hundreds of years before, and is now revered as a saint of sick children.

In the film, Etienne arrives in a stone-walled town that is reproduced so accurately by art director Bernard Vezat that it could be mistaken for a page in an illuminated manuscript. The costumes are spot on, too, but these peasants are rather

Seeking out heretics, Etienne is intrigued by a local woman, Elda, who is a faith healer living in the woods, a true heroine to the superstitious villagers. He feels that her mysterious potions from leaves and plants may be against the grain of God. One night he follows a woman with a very ill child to Elda's terri-

When her potions to cure the baby's fever fail, Elda reluctantly takes the child to the "grove," where the friar witnesses a ritual that he deems demonic and the work of a sorceress. Etienne sentences Elda to be burnt at the stake.

But in private conversation, the truth about Etienne's past is unearthed, as are facts about Elda's life.

She gets well-developed performances from Tcheky Karyo, who chooses to play the friar not as intractable but with vulnerability. Christine Boisson is confident, proud and centered as Elda.

Script is clever and the pic handsomely photographed, with long shots of the village evoking the medieval flavor. But the audience has to click with the time frame and the subject

Tues., Sept. 15, 1987

South Of Reno

(Drama — Color)

An Open Road production in association with Pendulum Prods. Produced by Robert Tinnell. Coproducer, Joanna Stainton. Executive producers, Victor Markowicz, Stainton. Directed by Mark Rezyka. Screenplay, Rezyka, T. L. Lankford. Stars Jeffrey Osterhage, Lisa Blount. Camera (CFI Color), Bernard Auroux; editor, Marc Grossman; music, Nigel Holton, Clive Wright; production design, Phillip Duffin; art direction, Elizabeth Moore; sound, Rob Janiger; associate producer, Eric Liekefet; second-unit director, Tinnell; casting, Barbara Remsen & Assoc./Anne Remsen. Reviewed at CFI Labs, L.A., Sept. 10, 1987. Running time: 94

Martin.....Jeffrey Osterhage Anette.....Lisa Blount Hector..... Joe Phelan Willard.....Lewis Van Bergen Susan.....Julia Montgomery Brenda..... ... Brandis Kemp Danitza Kingsley Manager of Motel. . Mary Grace Canfield Howard Stone Bert Remsen

A quirky tale of a loser who tries to escape the hand fate has dealt him, "South Of Reno" is a gorgeously filmed independent picture that reveals promising talent in several departments. Shot last fall in the Mojave Desert under the title "Darkness, Darkness," first feature by Mark Rezyka is too stark and uneventful for mass consumption, but is a natural for the festival circuit and could develop a following on the art-house circuit with crafty promotion. World premier place last Saturday at the Toronto Festival of Festivals.

Opening sequence is enough to draw in anyone attracted to the offbeat, as desert dweller Jeffrey Osterhage is observed tossing broken glass and nails across the highway. One suspects a devious scheme afoot, but in fact the poor guy just wants tires to blow out so he can talk to the drivers for awhile and have a little company.

The rest of the time, he sits in his barber's chair in his shack watching through fuzzy reception at the only tv broadcast he can even remotely receive. His wife, Lisa Blount, has long since given up on him, and spends most of her time making time with scuzzy auto mechanic Lewis Van Bergen.

With such layabouts as protagonists, it is difficult for awhile to figure out where to place one's sympathies or interest, but melodrama soon rears its head when Osterhage catches his wife cheating on him and decides to do something about

At the same time, the man's pathetic dream of starting up anew in Reno is revealed to have sprouted a private, magical world of lights and spinning windmills, and sequence devoted to this is like something out of Fellini in its wondrous imagery.

The specter of "Paris, Texas" is conjured up, not only through the figure of the isolated, lonely man set against monumental scenery. but by the spectacularly fine cinematography of Bernard Auroux. Outdoor shots are dominated by high blue skies and stark mountains and flats, while interiors are photographed with exquisite luminosity.
On the other hand, some viewers

will undoubtedly think of "Blood Simple" when the rival men start thinking of how to do the other in, and the ironic ending immediately reminds of John Huston, with its laughter prompted by the cruel but appropriate twist that befalls the survivor.

A native of Poland who grew up in Montreal and has made some 70 musicvideos, Rezyka clearly has a strong visual sense and a taste for strange humor. Pacing and storytelling are uneven, and performances, particularly that of Osterhage, who resembles Paul Le Mat, seem to lack confidence at first, but gain over time.

Pic is thoroughly professional on all counts despite an obviously very low budget, and score by Nigel Holton and Clive Wright is an excellent patch on Ry Cooder. Cart.

Tues., Sept. 15, 1987

Sweet Revenge (Action - Drama - Color)

A Concorde Pictures release of a Motion Picture Corp. of America production. Executive producers, Roger Corman, Brad Krevoy. Produced by Steve Stabler. Directed by voy. Produced by Steve Stabler. Directed by Mark Sobel. Screenplay, Steven Krauzer Tim McCoy; camera (Eastmancolor, Film Hours prints), Shane Kelly; editor, Michael S. Murphy; music, Ernest Troost; sound (Ultra-Stereo), George Mahlberg; production design, Vic Dabao; pyrotechnic effects, Chagar; postproduction coordinator, Eric Brooks. Reviewed at Cineplex Odeon Coliseum 2 theater, N.Y., Sept. 12, 1987. MPAA Rating: R. Running time: 78 min.

Jillian Grey Nancy Allen
Boone Ted Shackelford
Cicero Martin Landau
GilSal Landi
Lee Michele Little
K.CGina Gershon
SonyaLotis Key
Tina Stacey Adams
BuddhaLeo Martinez

New York — "Sweet Revenge" is an utterly routine action picture from the Roger Corman stable, reminiscent of the Filipinolensed films he cranked out for the old New World in the early

Nancy Allen (pre-"Robocop") toplines as an L.A. tv reporter doing an undercover story on a whiteslavery ring. She is abducted by the ring's henchmen, Lotis Key and Sal Landi, and taken with three young would-be models to the Far East lair of Cicero (Martin Landau, playing the sort of smug baddie he used to foil weekly on "Mission: Impossible").

In the midst of numerous escapes and chases, they are befriended by Boone (Ted Shackelford), a soldier of fortune involved in smuggling counterfeit Chanel No. 5 to the U.S. Pic sags considerably midway through as the leads take time out to help a pirate friend of Boone's.

Direction by Mark Sobel is bythe-numbers, with numerous explosions proving to be the action highlight. A hurried climax kills off each villain one-by-one, leading to a soggy, sentimental coda of Allen reunited with her missing daughter at the airport back home.

Pic's acting is okay, with tv star Shackelford physically right as the reluctant hero.

Thurs., Sept. 10, 1987

Marusa No Onna A TAXING WOMAN

(Japanese — Satire — Color)

A Jane Balfour Films presentation of an Itami Prods., New Century Producers production. Produced by Yasushi Tamaoki and Seigo Hosogoe. Written, directed by Juzo Itami. Camera (color), Yonezo Maeda; editor, Akira Suzuki; music, Toshiyuki Hon-da; sound, Osamu Onodera; art direction, Shuii Nakamura, Reviewed at the Venice Film Festival (competing), Sept. 5, 1987 Running time: 127 min.

... Nobuko Miyamoto Rvoko.

Gondo ... Tsutomu Yamazaki With: Masahiko Tsugawa (Assistant Chief Inspector Hanamura), Hideo Murota (motel president). Shuji Otaki (tax office manager) Daisuke Yamshita, Shinsuke Ashida, Keiju Kobayashi, Mariko Okada, Kiriko Shimizu, Kazuyo Matsui, Yasuo Daichi, Kinzo Sakura, Hajimeh Asoh, Shiro Ito, Eitaro

Venice - This is the third and best organized film by Juzo Itami, who applies his sardonic sense of humor in this picture to what he considers to be a highly sensitive point with his fellow conationals, their wallets. Since subject is sufficiently international to appeal to practically anyone who has had to pay taxes, this is bound to find receptive audiences most anywhere.

The woman of the title is taxing in two respects. First of all, she is a tax inspector, and a most dedicated one, but also never tires or lets go of her prey once she has set her sights on him.

The victim, in this case, is a hood operating adult motels and crooked real estate deals, who doesn't even dream that a fragile, defenseless woman can do him any harm.

However, he doesn't count on the lady's tenacity and the full support of her colleagues on the tax police squad, who are sufficiently stubborn not to knuckle under to any of the pressures exerted on them.

Itami - who has traded his acting career for a new one behind the camera - has already displayed his fierce satirical vein when dealing with funeral rites in "The Funeral" and eating habits in "Tampopo."

Here he paints the portrait of a nation whose favorite pastime is to beat the income tax in every possible way. Not only the big sharks do it, but every shopkeeper and professional person is searching for ways to evade taxes.

The heroine is single, exclusively dedicated to her job, a tough cookie in a remarkably feminine wrapping. Nobuku Miyamoto (Itami's wife) fits the role to perfection, with her big, innocent eyes fooling the subjects of her investigations into believing she is a pushover.

Entirely committed to her career with the Tax Office, she pursues relentlessly her goal, way beyond the call of duty, and her running

duel with Tsutomu Yamazaki, as the limping gangster she chases, holds plenty of twists and surprises, as new plots and tricks for beating the tax rap are introduced, and then countered by the law.

Tighter than his first film, "The Funeral," and better constructed than "Tampopo," "Taxing Womdrives relentlessly forward, mixing social satire with action and sex, if anything piling it a bit too much for one film. This is in spite of the fact Itami says he used barely one-tenth of the material he collected in his extensive research of the subject.

Strong cast feels entirely at home with the spirit of the satire even if subtlety is not the name of the game, with Miyamoto and Yamazaki exceedingly effective as the two unlikely rivals, the beauty and the beast.

Solid technical credits and tongue-in-cheek use of traditional film genres are professionally handled all through.

Wed., Sept. 9, 1987

Too Much

(Comedy - Color)

A Cannon Group release of a Golan-Globus production. Produced by Menahem Golan, Yoram Globus. Line producer, Yosuke Mizumo. Directed by Eric Rochat. Screenplay, Rochat; narration, Joan Laine; camera (Imagica Color; TVC prints), Daisaku Kimura; editor, Alain Jakubowicz; music, George S. Clinton; sound, Shyotaro Yoshida; assistant director, Toshiaki Arai; art direction, Tsunco Kantake; special effects coordinator, Osamu Kung; robot supervision, Masaharu Ogawa; postproduction su-pervisor, Michael R. Sloan; casting, Kazuki Manabe; associate producer, Dov Maoz. Reviewed at Movies At Town Center 2, Boca Raton, Fla., Sept. 6, 1987. MAPP Rating: PG. Running time: 89 min.

SuzyBridgette Andersen
Too MuchMasato Fukazama
Tetsuro Hiroyuki Watanabe
Prof. Finkel
Bernie Uganda

Boca Raton — "Too Much" is a feeble comedy for kids about a little girl and her playmate robot's adventures in Japan. Modest Cannon offering is a Summertime territorial release.

French writer-director Eric Rochat (who previously helmed "The Story Of O, Part II" at the other end of the audience spectrum) has concocted a very flimsy storyline in which cute Bridgette Andersen is in Tokyo with her parents (dad's on a business trip) when "Uncle" Tetsuro (Hiroyuki Watanabe) gives her a prototype robot as a gift.

She exclaims: "You're too much,"

so it's Too Much, or TM for short. There follows a series of slapstick misadventures as the robot refuses to leave her when she's due to fly home to America with her family On the run, the twosome are helped out by a young Japanese boy in avoiding the grasp of evil scientist Prof. Finkel (Char Fontana) and his goonish henchman Bernie (Uganda).

Silly windup is right out of a Gamera monster film: heroes are holed up in a department store with lots of toy robots for a confrontation with riot police, only to be saved by hundreds of Japanese kids showing solidarity with Too Much.

Title amply describes Rochat's treatment of cute heroine Andersen; a pleasant moppet, she becomes grating with sweetness by film's end. Klutzy dialog is not enhanced by Joan Laine's puerile narration, voiced by the heroine. Scenic Japanese locales are photographed in documentary fashion, with musicvideo-style editing to a peppy score by George S. Clinton. Gags are frequent but unfunny.

Wed., Sept. 9, 1987

Too Outrageous! (Canadian - Comedy-drama - Color)

A Spectrafilm release of a Roy Krost production. Produced by Krost. Written, directed by Richard Benner. Camera (color), Fred Guthe; music, Russ Little; editor, George Appleby: costumes, Alisa Alexander; art direction, Andris Hausmanis; production manager, Dan Nyberg; makeup, Inge Klaudi; first a.d., Tony Thatcher. Reviewed at Cineplex Odeon screening room, Aug. 31, 1987. Running time: 100

Robin Turner	Craig Russell
Liza Connors	Hollis McLaren
Bob	David McIlwraith
	Ron White
Betty Treisman	Lynne Cormack
Lee Sturges	Michael J. Reynolds
Rothchild	Timothy Jenkins
Tony Sparks	Paul Eves
Manuel	Frank Pellegrino
Phil Kennedy	Barry Flatman

Toronto - Craig Russell turns in a sparkling performance in Dick Benner's sequel to his 1977 hit "Outrageous," but the saga of the female impersonator and his schizophrenic girlfriend is diluted by a transparent script. The audience will be diverse, with a large curiosity factor making iniboxoffice brisk, but it should fall off after that.

'Too Outrageous!'' takes place 10 years later and Robin Turner (Russell), now a drag queen making it big on the New York gay club circuit, has been living in a cozy friendship with Liza Connors (Hollis McLaren), a former mental patient whom Robin has nurtured and saved a number of times.

This time out, Robin is becoming a major hit, wowing his leather-clad friends with his polished transformations into Mae West, Peggy Lee, Barbra Streisand, et al., and helped along by a laudatory magazine article by Liza.

He is courted by two high-

powered caricatures of New York agents, Betty (Lynne Cormack) and Lee (Michael J. Reynolds), who want to fine-tune and temper Robin's outrageousness for a mainstream audience.

The more successful Robin gets, the more isolated he feels. Betty decides to move him from the New York scene back up to hometown Toronto with his entourage to work out new MOR material.

Liza, who has been haunted by personal demons that she calls "the others," meets a Latino bartender,

Manuel (Frank Pellegrino), who seduces and ingratiates himself to her, leaving Robin very depressed.

The vitality falls in "Too Outrawith a trite storyline and a geous! sappy finale. Liza's crazies don't seem as menacing, and her relationship with Manuel is barely credible. The happy ending, after Liza is hospitalized and once again rescued by Robin (this time impersonating her mother), and his "I gotta be me"

But it's Russell's show here and when he's on screen he perks up even the most innocuous dialog. As an impersonator (this time his bag of beauties includes Tina Turner and Janis Joplin), as an actor, and simply as a comic effortlessly tossing off one-liners, he's very amusing

attitude is too sentimental.

Benner extracts fine turns from Russell's associates, notably David McIlwraith, Ron White and Timothy Jenkins. McLaren reinhabits Liza, but she just doesn't seem convincing this time out.

The director also uses New York City and Toronto locales well, grabbing the night flavor and especially nabbing the frenzy of the Christopher Street gay Halloween

TITLE TALES

- Q. What do the following films have in common?
- Α. They were all 1987 releases in L.A.
- Q. So what?

None of them had advance screenings for the press.

"WHO'S THAT GIRL" proved she wasn't "PRETTY SMART" after she "BUSTED UP" with "MALONE." He's the guy she described as "SOMETHING SPECIAL" and "MY **DEMON LOVER!**

Acting like a "WARRIOR QUEEN," even though she claims "THEY STILL CALL ME BRUCE," she lived up to her reputation of having "EYES OF FIRE" and being in "HOT PURSUIT" of all "THE BARBARIANS" and all the "JOCKS" and all the "MEATBALLS III" and all the "DISORDERLIES" at the "POLICE ACADEMY 4."

She and Malone stopped off at the "MALIBU BIKINI SHOP" soda fountain for a "HAPPY HOUR" root beer float and then headed "BACK TO THE BEACH" where they rode the "CYCLONE." At the top they stood up and screamed, "we are the 'MASTERS OF THE UNIVERSE!'

Meanwhile, what does her nebbish friend Ernest do? He's really "DOWNTWISTED." He has a secret yen for her and wants a macho image "BORN IN EAST L.A." so as not to appear to be a "CAMPUS MAN USA" goody two-shoes type. He decides to "RETURN TO HORROR HIGH," but he's rejected and settles for "SLAUGHTER HIGH," which has been known to matriculate a cadaver or two.

He signs up for a course in "ASSASSINATION" so he can be "PROGRAMMED TO KILL." In one class the teacher reads "DEADTIME STORIES" and asks Ernest to write his review on the blackboard, to which nerdie Ernie inquires, "WITCH-

During Summer vacation "ERNEST GOES TO CAMP." After camp he visits "ALAN QUATERMAIN & THE LOST CITY OF GOLD," where he meets and falls madly in love with the 'AMERICAN NINJA 2." When he learns that they can't legally marry in his state, he screams "is this 'AMERICAN JUSTICE?"

The moral of the story is: That girl should have married the "HUNK" with the "HANDS OF STEEL" - "SUPERMAN IV." Speculation: On their "HONEYMOON" she could have met up with "THE ALL-NIGHTER!" -Frank Worth

NECROLOGY

ABBOTT, TOM (53) (4/8/87) ABEL, WALTER (88) (3/26/87) ABRAMSON, PHILIP (54) (7/4/87) ABEL, WALTER (09) (1/8/87)
ABRAMSON, PHILIP (54) (7/4/87)
ADAMS, PETER (69) (1/8/87)
AGNETA-MORETTI, HELEN (94) (2/9/87)
ALAN, BRUCE (37) (2/10/87)
ALDRE, MART (46) (4/14/87)
ALDRE, MART (46) (4/14/87)
ALLAN, LEWIS (ABEL MEEROPOL)
(83) (10/30/86)
ALLEGRET, YVES (79) (1/21/87)
ALLEN, JERRY (36) (10/27/86)
AMEN, CAROL (53) (7/11/87)
AMY GEORGE J. (86) (12/18/86)
ANDERSON, EDWARD LEE (48) (8/11/87)
ANDERSON, JERRY D. (45) (11/11/86)
ANDERSON, MARY JANE (61) (4/1/87)
ANDREWS, V.C. (age unreported)
(12/19/86)
ANGEL, HEATHER (77) (12/13/86) ANGEL, HEATHER (77) (12/13/86) ANSTEY, EDGAR F. (80) (9/26/87) APPLETON, CHARLES LEONARD (86) APPLETON, CHARLES LEONARD (86) (12/12/86)
ARGEVITCH, SIMON (71) (10/12/86)
ARMHAUS, DELLA (TODDY) (age unreported) (3/23/87)
ARMITAGE, RICHARD (late 50s) (11/16/86)
ARNAUD, GEORGES (69) (3/4/87)
ARNAZ, DESI (69) (12/2/86)
ARNSTEIN, EUGENE (79) (11/14/86)
ARTHUR, ROBERT (76) (10/28/86)
ASCH, MOSES (81) (10/19/86)
ASCOL, LOU (70) (9/10/87)
ASHARDRORD JR., TED (46) (2/13/87)
ASTAIRE, FRED (FREDERICK AUSTERLITZ) (88) (6/22/87) (88) (6/22/87) ASTOR, MARY (LUCILE LANGHANKE) ASTUR, MART (LUGIEL EXISTRALL) (81) (9/25/87) AUSTIN, DAVID R. (42) (date unreported) AVAKIAN, ARAM (60) (1/17/87) AXELMAN, BERNARD G. (80) (6/14/87) AZAR, TED JR. (early 50s) (10/17/86) AXELMAN, BERNARD G. (80) (6/14/87)
AZELMAN, BERNARD G. (80) (6/14/87)
AZAR, TED JR. (early 50s) (10/17/86)
BAACK, WILLIAM (33) (8/17/87)
BADER, ALAN (early 60s) (8/26/87)
BAHR, WARREN A. (62) (2/6/87)
BAILY, R. BRUCE (mid 80s) (6/16/87)
BAILY, SHERWOOD (64) (8/6/87)
BAIRD, BILL (82) (3/18/87)
BARED, BILL (82) (3/18/87)
BARING, AUBREY (74) (date unreported)
BARNES, PAUL (61) (1/19/87)
BARNS, HAL (77) (2/21/87)
BARRETT, BARBARA (TUCKER)
 (age unreported) (7/22/87)
BARRETT, BARBARA (TUCKER)
 (age unreported) (7/22/87)
BASS, KENNY (64) (1/13/87)
BASS, KENNY (64) (1/13/87)
BASS, ROBERT E. (72) (4/26/87)
BAUERSMITH, PAULA (78) (8/6/87)
BAUM, LAL (49) (7/21/87)
BAY, HOWARD (74) (11/21/86)
BEARD, CECIL (79) (12/28/86)
BEATY, IRA OWENS (83) (11/14/87)
BEERY, MARY ARETA (88) (11/14/86)
BEHRENDT, OLIVE (73) (5/28/87)
BENDA, HELENA (83) (12/24/86)
BENJAMIN, BARBARA (38) (11/21/86)
BENNETT, MICHAEL (44) (7/2/87)
BENTON, J. ROBERT (83) (10/5/86)
BERMAN, JULES (57) (2/12/87)
BERMARD (SOMMER), BRUNO (75) (6/3/87)
BEAUKEMA, KITTY S. (87) (4/4/87)
BIVONA, RUTH ROBIN (68) (6/12/87)
BLACK, BUDDY (69) (2/9/87)
BLACK, BUDDY (69) (2/9/87)
BLOCH, CHARLES B. (71) (1/19/87)
BLOCH, CHARLES B. (71) (1/19/87)
BLOOK, HARRY (75) (7/20/87)
BLONS, HARRY (75) (7/20/87) BLODGETT, MARY ESTHÉR ELIZABETH (85) (9/28/87)
BLONS, HARRY (75) (7/20/87)
BLUMENSON, GEORGE T. (68) (9/16/87)
BOCCHICCHIO, ALFEO (72) (4/18/87)
BOHM, WILLIAM (74) (3/7/87)
BOLAND, JOSEPH (83) (6/21/87)
BOLGER, RAY (83) (1/15/87)
BOLKER, JOSEPH (62) (11/28/86)
BOND, HENRY (PREVIEW HENRY) (59) (1/3/87)
BOOKER, BERNICE INGALLS (91) (2/25/87)
BOOKER, TERNICE INGALLS (91) (2/25/87) (59) (1/3/87)
BOOKER, BERNICE INGALLS (91) (2/25/87)
BOOKER, BERNICE INGALLS (91) (2/25/87)
BOOKWALTER, DeVEREN (47) (7/23/87)
BOOTH, TRUDY (60) (12/16/86)
BOUGLIONE, JOSEPH (83) (8/6/87)
BOWERS, WILLIAM (71) (3/27/87)
BOWMAN, PIERRE (42) (9/22/86)
BRADEN, JOHN (41) (7/22/87)
BRADSHAW, JON (48) (11/25/86)
BRAINE, JOHN (64) (10/28/86)
BRANCATO, SALVATORE (57) (8/28/86)
BRANCATO, SALVATORE (57) (8/28/86)
BRAND, EDWARD R. (84) (8/13/87)
BRANNUM, HUGH (77) (4/19/87)
BRANNUM, HUGH (77) (4/19/87)
BRANNUM, JAMES F. (late 40s) (10/7/86)
BRESSAN, ARTHUR J. JR. (44) (7/29/87)
BRIAN, VIRGINIA (0'BRIEN) (90) (5/2/87)
BRODY, SAM (80) (9/9/87)
BROWN, CLARENCE (97) (8/17/87)
BROWN, CORNELIA (80) (11/2/86)
BROWN, HARRY (69) (11/2/86)
BROWN, LEE, DAVID (31) (7/27/87)
BRUCK, KARL (81) (8/21/87)
BRUNNER, ANNA M. (48) (4/13/87)
BRYANT, BUGLEAUX (67) (6/25/87)
BRYANT, BUGLEAUX (67) (6/25/87)
BRYANT, HUGH (58) (7/22/87)
BUCKLEY, HOWARD J. (81) (8/1/87)

BURDA, FRANZ (83) (9/3/86) BURKE, MARY E. (54) (3/5/87) BURKHART, GARY (40) (5/8/87) BURNSIDE, HAROLD (43) (11/15/86) BURRELL, HORACE KENNETH (36) (11/1/86) BURTON, BILL (46) (2/21/87) BURTON, RUSS J. (70) (4/12/87) BUSCH, BOB (69) (9/29/86) BUTLER, RALPH (74) (4/6/87) BUTTERFIELD, PAUL (44) (5/4/87) CABOT-ROMAN, SUSAN (age unreported) (12/10/86)
CALANDRA, RICHARD (45) (10/20/86)
CALANDRA, RICHARD (45) (10/20/86)
CALDWELL, ERSKINE (83) (4/12/87)
CAMP, DUANE (62) (5/27/87)
CAMPBEL, ROBERT (62) (1/2/87)
CAMPBELL, ARCHIE (72) (8/30/87)
CANPBELL, JOHN (68) (7/23/87)
CANNON, LILO (ALEXANDER) (76) (1/7/87)
CAPITANO, EDNA (74) (4/8/87)
CAREY, DENIS (77) (9/28/86)
CARLLILE, THUMBS (50s) (7/31/87)
CARMEL, ROGER (54) (11/11/86)
CARR, GLEN P. (PETE) (68) (date unreported)
CARRERAS, LADY (VERA ST. JOHN) (late 70s) (10/31/86)
CARROLL, ANGELA (82) (8/7/87)
CASEN, EILEEN E. (age unreported) (3/30/87) CABOT-ROMAN, SUSAN (age unreported) CARUSO, ENRICO JR. (82) (4/9/87)
CASEY, EILEEN E. (age unreported)
(3/30/87)
CASPARY, VERA (87) (6/13/87)
CASSELL, DUNCAN (84) (1/26/87)
CHAIN, BARBARA (66) (7/5/87)
CHAMPION, BLAKE GOWER (25) (5/21/87)
CHANEY, HAROLD LEE (59) (1/4/87)
CHASIN, GEORGE (81) (7/29/87)
CHASINS, ABRAM (83) (6/21/87)
CHASSMAN, LILLIAN (86) (4/6/87)
CHEW, VIRGILIA (82) (7/23/87)
CHILBERG, JOHN E. II (57) (3/2/87)
CHUDNOW, ROSAMOND (82) (9/5/87)
CLARKN, CARLOS (56) (2/7/87)
CLARK, MAMO (72) (12/18/86)
CLARK, MAMO (72) (12/18/86)
CLARKE, RAYMOND (47) (8/26/87)
CLAYTON, ANNETTE (52) (7/9/87)
COCKRELL, FRANCIS M. (FRANK) (80)
(4/15/87)
COCC, JAMES (56) (2/25/87) (4/15/87) COCO, JAMES (56) (2/25/87) COE, PETER (58) (5/25/87) COFFIN, WINNIE (75) (12/18/86) COHEN, CARL (73) (12/26/86) COHEN, SANDER (SANDY) (67) (10/19/86) COLBY, RICHARD (63) (10/8/86) COLLIER, WILLIAM JR. (BUSTER) (86) COLBY, RICHARD (63) (10/8/86)
COLLIER, WILLIAM JR. (BUSTER) (86)
(2/6/87)
COLLIER, PATIENCE (RENE RITCHER) (76)
(7/13/87)
COLLINS, KENNETH H. (34) (12/15/86)
COLLUM, JOSEPH J. (88) (9/30/86)
COLONNA, JERRY (82) (11/21/86)
COME, ANDRE M. (53) (6/12/87)
CONKLIN, JIM (55) (3/25/87)
CONNER, VELMA (82) (7/19/87)
CONNOLLY, JOHN (35) (1/5/87)
CONRAD, ARTHUR (51) (date unreported)
COOK, MARK (86) (2/8/87)
COOPER (CURTIS), OLIVE (94) (6/12/87)
COOPER, THEODORE H. (79) (1/19/87)
CORRADINE, TOM (62) (11/14/86)
COSTELLO, CAROLE (48) (3/29/87)
COWAN, AURELIA (94) (4/7/87)
COX, BOBBY (76) (7/4/87)
COX, BOBBY (76) (7/4/87)
COX, EOWARD A. (91) (8/1/87)
CRANS, THOMAS (TEC) (50) (12/20/86)
CRAWFORD, CHERYL (84) (10/7/86)
CRESPINEL, WILLIAM (96) (61/9/87)
CROTHERS, BENJAMIN SHERMAN
(SCATMAN) (76) (11/22/86)
CULVER, JOHN CALVIN (CASEY DONOVAN)
(43) (8/10/87)
D'AMORE, DOMINIC J. (27) (4/28/87) (43) (8/10/87) D'AMORE, DOMINIC J. (27) (4/28/87)
DACEY, FLORENCE O'NEAL (75) (6/20/87)
DAMIANI, LEO (74) (11/4/86)
DAMON, CATHRYN (age unreported) DANA, VIOLA (VIRGINIA FLUGRATH) (90) (7/3/87) (7/3/6/)
Da PRON, LOUIS F. (74) (7/21/87)
DATRY, MYRON (SONNY) (81) (3/6/87)
DAVIS, DONALD DWIGHT (90) (1/21/87) DAVIS, DUNALD DWIGHT (90) (1/21/87)
DAVIS, EDDIE (93) (4/20/87)
DAVIS, EDDIE (LOCKJAW) (65) (11/3/86)
DAWSON, CAROLYN BYRD (81) (7/8/87)
DAWSON, HAL K. (90) (2/17/87)
DAY, NED (42) (9/3/87)
DECAE, HENRI (71) (3/7/87)
DEFERRIS, AMELIA ESPARZA (85)
(8/19/87) DEFERIS, AMELIA (5) (8/19/87)
DEFERIS, AMELIA ESPARZA (85) (8/19/87)
DEFORE, JIMMY (63) (1/24/87)
DEHN, MURA (84) (2/11/87)
de LIAGRE, ALFRED JR. (82) (3/5/87)
DEMPSTER, HUGH (86) (4/30/87)
DENNY, JOYCE (age unreported (8/27/87)
DENTON, JACK (61) (11/17/86)
DERUE, CARMEN (78) (9/28/86)
DEVLIN, WILLIAM (75) (1/25/87)
DICKEY, DOUGLAS F. (35) (8/8/87)
DIETZ, JAMES (27) (4/22/87)
DINE, JOSEF C. (74) (11/26/86)
DISHAW, CHARLES J. (63) (3/17/87)
DIVERDI, GEORGE (82) (8/26/87)
DODD, LOICE (64) (5/5/87)

DODDS, JOHN (64) (10/9/86)
DODSON, PERRIE (67) (9/27/86)
DONOVAN, KING (69) (6/30/87)
DOOLITTLE, JIMMY (69) (4/12/87)
DORNACKER, JANE (40) (10/22/86)
DORSEY, LEE (59) (12/1/86)
DOUGHERTY, CELIUS (84) (12/22/86)
DRAKE, HAZEL (72) (9/10/87)
DRAPER, BARBARA (83) (7/4/87)
DRAPER, BARBARA (83) (7/4/87)
DRAPER, BICHARD (49) (6/19/87)
DREW, MAX (40) (1/8/87)
DRUXMAN, HERSH (71) (2/23/87)
DUBIN, JOSEPH S. (76) (1/18/87)
DUKE, FORREST JR. (26) (3/31/87)
DUNLAP, ROMOLA REMUS (mid-to-late 80s) (2/17/87)
DURHAM, EDDIE (80) (3/6/87)
DWYER, LESLIE (80) (12/29/87) EARLE, EUGENE (33) (6/30/87) ECKES, JOHN (78) (10/8/86) EDDY, ANN D. (age unreported) (8/28/87) EDDY, SAMUEL ALBERT (83) (6/28/87) EDWARDS, WILLIAM J. (BILL) (57) (3/5/87)
EFROS, ANATOLY (61) (1/13/87)
EGAN, RICHARD (65) (7/20/87)
EIDEMILLER, HERB (64) (1/29/87)
ELKERBOUT, BEN (46) (7/6/87)
EMMONS, DAVID (34) (12/6/86)
ENGLAND, DON (57) (2/4/87)
ENSLOW, CLAUDE (82) (11/14/86)
ERWIN, JAMES H. (60) (9/5/87)
ESPIAU, LITA S. (64) (6/4/87)
EVANS, CECILIA (age unreported)
(11/18/86)
EVERETT, FRED A. SR. (52) (1/20/87) (3/5/87)

EVERETT, FRED A. SR. (52) (1/20/87)

FACTOR, TED H. (72) (2/28/87)

FARR, BILL (52) (3/8/87)

FARR, BILL (52) (3/8/87)

FARRELL, FRANCIS (FRANK) (68) (6/26/87)

FASSETT, JAMES (82) (12/17/86)

FAULKNER, RALPH B. (95) (1/28/87)

FAYE LE BRET, ROBERT (82) (4/28/87)

FAY, JAMES JR. (33) (4/20/87)

FEDER, SIDNEY (81) (5/27/87)

FEEBACK, SAMMIE G. (73) (9/20/86)

FEENEY, HARRY J. (69) (7/11/87)

FELDMAN, MORTON (61) (9/3/87)

FELDMAN, MORTON (61) (9/3/87)

FENAJA, GEORGE (69) (8/1/87)

FIEN, LAURA (89) (5/3/87)

FIEET, DON (48) (12/31/86)

FONG, BENSON (70) (8/1/87)

FONSECA, PETER (28) (12/6/86)

FORBES, MURRAY (80) (1/27/87)

FOSSE, BOB (60) (9/23/87)

FOTOPOULOS, MIMIS (73) (10/29/86)

FRANCIS, IVOR (68) (10/22/86)

FRANKLIN, HUGH (70) (9/26/86)

FRANKLIN, HUGH (70) (9/26/86)

FRANKLIN, HUGH (70) (9/26/86)

FRASER, BILL (79) (9/5/87)

FREDERICKS, CARLTON (76) (7/28/87)

FREEDMAN, BEN (83) (6/13/87)

FREEDMAN, HARRY (83) (9/13/87)

FREEDMAN, HARRY (83) (9/13/87)

FRIEDMAN, HARRY (83) (9/13/87)

FRIEDMAN, PAUL (80) (7/4/87)

FUGLSBY, JOAN (62) (8/11/87)

FUGLSBY, ROSCOE VERNON (GADABOUT)

GADDIS, ROSCOE VERNON (GADABOU (90) (10/21/86)
GAINES, (OTHO) LEE (73) (7/15/87)
GALLARDO, GRACE (60) (10/19/86)
GARCIA-HENRIQUEZ, RONNIE (25)
(3/14/87)
GARIOCH, JEAN (59) (1/21/87)
GELMAN, HAROLD S. (74) (10/16/86)
GENSLER, SYLVIA (72) (3/9/87)
GERAGHTY, MAURICE (78) (6/30/87)
GIBSON, ALAN (49) (7/5/87)
GIBSON, WYNNE (82) (5/15/87)
GIGLIGTTI, YOLANDE (58) (5/3/87)
GILLIGAN, MATTHEW (76) (1/22/87)
GIMBEL, PETER R. (59) (7/12/87)
GINGOLD, HERMIONE (89) (5/25/87)
GLADWIN, JOE (82) (3/11/87) GADDIS, ROSCOE VERNON (GADABOUT) GLADWIN, JOE (82) (3/11/87) GLASSMAN-WEBB, JENNIFER ANN (26) (11/13/86) (11/13/86) GLEZERMAN, ALLAN (57) (12/6/86) GOLDSMITH, BETTY (age unreported) GOLDSMITH, BETTY (age unreported) (8/24/87) GOLDSTEIN, NATALIE (62) (3/22/87) GOLDSTEIN, RICHARD C. (48) (9/6/87) GONI, TRINIDAD (95) (date unredported) GODDMAN, BOBBY (31) (9/12/86) GOODMAN, BYRON (77) (12/26/86) GOODWIN, ROBERT ADRIAN (41) (9/27/87) GOOLIN, VICTORIA (80) (3/21/87) GORDON, EDITH WRIGHT (77) (10/14/86) GOTTLIEB, SYLVIA (73) (12/28/86) GOULD-PORTER. ARTHUR E. (81) (1/2/87) GRANT. CARY (AI EXANDER ARCHIBALD GOULD-PURITER, ARTHUR E. (81) (1/2/8/GRANT, CARY (ALEXANDER ARCHIBALD LEACH) (82) (11/29/86)
GRANUCCI, VELMA (91) (3/12/87)
GRAVES, MICHAEL (85) (4/8/87)
GRAY, HARRIETTE ANN (73) (4/20/87)
GREEN, FREDDIE (75) (3/1/87)
GREENE, LORNE (72) (9/11/87)
GREENE, SIR HUGH CARLETON (76) (2/19/87) GREENE, SIR HUGH CARLETON (/6) (2/19/87) GREENWOOD, JOAN (65) (2/28/87) GRESHLER, ROSE D. (70s) (8/1/87) GROESSE, PAUL (81) (5/4/87) GROESSE, SONIA (79) (3/4/87) GROSS, MICKEY (81) (7/1/87) GUARDIA, ALBERT H. (BOB) (65)

HAACK, MORTON (58) (3/22/87)
HAAS, BUDD (62) (1/8/87)
HACKETT, RAY (75) (3/29/87)
HALEY, SIR WILLIAM (86) (9/6/87)
HALIM, VICTOR (97) (11/17/86)
HALL, JOHN M. (41) (9/5/87)
HALLENBECK, E. DARRELL (64) (1/31/87)
HALPERT, ETTA (93) (11/27/86)
HALSTEAD, WILLIAM S. (85) (7/8/87)
HALTERMAN, KENNY (69) (3/24/87)
HAMILTON, MARC (64) (5/12/87)
HAMILTON, MARGUERITE (69) (5/22/87)
HAMMERSTEIN, DOROTHY (BLANCHARD) (87) (8/3/87)
HAMMOND, JOHN (76) (7/10/87)
HAMPE, LARRY (58) (8/31/87)
HAMZA, ABE (72) (8/28/87)
HAND, DAVID (86) (10/11/86)
HANSON, WESLEY T. JR. (74) (5/20/87)
HARDESTY, WILLIAM (86) (12/6/86)
HARMON, RUTH (68) (3/20/87) HARGRAVE, WILLIAM (86) (12/6/86)
HARMON, RUTH (68) (3/20/87)
HARRIS, C.C. (BUCKY) (78) (8/2/87)
HARRIS, MARY (73) (7/19/87)
HART, DEREK O. (61) (11/23/86)
HARTMAN, ELIZABETH (43) (6/10/87)
HARTWELL, GIFFORD JR. (66) (11/9/86)
HASKIN, HAROLD (80) (3/29/87)
HASSINGER, JIM (61) (8/5/87)
HAYNES, BERNADINE (75) (8/29/87)
HAYNES, IL OYD (age unreported) HASSINGER, JIM (61) (8/5/87)
HAYES, BERNADINE (75) (8/29/87)
HAYNES, LLOYD (age unreported)
(12/31/86)
HAYWORTH, RITA (MARGARITA CARMEN CANSINO) (68) (5/14/87)
HEARN, GUY EDWARD (EDDIE) (72)
(4/22/87)
HEIDT, HORACE (85) (12/1/86)
HEIN, KETIH (46) (7/8/87)
HEINEMANN, ARTHUR (77) (9/22/87)
HEINEMANN, ARTHUR (77) (9/22/87)
HEINEMANN, ARTHUR (78) (11/26/86)
HERRING, GLENN (55) (8/3/87)
HEWITT, ALAN (71) (11/7/86)
HIESTAND, JOHN (BUD) (80) (2/5/87)
HIGGINS, ROBERT (75) (7/29/87)
HILL, ABRAM (AB) (76) (10/6/86)
HILL, ROLAND E. (91) (11/10/86)
HINDERAS, NATALIE (60) (7/22/87)
HIRSZMAN, LEON (49) (9/15/87)
HOBLEY, MCDONALD (70) (7/30/87)
HOCHSTETTER, LEO (76) (6/10/87)
HOFFMAN, HAROLD M. (79) (5/28/87)
HOLBROOK, PATRICIA WALSH (57)
(10/17/86)
HOLCOMBE, HARRY (80) (9/15/87)
HOLLAND, EDWARD RAY (44) (4/17/87)
HOLLAND, HELENA (71) (6/29/87)
HOLL, BAYNHAM (83) (2/10/87)

HOLLAND, HELENA (1/1) (0/23/6/)
(7/14/87)
HONRI, BAYNHAM (83) (2/10/87)
HONK, CHARLES (32) (11/28/86)
HOOKER, BENO HARRISON (76) (2/4/87)
HOOKER, HUGH (68) (9/11/87)
HOWARD, BOB (66) (3/17/87)
HOWARD, MARVIN (60) (2/16/87)
HOWARD, NOEL (66) (2/7/87)
HUBAN, MARVIN (76) (6/5/87)
HUBAN, MARVIN (76) (1/24/86)
HUFEMAN, EDWARD I. (73) (12/4/86)
HUFEMAN, ALICE (71) (11/14/86)
HUIE, WILLIAM BRADFORD (76) (11/22/86)
HUMPHREY, JACK (54) (4/18/87)
HUNTINGTON, CATHARINE SARGENT (100) (2/27/87) (100) (2/27/87)
HURST, BRIAN (86) (9/26/86)
HUSTON, JOHN (81) (8/28/87)
HUTSON, MICHAEL (38) (7/12/87)
HUTTENBACK, DOROTHY (DOROTHY ALICE MARCUSE) (90) (4/10/87)

ISRAEL, WILLIAM (90) (4/17/87) IVERSON, ROBERT (57) (8/17/87)

JACKS, ROBERT L. (60) (8/19/87)
JACOBSON, ROBERT M. (46) (5/9/87)
JAFFE, ALLAN (51) (3/9/87)
JAFFE, ALLAN (51) (3/9/87)
JAFFE, MILDRED (79) (3/9/87)
JAMESON, JOYCE (about 55) (1/16/87)
JARRETT, ART (81) (7/23/87)
JAYCOX, BETTY (74) (7/18/87)
JEFFRIES, PHILLIP M. (61) (4/6/87)
JEFFRIES, LANG (55) (2/12/87)
JENKINS, CARROLL L. (59) (11/28/86)
JENSEN, BOB (75) (9/8/87)
JERMANOVICH, STEVEN (36) (7/4/87)
JOHNSON, EDGAR (59) (6/13/87)
JOHNSON, EDGAR (59) (6/13/87)
JOHNSON, RAYMOND (40) (3/26/87)
JOHNSON, RAYMOND (40) (3/26/87)
JONES, DARBY (76) (11/30/86)
JONES, DOUGLAS B. (70) (6/7/87)
JONES, GORDON (86) (5/29/87)
JORGENSEN, PATRICIA LYNNE (GLASS)
(821/9 (80) (8/18/7) (early 60s (6/5/87) JUDD, WILLIAM M. (70) (1/12/87) JUTRA, CLAUDE (57) (date unreported)

(11/19/86) KABALEVSKY, DMITRI (82) (date KABAT, ROY G. (66) (10/30/86)
KAHL, MILT (78) (4/19/87)
KASS, IRVING (71) (7/12/87)
KASS, RONALD S. (51) (10/17/86)
KAY, BEATRICE (79) (11/8/86)
KAYDEN, WILLIAM (63) (6/13/87)
KAYE, ALBERT E. (88) (2/3/87)
KAYE, DANNY (74) (3/3/87)
KAYE, NORA (67) (2/28/87)
KAYE, SAMMY (77) (6/2/87)
KAYE, SAMMY (77) (6/2/87)
KEAN, BETTY (69) (9/29/86)
KEATOR, STEVE (36) (8/27/87) unreported)

KEELER, WILLIAM (65) (4/7/87) KEENAN, PAUL (30) (12/11/86) KELLER, HARRY (73) (1/19/87) KELLY, THOMAS (87) (7/23/87) KENNEDY, MADGE (96) (6/9/87) KING, MARY DELORES (88) (12/5/86) KING, RUTH MARGARET RHODES (67) KING, RUTH MARGARET RHÓDES (67)
(6/20/87)
KING, WILLIAM JR. (73) (11/2/86)
KLEIN, IRVING (97) (10/27/86)
KLEIN, LAWRENCE P. (85) (5/22/87)
KLEIN, NORMAN (48) (2/21/87)
KLINGMAN, LAWRENCE L. (68) (10/20/86)
KNIGHT, ESMOND (80) (2/23/87)
KNIGHT, JUNE (74) (6/16/87)
KOEPKE, RICHARD (41) (7/27/87)
KOVOLOFF, JOSEPH HAROLD (80)
(12/5/86) KOVOLOFF, JOSEPH HAROLD (80) (12/5/86) KRAUS, LILI (83) (11/6/86) KRENTS, HAROLD ELIOT (42) (1/12/87) KRONER, WILLIAM (80) (10/28/86) KRUTKA, JOHN III (29) (4/17/87) KUNII, TOSHIAKI (50) (2/28/87) KYLE, THOMAS GEORGE (43) (7/1/87)

LAKE, ARTHUR (81) (1/9/87)

LAKE, ARTHUR (81) (1/9/87)

LAMBERT, DOUGLAS (50) (12/16/86)

LAMORIE, JOSEPH F. (99) (8/19/87)

LANCHESTER, ELSA (84) (12/26/86)

LANDRES, MORRIS MICHAEL (96)

(7/18/87)

LANGLEY, KEN (57) (2/4/87)

LAPENIEKS, VILIS (56) (7/3/87)

LASONDE, BEVERLY J. (57) (5/2/87)

LATHAM, JACK (72) (1/1/87)

LAWRENCE, JAY (63) (6/18/87)

LAWRENCE, JUSTUS BALDWIN (JOCK)

(83) (4/21/87)

LAWRENCE, PHILIP (66) (2/19/87)

LEARN, BETSY (BETTY ROBBINS) (98)

(2/5/87)

(83) (4/21/87)
LAWRENCE, PHILIP (66) (2/19/87)
LEARN, BETSY (BETTY ROBBINS) (98) (2/5/87)
LEBOWSKY, STANLEY (59) (10/19/86)
LEE, ROBERT TYLER (76) (1/19/87)
LEFEDY, G. FRANK (52) (1/19/87)
LEFKOWITZ, JULIUS (78) (5/13/87)
LEIGHTON, AVA (age unreported) (8/27/87)
LELAND, DAVID (65) (4/17/87)
LE LURON, THIERRY (34) (11/13/86)
LENARD, GRACE (mid 60s) (4/7/87)
LEROY, MERVYN (86) (9/13/87)
LESCOULIE, JACK (75) (7/22/87)
LEVENE, CAROL (74) (10/29/86)
LEVIN, BORIS (78) (10/11/86)
LEVINE, JOSEPH E. (81) (7/31/87)
LEVINE, SANFORD N. (55) (4/15/87)
LEVINE, STEPHEN (37) (11/9/86)
LEVINS, BUDY (59) (11/22/86)
LEWIS, BUDY (59) (11/22/86)
LEWIS, BUDY (59) (11/22/86)
LEWIS, LILLIAN (88) (8/19/87)
LIBERACE (WLADZIU VALENTINO
LIBERACE (WADZIU VALENTINO
LIBERACE (%6) (5/8/87)
LUON, ALFRED (78) (2/2/87)
LIVADARY, JOHN PAUL (90) (4/7/87)
LUVD, MARJORIE ELIZABETH (PEGGY)
(61) (11/18/86)
LOCKE, HARRY (74) (date unreported)
LOFTLIN, WILLIAM J. JR. (74) (9/23/86)
LONDON, JACK (66) (5/8/87)
LUDAM, CHARLES (44) (5/28/87)
LUDAM, PATRICIA (60s) (11/23/86)

MacGIBBON, HARRIET (81) (2/8/87)
MACKAY, FULTON (64) (6/6/87)
MacLEAN, ALISTAIR (64) (2/2/87)
MADDEN, CECIL (84) (5/27/87)
MADDERY, MAUREEN ROSE (68) (1/24/87)

MADERY, MAUREEN ROSE (68) (1/24/87)
MAGOWAN, JEAN (58) (8/17/87)
MAKSIK, BEN (78) (12/25/86)
MANAHAN, ROBERT JAMES (38) (12/1/86)
MANDELL, DANIEL (92) (6/8/87)
MANGER, WINIFRED BRISON (94)
(8/20/87)
MANSFIELD, ANDY (85) (8/8/87)
MARACCI, CARMELITA (76) (7/26/87)
MARCHAND, JOEY (36) (2/25/87)
MARCUM, KEVIN (31) (7/20/87)
MARDONI, CLAYTON HINES (82) (2/27/87)
MAREK, GEORGE R. (84) (1/7/87)
MARKSTEIN, GEORGE (57) (1/15/87)
MARQUAND, RICHARD (49) (9/4/87)
MARTIN, DAVID (50) (8/2/87) MARTIN, DAVID (50) (8/2/87) MARTIN, DEAN PAUL (35) (3/21/87) MARTIN, DELORES (72) (7/17/87) MARTIN, QUINN (65) (9/5/87)
MARTIN, ROD (57) (9/22/87)
MARTINEZ, HERB (65) (3/8/87)
MARVIN, LEE (63) (8/29/87)
MASON, BREWSTER (65) (8/14/87)

unreported) MATTHES, SANDI (58) (7/5/87) MATTHEWS, NAT (75) (11/29/86) MAUREEN, MOLLIE (70s) (1/26/87) MAURER, NORMAN (60) (11/23/86)

MASON, HAL (69) (10/10/86) MATHEWS, DAVID T. (76) (date

BRYANT, HUGH (58) (7/22/87) BUCKLEY, HOWARD J. (81) (8/1/87) BULLARO, JOSEPH (84) (12/24/86)

(11/15/86) GUERNSEY, JESSE (57) (9/25/86) GUTERMAN, MORTIE (83) (3/18/87)

NECROLOGY

MAY, JUNE JOHNSON (68) (7/14/87) MAYSLES, DAVID (54) (1/3/87) MCADAM, MICHAEL R. (77) (4/7/87) MCARTHUR, EDWIN (79) (2/24/87) MCCARTHY, BRIDGET (39) (11/9/86) MCCARTHY, FRANK (74) (12/1/86) McCARTHY, FRANK (74) (12/1/86)
McCLURE, DARRELL (84) (2/27/87)
McCLURE, SPECK (76) (10/30/86)
McCLURE, IRENE (73) (3/17/87)
McCUP, CHARLES M. (71) (4/22/87)
McDERMID, FINLAY (82) (3/2/87)
McDERMID, FINLAY (82) (3/2/87)
McDOWELL, CURT (42) (6/3/87)
McGOFFIN, BARRY (40) (4/26/87)
McGUIRE, JON (77) (5/31/87)
McGUIRE, JON (77) (5/31/87)
McKAY, SCOTT (71) (date unreported)
McKENNA, SIOBHAN (63) (11/16/86)
McLAREN, DONALD M. (49) (3/24/87)
McLAREN, NORMAN (72) (1/27/87)
McLAREN, ROSS (62) (6/1/87) McLEAN, ROSS (62) (6/1/87) McNAMARA, ED (65) (10/11/86) MEAGHER, LEONE BRUMONDI (76) (12/9/86)
MEDFORD, BEN (86) (8/1/87)
MENENDEZ, NILÔ (84) (9/15/87)
MERRILL, CELESTÉ RÜSH (age unreported)

MERRILL, CELESTE RUSH (age unreporte (2/15/87)
MESSINGER, MARIE (81) (4/4/87)
METRANO, BEN (66) (12/26/86)
MEYER, ANDREW C. (43) (3/8/87)
MEYER, JOSEPH (93) (6/23/87)
MICHAELS, CHRIS (58) (10/27/86)
MICHAELS, TANIS (WILLIAM H. BROWN JR.) (33) (8/27/87)
MILLAKOWSKY, HERMAN (95) (2/12/87)
MILLER, DOLORES (82) (12/2/86)
MILLER, FRANK (63) (10/22/86) MILLER, ELLEN M. (72) (7/11/87)
MILLER, FRANK (63) (10/22/86)
MILLER, JOHN J. (49) (3/23/87)
MILLER, JULIUS SUMNER (78) (4/14/87)
MINOR, MICHAEL (46) (5/4/87)
MINSKY, MORTON (85) (3/23/87)
MINSKY, TED (70) (2/24/87)
MITCHELL, KENNETH J. (62) (1/29/87)
MONTGOMERY, EARL (65) (3/5/87)
MOONEY, JAMES B. (69) (12/31/86)
MOORE, ELEANOR J. (71) (5/22/87)
MOORE, GERALD (87) (3/13/87) MOORE, ELEANOR J. (71) (5/22/87)
MOORE, GERALD (87) (3/13/87)
MOORE, JAMES (72) (4/8/87)
MOORE, JAMES (72) (4/8/87)
MOORE, PHIL (70) (5/13/87)
MORGAN, KENNETH (74) (1/15/87)
MORGAN, KENNETH (74) (1/15/87)
MORRISON, GWENN (57) (9/23/86)
MOSS, SHIRLEY F. (81) (8/24/87)
MOYER, RICHARD (47) (9/27/86)
MUIR, BOB (36) (4/9/87)
MUNTZ, EARL (MADMAN) (73) (6/20/87)
MURPHY, MELVIN (TURK) (71) (5/30/87)
MURPHY, WILLIAM H. (87) (9/26/86)
MUSE, KENNETH L. (75) (7/26/87)
MUSGROVE, DALE (58) (6/13/87)

NAIL, WILLIAM (60) (3/3/87) NANNI, DANIEL (38) (10/6/86) NAONE, IDA K.F. (81) (5/17/87 NAONÉ, IDA K.F. (81) (5/17/87)
NATHAN, WYNN (63) (11/13/86)
NAZARRO, RAY (83) (9/8/86)
NEBENZAHL, LEON (72) (8/20/87)
NEEDHAM, JOHN P. (65) (3/4/87)
NEGRI, POLA (BARBARA APOLLONIA CHALUPIEC) (87) (8/1/87)
NEVILLE, HARRY C. (56) (2/15/87)
NEWHOUSE, DAVID H. (68) (6/21/87)
NEWHOUSE, DAVID H. (68) (6/21/87)
NEWTON, MARV (54) (11/9/86)
NEWTON, MICHAEL (53) (10/21/86)
NORTON, ELIZABETH ANN (BETSY)
GLAZIER (age unreported) (3/21/87) GLAZIER (age unreported) (3/21/87) NOVAK, JOSEPH ALBERT (89) (1/15/87) NOVIKOFF, MEL (64) (9/1/87) NOVY, ERNEST J. (80) (2/12/87) NUNN, BOBBY (61) (11/5/86) NYIREGYHAZI, ERWIN (84) (4/13/87)

OBERLIN, RICHARD (58) (1/5/87)
OBERMAN, TYRONE JOSEPH (49) (8/19/87)
OBOLER, ARCH (77) (3/19/87)
O'BRIEN, PAUL D. (82) (5/29/87)
O'CONNELL, JON M. (40) (3/29/87)
O'DOLL, EDNA (91) (6/11/87)
O'DONNELL, WALTER (75) (10/14/86)
O'HALLORAN, JOHN F. (82) (4/22/87)
O'HANLON, JANET (38) (2/13/87)
OHMAN, KIP (41) (7/25/87)
OLEJNICZAK, DANIEL (50) (7/23/87)
ONDRA, ANNY (83) (2/28/87)
ONDRA, ANNY (83) (2/28/87)
ONDE, TATSUNOSUKE (TORU FUJIMA) (40) (3/28/87)
OPPENHEIMER, DOROTHEA (68) (5/7/87)
ORNATO, GIUSEPPE (59) (date unreported) ORNATO, GIUSEPPE (59) (date unreported)
O'STEEN, JOHN R. (JOHNNY) (78) (8/5/87)
OTERO, VINCENT (32) (10/20/86)
OTTENBERG, BERTRAM (BUDDY) (66)

(8/3/87) OWENS, HARRY (84) (12/12/86)

PACKER, JAMES JR. (56) (6/18/87)
PACKER, PETER (81) (2/13/87)
PAGE, GERALDINE (62) (6/13/87)
PALMER, NORMAN (65) (11/25/86)
PANTAGES, RODNEY (81) (12/2/86)
PARKER, GARY A. (45) (7/6/87)
PARRISH, DARLENE G. (77) (9/30/86) PARSELL, JAY (50) (6/12/87)
PARTLOW, VERN (76) (3/1/87)
PASTORIUS, JOHN FRANCIS (JACO) (35) (9/21/87) PATRICK, DOROTHY (DAVIS) (65) (5/31/87) PAYNE, DAVID (49) (3/27/87)

PEARLE, EDWARD L. (age unreported) PEARLE, EDWARD L. (age unreported)
(8/27/87)
PEARSON, R. WADE (72) (7/25/87)
PEER, MONIQUE I. (80) (8/30/87)
PELLER, CLARA (86) (8/11/87)
PETERSEN, ROBERT (50) (1/12/87)
PETZOLDT, ROBERT (87) (7/26/87)
PHILBRICK, NORMAN D. (73) (1/25/87)
PINHEIRO, VICTOR (58) (3/5/87)
PLESHETTE, GERALDINE (age unreported)
(3/19/87) PLESHETTE, GERALDINE (age unreporte (3/19/87)
PLUMMER, ELMER (76) (12/31/86)
POKRAS, ABEL (68) (4/22/87)
POPPELE, JACOB R. (88) (10/7/86)
POPPER, JAN (79) (9/2/87)
POSEN, NORMAN (65) (8/26/87)
POTTER, CHARLES H. (88) (9/5/87)
PREDERGAST, JANET F. (86) (9/29/86)
PRESTON, ROBERT (68) (3/21/87)
PREVOST, GERMAIN (95) (5/9/87)
PRICE, KENNY (56) (8/4/87) PRICE, KENNY (56) (8/4/87)
PRICE, LUCILLE HARDY (77) (10/8/86)
PRIEST, NATALIE (68) (7/7/87)
PUCCIO, JOE (48) (2/21/87)
PURCELL, ROBERT (75) (8/5/87)
PURNELL, ALTON (75) (1/16/87)

QUALEN (OLESON), JOHN (87) (9/12/87) QUEEN, WILLIAM A. (64) (4/30/87) QUILL, JOHN E. (50) (9/13/87)

RABIN, JACK (73) (5/25/87) RAMIREZ, CARLOS J. (73) (12/11/86) RAMOS DA SILVA, FERNANDO (19) (8/25/87)
RAPP, PHILIP (75) (1/12/87)
REDDICK, CECIL (56) (12/10/86)
REDSTONE, MICHAEL (85) (4/4/87)
REED, ROBERT (92) (3/4/87)
REEVES, HAZARD E. (80) (12/23/86)
REHM, STACEY (32) (11/17/86)
REILLY, ADAM (42) (5/5/87)
REIMUELLER, ROSS (49) (8/12/87)
REISMAN, JOE (63) (9/25/87)
REPOLA, ERNEST L. (63) (10/9/86)
REY, ALEJANDRO (57) (5/21/87)
REYNOLDS, TOMMY (69) (9/30/86)
RHODES, GRANDON (82) (6/9/87)
RHODES, LEAH (84) (10/17/86)
RIBOUD, CHRISTOPHE (37) (8/31/87) RIBOUD, CHRISTOPHE (37) (8/31/87) RICH, BUDDY (BERNARD) (69) (4/2/87) RICH, SUSIE (76) (12/9/86) RICKETSON, FRANK H. (RICK) JR. (90) (6/18/87) RIGGLE, LOUISE (78) (7/5/87) ROBBINS, ALLAN MITCHELL (AL) (49)

(2/8/87)ROBERTS JOSEPHINE (81) (1/1/87) ROBERTS JOSEPHINE (81) (1/1/87)
ROBINSON, DAR (39) (11/21/86)
ROCHA, VICTORIA JOAN (33) (3/12/87)
RODRIGUES, VICTORIA KEALIKAAPUNIHONUA II (AUNTY VICKIE) (74) (7/22/87)
RODRIGUEZ, LISA (19) (12/14/86)
ROEDIGER, ROLF (57) (12/24/86)
ROPOLO, EDWARD D. (64) (10/30/86)
RORKE, HAYDEN (76) (8/19/87)
ROSALY JR., PEDRO J. (67) (10/10/86)
ROSE WILLIAM (68) (2/10/87) ROSALY JR., PEDRO' J. (67) (10/10/86)
ROSE, WILLIAM (68) (2/10/87)
ROSENBACH, MELVILLE (77) (12/17/86)
ROSENBERG, EDGAR (62) (8/14/87)
ROSENTHAL, JERRY (60) (8/6/87)
ROSENTHAL, SANDY (63) (12/27/86)
ROSS, AL (71) (4/4/87)
ROSS, JONNIE EULALIA (39) (7/19/87)
ROSS, SELMA (87) (11/9/86)
ROTH, EDWARD (89) (1/28/87)
ROWAN, DAN (65) (9/22/87)
RUBINOFF, DAVID (89) (10/6/86)
RUFFINO, JAMES (55) (8/17/87)
RUSKIN, COBY (75) (3/3/87)
RUSSELL, JAMES (59) (6/14/87)
RUSSELL, JAMES (59) (6/14/87)
RUSSELL, KATHLYN WILSON (60)
(9/27/87)

(9/27/87) RUSSO, E. MANNE (78) (5/25/87) RUTHERFORD, ANGELO (33) (1/30/87) RYAN, THOMAS C. (54) (11/25/86)

SAGE, JAMES E. (70) (8/27/87) ST. JOHNS, BARBARA ANN (53) (1/21/87) SALOMAN, STANLEY (LOMAN) (68) (8/27/87)
SALT, WALDO (72) (3/7/87)
SALTER, NORMAN F. (65) (5/11/87)
SAMANIEGO, JORGE (40) (8/12/87)
SAMMETH, MIRIAM (75) (9/16/87)
SAMPSON, WILL (53) (6/3/87)
SANCHEZ, MARCELINO (28) (11/21/86)
SANDLER, LENA (66) (7/6/87)
SANJURJO, LUIS (45) (3/12/87)
SANTORO, DEAN (49) (6/10/87)
SAROYAN, HENRY (82) (4/14/87)
SAUNDERS, RUSSELL (81) (4/28/87)
SAVAN, BRUCE (59) (4/13/87) SAVAN, BRUCE (59) (4/13/87) SAVOY, DAVID (24) (2/6/87) SAWYER, WILLIAM (BILL) (52) (11/18/86) SAYLES, EMANUEL (79) (10/5/86) SCHAAR, RUBY YOSHINO (age unreported) (8/26/87) SCHAEFER, RAYMOND M. (BILL) (72)

SCHAEFER, RAYMOND M. (BILL) (72) (8/1/87)
SCHALLERT, JOHN SR. (61) (8/30/87)
SCHIPANI, ALPHONSE (61) (9/29/86)
SCHLANGER, CLAUDE J. (62) (3/19/87)
SCHNEIDER, EMIL (SAM) (58) (12/11/86)
SCHNEIDER, GERTRUDE (TRUDY) (age unreported) (9/9/87)
SCHOCK, RUDOLF (71) (11/13/86)
SCHOEN, MARION HUTTON (67) (1/10/87)
SCHRIBMAN, JOE (73) (12/24/86)
SCHUBART, RICHARD L. (35) (1/16/87)

(36) (11/9/86)
STANYAN, CHARLES H. IV (68) (3/10/87)
STARK, COL. RICHARD S. (75) (12/12/86)
STEELE, JON (74) (5/28/87)
STEIN, MAURICE (76) (1/9/87)
STEINHAUER, ELIZABETH (41) (3/10/87)
STEPHENS, HARVEY (85) (12/22/86)
STERN, ALAN M. (39) (12/17/86)
STERN, STANLEY (69) (3/30/87)
STEVENS, ROY K. (40) (4/12/87)
STEWART, MICHAEL (63) (9/20/87)
STONE, GRANT (JIMMY) (85) (5/7/87)
STRANGE, CYRIL (CY) (72) (2/12/87)
STRANGE, CYRIL (CY) (72) (2/12/87)
STROMBERG, HUNT JR. (63) (11/24/86)
STURM, ERNEST (76) (6/18/87)
SULLIVAN, MAXINE (75) (4/9/87)
SULLIVAN, MAXINE (75) (4/9/87)
SULLIVAN, RICHARD (61) (3/24/87)
SUMMERS, DAVID (34) (11/8/86) SULTIVAN, HICHARD (61) (3/24/67) SUMMERS, DAVID (34) (11/8/86) SUSSKIND, DAVID (66) (2/22/87) SUTHERLAND, ESTHER (54) (12/31/86) SWINK, NANCY (57) (7/20/87) TARKOVSKY, ANDREI (54) (12/29/86) TAYLOR, DWIGHT (84) (12/31/86) TAYLOR, KENT (80) (4/11/87) TAYLOR, STAN (42) (5/10/87) TEASDALE, VERREE (80) (2/17/87) TEICHMANN, HOWARD M. (71) (7/7/87) TELFORD, FRANK (72) (5/19/87) TERMINI, CHARLES (77) (9/30/86) TEXAS, TEMPLE (63) (6/18/87)
THALBERG, IRVING G. JR. (56) (8/21/87)
THATCHER, HEATHER (early 90s) (date unreported)
THEODORE, LEE (54) (9/3/87)
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(1/10/87) WHITE, LARHY (NICK RODGERS) (33)
(1/10/87)
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WILETTE, HOWARD W. (46) (11/8/86)
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(3/29/87) WYNN, KEENAN (70) (10/14/86)

'RIGHTS': TRICKY LEGAL ISSUES

(Continued from Page 234, Column 5)

Janice Ouill had a child out of wedlock. This, Mrs. Wheeler argued, implied that her own daughter was illegitimate.

Ironically, the fact that Mrs. Wheeler denied having any of the fictional character's "unsavory characteristics" strengthened the defendants' case. Quill was portrayed in such an ugly way that no one could reasonably identify her with the real Hazel Wheeler. Lastly, Janice Quill played such an inconspicuous part in "Anatomy Of A Murder' that the average reader wouldn't even remember the minor sub-plot in which she had a place.

Celebrity Defamation: Since public figures have a more difficult time than private parties in proving defamation, a producer would be better off basing his film on a more notorious and well known celebrity. Yet a major pitfall remains: the producer must confront the issue of whether or not he has transgressed into an area of the celebrity's life which is of no public concern. An easy way for the producer to deal with this is to wait until the celebrity

But if you choose not to wait and ephemeral boxoffice potential may dictate otherwise, then you should check whether others have published biographies or done stories which deal with the private areas of the celebrity's life. A public figure such as Bob Guccione has had so much published about him, and led such a flamboyant lifestyle that he has become virtually "defamation

Even if you do make a deal with a celebrity or public figure, this, too, may not rid you of all worries. For instance, the founder of the Guardian Angels, Curtis Sliwa, had signed a contract with Highgate Pictures to produce a televi-

sion film based on his life and his organization. The contract allowed the producer to depict the Guardian Angels' story either in a fictionalized or factual manner. Highgate decided to opt for the docudrama format. Sliwa sued because the film deviated from the truth. However, the court found that the film did not greatly differ from actual events, and the motion picture company was entitled to a certain amount of artistic

Certainly, although the film company would not be allowed to alter reality so greatly as to entirely distort the story line or the portrayal of real live characters, the safest route for the producer is to use a disclaimer. In the Guardian Angel case, the judge suggested the following:

'This story was inspired by the life and deeds of Curtis Sliwa of the Bronx, New York, and of the group he organized, the Magnificent Thirteen, which later evolved into the Guardian Angels. For the purposes of dramatization, names have been changed, characters created and incidents devised or altered, and this production does not purport to be a factual record of real events or real people.

No Simple Rules! Stories based on well known events or famous characters are popular forms of entertainment. Unfortunately, there are no hard and fast rules resolving the tension between the First Amendment and privacy concerns. The rules differ slightly in each different fact situation and are ever evolving. Get advice from your attorney and your errors and omissions insuror. If you do your homework properly (and are lucky), you will enjoy your boxoffice blockbuster without the nuisance of time-consuming and costly litigation.

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