STAR WARS - the new science fiction epic appears in...

THE HOUSE OF HAMMER

* MANSION OF THE DOOMED
* VICTOR FRANKENSTEIN
* NIGHTMARE IN BLOOD
* SUMMER OF SECRETS
* BLOOD CITY
* ALUCARDA
* SUSPIRIA

PLAGUE OF THE ZOMBIES

TOLAND COMICS
Another Planet of the Apes sequel? No, the seven-foot shiney-nosed creature is in fact Chewbacca. And considering that he's one of the heroes of the new Fox sensation, Star Wars, the mind boggles over what the villains must look like. More on this sci-fi epic on pages 22 to 26 this issue.
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All the latest news on upcoming fantasy films from around the world.

MEDIA MACABRE REVIEW  16

The Uncanny, People That Time Forgot and War of the Monsters all come under the critical eye of the HoH team.

STAR WARS  22

Our preview look at the space fantasy film that's shattered all box office records in America, and looks like doing the same in Britain this Christmas.

POST MORTEM  27

In HoH 9, we asked for your ideas for new features, and your opinions of the current HoH formula. Turn to page 27 and you'll see an example of the deluge of mail that followed.

FANTASY FESTIVAL  34

Our report on the Paris Fantasy Film Festival, with reviews and pix of five new fantasy films.

DEAD THAT WALK  40

Following our adaptation of Hammer's Plague of the Zombies, a look at the classic (and not-so-classic) zombie films of the past.

HELSING'S TERROR TALES  48

A warrior chief's grave is plundered, bringing about The Curse of Cormac. Don't miss this month's illustrated shocker!
When we first doubled up to monthly frequency, my biggest fear was that we just wouldn't have enough material to fill fifty-two pages, twelve times a year. Bi-monthly had been fine, but 624 pages a year?!

It quickly turned out I couldn’t have been more wrong. My fears were totally unjustified. Every single issue we find we have material that just won’t fit in! Other than the science fantasy upsurge which we’ll be catering for elsewhere (first clue), more and more new horror films are appearing every week.

So, once again, we’ve got a jam-packed issue for you. An issue so full, we’ve had to lose Answer Desk, Fan Scene on Collecting, Book and Magazine Reviews, and half of our report on the Paris Film Festival! But next month, along with our adaptation of One Million Years BC (and back-up feature on Last Witch Hunter), we’ll be covering Suspicion, Victor Frankenstein, Summer of Secrets and The Living Dead in Blood ... from the Paris Festival. Plus an exclusive interview with veteran fantasy film actor John Carradine, Night of the Living Dead director George A. Romero on his new vampire film, Martin (which Tony Crawley describes as 'top of the bunch of Cannes films'—see Media Macabre, page 15 this issue), a new Van Helsing’s Terror Tale, Orcus (the Dino de Laurentias Jaws rip-off featuring Richard Harris vs. a love-sick killer whale), Ruby (Piper Laurie, after her successful comeback as the mother of Carrie, in the title role of this Carrie/Exorcist thriller), Would You Kill a Child (a sort of combination of Cormac’s Gas and Children of the Damned) and the long-awaited details on how you can obtain your HoH Volume Binders.

See you in thirty,

[Signature]

Editor.

The results are now in, we’ve tabulated them, and so we now proudly present your opinions of what was best about House of Hammer 9.

1. The Quatermass Experiment by Lilley/Aldrich and Brian Lewis (116).
2. Van Helsing’s Terror Tales ‘Food For Thought’ by Steve Moore and Jim Baikie (83).
3. The Quatermass Story by John Brosnan (82).
4. The Day HoH Invaded Leicester Square/Squirm (77).
5. The Living Dead At The Manchester Morgue, Review by John Fleming (63).
6. The Original King Kong, Feature by John Brosnan (63).
7. In The Footsteps of Hitchcock (De Palma Interview) John Brosnan (60).
8. Media Macabre, Film news by Tise Vahimagi (57).
10. Fan Scene on Collecting by Tise Vahimagi (30).

We weren’t that surprised that you all voted the Hammer adaptation into a high place, giving it top marks on average, but the biggest shocks were in finding our new regular back-up feature on the film being adapted came so high (in this case The Quatermass Story), and our illustrated, home-made chillers Van Helsing’s Terror Tales. (Modesty prevents any editorial comment on the No. 4 placing).

Thanks to all of you who actually sent in your ideas, suggestions and popularity polls, you’ve been an immense help. The prize we offered for anyone whose personal opinions matched the averaged-out opinion exactly hasn’t been won by anyone, which is hardly surprising. But as Steven Whittaker of Greenwich and Andrew McCaffrey of Dun- deed got the first five right, we’re awarding them free annual subscriptions to HoH, plus £2.50 each worth of free Bargain Basement items.

SHRIEKS AND SPOOF S SUBSCRIPTION SECTION

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PLAGUE OF THE ZOMBIES

A HAMMER FILM PRODUCTION
WITH
ANDRE MORELL. Sir James Forbes
DIANE CLARE...............Sylvie
BRIDG WILIAMS
or Peter Thompson
JACQUELINE PEARCE..........Alice
JOHN CARSON.......Clive Hamilton
Directed by JOHN GILLING; Screen-
play by PETER BRYAN; Produced
by ANTHONY NELSON KEYS.
Released by Warner-Patha (USA:
20th Century-Fox). Technicolor. 91
minutes. 1966

Script by Steve Moore
Artwork by Trevor Goring & Brian Bolland
HIDDEN FAR FROM THE EYES OF AN UNSUSPECTING WORLD, THE PRIEST PERFORMS HIS HIDEOUS RITUAL ... SPRINKLING BLOOD OVER A CRUDE SIMULACRUM OF A HUMAN BEING.

CHANTING THE NOXIOUS WORDS OF POWER...

... AND HORROR COMES ONCE MORE TO THE SMALL CORNISH VILLAGE OF TARLETON.

KADA NOSTRA...
KARA ESTR]

MY WRIST!
IT'S BLEEDING...
AGAIN!

BUT OTHERS ARE ALSO APPROACHING TARLETON: THE NOTED SCIENTIST SIR JAMES FORGES, AND HIS DAUGHTER SYLVIA.

PEOPLE DYING LIKE FLIES... I CAN'T UNDERSTAND IT. IT'S NOT LIKE ONE OF MY PUPILS TO WRITE SUCH UNSCIENTIFIC GIBBERISH. MUST BE UNDER SOME SORT OF STRAIN.

LOOK, FATHER! A FOX OUTRUNNING THE HUNT! I HOPE IT GETS AWAY!

BUT THEN THE TOUGH YOUNG HUNSTMEN BRING THE CARRIAGE TO A HALT...

THE FOX! DADDY, MAN, YOU MUST HAVE SEEN WHICH WAY IT WENT!

I SAW HIM RUN UP THAT PITCH... YOU'LL HAVE TO HURRY IF YOU WANT TO CATCH HIM!

WE'LL CATCH HIM, DEAR LADY! NEVER FEAR!

AS THE HOT-BLOODED HUNSTMEN SPUR THEIR HORSES AWAY...

YOU'RE RIGHT, FATHER... BUT WE'LL BE IN TARLETON SOON, SO WHAT DOES IT MATTER? I CAN'T WAIT TO SEE ALICE AND PETER AGAIN...

HAVE THE IMPRESSION YOU WERE NOT TELLING THE TRUTH, MY DEAR. LET'S HOPE WE DO NOT RUN INTO THAT YOUNG MAN AGAIN!
A FUNERAL! WAS PETER JUST RAVING IN HIS LETTER OR IS THERE REALLY SOME SICKNESS HERE?

NO, SIR! DON'T... WHAAH! WHOAH!

TRICKED, HEY? WELL, I KNOW A TRICK OR TWO AS WELL! HTAHH! OFF WITH YOU!

LOOK OUT!

FOR MARTINUS, THE DEAD MAN'S BROTHER, RAGE REPLACES SORROW. BUT...

NO, MY SON! LET THEM GO! THERE IS NOTHING WE CAN DO ABOUT THEM!

THEN, AS SOMETHING APPROACHING NORMALITY RETURNS...

I'M DREADFULLY SORRY ABOUT THIS. MY DAUGHTER AND I ARE HERE TO SEE DR. TOMPSON. BUT IF THERE'S ANYTHING WE CAN DO...

A FEW PACES BRING A REUNION WITH ALICE, SIVILIA'S OLDEST FRIEND, NOW MARRIED TO PETER TOMPSON. ONCE SIR JAMES'S STAR PLAYER...

SIR JAMES! SIVILIA! WASN'T EXPECTING... YOU'D BETTER COME IN. PETER'S NOT HERE AT THE MOMENT.

WHAT HAPPENED TO YOUR WRIST, ALICE? IS IT ALL RIGHT?

IT'S NOTHING, SIR JAMES AND PETER ARE A DOCTOR. HE SHOULD BE BACK SOON...

THE PLACE IS IN SUCH A MESS! IT'S NOT LIKE ALICE TO LET THINGS GO DOWN HILL THIS FAR.

IF YOU CAN HELP TOMPSON FIND OUT WHAT'S CAUSING ALL THESE DEATHS BUT YOU THINK THERE'S NOTHING TO BE DONE. TOMPSON'S HOUSE IS OVER THERE.

HOW ARE YOU KEEPING, ALICE?
Peter Thompson returns at last, and after the ladies withdraw...

The locals don't like modern medicine. They prefer to think of it as 'mush fever', and they won't let me carry out post-mortems. 'It's no good cutting 'em up when they're already dead', they say.

The coroner is the local squires, Hamilton, and he doesn't give a damn about anything. There's no way you're going to get a body to work on.

You saw them burying another one today, Sir James. That's at least twelve while I've been here! And I can't find the cause... I can't even show you any worthwhile reports.

What? That's absurd! What about the coroner?

Perhaps there is... we can always dig one up! The young man who was buried today, for instance.

For a moment Thompson recoils in horror at the idea, but there is nothing else to be done and later in the graveyard...

This shouldn't take long... the earth hasn't had time to get packed down yet.

Soon...

Now one or two screws, and...

I can explain, Sergeant! We are both doctors, and...

I don't care who you are, Sir. This is body-snatching, and...

And you'll be in deep trouble! Kindly step up here, Sir!

My God!

The body! It's gone! There's nothing here!

You mean the coffin's empty? But it's impossible! I saw him put down there this afternoon!

And I, Sergeant, but he's gone alright... and with him your body-snatching charge has gone too...

The only thing to do is fill in the grave and shush things up for a while at least! This village has enough troubles already!

I'll withhold my report for 48 hours anyway.

You go home, Sir James. We'll finish up here...

RIP

EVERT GROD

34th-1872
I've got to find out what's going on! I must hurry before she gets too far ahead!

But by the time Sylvia gets outside the village, there is no one to be seen.

Alice...

Others are abroad this night though... Martinus, the dead man's brother drowning his sorrows in wine and darkness.

You... it was your coach... in the village square... you're to blame...

No! Keep away!

Ha! It's the wench who spoiled our sport earlier! We've a debt to settle, girl, and a hunter must have his prey!

Then, a nightmare ride that seems to last for eternity...

No! Let me go!

Ending at an imposing local mansion.

No use struggling! You'll not get away until I'm ready to let you go!
I SAID LEAVE HER ALONE! YOU'LL NOT ACT LIKE FILTHY BRUTES IN MY HOUSE!

NOW, MY LITTLE FOX, NOW!

I MUST APOLOGISE, MISS FORBES, I KNEW NOTHING OF THIS! PLEASE FORGIVE ME. PERHAPS I CAN HAVE MY CARRIAGE TAKE YOU HOME? I AM CLIVE HAMILTON!

NO THANK YOU... I SHALL WALK. STRAIGHT TO THE POLICE STATION!

PLEASE DON'T DO THAT, MISS FORBES. I'M THE SQUIRE OF THIS LITTLE COMMUNITY, YOU SEE, AND THE VILLAGERS RELY ON MY JUDGEMENT. ANY TRACE OF SCANDAL ATTACHED TO MY NAME... WILL YOU PERMIT ME TO PUNISH THE OFFENDERS MYSELF?

VERY WELL... I'LL SAY NOTHING THIS TIME... BUT NOW I'M GOING HOME ON FOOT!

AND SO SQUIRE DEPARTS... BUT THE NIGHT'S ADVENTURES ARE NOT YET OVER...

WHO'S THAT UP BY THE MINEHEAD? AND ALICE... I FORGOT ALL ABOUT HER! WHAT'S HAPPENED TO ALICE?

THANK YOU, MISS FORBES AND IF I CAN'T PERSUADE YOU TO TAKE MY CARRIAGE, PLEASE STICK TO THE PATH! THESE ARE OLD TIN MINES AND THE GROUND IS LIKELY TO SUBSIDE...
Released by its hideous bearer, who turns to leave. The lifeless body rolls once on the ground and is still.

Alice! It can't be... not dead!

While Sylvia, lost in grief, does not even notice the undead horror as it shuffles silently away.

Dared second thought, Sylvia has no idea now she returns to the mansion's house. And shortly afterwards, another hearty man comes back.

It's done. Everything covered up and just as it was before...

Oh, God! No! Not after all the others! Not here! It's not true!

I'm afraid it is. Sylvia found her near the old mine. We were just going to get the police again.

And so... it was over there. Sergeant, up near the mine...

It's Martinus. Out cold and stinking of drink.

Here. Peter. Drink this. I'm afraid I have some shocking news.

It's about Alice... I'm afraid she's dead!

And there's the body. She's dead all right.

Come on, Martinus. Wake up! Let's have a word with you.

I swear to you, Sergeant! I've got nothing to do with this. I didn't even see her tonight.

Maybe you didn't... or maybe you did. Either way, you're coming down to the station!
AND SO ALICE TOMPSON RETURNED TO HER HOUSE FOR THE LAST TIME. AND IN HER HUSBAND'S SURGERY.

VERY CURIOUS. THIS ISN'T HUMAN BLOOD... IT'S ANIMALS. SHE HASN'T BEEN MURDERED.

NO... SHE DIED THE SAME WAY AS ALL THE OTHERS. AND I LET HER DIE! I DIDN'T LOOK AFTER HER.

DON'T BE A FOOL, PETER! IF YOU COULDN'T SAVE THEM, YOU COULDN'T SAVE HER... BUT WE SHOULD BE ABLE TO SAVE OTHERS...

BUT SHE'S MY WIFE... AND SHE'S ONLY JUST DEAD... BUT YOU'RE RIGHT! IT'S GOT TO BE DONE...

THANK YOU... I KNOW THIS IS PAYBACK. BUT I'M GOING TO NEED YOUR ASSISTANCE...

WE NEED MORE INFORMATION, PETER. I'D LIKE YOUR PERMISSION TO PERFORM AN AUTOPSY.

BUT... AFTER MANY HOURS OF PATIENT WORK?

NOTHING! ABSOLUTELY NO CLUE AS TO WHY SHE DIED AT ALL! THE ONLY THING WRONG WITH HER WAS THAT CUT ON HER WRIST.

THERE IS NOTHING MORE FOR PETER TO DO BUT MAKE THE FUNERAL ARRANGEMENTS FOR JAMES. MEANWHILE, RETURNS TO THE POLICE STATION.

I TOLD YOU... I DIDN'T TOUCH HER... I Fainted WHEN I SAW HIM... MY OWN DEAD BROTHER... WALKING ABOUT ON THE MOORS... ALL GREY AND STARING... HE WAS...

AND WHEN SYLVIA AWAKENS FROM A LONG EXHAUSTED SLEEP...

ARE YOU SURE? IT WAS THE ONE IN THE COFFIN... THE DEAD MAN?

LATER, AFTER THE FUNERAL ARRANGEMENTS HAVE BEEN MADE, PETER AND SIR JAMES JOIN THE SERGEANT ON A SHORT EXPEDITION...

THE MINE'S CLOSED DOWN NOW, SIR... THOUGH IT'S SUPPOSED TO HAVE A VERY RICH VEIN OF TIN... BUT THERE WERE MANY ACCIDENTS... THE OLD SQUIRE HAD TO CLOSE IT DOWN. THE YOUNG SQUIRE HASN'T BOTHERED TO OPEN IT UP AGAIN...

DON'T KNOW WHERE THE SQUIRE GETS HIS MONEY FROM, HE INHERITED A LOT OF DEBTS... BUT A FEW YEARS LATER HE WAS ENTERTAINING AND SPENDING MONEY LIKE WASTER... CERTAINLY NOT FROM THE MINE!

HMM... AND NOW I SUPPOSE THE VILLAGERS SAY THE MINE'S HAUNTED.

YES, SIR... I'M SURE! I DIDN'T WANT TO BELIEVE IT, BUT... IT WAS HIM!
A TELLY VISION

In from Hollywood, sporting open silk shirt, medallions, rings, sharp shades, polished dome and far too much luck at the local casino, Telly Savalas—lately turned horror director on his annual hiatus from Lollipop-musak and Kojak. His debut is The Mati. All his own work. About psychiatrist Nicholas Mati who thinks he knows it all until a hallucinogenic breakdown oms him into a good v. evil battle

Telly told us, 'It's a story I wrote. A concept of mine I wanted to put on screen. The concept being a diabolical one—the devil taking the form of a very beautiful young girl. Priscilla Barnes, who's gonna be very big. ... Yeah, Telly, sure—but what about the story?' Mati attacks evil concepts Mati is a lament for the times that us/ta. Me. Mati one out. We just wanna frighten, terrify, excite, like det.' Telly

ought to change Mati's publicity One line reads: 'A most shocking motion picture'.

LE FANU IS COMING

Easier on the ears—Swedish-based American director Calvin Floyd. He tells us he's keeping his Victor Frankenstei star, Leon Vitali (from Kubrick's Barry Lyndon) for his next film, a free adaption of The Inn of the Flying Dragon, by that Irish master of the supernatural, Sheridan Le Fanu. Shooting in Germany and (like Victor F.) Ireland, in English, again like Victor, but costing around $3,000,000. 'Set in the early 19th Century,' says Floyd, 'it will be intended as a mystery adventure with horror overtones.' You may remember it was Floyd who a few years back made Chris Lee's In Search of

The Star Wake

Hot on the heels of Star Wars are a whole galaxy of sci-fi films currently in production around Close Encounters of the Third Kind (the film we previewed back in HoH 10), Alien Encounters (Roger Corman's retitled God Told Me To), Superman 1 & 2; re-releases of the Paramount sci-fi biggies: When Worlds Collide & War of the Worlds (both George Pal productions), Pal himself is making a tv movie of the H. G. Wells story Off On A Comet (re-titled In the Days of the Comet), Pal is also sequeling his H. G. Wells adaptation Time Machine as a feature film aptly titled Return of the Time Machine (see HoH 11 for further details on this one).

Star Trek seems to be one of the more confusing possibilities. First it was to be a feature film, with a new crew seeking out the old Enterprise ship, last some-

where in the cosmos (cameos by the now high-ranking middle-aged Kirk, Spock et al. Then, when it was heard that Star Wars was breaking all records in the USA (biggest grosser since Jaws in its first week of release), plans were switched to go straight into a new tv series. The main reason this had not originally been done was the incredible costs in making the sets, effects, and such. It had been intended to make the sets for the movie, then use the same ones—basically—for a tv series, thus keeping tv costs within reasonable budget. Latest word though is that tv series is now off. No word on whether film is back on again.

Onsley Productions' entry into the space race for all you animal lovers is The Cat from Outer Space. They also have another sf project in the planning stages entitled Space Pram.

Universal is planning a remake of The Thing from Another World (the 1951 Howard Hawks film, starring James 'Gunsmoke' Arness as the creature). They have also bought the rights to the old Buck Rogers tv serials as possible re-releases. Another 1950s sci-fi classic, The Incredible Shrinking Men, is under way as a remake, but this time with humour inserted.

Sir Lew Grade has made Capricorn One, about a money rocket launch.

From various independent studios, we can look forward to such titles as Spawn of the Slithe, End of the World, Gift from a Red Planet, Skywatch, and a film version of Hal Lindsey's best selling book The Late, Great Planet Earth.

And there's more... Many old projects are being brought out of the cupboard, dusted off and re-examined. Rumour has it that

Milton Subotsky is intending to restart production on The Microonauts (see HoH 6's Media Macabre for further details on this £4 million project). Also being reconsidered is Meteor (see HoH 3), Magne I, Incredible Adventure, Timescape (from Saul 'Logan's Run' David), Rocket Ship X Flies Again, and Predicator.

Several times, we've referred to the Oe Palma/Clarke team-up on a film adaptation of Clarke's Childhood's End novel. The latest is that it has now been scripted by Abraham Polonsky, and producer George Litto is currently trying to get production underway.

... seemed more like a horror/ fantasy festival than anything else. On an official, competition level, the event was a wash-out. So was the weather. And the final awards. In the hustle of the film market scene, however, horror ruled. Cannes '77 it's sure to be the hundred or more Star Wars rip-offs, take it from us Hong Kong has already started with Battle Wizards.

On show Jeff (Squirm) Lieberman's Blue Sunshine; David (Shivers) Cronenberg's Rabid; Texas Chainsaw Massacre maker Tohe Hooper's all-star Death Trap. Japan had clips from a king-size beastie, Legends of Dinosaurs and Monster Birds—far more polished stopmotion stuff than America's weak Creature Lake Monster. Hong Kong went one with a slant-eyed King Kong: The Giant Peking Man. Sweden unearthed Victor Frankenstei (shot in Esta) Holland had Blood Relations, about very modern vampires with their own blood bank, Australia was ready Phobia for next year, and the same (U.S.) money-men are backing Peter Guttilla's science fantasy, The Far Side of Forever.

...
Media Macabre

Lee Times Two

Christopher Lee was around (twice) in great clips from John Hayes’ End of the World. Similar premise promised in The Late Great Planet Earth from Hal Lindsey’s best-seller. Omen-followers also have some lookalikes in Cathy’s Curse from Montreal, and both The Child and The Redeemer, from Los Angeles. Chris Lee is certainly busy in his new L.A. life-style; he hosts the veritable slaughterhouse of a movie. Meatkiller Massacre, a heavy occult trip which should destroy the similar sounding item, The Axe. Lee has also completed Alien Encounter in Toronto with Robert Vaughan. This film carries a heavy notice: 'This picture is not Close Encounters of The Third Kind'. Who thought it was?

Top Team

Top of the Cannes bunch of films had to be George Romero’s Martin (to be reviewed next issue). He also had the best news. The American cult horror figure, now firmly on the comeback trail, has joined forces with his exact opposite number in Italy, devilish Dario Argento. Thus far, a very lush-hush VIP project. More news—when George tells us. Then’s a teaming devoted to be wished.

Film Society

The Gothique Film Society’s 12th season starts this month. Among the films lined up for screening at their usual locale (The Holburn Library viewing theatre) are Death Line (starring Christopher Lee and Donald Pleasence) and a double bill of Tod Browning’s Freaks with the new Spanish film Frankenstein’s Castle of Freaks (1). Full details (in the form of the season’s programme) will be sent out to anyone interested (along with the membership form). Write to: Robin James (secretary, Gothique Film Society), 75 Burns Ave., Feltham, Middlesex.

Sword and Sorcery

Milton Subotsky, who used to head the Amicus organisation here, has announced that his company SWORD AND SORCERY PRODUCTIONS will start filming Thongor in the Valley of Demons in 1978. Based on the book of Lin Carter, it is the first of an anticipated series and it looks like the first will be directed by special effects genius Jim Danforth (of Equinox, Jack the Giant Killer, Flesh Gordon and Hammer’s When Dinosaurs Ruled the Earth fame). The film will be crammed full of non-stop animation monsters such as dragons, flying lizard-hawks, giant spiders, dinosaurs and many more. Musclemans Arnold Schwarzenegger was approached to star but it seems he’s being played Conan instead, the property just bought by Ed Pressman (The Producer of Carrie) Subotsky wants the film to be similar in feel to the Sabu version of The Thief of Baghdad. The soon to be released The Uncanny is another Subotsky film based on his anthology Beware of the Cat. The film is three stories linked by another directed by Denis Heroux and its original title was Brrrr.

Subotsky’s script The Cat People is to be made in Canada. It’s a remake of Val Lewton’s masterpiece from the forties. Another film to be made in Canada is what Subotsky feels is the nearest he or anyone else has come to matching Henricid Clouzot’s masterpiece Diaboliques (The Fiends). Called Dominique, it’s based on a story entitled What Beckoning Ghost. This had previously been filmed for television as one of the more dramatic episodes of the 1963 Thriller series which was hosted by Boris Karloff. Dominique will be the first picture to be made in Montreal’s huge new studios, with filming starting this October.

Then there’s The Monster Club based on the stories of R. Chetwynd-Hayes. (His stories were used for the other Amicus movie From Beyond The Grave). This will be a three story anthology — the last story being called My Mother Married a Vampire.

Night of the Crabs has been turned into a script called King Crab. Based on the book by Guy N. Smith, Subotsky intends to use puppet animation in a sort of magnified live crab.

Just having lost his option on The Incredible Hulk (which is now being made as a television cartoon series by Universal in America), Subotsky is making a deal with Jim Warren to turn the best of the Creepy and Eerie stories into a film similar to his Tales of the Crypt success.

Last but not least Milton Subotsky will soon, in conjunction with Corbi books, be setting up a competition to find new writing talent and horror stories. All entrants will be given a year to submit their stories and the first prize will be £1,000 for the option to make a film and a further £10,000 if the film is made—and that doesn’t even include book royalties!

So all you HOUSE OF HAMMER readers—now’s your chance! Watch for details in future issues.

—Alan Jones
Review by John Brosnan

What a relief to see a good, old-fashioned horror film again. After the unremitting seriousness (and pretentiousness) of films like The Omen, Burnt Offerings and The Sentinel etc, it's really refreshing to come across a horror film that doesn't take itself seriously - a film that doesn't pretend to be anything other than a jokey horror comic. And the word "comic" is significant in relation to The Uncanny because it's produced by Milton Subotsky, the man who made Tales from the Crypt and Vault of Horror both of which were based on the old EC horror comics. The Uncanny has many similarities to those earlier films, and to emphasize the point various characters are seen reading comics during the film.

Like many of the horror films that Subotsky produced for Amicus Films, The Uncanny is an anthology form with three separate stories linked by an overall connecting story. In this case the main theme concerns cats and in the linking story Peter Cushing plays an eccentric author trying to persuade a doubtful publisher (Ray Milland) to accept his hook about the dangers that cats represent towards mankind; in fact he believes that there is a vast conspiracy among cats and they are using Man for their own evil purposes (as any cat owner can readily testify). To illustrate his warning he tells the publisher three different stories about cats doing nasty things to people, though with good reason in each case. The first is a somewhat conventional tale about a rich old lady who lives with a huge horde of cats until she is murdered by her maid. Her cats are very annoyed by this and first trap the girl in a pantry for several days before they... well, it gets pretty gruesome. The second story is also very familiar but rather more fun - a small girl is orphaned when her parents are killed in a plane crash and goes to live with her rich, snotty relatives, her only real friend being her cat 'Wellington'. But her cousin, a girl a few years older, is an embryonic bitch of the first order and conspires to have poor old Wellington carted off to a place-of-no-return. Wellington, however, does return because he is no ordinary cat but a witch's familiar, the little girl's mother having been an exponent of the Black Arts. The cat and the girl, who has inherited some of her mother's skills, decide to take their revenge on the older cousin and achieve this by shrinking her to the size of a mouse. After some cat-and-mouse games (sorry) the cousin, not surprisingly, repents and apologises for all her vile behaviour and for a moment it seems apparent that a mutually happy ending will take place but it's here that Subotsky and Michel Parry pull a small surprise and the story ends on a suitably sick note.

The third episode is the most enjoyable and has Donald Pleasence hammering it up as a second-rate horror star reminiscent of the character played by Jon Pertwee in the Dracula's Cape segment of Subotsky's The House That Dripped Blood) who murders his wife by first switching the fake blade on a movie prop for a real one and then, in a
scene similar to the climax in Corman's 'Pit and the Pendulum', neatly bisecting her while the film crew calmly watch on. His plan is to have his wife replaced in the starring role by his giggly mistress (played by Samantha Eggar, obviously having a good time) but his late wife's cat takes exception to all of this, particularly when Plesance flushes her newly-born kittens down the toilet (an action which mercifully takes place off-screen) and it's not long before something unpleasant happens to both the mistress and him. As the vain Valentine Death (he has his initials 'VD' monogrammed on his pyjamas) Plesance is very amusing and we can only guess which actor his performance is modelled upon, but the episode is spoiled by some really corny jokes built around the word 'cat', and as for final sequence when someone asks: 'What's the matter, cat got your tongue?'... well, it's something of a catastrophe.

The Uncanny, one can safely say, is good, clean, nasty fun. Its stories may consist of well-worn formulas and its characters may be constructed out of the thinnest of cardboard but it provides the sort of pleasure you get by picking up a favourite old comic book that you haven't seen in several years. My main quibble is about the obvious haste in which it was made—there are far too many shots of annoyed cats tethered at the ends of very evident lengths of black string—and I do wish someone had told Joan Greenwood, who plays the rich old lady, that her brown hair was protruding from the back of her white wig.

THE UNCANNY

Link Story
Peter Cushing (as Wilbur) and
Ray Miland (as Frank)

Malkin Story
Susan Penhaligon (as Janet); Joan Greenwood (Miss Malkin); Simon Williams (Michael); Roland Culver (Wallace)

Black Magic Story
Alexandra Stewart (as Mrs Blake); Chloe Franks (Angelica); Katrina Holden (Lucy); Donald Pleasence (Mr Blake); Renee Giraud (Mrs Maitland)

Film Studio Story
Donald Pleasence (as De'Ath), Samantha Eggar (Edna); John Vernon (Pomeroy); Sean McCann (Inspector); Jean LeClerc (Barrington); Catharine Bieg (Madeleine).

Directed by Denis Heroux; Produced by Claude Heroux and Rene Dupont; Story and Screenplay by Michel Parry.

Review by John Brosnan

This is the sort of movie that, while you're watching it, makes you start thinking of all the more constructive things you could be doing with your time—such as pushing a sharp, pointed stick into your left ear or watching The Generation Game on TV.

I'm probably getting old but the sight of Japanese stuntmen in funny costumes throwing each around for what seems eternity doesn't give me much of a kick. My mind keeps wandering in other directions—like what the conditions are like inside those monster suits. Are they as hot and uncomfortable as they appear to be? How often do the stuntmen get a break and a cold drink? Are they well paid? Is wearing a Godzilla suit for a living something to brag about in Japan or do you keep quiet about it out of working hours? And what happens when the monster you play—say the giant turnip creature from beyond the moon—becomes unfashionable and is dropped from the studio's all-star line-up? What do you do then? Save face by tying a rock around your neck and stepping into the deep end of the Toho Studio special effects tank?

It's all very interesting, which is more than one can say for War of the Monsters, one of Toho's more recent efforts and currently on release in this country. They have been churning out these films since Godzilla (Gojira in Japan) first breathed fire in 1954 and over the years they have become increasingly silly and tedious. Originally Godzilla was your run-of-the-mill giant prehistoric monster on the rampage but these days he's more like Puff the Magic Dragon, residing on an island with all his monster friends and given to growling things like: "Come on, Anguirus, we've got work to do."

Cockroaches from Space

Toho's special effects have also become rather perfunctory with no attempt to integrate the human actors with the monsters, with the result that you get the impression you are watching two separate films, their only connection being sheer awfulness.

As for the plot of War of the Monsters... well, you see there are these two cockroaches from outer space and—are you sure you want me to go on?—they disguise themselves as a teenage boy and his uncle respectively, then they open a monster fun park in which the dominating feature is a huge, hollow statue of Godzilla.

A young cartoonist, seeking a job at the fun park, encounters a girl who is searching for her missing brother—a technician employed at the park. She hasn't found him but has managed to steal a reel of mysterious tape. When it's played it wakes up the monsters on Monster Island, including Godzilla who sends his buddy Anguirus (who resembles a large, spiky turtle) to investigate. But Anguirus is met on the beach by the Japanese Defence Corps (apparently formed to defend Japan against monsters) and is sent packing with an atomic hot-foot back to Monster Island.

Meanwhile the tape has been recovered by the cockroaches—disguised as humans—and they use it to summon two monsters from Space-M
(whatever that is). One of them is a three-headed dragon and the other is ... well, it's sort of hard to describe but it has a buzz saw protruding from its stomach so that gives you some idea. Of course they immediately set about destroying Tokyo (the residents of Tokyo are obviously accustomed to this sort of thing now because they don't even bother to come out into the streets — there's not a sign of anyone while all this is going on) but Godzilla and Anguirus come to the rescue and after a long, long fight the alien monsters are heaten and the cockroaches crushed beneath the rubble of their fun park.

And to think some people have the nerve to say that the cinema is a dying art ...
Review by Fise Vahinag

The scene of Bowen Tyler hurling a cannon into the sea, and remaining marooned on the island of Caprona, saw out the last seconds of *The Land That Time Forgot* and left the gate open for a sequel.

Now, four years later, AIP brings forth the exciting follow-up, *The People That Time Forgot*, with enough sparks to keep the most imaginative absorbed. Primarily aimed at the juvenile audience, *The People That Time Forgot* should appeal to most factions due to its rapid pace and colourful action.

Directed by Kevin Connor (he who gave you the previous excursion as well as *From Beyond the Grave*), Patrick Tilley's screenplay sweeps the thrilling story along with the vigour of a *Flash Gordon* serial, stopping only to breathe between hazards. The period is 1919, and Tyler's friend Ben McBride (Patrick Wayne), newspaper photographer Charly (Sarah Douglas), biologist Norfolk (Thorley Walters) and World War One airplane mechanic Hogan (Shane Rimmer) are on their way in search of Tyler and the lost island of Caprona.

They find Caprona, and along with it a monstrous menagerie of dinosaurs, hostile tribes, and the deadly City of Skulls. On arrival the expedition comes across a beautiful primitive girl, Ajar (Dana Gillespie), who knew Tyler and is coaxed into travelling with them. The party's first encounter with the enormous dangers of Caprona arrives in the form of a gigantic Pterodactyl which attacks their amphibian, an early form of flying-boat. After barely surviving several further dangers, they
A grim band of Na-Ga warriors advance along the rim of a volcano on their way to intercept the unsuspecting expedition.

are captured by a small army of Samurai-like warriors—the ferocious Na-gas—and are taken to the forbidding City of Skulls, located high on the rim of an active volcano.

If all this seems reminiscent of Undersea Kingdom or Phantom Empire, then you have the picture pretty well tied down. The adventures come stockpiled in the tradition of The Lost World and Conan of Cimmeria, and utilise all manner of weaponry from machine-guns to swords. The special effects are quite suitable, for this type of film, but the camera cuts in on too many close-ups when it comes to the monsters. The use of make-up, as in the previous film, is still impressive without being intrusive.

The only possible negative note in this picture must he Thorley Walters silly naive dialogue: "Look, it's a Pterodactyl!", as the massive thing swoops towards him, and "Look, a Stegosaurus!", when one comes rumbling along. The central characters, however, are pretty much stock types, with Wayne doing quite a successful impersonation of Buster Crabbe, right down to the aviator outfit. However, when Wayne latches onto a sword, and dives into combat, one feels that he must have used this film as a training ground for his upcoming Sinbad and the Eye of the Tiger.

McCLURE'S APPEARANCE

One of the most pleasing aspects is that Doug McClure puts in a special appearance as Bowen Tyler—his head now covered with long hair and a furry beard. With the addition of Tyler, this now sets the stage for a climactic battle between the dreaded Na-gas and our two heroes in the ceremonial chamber of the City of Skulls. An added pleasure, by way of action, is muscleman Dave Prowse as a black-hooded executioner, complete with oversize sword.

The whole development of People That Time Forgot is very much along the same lines as a 1930's Saturday-morning Serial: each new scene holds an assortment of terrifying dangers. In trying to come up with an action-filled, thrilling picture for the Summer season, AIP have scored in all departments with The People That Time Forgot. If this film had been made some 40 years ago it would have succeeded as a splendid serial, possibly the product of an outfit such as Mascot or Universal. And that's a compliment.
Star Wars looks like becoming the biggest-ever box-office film success. In its first six days on release in only 41 cinemas in the United States it has grossed a staggering $2.5 million: judging from ecstatic audience reaction, that experience is likely to be repeated when the film goes out on general release and Star Wars will probably replace Jaws as the most profitable movie ever. Which is pretty good for a film that was once nearly scrapped by 20th Century-Fox executives who feared that Star Wars would not even cover its costs! Now a jubilant Fox executive is quoted as saying "It's madness. The queues at the cinemas are unbelievable."

The one man who always believed in the film is writer-director George Lucas. His previous record seemed lightweight for him to be entrusted with some $9.5 million for Star Wars: his first film had been a neat little s-f film, THX 1138, an extension of an amateur film he had made while still a student. That had led to Universal financing American Graffiti, which became the eleventh highest grosser of all time. Despite that, when Lucas offered them Star Wars in the form of a twelve page outline, Universal were unwilling to take a chance.

Fox take up the challenge

It was left to 20th Century-Fox to take up the project: two years and four versions later, Lucas had his screenplay and was ready to begin filming. The perfect location to depict another planet in another galaxy was finally found in the dry and desert landscape of Tunisia and in March 1976 filming began on the Chott el Jerid, whose bare wastelands formed the ideal landscapes for the barren planet of Tatooine, later moving on to the bizarre town of Matmata, largely inhabited by troglodytes living in caves cut from the sides of the crater-like holes in the ground. Following two and a half weeks of location work in Tunisia, filming continued in Britain's Elstree Studios for 15 weeks. The unique special effects were completed in Los Angeles during a year of post-production work while second-unit teams completed location filming in Death Valley and Guatemala. The result: Time magazine has called Star Wars 'the year's best movie' and even hardened critics have been bowled over by its incredible special effects.

Star Wars is a movie whose synopsis gives only the merest impression of its
overwhelming impact. It's a riveting mixture of suspense and swashbuckling adventure with the finest special effects ever to be seen in the cinema. It's a stunning amalgam of the great comic strip and serial heroes—Flash Gordon, Buck Rogers and Brick Bradford—combined with elements of war and pirate movies, the Errol Flynn swashbucklers of the '30s and '40s, The Wizard of Oz and just about every western ever made. It even has that rarity in the cinema, a happy ending. Star Wars is, simply, mind-stretching and magnificent entertainment that makes all previous genre movies pale into insignificance.

The adventures of its hero, Luke Skywalker, range across unknown galaxies and strange new worlds in scenes that only the cinema could imagine, let alone make real. When the rebel princess Leia Organa is captured by the arch-villains of the Galactic Empire, Darth Vader and the Grand Moff Tarkin, she manages to steal the plans of the Empire's secret and impregnable weapon, the Death Star, which can destroy whole planets with a single burst of lethal energy. She entrusts the plans to the robot R2-D2 in order to get them to former rebel general Ben Kenobi on the far planet of Tatooine. Fortunately the plans fall into the hands of the resourceful farmer Luke Skywalker who joins forces with the general, the robot Artoo Detoo (R2-D2) and his robot friend Threepio (3PO) and together they set out across the galaxies to rescue the princess and foil Darth Vader and the Grand Moff Tarkin. Their incredible adventures and blazing action—and there's plenty of it—form the basis of the most amazing film ever conceived as they join forces with space pilots, outlaws, robots and the strange furry Wookie to thwart evil in the finest entertainment, unlike 2001, the film with which it will inevitably be compared. Where 2001 was a special effects movie in search of a plot, Star Wars is a completely satisfying and leaves Kubrick's film light years behind in every aspect.

The stunning special effects employed in the film seem almost inconceivable, even in these days of the sophistication of film techniques. Lucas and John Dykstra (an expert in special photographic effects) used a sophisticated calculator linked to their camera which recorded and memorised every shot. Valuable time was saved when new elements had to be added, merely by consulting the calculator, instead of having to rely on the time-consuming and relatively restrictive multiple exposure effects and composite opticals.

Above left and centre: some of the marvellous space war ships that, in construction alone, make Star Wars the first film comparable to 2001.

2001... light years behind...
have real personalities of their own. Inside Artoo Detoo, the midget robot that plays Laurel to Threepio’s Hardy is 3 foot 8 inches tall Kenny Baker, described by Production Designer John Barry as “the smallest man in England”. Baker was able to operate Artoo Detoo from inside, fitting his legs into the robot’s and with lights he could switch on and off. Inside the towering and unique figure of Threepio, a golden robot constructed of plastic, rubber, fibre-glass, steel and aluminium was actor Anthony Daniels, who nearly expired under the heat of the Tusman sun, when the machine’s plastic and rubber joints were in danger of melting. To create the furry Wookie, Chewbacca, co-pilot of the space freighter that fights the climatic battle over the Death Star, London hospital porter Peter Mayhew, already over 7 feet tall followed in the footsteps of Karloff by being made even taller with thick boots and a built-up head mask.

Enter... Ugies Limited

Lucas has also included a magnificent menagerie of monsters in the very finest traditions of the genre. In order to stage a free-wheeling brawl in the rough cantina where the heroes hire Chewbacca and the tough star pirate Han Solo, a brawl that recalls the best of the western saloon fights, the London agency Ugies Limited supplied a roster of evil heavies, transformed by make-up man Stuart Freeborn into villains from all over the universe, a group of grotesques that is both unique and like an anthology of all the ’50s monster movies.

In less confident hands, the human actors could have been dwarfed by the fascinating parade of robots and grotesques, of science-fiction hardware, bizarre locations and the stunning special effects. It is to Lucas’s credit that the actors emerge as very real people, heroes to be cheered and villains to be hissed. Peter Cushing gives a typically remorseless performance as Grand Moff Tarkin, the Governor of the Impenetrable Outland Regions; Alec Guinness commands as the rebel general Ben Kenobi; Carrie Fisher portrays a princess eminently worth crossing uncharted space to rescue. As Luke Skywalker, Mark Hamill provides a hero, resourceful and virile in the traditions of Flash Gordon and Errol Flynn. And, if in the end the villainous Darth Vader, personifying all the evil
of the Galactic Empire, manages to make his escape, it's in our own best interests. With millions of planets available for him to begin his depredations once more, George Lucas is already planning a sequel to Star Wars.

What does Star Wars mean to its creator George Lucas? For him, the film is the story of the fantasy life he experienced as a boy. "I wasted four years of my life cruising like the kids in American Graffiti," he says. "Now, in Star Wars I'm telling the story of me. It's fun... that's the word for this movie. I want to open up the whole realm of space. Science-fiction is okay, but it got so involved with science that it forgot the sense of adventure. I want Star Wars to make an audience think of things that could happen. I want Star Wars to give people a faraway, exotic environment for their imaginations to run free. I have a strong feeling about interesting people in space exploration. I want them to get beyond the basic stupidities of the moment and think about colonising Venus and Mars. And the only way it's going to happen is to have some kid fantasise about getting his ray gun, jumping into his spaceship and flying off into outer space."

The film was born of Lucas's passion for the Flash Gordon serials he first saw on television and from his abiding love of science-fiction and space fantasy, added to his enthusiasm for all kinds of adventure stories. Star Wars is the magnificent synthesis of all these passions, a revival of the realm of mythological fantasy that died when the western died.

"I wanted," continues Lucas, "to make an action movie in outer space, characters with ray guns, running around in spaceships and shooting at each other. I knew, too, that I wanted to have a big battle in outer space, a sort of dogfight thing. To achieve that battle, the climax of Star Wars which has had even hardened critics cheering, emotionally. It's basic—whether you're seven, seventeen or seventy. The more intense the experience, the more successful the film. I'm trying to reconstruct a genre that's been lost and bring it to a new dimension so that the elements of space, fantasy, adventure, suspense and fun all work and feed off each other."

What incredible impact Star Wars has proved George Lucas to be correct. With the exception of a hard-core monster movie like Jaws, and the horror-fantasy films typified by The Exorcist and The Omen, the genre has always been very much a private affair between its films and their devotees. Star Wars exerts a fascination and appeal that extends far beyond the traditional fans of the genre, because it is a gripping story of adventure and suspense containing some of the most ingenious special effects and imaginative sequences ever seen in the cinema. By the time the film opens in this country at the end of 1977, no doubt Star Wars will have spawned a myriad of imitators—but Lucas's film will prove pretty difficult to match.

The last word belongs to the film's producer Gary Kurtz. "Star Wars," he says, "is not science-fiction, but space fantasy. Space fantasy allows you more rein to say what you want to say." And Star Wars says it stunningly.
In issue 9, we asked you for your ideas on future issues of HoH; what you thought we should, or shouldn’t include, and what you think of the sort of features we are currently running.

The number of good suggestions we received was astonishing, so here are a few of them...

Before I got House of Hammer, I used to buy Monster Mag, which I thought was great. Why not combine the two (as you edited both) and have a poster in HoH?

Christopher Thomas, Carmarthen

Captain Kronos (in HoH 1, 2 and 3) didn’t grab me much, but Van Helsing’s Terror Tales (especially “Food For Thought” in HoH 9, and “Swamp Fever” in HoH 3) must be the greatest thing since sliced bread. Give it more pages.

Mike Judge, White City, London

Your best adaptation so far has been Dracula, Prince of Darkness in HoH 6 and the worst was Moon Zero Two in HoH 5. Please stick to gothic horror, not science fiction.

Gary Chedgzoy, Liverpool

In American mags, they have a few pages where you can buy things like horror LP records, films, masks, posters, models, etc. I think you should do more, instead of just back issues.

Shaun Coyle, Shildon

The film posters you are running on the back covers are great. Keep them coming. Also, bring back Kronos, Vampire Hunter, and include Van Helsing’s Terror Tales in every issue.

Peter Collins, Huyton

Van Helsing’s Terror Tale “Food For Thought” in HoH 9 had a great twist ending and kept me in suspense right the way through. More like it, please. I really enjoyed the adaptation of The Quatermass Xperiment, too, the artwork made the monster look just as frightening as in the film. Keep up the features on films you adopt, they help me understand the film more.

Gary Stegger, Ferryhill

Have a pen-pal and swap shop page. Run an article on how a horror film is made, telling us about the jobs of the scriptwriter, make-up man, director, etc. I would also like to see an article on Japan’s giant monster films, and one on the special effects work of Ray Harryhausen. The miniature film posters you use on the back cover are great.

Gary Dawson, Birtley

I really enjoy Van Helsing’s Terror Tales, please make them longer. Your best so far was “The Midnight Coach” in HoH 8. Please adapt One Million Years BC and The Mummy’s Shroud; I saw them on the television and they were great. Also Blood From The Mummy’s Tomb.

Robert D. Hutchinson, Spenymoor

I think it would be great if you could have a list of new books published every month, and features on witchcraft and voodoo.

J. Johnson, Bramley

Do an article on the history of Hammer Films, including all their pictures from first to latest, with information on the actors and directors who were connected with them. I’d also like to see competitions, where readers can test their knowledge of Hammer Films, with the answers to the quiz in the back of the magazine.

Stewart Jolley, Bromborough

I find your magazine of the highest standard, especially Van Helsing’s Terror Tales, please make them longer. Also I think you should have a small pin-up in the centre pages. I think this would be very effective.

Gary Rugless, Harlow

Diversify your content more. By concentrating on Hammer Films it narrows the field. Also smarten up the covers (more like HoH - not a seed catalogue). Concentrate on quality (no more irreputable and violent stuff like Van Helsing’s “The Midnight Coach” strip). Sorry if I sound hyper-critical, I still think HoH is damn good. Certainly the high spot of my month!

Mark Chapman, Allerton

How about including each month a pull-out centrefold depicting in colour some scene from a horror movie, or perhaps a famous horror actor (on glossy paper preferably). I think you could also get the best of both worlds with typed fiction and illustrated strip fiction by handing Van Helsing’s Terror Tales over to a story-writer with perhaps a few illustrations, whilst keeping up the high standard of comic strips in your film adaptations.

Keith Shepherd, Upton

I think Van Helsing’s Terror Tales are very original and first class. My favourites so far being “Swamp Fever” and “Midnight Coach”. But there is one thing I do not like. I wish you would put all your advertisements at the back of the magazine instead of throughout it. This way they would not distract from good stories. Please carry on doing your Monster Gallerlies, and include them as often as possible. I am glad you took out Captain Kronos, I thought it was weak and ineffective.

John Cyase Jr., Dorking

And they’re just a few of the letters! We could have given the whole issue over to Post Mortem this month and still have some mail left over. (more of your suggestions next month). To all who’ve asked, we’d like to include colour posters in the centrefold, but it would mean the cover price would go up, as it would obviously cost more to print colour inside. We’re trying to keep the magazine easily within everybody’s pocket, even at the expense of colour. In answer to Shaun Coyle, we prefer articles and strips to too many pages of repeat ads. To John Chase, we integrate the ads to act as “chapter breaks” in long strips, also we prefer to finish the magazine with a short illustrated horror story (Van Helsing’s Terror Tales) rather than pages of house advertisements. To Mark Chapman, we thought we were diversifying our content too much, so we’re covering more Hammer (history and interviews) in upcoming issues. To everyone else who has written in “thank you”. 

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Plague Of The Zombies Part Two: 'THE SACRIFICE'

MEANWHILE

MAY I COME IN, MISS FORBES? I FELT IT MY DUTY TO COME AND OFFER MY CONDOLENCES ON THE DEATH OF YOUR FRIEND...

A SHERRY, MR HAMILTON? THANK YOU, I CAN'T STAY LONG...

GOOD LORD, HOW CLumsy of me! I DO BEG YOUR PARDON!

I MUST HAVE CAUGHT YOU WITH MY KING / HERE, LET ME BRANDISH IT FOR YOU... AND THEN I MUST BE OFF...

BUT... ALL RIGHT... DR. TOMPSON WON'T BE LONG... HE'S OUT WITH MY FATHER...

LATER, WHEN THE TIME FOR ALICE'S FUNERAL ARRIVES

A CUT FINGER, MY DEAR? WHEN DID YOU DO THAT?

THIS MORNING, WHEN SQUIRE HAMILTON CALLED. IT'S NOTHING, BUT SINCE IT HAPPENED, I CAN'T GET HIM OUT OF MY MIND!

AND AT THE CHURCHYARD...

MY FINGER'S BLEEDING AGAIN, AND HAMILTON HE HE...

MAN THAT IS BORN OF WOMAN HATH BUT A SHORT TIME TO LIVE...

AS THE SERVICE DRAWS TO A CLOSE...

PETER - I'M FEELING RATHER FAINT. TAKE ME HOME...

IT IS MANY HOURS BEFORE SIR JAMES RETURNS AFTER HIS CONSULTATION WITH THE PRIEST...

A WORD WITH YOU, VICAR; IF I MAY... IT'S VERY IMPORTANT!

WE'VE GOT THE ANSWER, PETER! IT'S TERRIBLE! YOU'VE HEARD OF VOO DOO? SOMEONE IS PRACTISING IT IN THIS VILLAGE...

RAISING THE DEAD? BUT THAT MEANS, ALICE!

BUT, AS THE HOURS DRAG BY...

GO HOME, VICAR! YOU'RE A FEW TOO MANY YEARS UNDER YOUR BELT FOR STIRRING UP ALL NIGHT...

THE OLD CLERGYMAN SHUFFLES SLEEPILY AWAY TWO MINUTES PASS...

ARRAH! WHAT IN...

LISTEN! THAT'S THE VICAR'S VOICE! HE MUST BE IN TROUBLE! COME ON!

USING IT TO RAISE THE DEAD, BUT AS HIDEOUS THINGS, NEITHER DEAD NOR ALIVE... ZOMBIES

PRECISELY... WE INTEND TO WATCH THE GRAVE TONIGHT. I ASSUME YOU WANT TO BE WITH US? WE'RE LEAVING NOW...
SOME RUFFIAN LEAPT OUT AT ME. SO QUICK I DIDN'T SEE HIM! THEN HE WENT SLY AGAIN. I CAN'T UNDERSTAND IT!

I CAN... IT MUST HAVE BEEN SOME KIND OF DIVERSION.

ALICE...

AND IN THOSE FEW BRIEF MOMENTS...

SOMEONE'S OPENED THE GRAVE!

BUT IT IS TOO LATE... ALICE IS NO LONGER DEAD...

I NO LONGER ALIVE EITHER... OUT MOVING... MURDERously...

A WHIRLING HUBS... A METALLIC FLASH IN THE MOONLIGHT... A DULL THUD... FOLLOWED BY A BUBBLING OF CRIMSON LIQUID.

IT IS TOO MUCH FOR PETER TOMISON... TO SEE HIS WIFE DYE, AND THEN BE KILLED AGAIN... HIS HEAD JUMPS, HIS EYES BLUR... AND THE WORLD GOES MAD...

GET AWAY, PETER! THAT ISN'T ALICE ANY MORE! IT'S A... ZOMBIE!

FORGIVE ME... BUT IT'S TOO LATE TO BE DONE!

NO, ALICE! KEEP BACK!

AND BEFORE HIS EYES, THE MADNESS GROWS, LIKE A FERTILE FIELD, THE ENTIRE CHURCHYARD SUDDENLY THRUSTS UP ITS NOSEY CROP... AND THE LIVING DEAD BURST FORTH...
WITH A RIDEOUS KUSTLE OF DRIED SKIN AND DECAYING SKELETONS, THE WALKING SICKLY WALK TOWARD ERAS TO HAVE ANOTHER OF THE LIVING JOIN THEM IN DEATH.

"AAAAAGH! NO! NO!"

BUT THEN... IN AN INSTANT... THERE IS NOTHING!

"WAKE UP PETER! YOU'RE HAVING A NIGHTMARE, IT'S JUST A DREAM!"

NO, THAT PART WAS TRUE, I'M AFRAID, BUT SHE'S BEEN EXORCISED AND REBUILED.

AND THE DREAM TURNS OUT TO BE ONLY TOO PROPHETIC...

"NOTHING IN ANY OF THEM! WHERE HAVE THEY ALL GONE?"

"SARGE! MARTINUS... HE'S ESCAPED! HE CUT HIMSELF WHEN HAMILTON VISITED, AND TORE HIS WAY OUT WITH HIS BARE HANDS!"

GOOD LORD! IT ALL FITS... THE ZOMBIES HAMILTON... THE CUTS!

THE SUN IS SETTING AS SIR JAMES HURRIES TOWARD A FATEFUL MEETING...

HAMILTON'S MINING THE TIN SECRETLY AND GETTING IT FREE. YOU DON'T PAY WAGES TO ZOMBIES!

BUT HE'S GETTING GREEDY, AND KILLING EVERY-ONE IN THE VILLAGE SO THEY CAN WORK FOR HIM.

HE'S DRUGGING THEM SOME UNDERSWEAR VENOM GIVEN WHEN HE KILLS THE VICTIM. I'VE GOT TO STOP HIM BEFORE SYLVIA SUCCEMS...

GO BACK TO THE HOUSE, KEEP ME AWAY, I'M GOING TO SEE HAMILTON!

UNAWARE OF THE INTRUDER, HAMILTON MAKES HIS WAY TO THE MINE... A MINE PACKED WITH VICTIMS PETER TOMSON FAILED TO SAVE...

AND SO IT BEGINS... BUT:

KADLA ESTRADA...

WHERE'S DENVER? HE SHOULD BE HERE HELPING ME!

THE TIME IS HERE... THE POWER RISES. ONCE AGAIN THE OLD GODS COME TO MY AID...
AUTOMATICALLY, SIR JAMES MAKES A GRAB FOR THE KARY'S WRIST.

BUT IS IT LUCK OR DIVINE GUIDANCE?

THAT ENABLES SIR JAMES TO DRIVE THE BLADE INTENDED FOR HIM BACK INTO ITS OWN MASTER.

DYING, DENVER LURCHES, COLLAPSES, AND THE CLEANSING FLAMES LEAP OUT TO ENGULF HIS BODY.

UGH! BUT I MUST GET OUT OF HERE... STOP HAMILTON BEFORE HE CAN GET TO SILVIR...

BUT THE SECRET PANEL HAS ALREADY SLID SHUT... AND THE FLAMES SPREAD RAPIDLY...

CAN'T GET DOWN THIS WAY... I'LL HAVE TO HEAD FOR THE MINE...

ARAULUGH!

BUT ANOTHER IS ALSO APPROACHING THE MINE. SYLVIAS, HAVING SLIPPED AWAY FROM PETER'S WEARY GUARDIANSHIP...

ARRAULUGH!

A GUARDIANSHIP PETER TAKES UP AGAIN... BUT JUST TOO LATE...

'SYLVIAS, COME BACK! DON'T...

DAMN, THE LIFT CAGE'S ALREADY GOING DOWN!

AND BELOW...

BRING HER QUICKLY BEFORE THE TRANCE WEARS OFF.

THEN...

NOW THE ULTIMATE SACRIFICE! I GIVE YOU LIFE, DARK GODS.

NO!
IT'S NOISE MASKED BY THE DRUMMING,
THE LIFT HAS RISEN. THEN DROPPED
AGAIN... BRINGING A RESCUE.

GET YOUR
HANDS OFF HER, YOU
FILTHY BRUTES!

YET AGAINST THESE ODYS
WHAT CAN ONE MAN ALONE
DO? UNLESS HE IS NOT
QUITE ALONE...

UNLESS HE HAS AN ALLY IN FIRE... FOR WHAT HAPPENS TO THE VOODOO DOLLS ALSO HAPPENS TO THE ZOMBIES THEY REPRESENT.

AND NOW THE DOLLS ARE BURNING.

SYLVIA! QUICKLY...
I'LL GET YOU OUT OF
HERE! THE FIRE SHOULD
KEEP THEM BUSY.

WHAT?
I... WHAT'S HAPPENING?

BACK! DRIVE THEM BACK!

THEN, AS
HAMILTON
REALISES WHAT
IS HAPPENING
YOU! YOU'RE
RESPONSIBLE
FOR THIS! I'LL
KILL YOU!

WHY... SIR JAMES?

BUT THEN THE LIFT
DOOR SLIDES OPEN
ONCE MORE AND...

IN AN INSTANT, THE LIFT IS
RISING AGAIN... BUT IN
THAT INSTANT THEY CATCH
ONE LAST GLIMPSE OF
HAMILTON...

AND OF HIS TERRIBLE END

WHILE ABOVE, THREE
SURVIVORS MOVE
SLOWLY AWAY FROM
THE BRIGHT HEAT
OF THE FLAMES...
INTO THE COOL
DARKNESS OF THE
NIGHT.

IT'S OVER!
THE UNDEAD ARE
DEAD AT LAST! THE
PLAGUE IS NO MORE!

THE END

ARRRRRRRRGGGH!
3 great new "MATCHBOX" 75 models to collect with super all-action features. 35p each.

**THE ONES THAT FEEL LIKE REAL!**

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  - Really nice details plus toy bar two removable surfboards and super fast wheels.

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  - Wheels and rotor turn for real live action.

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Throughout the world more and more fantasy film festivals are starting every year. These give fans of the country an opportunity to see films from abroad that were never released generally, old classics, and brand new, yet-to-be-released movies. Thanks to French cineaste, Jean-Marc Lofficier, HoH readers can have the chance to see what happens at such festivals, and can get to know what films could well reach our shores over the coming year, through the following feature special.
A Night At The Festival

Outside the Rex, more than two hours before the actual start of the projection, a queue of hungry horror fans was already forming. Luckily, the weather was nice and the counter clerk efficient, so the waiting was bearable. But speak about success: some nights, not only had the spectators to sit on the stairs or stand up at the end of the theatre but the organisers had actually to refuse people entry!

The Rex itself is a three level theatre, all in gold-and-red velvet style, with baroque sculptures. The public of the Festival is, to say the least, a lively one. Thanks to the presence of one-sheet programmes, or plot summaries (for non-sub-titled films) made available by the organisers, an annexe of paper planes was launched from the second floor to grace gracefully to the screen...

At about 8 o'clock, some of the festival lovers came on stage and tried usually with success despite the crowding ‘breakfast’ to present the night’s programme. And then, the projection started.

Unlike in 1978 where all the shorter features were American (Don CURTIS’ Trilogy of Terror and The Night Stalker survive this year) time requirements—the management had required that everything was to end before midnight—made it possible only to start with a 10-minute film. Since no French movie was presented this year, the Festival Organisers decided to run a competition of French shorter features. The one that won the ‘Best’ Award was ‘REVE’ (‘Dream’), an animated cartoon on a mythological theme.

At about 8.15, the short feature was ended and the ‘pict de résistance’ started. Out of the 22 films shown this year, it is interesting to note that the Festival Organisers had kept a place for previously unreleased movies. Therefore the French public could at last see George Romero’s The Crazies (Holl Review back in issue 6). Joseph Newman’s This Island Earth and John Hancock’s Let’s Scare Jessica to Death. A number of Toho films had also been programmed but were all (with the exception of Godzilla vs. The Smog Monster) replaced, fortunately, by newer and better films.

A look at the Programme

Among the other films shown, seven were a World Première: Peter SASOY’S Welcome to Blood City (Canada/UK), F. J. GOTTIEB’S Lady Dracula (Germany), Derek TOON’S Things to Come (US), Juan MOCTEZUMA’S Alucard (Mexico), John PIQUER’S Journey to the Center of the Earth (Spain), John STANLEY’S Nightmare in Blood (US) and, last but not least Oario ARGO’S Suspiria (Italy). All in all a good score for the organisers, even if they could not get films like Demon Seed or The Sentinel, as originally programmed.

This international Spectrum of Horror or Fantasy, we should add, Sweden, represented by Calvin (‘In Search of Dracula’) FLOYO’s Victor Frankenstein and another Italian movie, DALLAMANO’S Cursed Medallion.

A word of warning however: two of these should really be avoided: Lady Dracula—just a rather obvious comedy on the reappearance of a female vampire (a former victim of the Count) in 18th century Austria. The director included in this film a bad rock music that manages to destroy any effect it could have.

Even worse is Things To Come—an acknowledged mistake of the Organizers—a pono film using SF as an alibi, and a poor one at that. It bears absolutely no relation at all to WELLS’S classic, I hardly could find anything to say on its behalf: the direction is obvious, the acting terrible, the special effects awful, the music obnoxious and the story nil!

Apart from these two ‘blemishes’, the rest of the Festival was an enjoyable event. In addition to the retrospective we already mentioned, it was good to see David NIVEN playing Orlok in Clive DONNER’S Nosferatu and Ernest Borgnine the satanic Corbis in FUEST’S The Devil’s Rain.

One of the big successes of the Festival was certainly JEFF LIEBERMAN’S Squirm (reviewed in Holt 8). Some scenes, like the one where the worms crawled under the skin of one character, were very effective

Award Time

The awards given at the Festival went to the following movies: Best I. GORÖN’S Food of the Gods the GOLDEN UNICORN. The Special Effects (GORÖN’S Motax System) depicting the giant rat invasion in this free adaptation of WELLS’S classic were undoubtedly the decisive factor in the jury’s decision.

The jury’s SPECIAL AWARD went to an Australian movie Jim SHARMAN’S Summar of Secrets, which also won the CRITICS’ AWARD. The BEST SCENARIO AWARD went to Welcome to Blood City; the BEST MASCULINE INTERPRETATION to Richard BASEHART for his Dr Chaney role in Mansion of the Doomed; and the BEST FEMININE INTERPRETATION went collectively to all the interpreters of Peter WEIR’S Picnic at Hanging Rock (that famous and lovely story of three girls’ disappearance on St Valentine’s Day).

The Public, itself, through the usual ballot system, gave its own award to Ralph BAKSH’S latest cartoon Wizards.

And now, more about some of the previously unseen films that were featured.

Festival Programme

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<tr>
<td>Sat 12 PICNIC AT HANGING ROCK (P. WIEH, Australia)</td>
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<td>GODZILLA vs. THE SMOG MONSTER (Y. BANNO, Japan)</td>
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<td>Sun 13 WIZARDS (R. EAKINS, USA)</td>
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<td>MAN 14 THE DEVIL’S RAIN (F. PIQUER, USA)</td>
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<td>Tue 15 VICTOR FRANKENSTEIN (C. FLOYO, Sweden/Ireland)</td>
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<td>Tue 16 LADY DRACULA (I. J. GOTTIEB, Germany)</td>
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<td>Thu 17 LET’S SCARE JESSICA TO DEATH (J. HANKCOCK, USA)</td>
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<td>Sat 19 SOURIR (J. LIEBERMAN, USA)</td>
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<td>Sun 20 JOURNEY TO THE CENTER OF THE EARTH (J. PIQUER, Spain)</td>
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<td>Sun 21 THE CURSED MEDALLION (M. DALLAMANO, Italy)</td>
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<td>Tue 22 SUSPENSA (D. ARGENTO, Italy)</td>
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* Mentioned by the Jury

World Premières:

*The other films were presented in retrospective
FOOD OF THE GODS
(Directed by Bert I Gordon)

In the relatively small world of Special Effects, after Willis O'Brien, Ray Harryhausen and Jim Danforth, one must not forget Bert I Gordon who is, unlike the others, a producer, director, and writer... an unprecedented feat since Melses!

Gordon's speciality—if I may say so—are giants (like in The Spider, The Amazing Colossal Man), or their smaller counterparts (such as in Attack of the Puppet People). Food of the Gods, of course, uses this factor. Strangely enough, it is not Gordon's first attempt at adapting Wells' classic; in 1965, in Village of the Giants, he told the story, in a comedy mood, of the experiments in size-changing by a young scientist.

Some ten years later, in Food of the Gods, the treatment of the theme is more tragic: giant animals—wasps and rats—run amok, attacking man. The 'ecological overtones' (nature's revolt) show Gordon's attempt to be 'relevant'. But was Wells irrelevant, or is it only a different approach? In any case, Gordon

is certainly an outstanding special effects man. Inventor of the Super-Perceptron Vision (used in the Magic Sword), he

utilises in Food of the Gods a special film, to which later alternations are brought: the matex system. Therefore, we can see in the same scene men and giant rats.

This 100 per cent realism—giant rats being far more impressive than Giant Spiders or Giant worms—makes Food of the Gods a special effects success, the story being a little bit obvious and without much surprise. Enough, it seems, to win it the famous Golden Unicorn Award at the festival.

FOOD OF THE GODS (U.S.A.)
Ida Lupino (as Mrs Skinner), Ralph Meeker (Benington), Marjoe Gortner (Morgan), John Cyper (Brian), Chuck Courtney (Davis)
Directed by Bert I Gordon; Produced by Samuel Z. Arkoff, Screenplay by Bert I Gordon (after the novel by H.G. Wells), 90 min, 1975.
**JOURNEY TO THE CENTRE OF THE EARTH**  
*(Directed by Juan Piquer)*

**C**lassics never die, it seems. The centre of the Earth has already been visited by cinemas From *The Mole People* to the recent *At the Earth's Core*, it has always been a tradition to populate it with various monsters. Juan Piquer's film does not betray this tradition. Indeed, his special effects team was advised by Harryhausen himself and, as a result, the monster sequences are truly beautiful.

Juan Piquer was clever enough to avoid Calvin Floyd's mistake; whilst he does not betray Jules Verne's spirit, he does not feel obliged to stick closely to the novel and adds to it, like SF novelist P. J. Farmer adds to the Burroughs mythos. The story itself is known. Prof. Lindenbrock finds an old traveller's log that leads him, his daughter and her fiancé, to the centre of the Earth from a dead Volcano in Iceland, and back via the Stromboli in Italy.

If Piquer had closely followed Verne's novel, we would have had a very dull move. As it is, our explorers meet a mysterious man at the centre of the Earth, Olsen (masterly played by Jack Taylor), who does strange experiments with a portable generator of advanced design. They eventually discover that Olsen is a man from the future—and glimpse, for a few seconds, a future city where men exactly like Olsen are engaged in mysterious activities. We also learn that Olsen was at the origin of Prof. Lindenbrock's finding of the log, and perhaps other, future discoveries as well!

Thanks to Olsen, though we all know the plot line, we never lose interest in the film story. The special effects are good and the "King Kong" met at the centre of the Earth has no need to envy its bigger counterpart, despite a considerably smaller budget! The photography making is also quite good, it always "feel" like the centre of the Earth.

The characters—well acted—are in Verne's style; too conventional (absent-minded scientist, etc.) in their XIXth century fashion. But the humour is never disrespectful, and the presence of the cold and scientific Olsen makes them in the end, closer to us.

Since 1959 (Henry Levin's *Journey to the Centre of the Earth* classic), this is probably the best film on the subject. One looks forward to seeing other films by el senor Piquer . . .

**JOURNEY TO THE CENTRE OF THE EARTH** (Spain)  
Kenneth More (as Professor Otto Lidensbrock), Pep Munne (Axel); Ivonne Sentis (Glauben); Frank Brana (Hans); Jack Taylor (Olsen); Lone Fleming (Molly); Jose Cafarel (Professor Fradikson); Emiliano Redondo (Cristoff).  
Directed and produced by Juan Piquer; Screenplay by Carlos Puerto, John Nelson and Juan Piquer (after the novel by Jules Verne); 90 mins, 1977.

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**THE CURSED MEDALLION**  
*(Directed by Massimo Dallamano)*  
*(U.S. title *The Night Child)*

Yet another film 'inspired' by *The Exorcist.* Michael Williams is a BBC film director planning to make a feature programme about the Devil. He goes to Spoleto, a small Italian village, where he meets a Countess Capella who owns a strange painting. Within the painting one can see, in the Devil's grasp, a burning woman jumping to her death under the eyes of a child wearing a medallion, said to be cursed. Precisely what happened to Williams' wife some months ago. Now, his very possessive 12-year old daughter, Emily (we shall learn eventually that she was the one who killed her mother), tries to kill any woman that her father meets. It starts with her young nurse, and then her father's girl friend . . .

At the end of the film, near the Devil Painting, Emily will kill both her father and herself.

Shades of Freud! The story itself is not very coherent: one does not see clearly the Devil's part, or those of the medallion . . . Furthermore, there are a lot of moments in the film where nothing happens (and, in that of films, this cannot be tolerated). Therefore, any interest we can have for the story quickly decreases . . .

The acting lacks some conviction— with the exception of Nicola Elmi who plays Emily. However, the beautiful streets of Spoleto are more of a compensation for an unremarkable film.

Murderous 12-year-old Emily (Nicole Elmi) wakes screaming from a chilling nightmare (left) and proceeds to stalk the eerie Castle Spoleto (right).

I am afraid, Dallamano is no Mario Bava . . .

**THE CURSED MEDALLION** (Italy)  
With Richard Johnson; Nicola Elmi; Joanna Cassidy; Evelyne Stewart.  
Directed by Massimo Dallamano; Screenplay by Dallamano, Franco Marotti and Laura Toscano. Produced by William C. Reich; 92 mins; 1975.
ALUCARDA

(Directed by Juan Moctezuma)

Juan Moctezuma was one of the five directors (along with Calvin Floyd, John Stanley, Juan Piquer and Dario Argento) present at the Festival. There was a rather awkward moment when, after having been ‘greeted’ by a shouting crowd (I have already said that the public was a lively one, sometimes verging on the... infantile!), he left the stage without further ado.

Unlike his Mansion de la Locura (that received the Jury’s Special Award in 1974), Alucarda is a story about Satan and witches. Everybody will have realized that Alucarda is Dracula spelled backwards, with an extra ‘a’ to add a feminine note (there was a Count Alucard in a Mexican Vampire Film). But why, since the film never mentions Dracula or even Vampires?

However, the movie starts with the birth of Alucarda, daughter of Satan. The child is taken to a convent, where she will grow up. Years later, she meets Justine, de Sade’s heroine, and a strange friendship grows between the two girls. During a stroll in the woods and a visit to Alucarda’s haunted birth place the two girls meet a gipsy sorcerer. Back at the convent, they engage into a witch ritual, become blood sisters and go to a sabbat, selling their souls to the Devil.

Discovered by the Sisters, Alucarda and Justine are submitted to an exorcism, in which Justine is killed. Alucarda is saved by the local Doctor—an unbeliever, of course—who takes her home. But she escapes, while Justine’s body, now possessed, flies after having killed a nun. The Doctor, now convinced of Satan’s existence, and some sisters go after her and manage to destroy her with holy water. Meanwhile, Alucarda has been playing havoc in the convent, burning people simply by her look. A final exorcism reduces her body to ashes.

Moctezuma described Alucarda as a ‘preparation for other films about witchcraft’ he intends to shoot, and he added that, for him, ‘Alucarda was the archetype of the witch’. The problem with this approach is that Alucarda is torn between the supernatural and rationalization. Moctezuma does not seem able to decide whether Satan does exist, or if witches are only sensuous girls refusing the Church’s strict rules. Therefore, the film fails on both accounts: it is not a good supernatural-based horror movie like The Exorcist nor is it a good realistic one (like Ken Russell’s The Devils).

Let us hope that the next Moctezuma film will somehow be more satisfying.

ALUCARDA (Mexico)
Claudio Brook (as Dr. Oscheck, sorcerer), Tina Romero (Alucarda), Susana Kamim (Justine), David Silva (Father Luzaro)
Directed by Juan L. Moctezuma; Produced by Eduardo Moreno and Max Guefen, Screenplay by Juan & Yolanda Moctezuma and Alex T. Arroyo; 90 mins., 1977.

Above: The barbaric rites at the sabbat where Alucarda and Justina sell their souls to Satan.
Mansion of the Doomed is not a monster film. Unless one wants to consider that Man may well be the worst monster of all...

Dr. Leonard Chaney (Richard Basehart) is a famous physician specializing in eye transplant research. His daughter, Nancy (Trish Stewart), has been blind since a car crash in which her father was involved. Burdened by guilt, Chaney wants to give sight back to his daughter. At any price...

One night, he steals Nancy's boyfriend, Dan (Lance Henrickson), and helps his assistant (Gloria Grahame) transplant his eyes onto his daughter without her knowing the donor's identity. After the operation, Chaney locks the now-blind Dan up in his cave, in the hope to cure him later should his method succeed. Unfortunately, Nancy's body rejects the eyes! Chaney, becoming quite unbalanced, starts kidnapping people to launch a new series of transplants, which all prove to be failures since Nancy's body rejects them almost immediately. Meanwhile, Chaney's blind victims in the cave—there are now about 8—manage to dig a hole in the wall. Two prisoners escape, but one is caught by Chaney while the other, a girl, is killed by a car.

A Police visit, after the accident, determines Chaney to have a final try. The opportunity comes after the murder of his assistant by the prisoners: he will transplant her eyes on Nancy. Whilst he is burying the body after the operation, Nancy wakes up and, inadvertently, discovers her father's victims—including her lost boy friend! When Chaney comes back, Nancy plays along and manages to lure her father into the cave, where she has already released his victims.

Mansion of the Doomed was certainly not intended to be funny. However, it does appeal to the black humour sense in each of us. The way mad Chaney prowls the city, looking for eyes, could have been terrifying. However, it is not. Pataki treats it almost lightly. Richard Basehart, who also stars in Allen's Flood, deserved his award because of the... natural way he was acting in a revolting role! No outré, no melodrama in the famous Mad Scientist style. Only a sweet—even understandable—obsession that turns into raving madness.

The plight of the blind victims, locked in Chaney's cave, is quite gripping. And the desperate escape of the blind girls was one of the highlights of an otherwise average film.

I would not go far enough to say that Basehart's interpretation saves the show—the film has other qualities—but it certainly helps.

MANSION OF THE DOOMED (U.S.A.)

With Richard Basehart, Gloria Grahame; Trish Stewart and Lance Henrickson.

Directed by Michael Pataki; Produced by Charles Band; Screenplay by Frank Ray Perillo, 90 mins; 1976

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The 'Zombie' they say, is a soulless human corpse, still dead, but taken from the grave and endowed by sorcery with a mechanical semblance of life... It is a dead body which is made to walk and act and move as if it were alive." This is William B. Seabrook's description of the walking dead, taken from his book, 'The Magic Island'. Seabrook's book told of his travels to Haiti, with one chapter covering these human corpses.

Among the many themes in the fantasy-filmmakers' arsenal, the story of the Dead, or zombie-like, are the most exploited. The reason for this is quite simple, the Dead have always been feared by man; they represent the form of things unknown.

The proliferation of Mummies, Vampires, Ghosts and Zombies on the screen goes to prove that moviemakers are more than willing to capitalise on this fear. However, over the years the Mummy, the Vampire, and the Ghost have set up their own limitations, their own ground rules by which they operate.

The zombie theme has evolved into something that really has no set laws to govern it, and the character has appeared in countless films which have had no bearing on its origins.

The term, zombie, had at one time a direct meaning; the Haitian-based voodoo victim. The term has been broadened to the extent that anything resembling a human which moves fairly sluggishly and appears mindless, if not dead, is referred to as a zombie.

The Halperin brothers' White Zombie, released in 1932, made the term popular with cinema audiences, and pretty much laid down the basis for many similar films to follow:

Madeline (Madge Bellamy) comes to Haiti to marry Neil (John Harron), her fiancé. During the voyage from New York she has met Charles Beaumont (Robert Fraser), a rich plantation owner. Beaumont has insisted that her forthcoming marriage be held at his estate.

The young couple witness a sinister
Roy Ashton's makeup mastery provided as with the Hammer version of zombies, in their 1966 Plague of the Zombies.
ceremony that night, and meet the even more sinister Murder Legendre (Bela Lugosi). Beaumont has actually fallen in love with Madeline, and calls upon Legendre, zombiemaster of the island, for his evil assistance. By way of some voodoo practice, involving a waxen image of Madeline, Legendre manages to put her into a state of apparent death.

HALPERIN ZOMBIES

After her body has been placed in the Beaumont mausoleum it is stolen by Beaumont and Legendre, with the aid of the latter's six zombie bodyguards. The now mindless Madeline is held at Legendre's cliff-top castle, and just wanders aimlessly through the musty corridors. Meanwhile, Neil has discovered the disappearance of Madeline's body from the tomb, and enlists the help of one Dr. Brumer (Joseph Cawthorn), who is something of an authority on voodooism. They locate the zombie-master's remote castle and in the ensuing conflict the slowly-poisoned Beaumont destroys Legendre, along with himself, by hurling over the cliff onto the ragged shoreline. Madeline and Neil are now reunited with the breaking of Legendre's spell.

White Zombie, although a roughly-made film, still stands up today as a very interesting picture; it is something of an irony that the film, when originally released in America, was virtually ignored by the critics but went on to recoup its initial expenditure, thus being a success as far as the Halperin's were concerned. They, in fact, went on to produce Revolt of the Zombies in 1936, but resulted with an inferior duplication.

This film begins during the last months of the First World War where we are shown a company of zombie soldiers routing the enemy, unperturbed by the oncoming bullets. The confusing story then goes on to tell of a secret formula for putting people under a trance-like spell—creating zombies—and the pursuit of this secret by various characters.

Revolt of the Zombies was directed by Victor Halperin, who also directed White Zombie, but failed to come anywhere near the style and class of the earlier production.

In 1940, Paramount Pictures came out with The Ghost Breakers, a hub but comic attempt at the zombie/Haunt theme featuring Bob Hope and Paulette Goddard. Directed by George Marshall, the film is loosely about a radio commentator (Hope) who, by accident, ends up in the Carribbean with Mary Carter (Goddard), who has just inherited an old, crumbling castle. Originating from an earlier stage-play, and now accommodating Bob Hope's antics, the 'haunted' castle sequences

A scene from the 1961 Mardi Gras production of The Dead One.

Not really zombies, but decidedly living dead. The Thing That Couldn't Die (Universal, 1958) featured a villainous 400-year-old head that hypnotised people. In the above scene, it "acquires" a body!
turn into a speedy farce. However, there are some quite eerie moments, played out in the atmospheric castle setting, which have the principals being chased by the forbidding Noble Johnson as a Zombie.

During the early Forties, Monogram Pictures churned out extremely low-grade zombie material such as *King of the Zombies*, *Revenge of the Zombies* and *Voodoo Man*. The first of this group, *King of the Zombies* (1941), was a simple, lifeless (no pun intended) story concerning three men, Bill Summers (John Archer), 'Mac' McCarthy (Dick Purcell) & Jefferson Jackson (Montan Moreland), who are forced to land their small aircraft on a remote Caribbean island. There they encounter one Dr. Miklos Sangre (Henry Victor), who claims he and his family are from Au-trua, refugees of the war. It seems that the island is swarming with zombies, controlled, apparently, by old Tahama (Madame Sub-son), the cook. Needless to say, Sangre denies the total existence of zombies. Sangre has a beautiful wife, Alyce (Patricia Stacey), who appears to be in a hypno-like trance. There is also the young niece, Barbara (Jean Woodbury), to supply the inevitable love interest. Dr. Sangre is really an Axis agent who has an American Admiral held captive on the island, which is pretty obvious to all except the heroes in the film. The idea is that Sangre plans to transfer information from the Admiral's mind to that of his wife, via voodoo.

Along the way, Jackson believes himself to be a zombie (after being subjected to hypnosis) and attempts to supply some comic relief involving the other zombies. Eventually, 'Mac' becomes a zombie and ends up leading the regular zombie pack against Sangre, finally causing the villain's death. Jackson and 'Mac' revert back to their former selves, and the Admiral is saved.

The production standards of this film barely rise up to the absurdity of the story. Jean Yarbrough was responsible for the direction, which seemed to alternate between attempts at old-dark-house frolics and lapsed horror. *King of the Zombies* was, if it is possible to imagine, the best of this little Monogram group.

1943 saw *Revenge of the Zombies*, featuring (or rather, wasting) John Carradine. This one centres around Nazi Doctor Von Altermann (Carradine) who is secretly trying to create an army of zombies. Into the shambles of this story, and over-familiar studio settings, comes three more heroes (including a new, Mantan Moreland as a character called Jeff) to disrupt the Axis enterprise. Moreland, incidentally, goes through the same unfunny 'comic relief' scenes as seen in the previous picture.

The third, and last, of these Monogram potboilers was William Beaudine's *Voodoo Man*, released in 1944. Robert Charles' screenplay seemed to take itself more seriously:

Near the town of Twin Falls there has been a spate of strange disappearances—all young women. Another young girl mysteriously vanishes, near the house of physician Richard Marlowe (Bela Lugosi), and Ralph Dawson (Michael Anes), a scriptwriter, along with the girl's sister, Betty (Wanda McKay) set off in search.

**WARTIME ZOMBIE FILMS AS NAZI PROPAGANDA**

Betty, prowling around Marlowe's house also disappears. Ralph teams up with the police and they come across Marlowe and his assistant, Nicholas (George Zucco), about to perform a voodoo ceremony with Betty and Marlowe's zombie-like wife (similar to the sequence in *King of the Zombies*).

As if nobody knew by now, Marlowe has been abducting the girls in an attempt to find a girl with the right mind (mental plane) for reviving his wife. All the other girls had been total failures, and are now zombies looking after Ralph (John Carradine). The climax sees the police shoot Marlowe who, before he dies, destroys his wife and effects the release.
of the girl-zombies.

Despite the inclusion of Lugosi, Zucco, and Carradine, Voodoo Man was as mediocre as the previous Monogram pair, and was happily the last of the Monogram/zombie entries. As with most wartime films, King of the Zombies and Revenge of the Zombies were merely genre vehicles for domestic propaganda, utilizing the zombie-theme as a basis for Nazi activities. Only the last movie, Voodoo Man, took itself on its own level and produced an actual explanation for the creation of zombies, not to follow with the contemporary trend of 'enemy agents'.

Slotted between such dismal fare as Revenge of the Zombies and the yet-to-come, Valley of the Zombies, RKO Radio Pictures came forth with one of the rare, classic examples in the Zombie-film, I Walked With a Zombie.

RKO appointed studio story-editor Val Lewton to the position of producer on a series of low-budget horror films, beginning with the relatively successful Cat People. Working from the script by Curt Siodmak and Ardel Wray, Lewton assigned Jacques Tourneur to direct I Walked With a Zombie, and brought about a whole new style to the making of horror films. Lewton's concept was that suggestion would spark the imagination of the audience into greater terrors than he could convey on the screen. It was later to continue as an effective method on such productions as The Leopard Man (1945), The Seventh Victim (1943), Curse of the Cat People (1944), and The Body Snatcher (1945).

However, the style came about more directly from budgetary restrictions at RKO than from Lewton's genius—but more basically, Lewton's talents were such that he was able to overcome these limitations and produce exciting cinema. The main reason why I Walked With a Zombie worked was that the emphasis was on visual atmosphere, rather than plodding dialogue, to create the excitement.

Nurse Betsy Connell (Frances Dee) is offered the employment of caring for the invalid wife of a sugar plantation owner, Paul Holland (Tom Conway), on the Isle of St. Sebastian, in the Caribbean. An atmosphere begins to formulate, when during the voyage there (after Holland has come out to meet her) he starts making remarks about death and decay surrounding his home. When Betsy arrives at the island her initial introduction is by way of mournful natives and harsh reminders of the island's earlier slave-trade. An atmosphere of gloom hovers over the landscape. Betsy meets Paul's half-brother, Wesley Rand (James Ellison), who tells her that the household consists of their mother (Edith Barrett) and the invalid wife, Jessica (Christine Gordon). Things are made even colder for the young nurse when she realises that a sense of hostility exists between the brothers.

That evening, Betsy finds herself wandering through the dark, ominous house to investigate a noise; this gives Lewton another chance to unnerv the viewer even further through the use of light and shadow—and things yet unseen. The night's proceedings result in Betsy realising that Jessica is mentally ill.

The nurse next meets a local physician, Doctor Maxwell (James Bell), who drags the heavy atmosphere down even deeper by referring to Jessica as a zombie. "She makes a beautiful zombie, doesn't she?"

At the nearby village, Betsy is present when Wesley gets drunk and in trying to assist him to his feet she meets Mrs. Rand, a strange woman who escorts her back to the Holland home.
During dinner, Betsy hears of the Home-front, the name for the island’s voodoo temple. The following day, she and Doctor Maxwell discuss the possibilities of reviving Jessica through shock treatment, but Holland has little faith in this method. After talking with a servant, Betsy is informed that a cure may be sought at the Home-front but Mrs. Rand tells her that this could be dangerous.

However, Betsy decides that voodoo may be the only cure for Jessica. So, leading her by the hand, she takes Jessica through the cane fields to the Home-front. This is where Lewton starts turning up the power on the audience, in terms of suspense. Just about every aspect appears to have a depressive grey tone, wind blows the sugar-cane in all directions. They eventually come across a dead goat, hanging from a tree, which signifies that a voodoo ritual is taking place somewhere nearby. They carry on, amidst the rustling and swaying cane, until they suddenly spot a tall, dark figure standing in the path. We see the figure a lot more clearly when Betsy’s flashlights shine over him—it is Carre Four. He is the guardian of the Home-front, a weird, somnambulistic figure with large staring eyes. However, the girls are wearing some special protective markings which allow them to pass unharmed.

Nothing ghastly or horrifying really occurs during this sequence, but due to the claustrophobic manner of the camera, taking us along the small path (practically from a subjective point of view) we somehow expect something to jump out on us—but nothing actually happens, except in our imaginations.

At the Home-front, Betsy meets the voodoo priestess—who turns out to be Mrs. Rand. She explains to Betsy that in order to get the natives to accept medicine, she pretends to possess special powers. The natives regard the unmoving Jessica as a zombie, and start taking an interest in her.

Back at the Holland house, there is a dispute during which Betsy learns that Jessica really is a zombie—a voodoo spell had been cast on her by Mrs. Raed, who had become insanely jealous when Wesley and Jessica had planned to go away together at one time. This is disputed by Doctor Maxwell, who states that in order for someone to become a zombie they must first be dead—and Jessica is certainly not dead.

The voodoo ceremony continues at Home-front, with the natives performing a ritual to draw Jessica back to them; Jessica stirs, hack at the house, and starts making her way off the estate. Wesley follows her but, seeing Carre Four approaching, he picks her up and heads for the sea, finally walking into the powerful waves.

Early in the morning, a torchlight procession of natives arrive at the Holland house, carrying with them the drowned bodies of Wesley and Jessica. The tragedy and gloom of the island claims a further two victims.

I Walked With a Zombie, a very zombie movie, was made in 1943, and not totally ignored by contemporary critics. It is strange, however, that this film, along with Lewton’s other productions, has now gained some cult popularity—some three decades after its release. Lewton, at the time, described it as ‘Jane Eyre in the West Indies’, which is a much more appropriate way to take it than the exploitation label that RKO stuck it with. Most of Val Lewton’s films rise far above their shock titles, and I Walked With a Zombie is no exception.

Combining the elements of comedy with horror (which, in certain movies, can become quite confusing), RKO released Zombies on Broadway in 1945. Frontlining two comedians, Wally Brown and Alan Carney, this substandard entry revolved around a nightclub called ‘The Zombie Hut’, for which the two comics promised to supply a real zombie for the opening night. Threatened by the club’s gangster owner, Ace Miller (Sheldon Leonard), the boys try to locate on Richard Renault (Roley Lagois), who has made a study of voodoo. They trace him to the island of San Sebastian (RKO studios, again), where he has been turning people into zombies with his special serum. From this point the film turns into a complete farce, even to the end when Renault orders his zombie-bodyguard to kill the comic hero but the brute turns on him instead.

Utilizing nearly the same crew that worked on I Walked With a Zombie, Zombies on Broadway had the direction of Gordon Douglas and a fairly competent cast, but somehow never allowed itself to take off.
Overall, it appears to be torn between its two basic elements, which result in its failure.

Republic Pictures came into the theme in 1946 with their Valley of the Zombies, which combined science with voodoo. Briefly, the story concerns a scientist, Ormand Marks (Ian Keith), who is committed to a mental institute. It is Marks' belief that there exists a plane between life and death which can be achieved via special blood transfusions. The real reference to the film's title belongs only as a location where Marks picked up his voodoo secret for creating the living dead. This film is actually a borderline case on the theme, but it does have something of a voodoo-based element in the story.

With the advent of the 1950s, science-fiction became the ruling factor in horror films, with the zombie element now worked into a scientific setting. Still, there were a few films that retained something of the old style. 1953's Seared Rifl was the Paramount remake of their earlier The Ghost Breakers, this time featuring the then-popular team of Jerry Lewis and Dean Martin. Needless to say, this version lacked all the mood and flavour that made the 1940 picture succeed on its own level.

1957 saw just about the last two 'serious' zombie films of that decade, Voodoo Island and Zombies of Mor-Tau.

ZOMBIES OF MORA-TAU

Voodoo Island cast an aging Boris Karloff, as professor Philip Knight, in a remote island setting where there are carnivorous plants and hostile natives ready to turn intruders into zombie-like beings. The picture was nothing exceptional, save the presence of Karloff, although he was wasted.

Columbia released Zombies of Mor-Tau the same year, but this also failed to come up to expectations.

After a period of ten years, Jan Peters (Autumn Russell) visits her grandmother's home, Mora-Tau, on the African coast. Her first unsettling experience comes when her grandmother's driver, during the journey to the house, kills a strange, ragged man on the road and quickly carries on. Later, both the driver and her grandmother (Marjorie Eaton) dismiss the incident quickly.

An expedition arrives off the Mor-Tau coastline hunting for diamonds on the sea-bed. George Harrison (Juel Ashley) leads the expedition, with his wife, Anna. When the diamonds are found, the archaeologist Jonathan Eggert (Morris Ankrum) refuses to allow them to be taken.

When they meet Jan's grandmother she warns them of great dangers should they try to locate the diamonds. She also points out the graves of previous expeditions, and the archaeologist recalls the legend of the 'Susan Bee' wreck from some 60 years before. The story goes that in 1894, when the ship came, they discovered the wealth of vast diamonds belonging to the natives. The Captain (actually the grandmother's late-husband and half the crew were killed in conflict over the gems.

Later, the Captain and the other 'un-dead' men returned to the ship, killing the remaining few onboard and sinking the vessel—they have been the seeking dead ever since.

Pretty soon, the new expedition encounter the zombies and suffer some casualties among the crewmen; Jeff is nearly killed by the zombies, who are able to travel along in the depths of the sea. Problems occur among the group, as Jeff and George bicker over the treasure. George's wife argues with him and runs off. She fails to turn up again, and the search leads the group to an old mausoleum where they discover that she is now a zombie (inexplicably).

The climax sees the zombies, after some harrowing sequences, disappear forever when the grandmother throws the gems overboard into the depths.

This film, more or less, laid down some basic ground rules for similar productions to come; groups of menacing 'undead', white men with that traditional haggard, dark-circles-around-the-eyes look.

The mindless character, later to become known as the zombie, first arrived on the screens in Robert Wiene's The Cabinet of Dr. Caligari (1919), in the form of somnambulist Dr. Caligari. In excluding the 'revived dead' (Frankenstein, Man-Made Monster, etc) because of the direct scientific influence, it is interesting to take a look at the films that used the basic zombie-theme by featuring humans that had been 'taken over' (lost identity) by something, turning them into a form somewhat akin to the established zombie figure.

These characters fall into two basic groups, the massed gang (as in Invasion of the Body Snatchers), and the individuals (such as seen in The Earth Dies Screaming).

It Came From Outer Space (1953) had an alien take-over of a small desert community, with the particular characters taking on a sluggish behaviour and glazed eyes (sometimes luminous) making them visually zombie-like. The same fate befell some of the principal characters in Invaders From Mars (1953). Here
they walked around with an emotionless expression, spouting abrupt dialogue. There were others in this category, such as Creature With the Atom Brain (1955), Plan Nine From Outer Space (1956), Brain From Planet Arous (1958), in which flying alien brains enter the minds of humans, Man from Moon (1965), which involved involved brain experiments, The Earth Dies Screaming (1964), etc.

The groups of menacing zombie-like characters could be seen in, especially, Invasion of the Body Snatchers (1953) where the paranoia really sets in: Dr. Miles Bennell (Kevin McCarthy), returning to his small practice in a California town, finds that many people, although physically unchanged, appear to have changed. Shortly afterwards, Bennell, along with his fiancée, Becky (Dana Wynter), are called over to a friend’s house to see a pod-like thing changing into a duplicate of the invasion, Jack (King Donovan).

It is not long before the entire community has been duplicated by these strange pods, actually extra-terrestrial seeds intent on ‘taking over’. Only Bennell, Becky, Jack, and his wife, Theodo (Mara Joness), remain.

The couple go for help, but return trans-formed. Bennell and Becky escape (in a scene where the whole town pursues them) and hide out in a disused mine. In the morning Bennell realizes that Becky, too, has been taken over by the aliens. He dashes for the highway, hoping to alert the rest of the world of this.

Although the transformed townsfolk aren’t visually horrific, the real terror lies in the fact that they want to make you one of them—a mindless shell.

Quatermass II (1957) had a similar plot, the transformation and eventual invasion of Earth by aliens who take over the minds of humans, reducing them to zombie-like figures. In 1958, United Artists released Invisible Invaders, which must have saved a goodly amount on the budget as the “invaders” were initially invisible, and their space-ship was invisible. This is simply a story of invading aliens ‘borrowing’ the bodies of humans and creating chaos around the globe. It is not until the final moments that we get to see these invaders, when it is discovered that they are vulnerable to high-frequency sound, and they march on the principals looking just like the crowd from Zombies of Mora-Tau which is hardly surprising as the director was Edward Colan, author of both movies.

Night of the Living Dead (1965) must be the prime example, despite the inclusion of cannibals. All the elements are there; corpses revived from the grave, sluggish performance with a drugged expression, and the stilted walk. However, the indiscernment for their revival was absent, not voodoo, but this picture makes a perfect borderline case.

Now, back to the more related zombie productions, most of which are cheap, shoddy and criminal. Directed by journeyman Edward Colan, The Four Skulls of Jonathan Drake (1959), tells the tale of Kenneth and Jonathan Drake, survivors of a family cursed by an Ecuadorian medicine man 180 years ago. Kenneth is killed, and an unsuccessful attempt is made on Jonathan’s life by an Ecuadorian zombie. Police investigations lead to one Dr. Zurich, a man who dabbles in head-shrinking. It turns out that Zurich died some 180 years ago, but before anything can be done Zurich kidnaps Jonathan’s daughter in the hope of eventually killing, and decapitating, Jonathan. Jonathan does show up, and promptly decapitates Zurich who immediately turns to dust.

Although Henry Daniell is good (as always), in the role of Dr. Zurich, the film is generally a mush-mash of South American superstition. Why the lips of Zurich’s zombie are sewn up is never explained.

The quality (or rather, the lack of it) of The Four Skulls of Jonathan Drake is basically mainstream of the films that followed, with only a couple of exceptions.

1960s The Dead one centres around the title character who plagues the tenants of an estate called Kenilworth; Invasion of the Zombies (1961) features the masked Mexican wrestler, Santo, who tangles with a crazed scientist and his army of zombies; War of the Zombies (1963) is one of the sword-and-sandal sagas involving dead Roman soldiers in the title role; Dr. Terror’s House of Horrors (1964) has a silly segment which shows Roy Castle connically menaced by the power of voodoo; I Eat Your Skin (1964, though released in 1971) produces scientifically-created zombies. The following year 1972, zombies and their Haitian origin even turned up in (somewhat gormecky stylized way) to make ‘different’ antagonists for super-spy James Bond in Live and Let Die.

But back in 1965, Hammer Films brought some conviction back into the zombie theme with Plague of the Zombies, even though their Cornwall location seemed pretty far removed from Haiti. Not considered much at the time, John Gilling’s film now, in retrospect, stands up pretty well against what Hammer was producing at the time. The traditional Hammer ingredients are all there; the evil laboratory, the cracked relics, the drawing out of terror, etc. Another doctors of Hammer’s is apparent here; the trans-position of setting (their classic example must be in situating the Werewolf-themee in medieval Spain, in Curse of the Werewolf).

One of the most remarkable, and frightening, scenes occurs during Brook Williams’ nightmare, in which he finds himself as a desolate cemetery just as the zombies start breaking and rising from their graves. A certain malevolent atmosphere is retained throughout the film, very much in the usual Hammer style.

VOODOO GIRL

A final film, worthy of inclusion in this selection, is Paul Mastansky’s Voodoo Girl, alternatively known as Sugar Hill (although some U.S. marques billed it as Sugar Hill and Her Army of Zombie Hit Men). This 1974 film told about the revenge of a murdered nightclub owner’s girlfriend, Diana ‘Sugar’ Hill (Marky Bey), who calls the aid of Baron Samedi (Don Pedro Colley), Lord of the netherworld, and his fellow black zombies against the white racketeer and his mob. Individually, the racketeer’s gang are decimated by the zombies. Finally, he is lured out to a remote swampland mansion and dies during a chase through quakestands. Baron Samedi ends up carrying the gangster’s girlfriend to the netherworld with him.

Voodoo Girl is pretty much in the black-film making exploitation style, but as a horror/zombie entry it comes across quite effectively. The central (vengeful) characters are black, while the ‘criminal’ element (the eventual victims) are mainly caucasian. However, there are quite a few pleasing sequences, such as the bulging-eyed zombies, armed with mud and dead leaves, rising from the earth, and the disposal of one gang member by female zombies in a massage parlour.

Unfortunately the Zombie film has never risen (i) to the heights of the Vampire, or the ‘mon-made Monster’ movie, but despite its cinema history of low-budget quickies it has offered, nevertheless, an interesting selection of titles to add to the Horror Film category, though sad to say, it seems unlikely that we’ll ever get another entry that will take itself as seriously as, say, I Walked With a Zombie or Hammer’s Plague of the Zombies.
Beneath this bleak, windswept plain of Midden Moor lies the body of Cormac, legendary warrior chieftain. Undisturbed for over two thousand years. Until now, for treasure hunters are about to realise their wildest dreams and unwittingly unleash

The Curse of Cormac

In the glow of a lamp their eyes beheld an awesome sight...

Stone crowns, look at that!

Good grief, he must be over seven feet tall, a giant!

Now that's what I came here for.

Look, Dave...I've read up about these things. There's an old legend about a giant chieftain in Cormac. He had a sword like that, a magic sword.

Hold on, I wouldn't touch that sword if I were you.

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Hold on, I wouldn't touch that sword if I were you.
WHO SAID ANYTHING ABOUT THREE WAYS? SCARABBLE AROUND IN THE REST OF THE STUFF IF YOU WANT. BUT THIS SWORD'S MINE!

I'LL SPLIT YOUR SKULL OPEN!

AND FOR THE FIRST TIME IN MILLENNIA, CORMAC'S SWORD TASTED BLOOD!

YOU'VE KILLED HIM, YOU LUNATIC. GIVE ME THAT SWORD. GIVE ME IT!

NEXT MOMENT, SAUNDERS FOUND HIMSELF IN A FERVENT GRIEF.

LET GO. YOU'RE BREAKING MY ARM.

I SAID LET GO!

CHONK!

GOING ONLY TO COLLECT HIS PACK, DAVE SAUNDERS FLED FROM THE GHASTLY SCENE.

GOTTA GET AWAY. BURY SWORD IN THE WOODS. COME BACK LATER.

THE BLASTED THINGS ATTACKING ME. GET OFF!

BUT, NEXT MOMENT.

RAAARK!
Saunders made a wild swing, but the blade of his sword seemed to vanish before his eyes.

THUNK!

Saunders struggled to free the sword, but the blade had bitten deep.

I don't get it. I'm using all my strength and it's just not budging...

Saunders stopped, struck by a sudden silence that descended on the darkening woods and then... that shuffling sound coming from behind me...

Saunders turned, and faced a sight that turned his blood to ice.

Saunders' exclamation was choked into silence as two skeletal hands grasped his throat in a grip of steel...

GAAAK!

We found a third body in the woods, Sir. Bit grisly, I'm afraid there was a dirty great clay-pipe in his mouth when we scared it off.

But I'm afraid we were too late!

It was a few days before the slaughter was discovered. Police searched the surrounding area and the mystery deepened when...

Oh my god!
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