Locked in fierce combat! The revived Kharis (Christopher Lee) and John Banning (Peter Cushing). See this issue’s History of Hammer for more on The Mummy 1959.
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You’ve read reams on vampires already, but here’s a look at their adversaries . . . from the 1930s to the 1970s.

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“The Hounds of Hell” is the title of this month’s comic strip shocker from the files of Professor Van Helsing.
Over the months we’ve received the occasional letter from die-hard Hammer fans who have noticed our comic strip adaptations each month are not exactly the same as the original movies.

We’ve had mail asking where the brontosaurus scene came from (in HoH 14’s One Million Years BC strip), the head-chopping of Mitterhouse (in HoH 17’s Vampire Circus) and so forth.

And, if not for this very editorial, we’d doubtless receive more, querying parts of our treatment of Captain Kronos.

The answer is that we are offering an exclusive bonus to the reader. As you may be aware, a film goes through various changes before reaching the cinema circuits. Revisions are made at all stages, from pre-production right through to the cutting room floor. So, rather than re-present the edited, censored version, with all its budgetary special effects limitations, we work from the original drafts wherever possible. Thus, in HoH alone, you can see the film exactly as it was meant to appear.

Now, in answer to yet more queries (perhaps I should retitle this editorial Answer Desk Part 2), here’s some information on what’s coming up in future issues.

On the comic strip side, we’re currently working on The Devil Rides Out (by Doug Moench, John Belton and Pat Wright, plus Dr. Jekyll & Sister Hyde, Chris Wicking & Paul Neary’s Revenge of Frankenstein, Brides of Dracula, and Enemy From Space (Quatermass 2).

On articles, coming up are: Cine FX—a look at the growth of special effects on the screen; Focus of Fear—a series of features by Hammer’s number one make-up man, Roy Ashton; Flashback—reviews of fantasy films released exactly ten years ago plus more interviews, behind-the-scenes scoops and previews than you can imagine.

In next month’s issue, HoH 21 we’ve a few special treats lined up... Lee on Lee is literally what it says. Christopher Lee on his career in horror films; Shandor—Damon Starker our classic comic strip character not seen since HoH 16; 3-D Horror Movies; a Van Helsing’s Terror Tale by top artist Berni Wrightson, Karlloff’s The Sorcerers; plus... our biggest behind-the-scenes feature ever as we look at the script, storyboards, casting, directing, location work, model-making, musical effects, editing and production of the new EMI movie 7 Cities to Atlantis.

Miss it at your peril!

Dez Skinn (Editor)

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SARA DURWOOD

Directed by BRIAN CLEMENS; Screenplay by BRIAN CLEMENS; Photographed by IAN WILSON. Edited by JAMES NEEDS. Produced by ALBERT FENNELL and BRIAN CLEMENS. Released by Bruton Films. Certificate AA.

The House of the Sorell Family, in the village of Durward. Rings with happy laughter. Isabella Sorell is seventeen years old today.

It's beautiful... and it's real gold! Oh, thank you, everyone!

Just wait till I show Petra! Can I run over there now?

If you're quick, my dear... be back before nightfall.

And so Isabella Sorell sets out on a short journey through the darkling forest...

Her last journey... there will be no more birthdays for Isabella Sorell...

WHA... NO!
NOOOOOO...!

Script: Steve Moore
Artwork: Steve Parkhouse
NO MORE OF ANYTHING AT ALL...

THE DEATH SHOCKS THE VILLAGE...

NO BETTER, I'M AFRAID... BUT SHE'LL ALLOW NO PHYSICIAN NEAR HER... NOT EVEN YOU, DR. MARCUS...

THEN, AS THE FUNERAL ENDS...

A SAD AFFAIRE... ESPECIALLY FOR HER SISTER, ANN. BUT NOW I MUST GET BACK TO THE HOUSE! GOOD DAY, DR. MARCUS!

COME HOME WITH US, PETRA... WE COULD DO WITH A HAND, AND IT MIGHT TAKE YOUR MIND OFF THINGS...

THANK YOU, ANN...

GOOD GOD!

OH, NO, NO NOOOO...!

THE NIGHT...

POINTER RODE FOR THREE DAYS AND NIGHTS AND FINALLY REACHED THE EASTERN MOUNTAINS...

POINTER... I WANT YOU TO TAKE THIS LETTER TO CAPTAIN KRONOS... AND STOP FOR NOTHING UNTIL YOU GET TO HIS CASTLE! IT'LL BE A HARD RIDE... TO THE EASTERN MOUNTAINS...

BUT WHEN DR. MARCUS TOO LEAVES THE SCENE...

ANN? ANN, ARE YOU ALL RIGHT? WHAT'S THE MATTER? CAN'T YOU SPEAK....

P. PETRA...

PETRA? WAS SHE WITH YOU? WHERE....
None could have arrived more swiftly than Kronos, and so...

Ga-Dang! Ga-Dang!

Kronos! I haven't seen you since the war. It's good...

Wild horses couldn't have kept me from coming to your aid, old friend. But listen to those bells! That's no wedding bell!

Moments later...

It's Handa Sorell... mother of the first girl attacked... at least, it was...

Look, Grost... the blood on the lips, our journey hasn't been wasted...

In a church, Kronos? Surely no vampire could...

Some vampires could! We need more information on what we're up against, then we can deal with it! Grost knows the first steps...

And Grost does indeed know what to do...

Dead toads? You're burying dead toads?

Precisely, my dear... tord in the hole! Only a few more...

None know of Grost's work. Least of all the two young lovers who arrive in the forest the next day...

Giles... I thought I saw someone over there... someone really old...

Where? I don't see anyone, Myra... come on, I'll walk you home...

And have my father see you? No, it's only a little way. You can watch me until I get clear of the woods...

And after all, what could happen in such a short stretch of path?

For Myra is only out of her lover's sight for a few seconds...

But those few seconds are enough...

Myra... Myra, my love...
I DON'T UNDERSTAND, KRONOS... I'M A MAN OF SCIENCE, BUT...

BUT WE DEAL IN LEGEND, MARCUS... THERE'S AN OLD RHYME: "IF A VAMPIRE SHOULD BESTRODE CLOSE TO THE GRAVE OF A DEAD TOAD, THE VAMPIRE'S HEART ITS LIFE SHALL GIVE AND SUDDENLY THE TOAD SHALL LIVE!"

BUT I CAN'T BELIEVE...

YOU RINGED THIS AREA, GHOST? GOOD. WE'LL CHECK...

NOW WE KNOW WHERE TO START LOOKING... THE SOUTH END OF THE VILLAGE...

UNLESS IT CAME THROUGH THE VILLAGE...

THE TAVERN'S AT THE SOUTH END OF THE VILLAGE... WE'LL START THERE TOMORROW...

LOOKING FOR SOMEONE WHO'S INCREDIBLY OLD?

NO... FOR ONE WHO'S YOUNG... YOUNGER THAN THEY SHOULD BE... IT'S NOT BLOOD OUR VAMPIRE STEALS... BUT YOUTH!

AND TALKING OF THE YOUNG... AND THE BEAUTIFUL... IN THE DURWARD MANSION...

HOW'S MOTHER, SARA?

JUST THE SAME, PAUL... SHE WON'T EAT... SHE JUST SITS THERE LIKE A DEAD THING!

AND SHE LOOKS SO OLD, PAUL! SHE USED TO BE SO BEAUTIFUL... BUT THE LAST THREE YEARS HAVE AGED HER SO MUCH...

NEXT DAY FINDS KRONOS ALSO NOTING THE YOUTHFUL...

SO YOU'RE GARTH MARKSTEIN... THEY SAY YOU CAME BACK FROM THE CITY A WHILE AGO LOOKING YEARS YOUNGER...

WHAT IF I DID?

OH, WE'RE JUST INTERESTED... THAT FINE HEAD OF HAIR...
...is a wig?

HA! He didn't find the secret of youth... he found a wig-maker!

Give that back...

That's what they say's going on in the village... witchcraft! First Isabella, and then... what do you think, Paul?

My brother doesn't form opinions too rapidly, doctor...

His mind full of dark thoughts, Marcus rides back... under a sky that has suddenly become equally black...

I really ought to go... tell me, Paul... does that book have anything about vampires in it?

I don't think so...

Some people think they don't exist. Well, good dry to you both...

Good morning, Paul... I was... er... passing, and I thought I'd drop in to see how your mother was.

No better... but no worse, doctor! I'm afraid she'll still see no one... not even you? Still, if you're here, perhaps I can offer you a brandy...

What's this you're reading, Paul? Witchcraft and necromancy...?

Oh... it was my father's... I'm finally starting to put his library in order...

Is that why you stare at me so hard, doctor? Or do you think there's something wrong with me?

Sara! As young and beautiful as ever! I really don't know how you do it... it's almost magical!

Forgive me, my dear...

The massive thunderhead has formed so rapidly it seems almost unnatural... and yet the darkness, and the howling wind are real enough...

But the darkness presses down heavily on Marcus... closing in on him...

And Marcus feels the sting of fear... poisonous, lip-biting fear...

And then the storm blows itself out in an instant, and all is as it was before... leaving Marcus to wonder if it was freak weather...
Kronos and Groot, meanwhile, having emptied the tavern, have returned to the forest...

Fine! A few more of these and we'll have every path in miles covered!

Right... No one, or nothing, will be able to pass through without our knowing...

And yet...

Too late! Too late again!

This thing's becoming an epidemic... like a plague of vampires! And a plague on them! The bell-trap never failed before!

That night...

You hate them, don't you, Kronos... but why? Why is it such an obsession?

I once went off to fight a war... leaving my mother and younger sister behind. When I returned, my sister greeted me with a kiss...

A vampire's kiss! I was strong enough to survive, but that meant I had to...

Kill them? Oh God...!
**MEDIA MACABRE**

**Film Scene News**

**Dawn of the Dead**

More weird and wonderful effects promised in the much-awarded George Romero and Dario Argento tie-up, *Dawn of the Dead*. George directs from a script based on his new novel; Dario "presents" the film, being produced by Romero's partner, Richard Rubenstein in association with Claudio Argento and Alfredo Cuomo. The publicity for the movie reads "Where there's no more room in hell... the dead will walk the earth."

**Horror Pushed Out?**

The main point in all your letters seems to be the same every month. "Where have all the horror films gone?" Turned into scripts every last one.

Fortunately a few genuine horrors are still about, or about to be made.

Item: The lycanthrope lives anew in America. A writer-director with the odd name of Worth Ketter III is busy with *Wolfman*, the hero of which, Colin Glasgow, is heir to the devil's curse. Sounds good—on paper. We're a little wary, though, of any project claiming to star "an international cast" headed by Earl Owensby as the unfortunate Colin. Earl who?... Actually Earl Owensby is also Wolfman's producer. So if he wants to class himself as part of an international cast, we suppose he has every right to.

Item: Dracula lives on, too. Shooting begins in...of all places—Dallas this summer on a $3,000,000 comedy movie. Title: Prince Dracula.

**Schlesinger's Alive**

Despite—or more likely because of—the tawdry Mexican quickie, *Survive*, about the Andes plane crash where the survivors cannibalised their dead companions to stay alive, the other film about the subject is far from dead, after all.

This being Alive, once on John Schlesinger's schedule. United Artists lost interest in the project following the hyped-up release of *Survive*. Now, Paramount have been talking to producer Edgar Scherick and the Alive film looks alive again.

**Hitler Disaster Movie**

To assure Bavarian government feelings, Peter Cushing's Munich movie, *Hitler's Son* will be known as *Return to Munich* in the Fatherland. On the set, they've been calling it Hitler's

---

**First Fantasy Film Fifty**

We all know that *Star Wars* is the greatest money-spinner in the history of the screen. Just the other year it was *Jaws*, of course. Before that, came the fierce battle between *The Godfather* and *The Exorcist*. And it was not so very long ago that *The Sound of Music* shook the filmworld by finally topping *1939's Gone With the Wind* from top spot as the biggest money-making film that ever was...

While the ups and downs of the last few record-breaking box-office years have been all very interesting, we've been wondering how the broad spectrum of fantasy films fared in such a list of all-time bests. For instance, which proved the more successful in the end? *Carrie* or *Psycho*, *Rosemary's Baby* or a *20,000 Leagues Under the Sea*, *The House of Wax* or *The Sentinel*, *Planet of the Apes* or the *Birds... and came to that, Westworld or *Futureworld*...?*

Variety, the weekly bible of show-business facts and figures, provides all the information in their annual list of box-office champions, old and new. Films that have earned at least $4,000,000 in distributors' rentals (as opposed to box-office receipts). We've called our list from theirs, sticking as closely as possible to what *Boxoffice* would regard as fantasy films—or of Gothic horror, straight and comedic, with the disaster movies thrown in for good measure. We have, though, deliberately cut out the 007 spy films—fascinating, sure, but not quite what we consider the *Boxoffice* genre to be. This again, is why only some of Hitchcock's winners are listed—the sheer horrors not his tense suspensers. You may disagree with some of our inclusions, but it does help resolve a few arguments...

The dollar figures mentioned represent distributors' rentals in the biggest film market, America and Canada. Double these figures and you'll have some notion of the world-wide accounting. *Okay, what do you think, did William take more money that Sinbad...? Read on.*

1. *Star Wars* (Director: George Lucas; 1977) $177,000,000
2. *Jaws* (Steven Spielberg; 1975) 121,256,000
3. *The Exorcist* (William Friedkin; 1973) 92,200,000
4. *The Towering Inferno* (John Guillermin; 1975) 50,000,000
5. *Airport* (George Seaton; 1970) 43,300,000
6. *The Poseidon Adventure* (Ronald Neame; 1972) 42,000,000
7. *Earthquake* (Mark Robson; 1974) 36,804,000
8. *King Kong* (John Guillermin; 1976) 35,851,283
9. *Young Frankenstein* (Mel Brooks; 1975) 34,150,000
10. *The Deep* (Peter Yates; 1977) 31,000,000

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11. *The Omen* (Richard Donner; 1978) 27,051,000
12. *Airport 75* (Jack Smight; 1975) 25,743,000
13. *2001: A Space Odyssey* (Stanley Kubrick; 1968) 24,100,000
14. *Close Encounters of the Third Kind* (Steven Spielberg; 1977) 23,000,000
15. *A Clockwork Orange* (Stanley Kubrick; 1971) 15,400,000
16. *The Hindenburg* (Robert Wise; 1975) 15,087,000
17. *Planet of the Apes* (Franklin Schaffner; 1968) 15,000,000
18. *Rosemary's Baby* (Roman Polanski; 1968) 15,000,000
19. *Airport '77* (Jerry Jameson; 1977) 14,336,000
20. *Carrie* (Brian De Palma; 1976) 14,500,000
21. *Fantasia* (1940) 14,000,000
22. *Exorcist I: The Heretic* (John Boorman; 1977) 13,500,000
23. *Psycho* (Alfred Hitchcock; 1960) 11,300,000
24. *20,000 Leagues Under the Sea* (Richard Fleischer; 1954) 11,000,000
25. *Island of the Lost* (Robert Stevenson; 1977) 10,200,000
26. *Logan's Run* (Michael Anderson; 1976) 9,500,000
27. *Willard* (Delbert Mann; 1971) 3,250,000
28. *ora* (Michael Anderson; 1977) 3,230,000
29. *Rollerball* (Norman Jewison; 1975) 8,800,000
30. *Two Minute Warning* (Larry Pearce; 1976) 8,698,000
31. *Beneath the Planet of the Apes* (Ted Post; 1970) 8,600,000
32. *Escape to Witch Mountain* (John Hough; 1975) 8,500,000
33. *The Andromeda Strain* (Robert Wise; 1971) 8,341,000
34. *Rollercoaster* (James Goldstone; 1977) 8,234,000
35. *The Beatles Strangler* (Richard Fleischer; 1966) 8,000,000
36. *Sleater* (Woody Allen; 1973) 7,867,000
37. *Sinbad and the Eye of the Tiger* (Sam Wanamaker; 1977) 7,700,000
38. *Reincarnation of Peter Proud* (J. Lee Thompson; 1975) 7,650,000
39. *Grizzly* (William Girdler; 1976) 7,272,000
40. *Beyond the Door* (Oliver Hellman; 1976; Italian) 7,178,000
41. *Westworld* (Michael Crichton; 1973) 7,000,000
42. *Survive* (René Cardona; 1976; Mexican) 6,258,143
43. *Frenzy* (Alfred Hitchcock; 1972) 6,500,000
44. *The Island of Dr. Moreau* (Don Taylor; 1977) 6,000,000
45. *It's Alive* (Larry Cohen; 1977) 6,000,000
46. *The High and the Mighty* (William Wellman; 1954) 6,000,000
47. *In Cold Blood* (Richard Brooks; 1967) 6,000,000
48. *Food of the Gods* (Ben I. Gordon; 1976) 6,000,000
49. *Race with the Devil* (Jack Starrett; 1977) 5,755,000
50. *Escape from Planet of the Apes* (Don Taylor; 1971) 5,500,000
Revenge, following a quirky series of Exorcist-like incidents. The dialogue coach broke his foot, the publicity man fractured a kneecap, a prop man sprained an elbow, cast and crew were in four car crashes in all, Peter Cushing fell victim to a serious inflammation of the eyes—which also befell director Rod Amateau, who broke a finger, as well. Nothing so far has happened to producer Dr. Gerd Goring (no relation!).

Just for the record, Hitler's Son is a movie and not a film, according to Amateau. A movie, he cites as being pure entertainment; a film provokes intellectual thinking...

---

**Meteoric Career**

To celebrate the fact that his star-packed Meteor marks his 50th year in movies and his 30th as a director, Ronald Neame has added himself to the cast alongside Sean Connery, Natalie Wood, Karl Malden, etc. Neame plays the British representative at the United Nations.

Neame, who apparently vowed he'd never handle another disaster thriller after the multifarious headaches of The Poseidon Adventure, has come a long, long way from his beginnings as a messenger boy at Elstree studios, London, in 1928. The first film he worked on was Hitchcock's first British talkie, Blackmail, in 1929. A cinematographer on such ventures as In Which We Serve (1942), he later produced the most important films of the postwar English cinema, Great Expectations (1946) and Oliver Twist (1948), before turning director later in 1949.

We're sure Meteor will be a cracking movie, but Neame will always be better remembered for his Alec Guinness films, The Card (1952), The Horse's Mouth (1959) and Tunes of Glory (1960) and Maggie Smith's The Prime of Miss Jean Brodie (1969).

---

**Technical Hitch**

Talking of Hitchcock... his own cinematic language, Hitchcockese, is turning up in film titles. To Hitch, a McGuiFFIN is that which is not quite what it seems—the innocent crop-dusting plane that isn't dusting any crops and starts menacing Cary Grant in North By Northwest, as one stunning example. Now the Benji writer-producer-director Joe Camp (no comment) is immortalizing the expression in a thriller called The Double McGuFFIN. "It's Saturday night," explains Camp. "The boys are playing a little game. The winner gets to live. . . ." Aha! Ernest Borgnine and George Kennedy are the boys(?). Elke Sommer is... honestly... playing the Prime Minister. Now there's a McGuffin if ever we've heard one.

---

**Bee-Pictures**

1978 looks like going down as the year of the bee-films. Three of them at the last count.

Hard on the heels of Bruce Geller's somewhat ridiculous tale of South American killer bees invading Louisiana (The Savage Bees), comes Irwin Allen's The Swarm, which is about South American killer-bees invading the entire United States. Well, Allen always did have bigger budgets.

Geller's stars rate as a kind of TV Movie First XI—good old Ben Johnson, Michael Parks, Horst Bucholz and sundry unknowns (and likely to remain so). Allen's cast features a starrier swarm: Michael Caine, Katharine Ross, Richard Widmark, Richard Chamberlain, Olivia de Havilland, Lee Grant, Jose Ferrer, Patty Duke Astin, Bradford Dillman, Henry Fonda, Fred MacMurray... and good old Ben Johnson. Again.

Now both of these films have to do battle with a quickie from Roger Corman's New World Pictures, Bees. Director is Jack Hill with a cast headed by John Saxon. Only difference we can see about this one is that the location is Mexico City. Which means, it's (a) either cheaper, not to bother importing the bees, or (b) the story has killer-bees from America taking their revenge on South America. About time, too.

---

**Moore Vanishes**

Latest news on the much headlined plan to re-make Hitchcock's The Lady Vanishes is a change of casting. For Roger Moore read George Segal. Very good news!

---

**Stinging Effects**

If The Savage Bees story was less than brilliant, the make-up effects were first rate. And all the work of one Maurice D. Stein, who suffered so many stings himself that he has to carry a booster antitode with him forevermore—"My doctor insists I've reached my toxin threshold."
MEDIA MACABRE

quarter-size, however, the mag is filled to the covers with varied articles, reviews and pieces relating to the fantastic cinema. The super-small print may initially strain your eyes, but the blend and quality of the contents will—you will soon realize—it all worth while.

The current issue (No. 10, Spring 1977) contains a most exciting coverage of the Paramount King Kong remake, most aptly entitled "'Twas Dono Killed the Beast". This article breaks down the 15 million dollars (spent on promotion) De Laurentiis myth that the film is "The Most Original Motion Picture Event of All Time". If you're a fan of the real original—the supreme 1933 picture—then this piece will certainly have you cheering.

An interesting observation (with comparisons) on the current Supernatural theme is made in the article "To the One... A Burnt Offering", which deals specifically with The One, Burnt Offerings and To the Devil... A Daughter. The author's final analysis may not be in accordance with everyone's opinion regarding these films but the article is a most readable study.

'Sinbad and Symbolism: A Voyage into the Uncanny'. This is a Freudian look at The Seventh Voyage of Sinbad—drawing from the film some curious (and obscure) conclusions. Although one would have thought that there are many more important films in the genre to analyse from a psychological viewpoint, this piece puts forward some curious interpretations that should interest those fans who murderously dissect and analyse movies to the nth degree. If you are willing to accept, in terms of symbolism, that the Cyclops represents the unconscious forces which threaten to overwhelm the conscious mind", then you should be quite content with this article.

There is also a lengthy movie review section, dealing with such titles as At the Earth's Core, Carrie, The Food of the Gods, Logan's Run, Obsession and Squirm. A particularly interesting section is the record review chapter, discussing such musical luminaries as Bernard Herrmann, Miklos Recca, John Barry, Max Steiner, and David Raksin.

On the whole, the 48 pages of Black Oracle (number 10) are well worth investigating if your interest in movies strongly favours films of a fantastic nature. Your reading requires material with a serious comment.

Copies of Black Oracle No. 10 (Spring '77) are available from George Stover at P.O. Box 10005, Baltimore, Maryland 21204, U.S.A. Overseas orders should send International Money Orders for $1.50 (which includes air mail).

T.V.

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Wanted: HoH 3, 4, 5 and 6. Contact me with prices. Pauline Smith, 88a Kelso Quadrant, Coatbridge, Lanarkshire, Scotland.


 fantasy filmography. Wrapping up the feature material in this issue is a short interview with Zita Johann—familiar to horror buffs mainly as the heroine in Karl Freund's 'The Mummy' (1932).

Rounding out the mag there are the regular columns dealing with fanzine reviews, movie reviews, and readers letters.

Midnight Marquee is an 8½ x 11½ format fanzine published irregularly, consisting of 44 pages. Available from Maya Merchandising of 52 Rodene Road, London SE18 10A, at £1.20 (inc. post & packing), and/or from Gary J. Svehla at 5906 Kavon Avenue, Baltimore, Maryland 21208, U.S.A., at $1.75.
Review by John Brosnan

Some movies can be described in just one word and the word that best describes The Incredible Melting Man is bleckkk! I mean, I've seen some nauseating things on the screen over the years, from the green vomit in The Exorcist to Barbra Streisand's performance in A Star is Born, but this takes the cake. Ugh, the mention of food is a mistake in connection with this film. The night I saw it I'd intended to have a pizza afterwards but as the "thing" resembles a pile of walking pizza filling, plus other substances over whose origins we will draw a discreet veil, I found I'd lost my appetite for pizza by the end of the show, as well as for all other forms of food.

The "thing" I refer to is all that remains of Colonel Steven West after a space flight to Saturn. Well, we're told he's been to Saturn but all we see on the screen is some NASA footage of one of the Apollo moon missions (and when Col. West, staring out of his window, says: "Gee! seeing the sun through the rings of Saturn sure is something!" there's a cut to a
During the flight there's an unexplained flash of bright light and one presumes that it's responsible for the unpleasant transformation that West undergoes, though again it's not very clear just what it is.

We next see West swathed in bandages in a hospital bed and in obvious discomfort. He staggered, ripped off the bandages and reveals that his face and hands have become nothing but vast open sores. Enraged, he immediately attacks a nurse, chasing her through the apparently deserted hospital and into the road outside. The next time we see the nurse she's lying dead on an autopsy table and being examined by two doctors, one of them being the film's hero, Dr. Ted Nelson. As the whole mishap in space must be kept top secret, Dr. Nelson receives orders that he must track down West practically on his own.

West, meanwhile, is deteriorating rapidly—his flesh taking on the appearance of the pizza filling I mentioned earlier, all red and yellow and runny. Anything he touches is covered with strings of sticky slime. And as he melts, apparently, so his appetite for fresh meat increases. His second victim, after the nurse, is a lone fisherman by a stream. The fisherman disappears into the bushes and the next thing we see is his head thrown into the stream. The camera follows it downstream and then, in one of the film's many peaks of sheer bad taste, we see the head topple over a waterfall and burst open on the rocks below... all in slow motion.

General Perry (Myron Healey) arrives in plain-clothes to assist Dr. Nelson in the search, so now there is a total of two involved in a hunt for an astronaut who has recently been sent to Saturn at the cost of countless millions of dollars and the efforts of thousands of people. They don't have much luck, which isn't surprising, particularly as they seem to spend most of their time hanging around Nelson's home
where his attractive wife Judy (Ann Sweeney) is waiting for the arrival of a baby.

West's toll of victims mounts up, including Judy's mother who was on her way to the Nelson home for a visit, but no matter how many people he eats it doesn't affect the desegregation process (see in loving close-up his right eye slowly trickle out of its socket and down his face...). Leaving the General to look after his sleeping wife, Dr. Nelson goes out to search for her missing mother. Of course, no sooner has he gone than West shambles into view, heading towards Nelson's house.

When Nelson returns, accompanied by a policeman, they find the General dead on the front lawn. To his relief, Nelson finds his wife unharmed.

Eventually Nelson and the cop track down West in the local electricity-generating station. "We want to help you," Nelson tells him but West rightly seems aware that the offer is a redundant one. The cop ends up being flung onto some high voltage wires, and when Nelson attempts to prevent two security men from shooting West he himself is shot dead for his efforts. West then staggers off, his condition worsening... and finally he dissolves, revoltingly, into a puddle of clothing and goo beside a metal shed. The film ends with a shot of a disgruntled cleaner shovelling the remains into a garbage can... a fitting image.

If the plot sounds vaguely familiar it should do, as it owes a lot to Hammer's The Quatermass Xperiment (and the 1959 rip-off First Man Into Space) and, of course, Frankenstein, but whereas those two films had a great deal of style, being made with care and intelligence, The Incredible Melting Man is an exploitation film of the purest kind—it has practically no redeeming features. The direction is almost non-existent, the script illogical and nonsensical, the acting perfunctory, etc.—only Rick Baker's make-up for Alex Rebar, as the melting man of the title, demonstrates any creative effort. It's revolting and nauseating but by being so it fulfils its purpose. If Baker hadn't been able to create a make-up effect so repulsive then the film would have been totally unwatchable—the responsibility for entertaining the audience would have fallen entirely on the writer and director, William Sachs, and he certainly wasn't up to the task.

So, thanks to Baker (he was the one inside the ape suit in the remake of King Kong and also designed most of the aliens in Star Wars) The Incredible Melting Man isn't a boring movie. It may be an awfully bad movie but isn't boring and these days that's not a quality to be sneezed at. Just don't plan to eat after you've seen it.

The Incredible Melting Man (1977)
Alex Rebar (as Colonel Steven West), Burt DeBrunning (Dr. Ted Nelson), Myron Healey (General Perry), Michael Aldredge (Sheriff Blake), Ann Sweeney (Judy Nelson), Julie Draven (Carol)

Review by John Brosnan
This is a dangerous film. Avoid it at all costs. If you find yourself trapped in a cinema with it you will first experience a sharp pain in the brain followed by a spreading numbness throughout your body caused by an intense attack of boredom. Chances of a complete recovery are slim and there is no antidote.

Basically The Savage Bees is yet another variation on Jaws: a community is threatened by a powerful natural force; there are a number of attacks on isolated victims before the danger is recognised; the authorities are slow to take the proper steps even when informed of the situation; finally there is a showdown between the protagonists and the "monster" and naturally the former are the ultimate victors.

In this case the "monster" is a swarm of killer bees that invades Louisiana after travelling up from South America in a banana boat. The bees first attack and kill a couple of crewmen on a freighter, a little girl on her way to church, and a dog. The dog turns out to belong to the local sheriff (Ben Johnson) and it's only when he insists that a young doctor at the town's mortuary carry out an autopsy on the dead animal that the existence of the killer bees is discovered. It just so happens that the doctor (Michael Parks) has had a recent romance with an entomologist (Gretchen Corbett) and he immediately asks her for some expert advice. She reveals that the bees are of the African variety—a species noted for both its aggression and the strength of its venom. Only a few stings are needed to kill a man.

Naturally they attempt to alert the city authorities but as New Orleans is in the middle of its Mardi Gras celebrations the Mayor is reluctant to take the threat seriously, leaving them to cope with the problem on their own. As there's a danger that the bees might spread out and interbreed with local species if the
queen isn’t destroyed it’s imperative that the whole swarm be captured intact. So while the sheriff organizes a search to locate the swarm, the doctor and the girl entomologist arrange to have a Brazilian bee expert (Horst Buchholz) flown up to help with the operation. At the same time they rekindle their romance... “It took a swarm of killer bees to bring you back to me,” murmurs the girl. Ouch!

The Brazilian bee expert arrives and soon takes charge, issuing orders and posing heroically with his shirt undone. With his help the swarm is finally located in a small diner on a remote country road. (I still can’t figure out how he found them; he simply pointed at the shack and said: “They’re in there.”) He then dons his special, silver, bee-proof costume and rides off towards the shack on the bonnet of the girl’s Volkswagen. While the girl waits in the car he goes inside the diner and, sure enough, finds the bees, as well as a few dead bodies. But while he’s attempting to get the queen two young refugees from the Mardi Gras, dressed in pirate gear, drive up and demand service. They only realize something is wrong when the bees begin to attack them, causing them to leap about in a bizarre dance of death. When the bee expert foolishly goes outside to try and help them (though it must have been obvious to him there was nothing he could do to save them) his suit is slashed open by the “pirate’s” (falling sword and he too is fatally stung (the who lives by the bee dies by the bee, it seems).

The bees then switch their attention to the girl in the car, covering her Volkswagen like a living carpet in an attempt to break in. When the doctor and the police arrive on the scene she is well and truly trapped. But after some discussion a possible solution is discovered— it seems that the bees fall asleep at a temperature of 43 degrees Fahrenheit so all they have to do is move the car to a place where the temperature can be controlled. Somebody remembers that there’s an enclosed sports stadium in the city that fits those requirements—the only problem is getting the car to it.

We then see the bee-covered Volkswagen, preceded by a police car, moving slowly through a New Orleans street. A hoard of extras, probably numbering as many as nine or ten, scurry for safety as they hear the police message from the loudspeaker: “Clear the street... there is a swarm of killer bees behind us.” (Not as memorable as the line in the film The Night of the Lepus when a policeman bursts into a drive-in cinema and tells the audience: “Attention, there’s a herd of killer rabbits coming your way.”)

They eventually make it to the sports stadium, the temperature is slowly lowered and, after several moments devoid of almost any tension, the bees fall asleep, having been beaten to this blissful state by the audience some time ago.

It’s a pretty shoddy film—cheaply made and directed by former TV director Bruce Geller with as much zing and excitement as a computer. The script seems machine-manufactured too—everything follows a totally predictable pattern and the dialogue could have come from some kind of lettraset kit (“Plot Variation Number #23: Just apply to blank page, press, then remove backing sheet”). But the other main problem with it is that bees aren’t very effective as a cinematic menace. They don’t generate much in the way of unease or fear, unlike spiders, worms or even ants, so film makers have to work really hard in order to imbue them with any feeling of horror or danger. So far no film maker has succeeded in this—Freddie Francis certainly didn’t in The Deadly Bees, a 1967 Amicus film, and neither does Geller in this one. It remains to be seen at the time of writing, how Irwin Allen has tackled the problem in his multi-million dollar epic Swarn. It will no doubt be much more spectacular than The Savage Bees but I have a strong feeling that it too will be a lot of buzz about nothing.

The Savage Bees (1976)
Ron Johnson (as Sheriff McKew), Michael Parks (Dr. Jeff Durand), Gretchen Corbett (Jeanette Devereaux), Horst Buchholz (Dr. Jorge Meuller), Bruce French (Police Lieutenant), James Best (Peligrono), Christine Ellisworth (Pirate Girl), Kenneth Lorenzen (Pirate Boy).

Produced and Directed by Bruce Geller, Screenplay by Gordon Trueblood, Director of Photography Richard Glounier, Music by Walter Murphy, Technical Advisors Kenneth Lorenzen and Norman Gary, Ph.D., Edited by George Hively and Bud Friedgen, Makeup by Maurice Stein, Executive Producers Don Kirchner and Alan Landsburg, Released by Columbia Film Distributors Ltd. Time: 90 mins.
Doctors of Death

Mervyn Rush and the lesser-known Crime of the Future are two recent contemporary horror films that all come from the mind of young Canadian writer-director David Cronenberg. Already he has earned himself the title of "the Canadian Roger Corman", because of his low-cost, high-profit products. This issue we look at his unusual approach to horror filming, and his stock-in-trade gimmick of...
Shortly before he began work on Shivers, Canadian director David Cronenberg had a nightmare: "I dreamt I was in a cinema with an audience. Certain members of the audience contracted a disease from the screen and then there was a certain amount of antagonism between those who got the disease and those who were immune."

In all Cronenberg's films, there is a conflict between those who are "normal" and those who are different. He graduated in English Literature from the University of Toronto. But he had enrolled at first on an Honours Science course. Then, he says: "I found that the people on the course were completely different from me. At the time, they were to me the kind of aliens that people in my films. They were recognisably human beings . . . yet there was something quite different about them."

He made his first film for $5,000 at the age of 27. Stereo (1969) is set in a Canadian institute, where parapsychologist Luther Stringfellow operates on six young adults. He removes their power of speech then, by brain surgery, increases their ability to perform telepathy. But, for Cronenberg, telepathy was just an excuse. "I wanted very definitely," he said, "to create the feeling that you are watching aliens from another planet."

To create an unreal effect, he used multiple-frame printing to make the characters move in a "kind of jerky slow motion". He also shot the film without any synchronous sound or music (which helped keep costs down). The soundtrack is made up of impersonal readings of scientists' observations.

This cold, clinical (and difficult-to-watch) approach was continued in his next film Crimes of the Future (1970). It is set in the near future at another fictional Canadian institute: The House of Skin. This institute treats those affected by some "severely pathological" skin diseases caused by modern cosmetics. The patients are men. All women die before puberty from the mysterious Rouge's Malady. The effect of this disease on men is an oozing of fluids. A white, creamy substance oozes from their ears. A thick, brown, chocolate-like substance oozes from their mouth and noses. Like liquefied dried blood. The fluids are highly attractive and tasty. Other people are tempted to lick and eat the substances. As in Cronenberg's other films, the cause of infection and transmission of the disease is sexual.

Not far away, at the Institute of Neuro-Venereal Disease, a man has been infected and his body is creating unique and highly-complex organs which sprout from his body but have no apparent purpose. (In Cronenberg's Rabid, the unique organs reappear with a purpose: to kill.) Straw-like tails push out of one nostril. The doctors think these may be nerve-endings from the man's brain, but they are not sure. No one is sure of anything.

The film's narrator is Adrian Tripod. He talks in a lost, wandering voice, unable to control or even understand what is happening around him. Eventually, he becomes involved in a plan to save the human race.

Crimes of the Future, like Stereo, was shot with no synchronous sound and is very much in the "underground" film category. When I saw it, eight people walked out (presumably from boredom) and many others kept looking at their watches and yawning. Cronenberg's next film, though, was a slam-bang eye-popping commercial exploitation feature.

He explained: "I had a dream. My mouth was open and this thing crawled out. I was lying in bed—absolutely neutral atmosphere—and that was the kernel of the film."

The working-title was Orgy of the Blood Parasites. On release, this was changed to The Parasite Murders. The French-Canadian title was Frissons. And, in Britain, it was known simply as Shivers (1974). Set in a high-rise apartment block isolated on an island in Montreal, it is a variation on the theme successfully used for Invasion of the Body Snatchers and Night of the Living Dead. A whole community is taken over by an outside force until the few remaining "normal" people are faced with a massive majority of infected humans. It is the normal people who are the "freaks".

Again, the disaster is started by a doctor operating on a patient. The resultant parasites look like the objects which dogs are not supposed to deposit on clean city streets. They carry a combination of aphrodisiac and venereal disease—a fact which brought some outraged cries from the press. At home, the Canadian Film Development Corporation was criticised for giving such a "repellent" movie financial backing. In Britain, Shivers was called "degrading"
(Sunday Times), “nauseous” (Daily Express) and “absolutely disgusting” (London Evening News). In fact, even producer Ivan Reitman had originally turned the film down as “too disgusting”, but he later changed his mind when Cinepix of Canada became involved in the project.

David Cronenberg had his own reasons for making the film this way, though...

“During the three years that I wrote the film, my father was dying and we were very close. It was a quite horrible death. No reason for it. It was just bad. Catharsis: that’s what the film can do. It’s a release of inner tension to get involved with a film like that and have it end the way it does.”

Cronenberg himself designed the “bug”, as it was affectionately known by the film crew. Special effects were handled by Joe Blasco, who normally worked as a make-up man for TV’s Lawrence Welk Show in Los Angeles. The results were remarkable. At the start of the movie, a girl’s stomach is slit open with a scalpel. The man who has performed the operation then pours steaming acid into the stomach and slits his throat open with the scalpel.

He is a doctor who has been trying to breed a parasite which can take over the functions of a human organ. The parasites, though, start to run, crawl and leap amuck, spreading their insanity-causing properties throughout the enclosed community. Soon, people are spewing up blood and bugs everywhere: into baths, onto the floor, out of the window. One little shower of blood and a bug from a high window goes sailing down onto the plastic umbrella of two old ladies walking below. “Oh poor birdie!” says one: “They’re always crashing into tall buildings.” The bug creeps away into the undergrowth.

In one of the most effective special effects sequences, the bugs can be seen moving just under the skin of a man’s stomach. Far more effective than anything in The Exorcist. In another scene, while two of the film’s heroes are talking about Man being “an over-rational animal that’s lost touch with its body”, a girl (played by Barbara Steele) in another room steps into her bath and lies down in the water. The plug rises and out creeps a bug, moving from her feet up towards her torso. As she flails about, knocking over and breaking a glass, the bath-water turns a mixture of blood-red and bug-brown, then drains away down the plug-hole. The girl steps out of the empty bath, not realising that jagged pieces of the broken glass are lying on the floor. She puts her foot down on the floor and sharp glass rips the soft flesh of her foot. But she shows no reaction, unaware of what is happening to her.

Elsewhere, a rapacious man attacks a woman who sticks a two-pronged meat fork into his neck; a woman cripple is attacked by a bug which crawls up her stick; an adam’s apple swells as a bug surges up inside a girl’s throat; an insane negro’s skull is smashed in with a crow-bar and everything begins to look too much like Night of the Living Dead. Victims of the bugs suddenly develop a glazed look and uncertain stagger which they did not have earlier in the film. They start to group together, attacking the few people who remain uninfected. The whole of Montreal is threatened. All this proved too much for the good people of Cambridgeshire, England. After complaints that some scenes were indecent, the local Council banned Shivers. Britain’s National Board of Film Censors had passed the film uncut because they believed (rather oddly) that the film had a message: “That the permissive society may be the result of this new form of plague.”

David Cronenberg defends his work more simply by saying: “The true subject of horror films is death and anticipation of death,
and that leads to the question of Man as body as opposed to Man as spirit. All my films have a strong physical consciousness. Being a mind in a body is a conundrum especially if, as happened with my father, the body starts to go and the mind has not."

Whatever the reasons Cronenberg had for making Shivers so explicit, the film was a financial success; it won First Prize at the 1975 Sitges Horror Film Festival; and it meant he had now moved from “underground” to “mainstream” movie-making.

As a result, he and producer Ivan Reitman teamed again for Rabid (reviewed in HoH 16).

Rabid, like Shivers, is about a strangely-shaped creature which needs to take over human beings’ minds and bodies in order to survive. Like Crimes of the Future, it features self-generating organs which grow out of the human body. Like both these films and Stereo, the horror clearly results from the ill-advised actions of well-meaning doctors and clinical institutions. Like all David Cronenberg’s films, it is about people who are not the human beings they, at first, appear to be. Rabid relies on tried and tested formulae. There is nothing new. It is basically a re-working of Shivers. I hope Cronenberg’s next film will not be another re-working of previous films. In horror films, I prefer the phrase “ad nauseam” to mean something else.

**Stereo (1969)**
*with* Ronald Mlodzik, Iain Ewing, Jack Messinger, Clara Mayer, Paul Mullholland, Arlene Mlodzik, Glenn McCauley.
Produced, Directed, Written, Photographed and Edited by David Cronenberg, Production Assistants Stephan Nosko, Pedro McCormick and Janet G. M. Good. An Emergent Films Production.
Time: 65 mins

**Crimes of the Future (1970)**
Produced, Directed, Written, Photographed and Edited by David Cronenberg. An Emergent Films Production.
Time: 70 mins

**Shivers (1975)**
(Canadian title: The Parasite Murders)
Paul Hampton (as Roger St. Luc), Joe Silver (Rollo Linsky), Lynn Lowry (Forsythe), Alan Migicovsky (Nicholas Tudor), Susan Petrie (Janine Tudor), Barbara Steele (Betts), Ronald Mlodzik (Merrick).
Written and Directed by David Cronenberg, Makeup and Special Effects by Joe Blasco, Director of Photography Robert Saad, Production Manager Don Carmody, Produced by Ivan Reitman. Released by Target International Pictures Ltd.
Time: 87 mins

**Rabid (1977)**
(Canadian title: Rage)
Marilyn Chambers (as Rose), Frank Moore (Hart Read), Joe Silver (Murray Cypher), Howard Ryschepan (Dr. Dan Keloid), Patricia Giage (Dr. Roxanne Keloid), Susan Roman (Mindy Kent), J. Roger Periard (Lloyd Walsh), Lynne Deragon (Nurse Louise).
Written and Directed by David Cronenberg, Produced by Ivan Reitman, Andre Link and John Dunning, Photographed by Rene Verzier, Music by Ivan Reitman, Distributed by Alpha Films, A Cinema Entertainment Enterprises (Montreal) Production.
Time: 90 mins
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However, rather than ignore the constant flow of requests, we're going to take time out to offer you another HoH contest. Movie buffs will have to take a back seat this time round as we present our HoH Art Competition.

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But for Kronos, the personal horror is far from over, for next morning...

KRONOS! Look at my face! I'm younger!!!

Chains, Grost!

Chains, Grost!

The girl in the forest... it was my fault wasn't it?

Yes, my friend... and you know what we must do: there will be pain...

Do it, Kronos... do whatever you have to do...

But... he doesn't bleed, Kronos... a vampire only bleeds at the moment of its death!

Hanging then...

But even now...

FIRE, Grost... we'll just have to keep trying until we find the right way...

Marcus?

Ooooooh...

That's enough, Grost... cut him down...

Marcus?

Blood! He's dead, Grost! But how?

A cross? He was wearing a cross... a simple steel cross...

No, Grost, a cross of holy steel, that's our answer... that's how we kill the vampire...
SO THAT NIGHT...

THIS'LL DO, KRONOS! GOOD HOLY METAL... I CAN FASHION A FINE SWORD FROM THIS...

BUT...

LOOK! THERE THEY ARE! THE ONES WHO KILLED DR. MARCUS... AND THEY'RE ROBBING GRAVES NOW...

RUN GROST... RUN!

AND SO KRONOS BEGINS A DESPHERATE FIGHTING ACTION...

AARGH!

UNTIL...

SORRY, GENTLEMEN... I'LL ENTERTAIN YOU ALL AGAIN SOME OTHER TIME...

AARRR!!!

OUR ARMS... HE HIT US ALL...

IN THE SAME PLACE!

AND SO, KRONOS AND HIS COMPANIONS WITHDRAW TO THE SAFETY OF THE FOREST...

ALMOST FINISHED, KRONOS! A SWORD FIT FOR A KING...

OR A VAMPIRE, EH, GROST?
AND, IN THAT VERY HOUSE...

I'M NOT HUNGRY, SARA... TAKE IT AWAY...

BUT, MOTHER, YOU MUST... OH IF ONLY YOU WERE WELL AGAIN. "BUT WE WILL MAKE YOU WELL... I SWEAR IT..."

BUT SARA HAS OTHER JOBS TOO... FRESH FLOWERS FOR THE FAMILY CRYPT...

YES, IT'S HORRIBLE, ISN'T IT, PAUL... BUT IT WON'T HAPPEN TO US, WILL IT? I CAN'T BEAR THE THOUGHT OF GETTING OLD...

MEANWHILE, KRONOS AND GROST CAREFULLY MAKE THEIR PREPARATIONS. THEN, WHEN STORM-WRACKED NIGHT CLOSES IN...

STILL NO BETTER? THAT'S WHERE IT ALL STARTED. SARA... WHEN FATHER DIED... THREE YEARS, AND SHE'S BECOME AN OLD WOMAN...

LISTEN, GROST! THE VILLAGE BELLS... IT'S STRUCK AGAIN! COME ON...

AND...

GADANG!

AND...

THERE... THE DURWARD COACH!

AND THE TODD... LIVES! IT'S HIM, KRONOS. IN THAT COACH...

AND SO, THE NEXT EVENING, KRONOS BEGINS HIS PREPARATIONS...

TWO, THEN? THE BROTHER AND THE SISTER... PAUL AND SARA...

FINALLY...

I'M READY... BUT ARE YOU, CARLA? DO YOU STILL WANT TO GO THROUGH WITH THIS?

BE A DECOY? YES, KRONOS... I WANT TO DO IT.
AND SO, WHEN DARKNESS FALLS...

WHAT THE DEY...

OH, SIR! PLEASE HELP ME, SIR... I SAW THE LIGHT AND...

MY FATHER TRIED TO FORCE ME INTO A MARRIAGE... I RAN AWAY.
PLEASE, SIR... LET ME STAY HERE TONIGHT... I WON'T TROUBLE YOU...
I'LL JUST STAY HERE BY THE FIRE.

OF COURSE... IT'S A SIMPLE KINDNESS... HERE, DRINK THIS...

WE'LL LEAVE YOU, THEN...
GOODNIGHT!

AND GOODNIGHT TO YOU, SARA...
SLEEP WELL... AND AWAKE RENEWED!

OUTSIDE...

WE'VE WAITED LONG ENOUGH, KRONOS. I DON'T THINK THEY'D ATTACK CARLA YET BUT...

BUT WE CAN'T TAKE THE CHANCE... COME ON, GHOST... TIME WE MADE OUR MOVE...

HURRY, KRONOS... THERE'S ANOTHER STORM BREWING! I DON'T LIKE IT!

NOR I, GHOST... BUT WE MUST APPROACH QUIETLY...

AND INSIDE THE HOUSE, ANOTHER IS APPROACHING QUIETLY...

CARLA WAKES, LOOKS, AND CATCHES ANOTHER PAIR OF EYES... STRANGE HYDROTIC EYES...

YOU... YOU'RE...

AND AS SHE SITS THERE ENTRANCED, LIKE SO MANY BEFORE HER...

MOTHER!

HER FACE, PAUL! LOOK AT HER FACE! WHAT'S WRONG...

YOUR FATHER... I AWAKENED HIM... I HAD TO BRING HIM BACK...

BUT AT WHAT PRICE, MOTHER? WHAT PRICE? YOUR IMMORAL SOUL...

WRONG? WHAT'S WRONG WITH BEING YOUNG AND BEAUTIFUL? LIFE HAS BEGUN ANEW, SARA... FOR ME... AND...
NONE CAN RESIST THE HYPNOTIC STARE OF THE VAMPIRE... AND AS PAUL AND SARA REMAIN MOTIONLESS...

NOW, HAGAN... SHE SHALL BE YOURS... I GIVE YOU HER LIFE...

WHAT PRICE? WHAT MATTER? YOU WILL REMEMBER NOTHING OF THIS... LOOK AT ME!

YOU SHALL NOT HAVE HER... NO ONE WILL!

A SWORD? YOU WISH TO FIGHT, LORD DURWARD? YOU'RE MORE FOOLISH THAN I THOUGHT.

NO... I...

Perhaps the fool is you, who taught me the sword?

BARLOFF... OF THE IMPERIAL GUARD!

THEN YOU'RE DOOMED, SIR... BECAUSE I TAUGHT HIM...

BUT PERHAPS THE SWORD IS MORE IMPORTANT THAN THE SWORDSMAN. THIS IS GOD'S BLADE... FORGED FOR YOUR BLACK HEART... AH! YOU BLEED...

YOUR BLADE MAY HAVE BEEN GOD'S... BUT MINE IS THE DEVIL'S...

MY SWORD!
DISARMED, KRONOS BACKS OFF RAPIDLY... AND THEN...

AHHAAH!

SINCE YOU KNOW THE DEVIL... YOU'LL PROBABLY BE FAMILIAR WITH THIS...

FIRE. SIR! FIRE AND BRIMSTONE!

AND, AS THE SULPHUROUS FLAMES ENGULF THE DEAD LORD'S CLOTHING...

AYYAAAAAH!

A FORETASTE SIR... FOR WHEN YOU BURN IN HELL?

AND HAGAN, DEAD LORD OF DURWARD, DIES AGAIN...

...BUT NOT ALONE... FOR AT THE LAST, HE REACHES FOR HIS BELOVED...

AND THE HYMNOTISED LADY DURWARD IS ALSO ENGULFED IN FIRE...

THEN, AS THE HYMNOTIC SPELL WEARS OFF...

IS IT OVER, KRONOS? REALLY OVER, AT LAST?

MOTHER... FATHER... THEY...

YES, IT'S OVER... HERE! BUT TOMORROW... SOMEWHERE ELSE PERHAPS...

I FEAR THERE'LL ALWAYS BE WORK FOR GROST AND I! ALWAYS WORK FOR PROFESSIONAL VAMPIRE HUNTERS...

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I would like to see more features on the films that you adapt to comic strip form. You could include deeper coverage of the makeup and special effects and perhaps some behind-the-scenes photographs.

G. McLaughlin, London.

Why not run an article on Dracula along the lines of "The Decline and Fall of the Frankenstein Monster" in HoH 3? And why not have a Dracula Gallery with stars like Jack Palance, Francis Lederer, Charles Macauley and Max Schreck? Not forgetting my two favourite Draculas, Christopher Lee and Bela Lugosi.

John Proud, South Yorkshire.

I have an idea for a competition you could have in HoH. Request design and apply their own monster makeup, get a friend to take a photo of them in a gruesome pose, and write a short story centred around that picture.

Also, I'd be grateful if you didn't publish any more "continued next issue" stories.

David Kerekas, Lancashire.

Each month you could do a kind of "Dictionary of Movie Monsters", including a list of all the characters in this year's special (Frankenstein, Dracula, Mummy), and, for each, list of the film in which the monster appeared and a list of books on the subject.

John Chase, Dorking, Surrey.

It's a pity you've changed your title from The House of Hammer to House of Horror. Had you stuck with the original title you could have brought out a whole series of companion magazines: The Annex of Amicus, The Two Up, Two Down of Tyburn, The Air-Raid Shelter of A.I.P., the list is endless...

Graeme Bassett, Grimsby.

I don't think there should be more comic strips in the magazine. One long Hammer adaptation and one short Van Helsing Terror Tale suits me fine.

Graham Watt, Lanarkshire.

Wherever possible, you could do a complete subject of the film you adapt to comic strip form. For example, if you adapt Dr. Jekyll and Sister Hyde you could do a complete Jekyll and Hyde filmography.

Philip Mason, London.

I hope you adapt, besides the well-known films, the lesser-known Hammer movies like X-The Unknown, Kiss of the Vampire and The Lost Continent.


Peter Walker must deserve coverage as the only true British horror film director of today. He has directed films like The House of Whipcord, House of Mortal Sin, Frightmare, The Flash and Blood Show and Schizo, none of which have been mentioned within your pages.

Derrick Sheldon, Hull.

There are many films which just do not seem to be discussed in horror magazines. Films such as The Curse of the Crimson Altar, the excellent Blood on Satam's Claw, and the little seen Karloff film, Cauldron of Blood.

If the prints of a poster on the back cover I'd rather not see a colour still from the film featured in the comic strip in that issue.

Jeffrey Leach, Bolton.

I think you should have a page for writers to read their own short stories of the macabre.

Adrian Cox, Maidstone.

In place of Van Helsing's Terror Tales why not a short horror story. A Terror Tale takes up three or more pages but only takes about five minutes to read. A short story should last a bit longer.

Steven Dowd, Oldham.

I don't enjoy Father Shandor a bit too much like those awful Marvel characters although the artwork is far better. Please don't print any more of his dreadful adventures.

Ricky Thaxter, Norfolk.

The fantastic strips of Van Helsing's Terror Tales and Father Shandor are not long enough. They are an excellent part of the magazine and should be given more space. Also, what has happened to Kronos? This was a superb strip and I long to see it return soon.

K. G. Wieland, Hertfordshire.

It would be good if you could print a feature on how your comic strip adaptations are produced. You could follow the strip's progress from writer to artist to letterer. Maybe you could print some unfinished artwork.

D. Cornie, Wiltshire.

Take Van Helsing's Terror Tales out of HoH and give the series its own magazine. This would allow room for more plot and character development. Use Kronos as a back-up feature and round out the magazine with two or three film reviews.

Robert Banner, Wolverhampton.

I have a suggestion to make. It is evident from your Med in Macabre listings that there are far too many films to do full reviews on. So why not do just the number of 2-page film reviews of the major releases plus a couple of pages of brief reviews or film trailers? These could have a column each and be similar to your Fantasy Film Festival reviews in HoH 13 and 14 having a small credit box at the bottom of the column.

Nicholas Hayson, Reading.

... and there you have it: A healthy batch of conflicting criticisms that leave us totally confused. Should the strips be longer/shorter, should the reviews be more or fewer? Who knows? Without your feedback, we certainly don't; so put pen to paper and we'll look forward to hearing from each and every one of you.

Send all letters of comment and criticism to: POST MORTEM, Top Sellers Ltd., Columbia-Wornen House, 135-141, Wardour Street, London W1, England.
By 1958, Hammer Films were already established as the modern masters of the Gothic horror film, due to their fantastically popular approaches to the classic terror tales, "Frankenstein" and "Dracula". In addition to these, Hammer had been achieving success with war and science-fiction films, and in 1958 they experimented with two further types of subjects.

The Snorkel was the forerunner of a series of Hammer thrillers, which would reach its height of popularity in the mid-1960s, with films such as Taste of Fear and The Nanny. Directed by Guy Green from a Peter Myers-Jimmy Sangster screenplay, The Snorkel starred Peter Van Eyck in the role of Jacques Duval, a man who murders his wife and makes her death appear to have been suicide. The plot thickens when Duval’s stepdaughter (Mandy Miller) begins to suspect the truth about her mother’s death—as well as the death of her real father, some time before. Duval learns of her suspicions and plans to do away with her. Suspense mounts until the film comes to an eerie “poetic justice” conclusion in which Duval’s scheme backfires on him... fatally.

Further up the Creek was a comedy (Hammer’s first in over three years) written and directed by Val Guest. A sequel to the non-Hammer Up the Creek (which had been shot in Hammerscope and distributed by Exclusive Pictures, of which Hammer was an outgrowth), Further was pretty much more of the same—a lightweight peacetime naval farce designed for domestic bookings. Its chief interest is that it demonstrates that Hammer continued to turn out a variety of product after The Curse of Frankenstein and Dracula, although their main attention was directed toward films of a similar nature to these, their two greatest successes.

And so Hammer rounded out their 1958 releases with The Revenge of Frankenstein, in technicolor. Christopher Lee, who had played both the creature in The Curse of Frankenstein and the title role in Dracula, refused to repeat either characterisation, causing Hammer to cancel both The Revenge of Dracula and And Then . . . Frankenstein Made Woman (a play on the title of Roger Vadim’s Brigitte Bardot vehicle And God Created Woman). Lee quite understandably was trying to avoid the kind of typecasting that had reduced Bela Lugosi to a foil for the East Side Kids, but Hammer were not about to let Lee’s decision hinder their success. Peter Cushing agreed to repeat his role as Baron Victor Frankenstein under the direction of Terence Fisher. Jimmy Sangster devised a script which truly set the style for Hammer’s Frankenstein series. Rather than following the adventures of the creature (as the original Universal series had done), Sangster’s plot concerned the continuing career of Baron Frankenstein himself.

The Revenge of Frankenstein had an advantage over Curse in that this time Sangster was able to script for a director and star who had already been through the basic premise with him. Where Curse had been an occasionally awkward blend of styles, Revenge was obviously the work of a team whose members knew how to complement one another’s approaches toward the material. This resulted in a
much sharper overall vision than before, so that Revenge is a better film than Curse, at least in terms of its creation of a powerful central character.

The Revenge of Frankenstein opens with the apparent guillotining of Baron Frankenstein, as implied in the finale of The Curse of Frankenstein, who is very much alive.

The film then jumps three years, to the town of Carlsbruck, where a certain "Doctor Stein" has stolen most of the patients away from the members of the local council of medicine. In addition to tending the needs of the rich, Stein runs a free clinic for the poor. As council member Paul Kleve (Francis Matthews) suspects, Stein is Frankenstein. Kleve blackmails Stein into taking him on as his assistant and pupil, and then quickly learns that Stein intends to bring another creature to life. Stein proudly shows Kleve the body (Michael Gwynne) he has constructed. Unlike the creature of The Curse of Frankenstein, this one is no misshapen monster, but a tall, powerful looking figure of a man. Another change is that this time Stein has a volunteer to supply the brain for his creature, in the person of a hunchbacked, partially paralyzed dwarf by dissecting it. In the meantime, the patients in the free clinic have discovered that Frankenstein has been using their limbs and organs for his experiments. At the first opportunity, they beat Frankenstein nearly to death.

The film ends with an unusual twist. Using the knowledge he has gained, Kleve transplants Frankenstein's brain into a "spare" body constructed by Frankenstein in his own image. And so, looking the same as before except for a mustache and a tattooed arm (taken from a pickpocket in the clinic), Frankenstein sets up practice in London under the name Dr. Franck.

The Revenge of Frankenstein was a departure from all previous Frankenstein films in a number of ways. The creature played by Michael Gwynne is the most sympathetic character in the film. Even his death is unique; rather than spectacular fire, explosion, or disintegration, this creature

of Frankenstein. The scene shifts quickly to a pair of graverobbers humorously portrayed by Lionel Jeffries and Michael Ripper in a style made famous by Abbott and Costello (the shrew Jeffries fast-talks the dimwitted Ripper into doing the hard work for him, digging up the body of a freshly buried baron). This unpleasant team soon discovers that their routine job leads them to a horrible discovery when the body which they dig up turns out to be not the expected nobleman, but a beheaded priest. Through this gruesomely comic sequence, the audience is informed that the guillotine at the film's opening decapitated the unsuspecting priest (who was performing the last rites on the condemned man) instead of the crafty Baron

Above: Hammer's 1959 remake of the 1932 Universal film The Mummy had Christopher Lee as Kharis retreading the footsteps of Boris Karloff and mistaking a modern woman, Isobel (Yvonne Furneaux) for his long-dead love, Ananka. Above left: In a fit of rage, Sir Hugo Baskerville (David Osley) roasts the head of one of his servants in the fireplace and then pursues the man's daughter (below left) with murderous intent. The Hound of the Baskervilles (1959). named Karl (Oscar Quitak). It was Karl who saved Frankenstein from the guillo-
tine and beheaded the priest in Frankenstein's place. Karl's reward is to be a new body, courtesy of the rescued Baron.

Although the brain transplant is a success, the creature (now called Karl) undergoes a series of emotional and physical shocks (he learns that Stein plans to exhibit him, along with his old body, and is beaten by a savage drunkard played by George Woodbridge). As a result, Karl finds that his paralysis is returning, and that he is showing a disturbing tendency toward cannibalism! Despite Stein's efforts, Karl becomes a murderer and eventually identifies Stein as Frankenstein in public. The Baron puts an end to his new creature dies by dissection — and offscreen, besides, Frankenstein himself has changed; he has cut off all of his emotional connections with the rest of the world. In The Curse of Frankenstein, he had a fiancée and was carrying on with a maid as well. But now he shows no signs of either love or passion, but only an expertly managed ability to function on any level of society as a superior, rather than an equal. "Franz" Stein's personality is framed by those of the characters around him, who are generally petty or selfish. In addition to Karl (in either of his bodies), there are three exceptions to this rule. On one hand, there is the patient played by Richard Wordsworth — a totally undefined personality who seems to embody the
spirit of anarchy. The reasons for his actions can only be explained as a fondness for making trouble for its own sake. At the opposite extreme is Margaret Conrad (Eunice Gayson), a minister's daughter who tends to the "needs" of the patients in the free clinic, supplying them with soap, writing paper, and tobacco—needless to say, only the last is in demand. Margaret is kind, generous, self-sacrificing—and a bit unrealistic. Also, with all her good intentions, she is largely responsible for the failure of Frankenstein's current experiment.

Lastly we come to Hans Kleve, who functions as the film's standard of normalcy. He sees both the good and the bad in Frankenstein. He admires the Baron's daring and skill, but is horrified at his methods. Unlike the Baron, Hans is idealistic, with a tendency toward humanitarianism (he is seen tending a young girl in the free clinic—no potential limb donor, she). Like Frankenstein in Curse, though, he expects others to share his enthusiasm for the Baron's work. It is Hans who cheerfully informs Karl, still recovering from the operation which has given him a new body, that he is to become an object of scientific study ("All my life I've been stared at," responds Karl to the unheeding Hans).

Finally Hans sides completely with Frankenstein, first against the medical council and then by performing the operation that saves the Baron's life. As a disciple or agent of Frankenstein, Hans
enables the Baron to achieve the ultimate
in his dreams of creating life; at the end of
The Revenge of Frankenstein, the Baron
has become his own creature. This con-
clusion is so bizarre that Hammer has
never attempted to follow it. Although in
the film Frankenstein declares, “They will
never be rid of me”, and Hammer made a
number of further Frankenstein films, only
the first two films, Curse and Revenge,
present any sort of consistent continuing
saga.

1959 began for Hammer with the release
of I Only Arsked, adapted by Sid Colin and
Jack Davies from the Granada TV series
The Army Game. Directed by Montgomery
Tully, I Only Arsked was another Hammer
comedy aimed almost solely at the
domestic film market—where it was, as
usual for Hammer, a success.

Hammer’s next two films, The Hound Of
The Baskervilles and Ten Seconds to Hell,
were given worldwide release by United
Artists. Hound reunited Peter Cushing and
Christopher Lee under the direction of
Terence Fisher. This time the script, based
on Sir Arthur Conan Doyle’s famous novel,
was written by Peter Bryan, who remained
more faithful to the original than Jimmy
Sangster had done in his Hammer adapta-
tions. For that matter, the Hammer
Hound Of The Baskervilles is closer to
Doyle than the 1939 American film version
was, despite a couple of Hammer “twists”.

The film begins at Baskerville Hall, a set
which marks the most impressive use of
Bray Studios outside of its disguise as

Castle Dracula in Hammer’s 1958 Dracula.
At this point the work of the late Bernard
Robinson should be acknowledged. As
Hammer’s chief production designer until
the late 1960s, Robinson was responsible
for the expensive “look” which many of
Hammer’s low budget films achieved. In
The Hound of the Baskervilles, Robinson’s
Baskerville Hall, photographed in rich
Technicolor, serves in the opening scenes
as a perfect backdrop for the evil of
Sir Hugo Baskerville, as well as a visual
expression of the nobleman’s decadence.
It is through these aspects of his personality
that Sir Hugo brings about his own death.
After pursuing an escaped servant girl
(whose father’s head he has just roasted in
the fireplace) onto the moors outside
Baskerville Hall, Sir Hugo stabs her to
death, and is in turn killed by a huge
dog... so goes the legend of the Hound of
Hell.

At this point the film switches to the
home of Sherlock Holmes (Peter Cushing),
Holmes and Dr. Watson (Andre Morell)
have been listening to the legend, as told by
Dr. Mortimer (Francis De Wolff), the
Baskerville family physician. Since the
recent mysterious death of Sir Charles
Baskerville, only Sir Henry (Christopher
Lee) remains heir to the Baskerville grounds, title, and fortune. Mortimer believes that Sir Charles’ death is connected with the legend of the hound, and fears for Sir Henry’s life.

Naturally, Holmes accepts the case and is soon working his expert way through a tangled web of clues, suspects, and strange occurrences. Rather than discuss the plot of this mystery (since the reader is probably already familiar with it), we shall turn our attention to Hammer’s handling of the world’s most famous detective.

Terence Fisher described Peter Cushing’s performance as “second to none”, and it is difficult to dispute the director’s appraisal, except on the grounds of nostalgia. Obviously, it is Basil Rathbone’s name which springs to mind when one mentions Sherlock Holmes in the movies, and Rathbone gave consistently top level performances throughout an entire series of Holmes films in the 1930s and 40s. And, while no one has ever topped Rathbone’s characterisation, Cushing’s performance cannot honestly be called inferior. As always, Cushing gave his all, not surprisingly in keeping with Van Helsing and Frankenstein into his portrayal. Like Van Helsing, Holmes is a totally dedicated enemy of evil, arming himself with all the information available to him. Like Frankenstein, he is impatient with anyone or anything that stands in the way of his goal, and is expert at manipulating the people with whom he comes in contact. Like both, he is unusually intelligent and concerned with knowledge—and refuses to even consider giving up (in Hound, he declares, “I never relinquish a case”)

It has been argued that Andre Morell’s Watson is a less effective foil for Cushing’s Holmes than the one which Nigel Bruce created opposite Rathbone. While the Hammer version sacrifices some of the charm of the byplay between Holmes and his dimwitted comrade, it should be remembered that this characterisation was Bruce’s, and not drawn from Doyle’s original stories. Terence Fisher described it another way: “A man of Holmes’ intelligence would never have suffered such a clot around him.” Morell’s Watson, while nowhere near Holmes’ genius, is an intelligent professional. And since Holmes is still his intellectual superior, Watson is still a perfect foil for lines such as “Watson, you inspire me!” (when he unintentionally reminds Holmes of a fact which the detective had overlooked) and the obligatory “elementary, my dear Watson”.

One further contrast regarding Holmes himself is that Hammer chose to ignore Holmes’ abilities as a master of disguise, a skill employed throughout the Rathbone series. On the other hand, Cushing’s Holmes is closer to Doyle’s original character in his physical involvement. He is as much a man of action as of thought, a fact never brought to light in the Rathbone films.

Christopher Lee, following his roles as Frankenstein’s creature and Count Dracula, had more screen time than before in Hound. As Sir Henry Baskerville, he had what could have been a standard “good guy” role, but instead played the part as a rather stuffy and uncooperative member of the upper class, with little patience for Holmes’ investigation. While possibly sacrificing audience sympathy, Lee gave Sir Henry an unexpected depth.

Ten Seconds To Hell was an unusual but appropriate film for Hammer, in that it was written and directed by American Robert Aldrich. Both Hammer and Aldrich had reputations for approaching familiar material in an unexpected way (in Aldrich’s case, this is best demonstrated in his 1954 film of Mickey Spillane’s Kiss Me Deadly). The film is about a group of war buddies who find that they cannot fit into a peacetime workaday world; and so together they form a squad to disarm unexploded bombs in former war zones. Realising the deadly nature of their job, they form a salary pool, to be divided among the survivors of their task. This grim premise was made unusual by the casting of the lead roles: Jack Palance, most famous as the murderous gunslinger in Shane, was the hero, and Jeff Chandler, a popular action hero of the 1950s, was the villain!

The Ugly Duckling followed, an unusual comedy version of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde directed by Lance Comfort from a Sid Colin-Jack Davies script based on a story by Coln. Bernard Bresslaw, who had appeared in I Only Arsked, played Henry Jekyll, a descendant of the “original” Jekyll, who discovers his ancestor’s formula and uses it to turn himself into Teddy Hyde, man about town and crook. Rather than emphasising the horror elements of the story, Hammer produced it in the style of their other comedy releases of the period.

Hammer’s next feature was Yesterday’s Enemy, scripted by Peter R. Newman from his television play. Val Guest, who had directed The Camp on Blood Island, directed Enemy as an alternative version of Camp, by showing that the British in World War II could be as ruthless as the Japanese were. Yesterday’s Enemy was a thought-provoking, intelligent film which corrected every “flaw” that critics had found in The Camp on Blood Island—and didn’t make anywhere near as much money.

Somehow Hammer managed to follow Yesterday’s Enemy with yet another technicolor Terence Fisher-Peter Cushing-Christopher Lee horror remake, The Mummy. By this time, Hammer had proven their abilities with horror subjects to the extent that Universal Pictures had granted them remake rights on all of their
Sangster’s script included touches such as a reference to Edgar Allan Poe as a contemporary author to create a recent period atmosphere, but The Mummy is memorable chiefly because of Terence Fisher’s visuals. The main setpiece of the film is the flashback to ancient Egypt, complete with ornamental parades, slaves, and vestal virgins lined up for ritual slaughter. This section of the film is probably the most “spectacular” footage Hammer had released at this point in their career.

As magnificient as the Egyptian sequence was, it was the handling of the scenes of mayhem involving the mummy which provided the film with its finest moments.

Hammer fans were given what they paid for when Lee’s Mummy attacked Cushing’s in his home, with Cushing rolling backwards over tables to avoid the monster’s grasp, and putting spears and shotgun bullets through the revived corpse in a vain attempt to halt the monster’s approach. It is Isobel’s resemblance to Ananka which stops the mummy’s rampage of destruction, as well as giving Christopher Lee his best opportunity to employ his evocative eyes in order to convey emotion.

Like Christopher Lee in The Mummy, Hammer’s progress was unstoppable, and, as we shall see next issue, that progress continued at full tilt into the 1960s.

Hammer Film Productions 1958–1959

The Hound of the Baskervilles (Pd: 1958, Rel: 1959) 
Peter Cushing (as Sherlock Holmes), Andre Morel (Dr. Watson), Christopher Lee (Sir Henry), Maria Landi (Cecilia), Ewen Solon (Stapleton), Francis de Wolff (Dr. Mortimer), Miles Mallinson (Bishop Frankland), John Le Mesurier (Barrymore), David O’Brien (Dr. Frankenstein), Dir: Terence Fisher, Sc: Peter Bryan from the story by Sir Arthur Conan Doyle, Ph: Jack Asher, Art Dir: James Bond, Ed: James Bernard, Exec Prod: Michael Carreras, Assoc Prod: Anthony Nelson-Kaye, Prod: Paul Hervey, Mus: Robert Coburn, Time: 87 mins.

This remake remained more faithful to Sir Arthur Conan Doyle’s story than did the original 20th Century-Fox film of 1939.

Ten Seconds to Hell (Pd: 1959, Rel: 1959) 

A bomb disposal squad pool their money with the idea that the survivor will receive the total. Stagn保利 enough, instead of playing the villain, the played the hero while Jeff Chandler was the bad guy.

The Ugly Duckling (Pd: 1959, Rel: 1959) 

Dism-witting descendant of the original Dr. Jekyll rediscovers the secret formula and uses it to transform himself into the suave Teddy Hyde.

Yesterday’s Enemy (Pd: 1959, Rel: 1959) 

The Mummy (Pd: 1959, Rel: 1959) 


In the gripping climax of The Mummy, Kharis (Christopher Lee) abducts Isobel Banning (Yvonne Furneaux) and is finally tracked down and killed by Peter Cushing (PETER CUSHING).
THE ABOMINABLE SNOWMAN

Lawrence Garson of Los Angeles, California, would like a listing of films using the Abominable Snowman theme, so here they are:


DR. FU MANCHU

For Fu Manchu fans Larry and Edward Gostelow of Bristol, the checklist of films featuring Sax Rohmer’s Oriental villain:


El Otro Fu-Manchu (The Other Fu Manchu, 1945). Spanish. Basco Films. Dir. &Scr: Ramon Barriero. LP: Manuel Requena (Dr. Fu Manchu), Rosita Yarza, Adela Esteban.


The Fu Manchu movie list was also for David Gurney (Newport), Mon., Philip Hammond & Ian Thompson (Liverpool), Diana Newberry, Carol Bryant & Peter Crowther (Wembley, Middx.), and Harald Rheine- mann (Cologne, Germany).

MYSTERY AND IMAGINATION

Anthony Margolin & Alan West of Melbourne, Australia, would like to see an episode listing of their old TV favourite Mystery and Imagination. This 1966 British TV series was the work of producer Jonathan Alwyn and story editor Terence Feely. It was an ABC Weekend Network production, and was hosted by David Buck (as “Richard Beckett’) who also appeared in some of the episodes.


“The Fall of the House of Usher” (February 12, 1966) Dir: Kim Mills. Story by Edgar Allan Poe, freely adapted by David Campton. LP: David Buck, Susannah York, Mary Miller, Denholm Elliot, Oliver McSquare, Dudley Jones.

“The Open Door” (February 19, 1966) Dir: Joan Kemp-Welch. Story by Mrs. Oliphant, adapted by George E. Kerr. LP: Jack Hawkins, Rachel Gurney, Jill Meredith, Henry Belltrane, Geoffrey Sumner, Debbie Bowen.

“The Tractate Middoth” (February 26, 1966) Dir: Kim Mills. Story by M. R. James, adapted by Dennis Webb. LP: David Buck, Norman Scace, Jerry Verno, Tim Preece, Giles Block, Edwin Finn, Helen Ford, Cyril Reinson.

“Lost Hearts” (March 5, 1966) Dir: Robert Tronson. Story by M. R. James, adapted by Giles Cooper. LP: Richard Pearson, Freddie Jones, Megs Jenkins, David Dodimead, Francis Thompson, Roy Young, Darryl Read.


“Room Thirteen” (October 22, 1966) Dir: Patrick Dromgoole. Story by M. R. James, adapted by Evelyn Frazer. LP: David Buck, David Battley, George Woodbridge, Tessa Wyatt, Carl Bernard, Joss Ackland.


‘SHE’ MOVIES

Our final list this issue is for the followers of Ayesha, John Lane of London SE22, David Gough of Cardiff, S. Wales, Colin Williams & Mike Bishop of London W10, and Dave Shaw of Glasgow, Scotland, who want to see a checklist of films based on Rider Haggard’s She.

Haggard’s “She” — The Pillar of Fire (aka La Danse de Feu/The Dance of Fire and La Colonne de Feu/The Column of Fire, 1899). French. Silent. Produced by Georges Melies. Based on idea from the novel “She” by H. Rider Haggard.

She (1908). Edison. Silent.

She (1911). Thanisson. Silent. Lead Players: James Cruse, Marguerite Snow.


She (1917). Fox. Silent. Dir: Kean Buel. Scr: Mary Murillo. LP: Valiska Buel. In this one, the fire finally takes Ayesha into an ape.


She (1958). Hammer. Dir: Robert Day. Scr: David T. Chantler. LP: Ursula Andress, Peter Cushing, Bernard Crickins, John Richardson, Rosenda Monteros, Christopher Lee, Andre Morell. This version sees the hero become immortal after bathing in the fire and having to remain in the lost city.

The shadowy world of blood-seeking vampires versus the vampire-slayers and their crude arsenal of evil-destroying implements is a bizarre concoction blended from three basic sources.

Garnished from the areas of literature, folklore, and cinema, they have created an entire pantheon of vampire lore and fearless vampire hunters. All three areas have contributed greatly to the vampire legend, but it is the cinema's portrayal and interpretation of the theme that remains foremost in the mind.

Borrowing heavily from—and somewhat distorting for sake of drama—the world of vampire-related literature, and the folklore that the books were based on, the screenwriters invented a complete new landscape of vampire fantasy and vampire stalkers. Most of the general rules regarding the vampire myths actually derive from the imaginations of the scriptwriters who—like their Pulp-fiction counterparts—created an entire universe to surround movie vampires, their backgrounds, and their opponents. From the basic groundwork laid out in the early days of cinema, most movies have conformed to the laws set down by their celluloid ancestors.

Bram Stoker's immortal novel contained much fuel for the scriptwriter's imagination, but the Hollywood studios of some thirty/fourty years ago really set the theme and pace for future vampire movies. Accepting the cinema's world of vampire lore (somewhat like its own Werewolf lore), and all the rules and limitations that go with it, we find that this "universe" is made up of several different components—all of which would be interesting to trace through their various movie utilizations. For example, the art of destroying a vampire contains intriguing implications: who first discovered that a stake through the heart, running-water, sunlight, holy-water, the shadow of the cross, the crucifix, etc., etc., could destroy a vampire?

However, it is not this aspect of movie vampire mythology that we are exploring here. It is the second most important character in all vampire films—the vampire hunter.

In all forms of drama the relationship, the play-off between two intelligent adversaries is the most important factor of the story—all other components are merely props for these two characters. Sherlock Holmes has his Moriarty, FuManchu has his Nayland Smith, Superman has Lex Luthor, James Bond has Blofeld—and Dracula has his Van Helsing.

The cinema industry has virtually made the vampire story its own, and the role of the vampire-hunter an art. The vampire hunter's bag of tricks, his arsenal, his methods and his character have been well-defined over countless movies. The vampire character is the central force that the story usually revolves around, yet vampires always have an adversary of somewhat unique talents who relentlessly pursues his quarry throughout the story. Without this apparently personal feud there really is no story—the surrounding characters, victims, castles, and mid-European forests are merely a chess-board over which the two "specialists" play out their tactics.

The art of vampire-hunting (it's not a profession that can be easily explained to others) is superbly depicted and played-out in Polanski's excellent Dance of the
Vampire Hunters
Vampires (formerly entitled The Fearless Vampire Killers). This 1967 picture is a tribute, homage, and spoof on the gothic vampire films and their characters. The storyline of Polanski’s film has its roots in Hammer’s Brides of Dracula and Kiss of the Vampire; the characters in his version, however, come across as incredible caricatures of the accepted “Baron Meinster”, the “Ravna” family, “Van Helsing”, “Shandor”, “Professor Zimmer”, etc.

Dance of the Vampires concerns the attempts of two vampire hunters, Professor Abronsius (Jack McGowan) and his assistant Alfred (Roman Polanski), who set out to rescue an innkeeper’s beautiful daughter (Sharon Tate) from the vampiric clutches of Count Krollok (Ferdy Mayne). Our two heroes are welcomed at Krollok’s castle but have, in effect, walked into his web. The vampire devices are all very much in evidence, but displayed in a rather unique fashion. One of the most impressive scenes is during a ball at the castle—made up largely of inmates from the local graveyard—which a large ballroom mirror reflects only the images of our three outsiders, yet all around them the “guests” fill the place out. There is also a very funny variation of an established theme where a smiling Jewish member of the undead approaches a crucifix-brandishing girl and gleefully admits, “You’ve got the wrong vampire!”.

Polanski’s film—next to Captain Kronos, possibly, which really goes off into a vampire-littered world of its own—brings out and makes obvious the absurd paraphernalia of movie vampire-hunting and destroying.

Dr. Abraham Van Helsing must be the original vampire-hunter, for he is part of the Bram Stoker package from which the general theme is derived. Van Helsing, unlike his counterparts, is aware that he really has only one enemy to destroy—Count Dracula. In the Doctor’s book, the final destruction of Dracula means the end of vampirism in the world—and it is
toward this end that Van Helsing battles.

He has his own set of strict rules and regulations to which he adheres, demanding also that his confused assistants and companions perform likewise. Van Helsing's arsenal is quite varied and bizarre—but then, his quarry and the world it belongs to is also quite bizarre. Van Helsing is, in effect, a sane man struggling along in a crazy world (not unlike the situation created for Neville in Richard Matheson's novel, *I Am Legend*—but more on that later).

The whole Van Helsing-Vampire syndrome is, in itself, a curious one. Here we have a man of science, medicine and intellectual logic who not only accepts the premise of blood-sucking, undead creatures but actually devotes his life to fanatically pursuing and destroying them, using weapons and methods that come closer to religious beliefs than science. It is basically the old "voodoo-doll" story again—you have to believe in it before you can respond to it! Priests are really the more logical adversaries of vampires because both already conform to the same rules. Science, even Victorian science, does not enter into it—or rather, it shouldn't.

The two most memorable Van Helsing in the history of cinema must be Edward Van Sloan's portrayal for Universal during the 1930s and Peter Cushing's interpretation under the Hammer aegis. The same character but two entirely different characterisations; Van Sloan, appearing in *Dracula* (1931) and *Dracula's Daughter* (1936), played a sedate, advice-giving, thinking Van Helsing, while Cushing played the character as an immensely active, wholly energetic, action-packed Van Helsing. Edward Van Sloan may come closer to Stoker's original concept of the elderly Dutch doctor but, by way of comparison, one couldn't really imagine Van Sloan tearing around Castle Dracula, leaping onto and running along dining-tables, and hurling himself onto the drapes to let the sunlight in at the climax of *Horror of Dracula*.

Tod Browning's *Dracula*, unfortunately, doesn't allow Van Sloan's Dr. Van Helsing much activity, mainly due to the heavy-weight stage-to-screen production. Most of the interesting and exciting parts are merely referred to in passages of dialogue—the players are left to discuss weird events that supposedly take place off screen.

In this early version, the Van Helsing character acts as if he were simply trying to get a confession out of Dracula by trapping him with small mirrors and crucifixes in the drawing-room. It is only at the end, the Carfax Abbey sequences, that he physically sets about destroying the vampire—and then it all happens when the camera discreetly moves away to allow an off-screen groan from the Count.

Universal followed up *Dracula* some five years later with *Dracula's Daughter*, with the main adversary this time being the title character, Countess Marya Zaleska (Gloria Holden). The beginning of the picture is the only interesting part, with the Count's daughter burning her father's body in quite an atmospheric sequence, and the (logical) arrest of Van Helsing after his performance at Carfax Abbey. Excepting the Zaroff-like presence of Irving Pichel's Sandor character, the rest of the film gets bogged down in a silly love-triangle melodrama. Van Helsing, once again, is more involved in the advice-giving than action department.

Peter Cushing's role of Van Helsing is by far the most exciting interpretation. Terry Fisher's *Dracula* lays out his role of the vampire-hunter and backs up the character by showing that Van Helsing is more or less alone in his beliefs and pursuits. The film tells us that Van Helsing has made a thorough study of the "disease" and has developed ways of handling it. The only problem is that the subject he's
dealing with, and the methods he is forced to employ, are so crude and unacceptable to the civilised world that he is often at loggerheads with the people he depends on most for assistance.

One need only think back to the sequence in **Horror of Dracula** where Van Helsing has to ask for Michael Gough's help in “saving” Gough's vampiric sister. Once Van Helsing has made clear his theory of vampires and what must be done by way of a stake through the heart, Gough tears off in an outraged passage of disbelief, paranoia, guilt, and self-sacrifice.

Cushing’s Van Helsing is a man who is frustrated in his every move to convince people that there is this dark world of vampires, and there exist only certain effective ways of dealing with them. **Brides of Dracula** sees him involved in performing his tasks with the minimum of explanation—obviously, by this time he’s somewhat lost interest in trying to ally others to his cause. He almost regards the people that he’s helping to protect as sheep. His is a one-man war.

The modern-day Hammer/Dracula vehicles (**Dracula AD 1972** and **Satanic Rites of Dracula**) unfortunately misuse the Van Helsing character (despite being a descendant) to the point where he is just another “hero” figure—for that matter, it could be any police-chief or routine leading-man. Whatever magic the Cushing! Van Helsing character contained during his **Dracula/Brides of Dracula** days is now quite out-of-context.

In Hammer’s **Legend of the 7 Golden Vampires**, despite the 1904 setting, the glory that should have been Van Helsing’s actually went to David Chiang and the other Martial Arts performers. On reflection, this picture could have done without the presence of Van Helsing—a sad farewell to the character who once took on similar creatures single-handedly, and with as much energy.
him before accidentally impaling the victim on a stake-sized crucifix. Where Kronos and his associates fail is in the action department; their operations are all deeply prepared and methodical—they lack the sudden sprights of activity that made Peter Cushing/Van Helsing’s hectic days much more exciting.

**Kiss of the Vampire**, from Hammer in ’64, presented Professor Zinner (Clifford Evans) as a sort of Van Helsing-type vampire-killer. Zimmer only stalks in and out of the film for most of the story, but at the end he conjures up a swarm of vampire-bats and directs them to attack the principal circle of vampires at a remote chateau.

Miracula/Carmina Karnstein also faced two strong adversaries, in the form of Douglas Wilmer’s Baron Hartog (The Vampire Lovers) and Peter Cushing’s Gustav Weil (in Twins of Evil). The Vampire Lovers (1970) actually featured two vampire-hunters—Baron Hartog was the main opponent throughout the film, but it took General Spiedes (Cushing, again) to complete the destruction of the female vampire (Ingrid Pitt). The character of Gustav Weil in Twins of Evil (1971) is even more irregular than the others. This witch and vampire hunter being related more closely to Matthew Hopkins (Witchfinder General) than to a Van Helsing.

Priests are the real and obvious adversaries of the vampire hordes—their knowledge of the ‘enemy’, and their dedication to good-over-evil makes them prime opponents. However, not all priests are brave and adventurous, and some are even weak enough to come under the spell of evil (as seen in Dracula Has Risen From the Grave). Andrew Keir’s Father Sandor (pronounced Shandor), in Dracula—Prince of Darkness (1966), finds himself in a similar position to Professor Zinner—protecting naive travellers from vampires, this time Count Dracula himself. From the outset, Sandor takes charge and knows exactly what to do, although his actions (as a member of the religious order) are somewhat unorthodox. Rupert Davies’ Monsignor continues the battle against Dracula, though much more restrained, in Dracula Has Risen From the Grave (1968). He not only has the welfare of the local people to worry about but also a local cleric who has become Dracula’s slave. From these two principal men of the Church, it is Father Sandor who emerges most capable of handling a bizarre situation. When dealing with the Count himself, Sandor comes closest to the Van Helsing style.

Crossing over to the Western genre, Eric Fleming’s preacher has a showdown with a vampire gunfighter in Curse of the Undead (1959). The gunfighter, Drake Robey (Michael Pate), appears successful in his many shootouts because regular bullets cannot harm him—he is Don Drago Robles, a 100-year-old vampire.
The preacher finally gets wise to this and dispatches Robles by shooting him with a bullet tipped with a splinter from the Cross of Christ.

Science-fiction offered a couple of irregular vampire killers, most notably in *The Thing From Another World* (1951). Here the quarry (the Thing) happens to be a blood-lusting alien. The setting is a remote Arctic base-camp, and the role of the "vampire-hunters" is taken by a small group of American Air Force men. The alien-vampire is, after many close encounters, finally destroyed by high-powered electrocution.

Richard Matheson's highly-impressive novel, *I Am Legend*, has inspired no less than two movie adaptations: *The Last Man On Earth* (1964) and *The Omega Man* (1971).

Here, at least in his original novel, Matheson proved once more why he is such a respected writer. He took the vampire-hunting theme and twisted it totally inside out. The world (through a gross epidemic) becomes populated by day sleeping, night stalking "vampires", and Neville (Vincent Price in the 1964 movie; Charlton Heston in the later version) as the supposed hero, their hunter.

But the hero/villain position is totally reversed. In a world completely filled with vampires, the man who tracks them to their lairs only to stake/blast/kill them while they sleep must surely be the villain. As invariably happens, this ironic twist was lost in the transition to the screen, with the latter version involving itself more with ecological questions than either Matheson's concept or the straight vampire-hunting of the former.

Memorable vampire stories on the small-screen are quite rare, making the tv vampire hunter an even rarer character. Of course, there have been various adaptations of Stoker's *Dracula* ('70 '73, and '77, in just the last ten years), but these contain a controlled, almost stagey, Van Helsing character. On the other hand Rod Serling's *Night Gallery* (1970-72) brought forth a few vampire segments—but these were mostly comic variations.

However, there is one great exception in small-screen vampire hunters—and that emerged in the form of news-hound Carl Kolchak in the 1972 made-for-tv movie, *The Night Stalker*.

Kolchak (Darren McGavin) is convinced that contemporary Las Vegas is the hunting ground for a modern-day vampire. Needless to say, the authorities don't accept any part of Kolchak's theory—right down the line to when Kolchak himself discovers the vampire (Barry Atwater) and destroys it. This tv film scored the highest-ever viewing ratings at that time—and this success, along with McGavin's own interest in the show, became the starting-point for a spin-off series, *Kolchak: The Night Stalker* (1974-75).

McGavin's Carl Kolchak (now based in Chicago) stalked every kind of monster during the short-lived series, but only one segment directly dealt with vampirism. The *Vampire* episode featured a girl who was one of the victims in *The Night Stalker* setting, and who now returned from the dead as a female vampire. Though Kolchak himself was far from "fearless", the character and his modern-day landscape interwoven with mythological creatures made an unusual and exciting blend. To date Kolchak is probably the last great "vampire hunter".

*Those fearless vampire-killers, Alfred (Roman Polanski) and Professor Abronsius (Jack McGowan) appear to be absolutely petrified in Dance of the Vampires (1967).*
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LIEUTENANT-COLONEL DORIAN DUCKWORTH WAS A SPORTSMAN. ONE OF THAT RARE BREED WHO DELIGHT IN DEATH FOR ITS OWN SAKE. ANYTHING THAT FLEW, SWAM, CRAWLED, GREPT OR JUST BREATHED WAS FAIR GAME... UNTIL... ONE FATEFUL DAY THE COLONEL TOOK A STEP OVER THE EDGE, AND LET LOOSE...

THE FOLLOWING MORNING FOUND DUCKWORTH AT HIS NEXT SCENE OF DESTRUCTION...

WHAT'S THIS, COLONEL? NEAR RIDING TODAY?

GOT A TOUCH OF BLAZED GOUT, NEVER MIND, I'LL FOLLOW ON IN THE OLD BUS WO'T MISS ANYTHING.

SOON THE HUNT WAS IN FULL CRY... THE BAYING OF HOUNDS WAS MUSIC TO DUCKWORTH'S EARS...

HELLO... SOUNDS LIKE THEY'RE ONTO SOMETHING. BY JOVE, I WISH I WAS DOWN THERE WITH 'EM!

Duckworth followed the hunt in their headlong pursuit over hedges and fields... until...

Hold on!

WHOAAA!

Script: Steve Parkhouse  
Artwork: Patrick Wright
CALL THEM OFF! BEFORE THEY TEAR THAT CAT TO PIECES!
HARRumph! NEVER DID LIKE CATS ANYWAY!

THE OLD COTTAGER, FRIGHTENED BY THE SCREAMS OF HER SAVAGED PET, TRIED VALIANTLY TO BEAT OFF THE ATTACK...

CALL THEM OFF! FOR HEAVEN'S SAKE, CALL THEM OFF!

Duckworth arrived on the scene...

WHAT'S GOIN' ON HERE? GOOD GOD, WOMAN... WHAT THE DEVIL 'VE YOU'RE DOING?

MONSTER! MURDERER!
I'LL KILL YOU FOR THAT... I'LL KILL YOU!

In his fury, Duckworth struck out with his gun butt...

Agh!

GAN! YOU BATTY OLD CRONE!

Good grief, Duckworth... You've gone too far this time. The old biddy's dead!

Before the shocked huntsmen could move...

Dead? Rubbish! She's just fainted that's all... excitement too much for her, what?

You're mad, Duckworth? If she's dead, it's a matter for the police!

Go on... run you lily-livered pansies!

Nobody's going to the police!
Then Duckworth caught a glimpse of something in dusty old mirror on the wall... something that froze his blood!

Good Lord! Looks like the old bat really was a witch!

Oh my God!

And with terror, Duckworth stumbled from the cottage...

GOT TO GET OUT OF HERE!

GASP! JUST CAN'T GO ON. I'M DONE FOR...

I WAS THEN HEARD IT....

No! NO! GASP... IT CAN'T BE!

Hoofbeats of an unearthly rider whose horn echoed through... wrenched from Duckworth's straining throat...

TARAAAAAGH!

Nobody ever knew how Duckworth ended up at the foot of a cliff. Some say he fell, others say he was pushed... but me I'd just say he'd gone to ground... er... the happy hunting ground, that is...

The End
Sinbad and the Eye of the Tiger

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